



# The Semaphore

Reminder

**Newsletter of the Rochester NY Chapter, NRHS**  
P.O. Box 23326, Rochester, NY 14692-3326; Published Monthly

**February 2001**  
**Volume 43, No. 6**

Program for February 15:

## Rails in Rochester

by **Donovan Shilling**

Don will trace the history of five different types of "rails" that served Rochester: horse drawn "street car", trolleys, interurbans, subway and the railroads.

His talk will be illustrated with slides.

What you missed in January

Ted Rafuse presented a well received documentary on the BR&P RR with emphasis on the Lake Ontario fleet sponsored by BR&P and Grand Trunk railroads. What made his presentation unique was the use of a computer stored images/program connected to a video projector. The images were breathtaking.

### Program Committee

Tom Forsyth (Chairman) 442-0125  
Bill Limburg 586-9470  
Dan Cosgrove 352-6931  
Dave Luca (Board liaison) 288-0318

The Committee welcomes suggestions and ideas for future programs. Contact any of the Committee members.

### Library Hours

**2 to 5 PM**

**Sunday, February 18**

**Library Phone: 872-4641**

**A to send your dues for 2001**

**Your renewal will add the fuel to keep the steam up!!!**

### A Reminder

The Chapter's address has been changed. The old PO Box was closed several months ago. Mail still keeps coming there and forwarding to our new box will soon expire! It is now: **P.O. Box 23326, Rochester, NY 14692-3326**

## *A Toast to Traction*

At the NYMT Years End Party held at Jim Dierks house in December, leadership of both NYMT and R&GVRM raised a "Toast to Traction", to celebrate our major accomplishment together in 2000 of getting the first phase of our joint trolley line operating under wire.

The synergy of our two groups linked by a rail line is unique in the USA, we believe, and certainly the sum of the two groups' strengths together is greater than the two groups apart.

We look forward to extending the breadth and depth and length of trolley operations in 2001, and beyond, as we really begin to bear fruit together on our joint dreams of the last 25 years.

Trolley activities, research, rebuild, and restoration continues throughout the depths of winter in upstate Western New York, even as we are writing (and reading) this.

Plans are already underway for a gala Trolley Weekend for the visiting public, to be held Saturday & Sunday, June 23 & 24, for our official "Grand Opening" of the added dimension of electric traction to our combined Museum's offering. *RW*

## Another Year End Party

The annual Year End Party, held at the Museum on Saturday, January 6, was another fine event, enjoyed by about 70 people.

Weather was good. Help was plentiful. Food was great. Heat was on and equipment performed.

Good hot stuff in the cabooses on the stoves. Fresh made munchies and pop corn in the *Pine Falls* while we enjoyed some really great videos.

Enjoyable train rides with EKC #6 diesel and the P-C transfer caboose. Kerosene lanterns and markers.

Fun food and fellowship prevailed as the daylight hours turned to darkness and the evening threatened to turn into yet another day before we all went home and got cleaned up.

Profit of \$120.00 will go to the fund for restoration of Subway Car #60. Thanks for your strong support.

Set up: Warners, Huse, Reddens, Webster.

Move Trailers: Mummery, Scanlon, Gleason, Waterstraat.

Caboose Chiefs: Tuke, Tucker, Hauf, Hartnett.

Snow Plowing: Webster, Waterstraat.

Train Operations: Redden, Carpenter, Tuke, Huse, Holbert, Van Horn.

Serving: Elaine Redden and Marge Warner.

*Pine Falls*: Gale Smith.

Clean up: Warners, Bogucki, Oagley, Huse, Reddens, Harshbarger.

**Thanks Everybody For Another Great Year End Party!** *RW*

## Bob Kewin's 55 Years with the Rochester Chapter

An Interview with Don Shilling

It's not everyday that one has the privilege of chatting with a fifty-five year members of the Rochester Chapter. That opportunity came on a frosty January morning when I met with Robert Kewin. We both enjoyed a steaming cup of Starbuck's choice coffee as Bob reminisced over his lifetime fascination with steam railroading.

Today Bob is the retired CEO of the former Bliss Plumbing Company that once occupied the building at 300 Andrews Street between North Clinton and the former Greyhound Bus station.

When he was no taller than the four foot table at which we were seated, Bob's dad took him down to Blossom Road near the New York Central mainline. There both father and son were captivated by the swirling roar of the passenger train as the old North Shore Limited swept past. The young lad was enchanted. As a teenager in the early

*(Continued on Page 6)*

## Sam Grover

Sam, our oldest living member, passed away peacefully, Tuesday, January 30, after a period of deteriorating health, at the ripe old age of 98.

Sam was very active in the Rochester Chapter in the 1940's, 50's and 60's; holding many leadership positions, including President in the mid 1950's.

While President in 1956, Sam was instrumental in having Rochester Subway Car #60 donated to the Chapter by Rochester Transit Company. The car was subsequently put on display at the Rail City Museum – the first in New York State.

Sam spent most of his life in the area, and entered the rail scene early. At the age of 23 he was made Paymaster for the Rochester Lockport & Buffalo Railways interurban trolley line.

In other facets of his career he worked for Monroe County Social Services Department and also the Alling & Cory Company.

Sam was always an active rail supporter and worked hard on a "Save the Subway" effort back in the 1950's.

When Subway Trolley #60 was finally retrieved from Albany in 1998, Sam & Anna were at our Museum to see the car come in — just in time for his 95th birthday!

Sam's last visit to our Museum, with his gracious wife Anna of 50 years, was to see RL&B interurban car #206, which he had surely ridden in the 20's.

Sam was a great friend to all he met; he will be greatly missed. The Chapter extends our sympathy to Anna an *RW*

### A Lyons Station looking better

Planning continues on reestablishing a passenger station at Lyons, NY. In October, \$1 million in state funding for building the station was granted.

On January 31, Sen. Charles Schumer announced he received confirmation from Amtrak President and CEO George Warrington that Amtrak will work with CSX and local officials to develop a cost-effective plan for the station.

CSX's concerns are that passengers would have to cross existing tracks. Also plans for hi-speed rail service, calls for high level platforms, which would interfere with freight. [*Democrat & Chronicle*, Feb. 1]

## Famed RR Photographer O. W. Link Dies

O. Winston Link, the photographer noted for his meticulous and glamorous photographs of N&W steam power died of a heart attack at age 86.

He had been sick for some time when he drove himself to a hospital in Mount Kisco, N.Y. on Tuesday afternoon (January 30) and suffered a heart attack en route.

He was featured in the January issue of *Vanity Fair*, which featured photographers of the 20th century. He would take days to construct the scene for his photos, which involved numerous flashes and wires. N&W would work with Mr. Link, manipulating the trains to his liking.

[via the Internet from story by Zeke Barlow of *The Roanoke Times*]

### Membership Report

*Beth Krueger, Chair*  
*Janet Dittmer, Assistant*

No new members for this report.

To date, 136 members have renewed. This leaves almost 100 who have NOT RENEWED. Your renewal would be much appreciated and a vote of confidence in furthering the Chapter's activities.

In the near future, the National Office (not the Chapter) will be sending reminders to those who have not renewed. If you have renewed upon receipt of such a notice, please disregard same.

As for contributions since last month's report, the Chapter has received \$381 and the National \$103.

Correction to e-mail addresses: The correction to Joy and Jim Lethbridge's e-mail last month was incorrect. With fingers crossed, it is: [jimleth@ix.netcom.com](mailto:jimleth@ix.netcom.com).

### Question about your Membership?

If you have a question concerning your membership, please call Janet Dittmer at 288-0318.

### The Erie would have been 150 years old this year

The Erie Railroad would have been 150 years old this year, if it were still around – which it isn't.

However, at least one group is planning to celebrate its history. As originally constructed, it favored a six-foot gauge. Later, this caused operational problems when it came to interchanging cars with connecting railroads. So it went to standard gauge. But the clearances necessitated with the broad gauge soon became apparent as the favored road to transport oversize loads.

## Library Report

*Charles Robinson, Chairman*

The Chapter's library in Webster will be open for general use on Sunday afternoon, February 18 from 2 to 5 PM. Come on out and see our photo collection and browse through the thousand rail books of all descriptions!

There has been a great amount of activity at the library. John Stewart and Otto Vondrak have done a great service to the library by removing a large part of our tower piles of surplus rail magazines. We are on the verge of throwing them out. So if you are missing *Trains*, *Railroad and Railfan*, *National Railway Bulletin* and others, you had better come out soon to obtain those back copies because those that remain are headed for the dumpster very soon.

Jim Stewart has finished straightening out the files of rail materials and is now doing the same for our collection of *Official Guides*. These are little details that makes the library better organized and more useful to the users. Jerry Gillette has been placing the pages of the few remaining pages of the Wally Bradley albums in archival page covers. Soon all the historical albums of Wally will be in archival protectors. They are an outstanding record of historic photos of local as well as national steam railroads and electric lines.

Steve Oagley, Bob Miner and I are attending to other details to keep the library orderly.

Chris Hauf has purchased six fireproof safes at a fire sale at Sentry Safes. So four more safes are now at the library to prevent raids by misguided, overzealous railfan collectors on our outstanding collection of important railroad historical items. Better come out and see what we have.

We hope to see you at the library the Sunday afternoon, February 18.

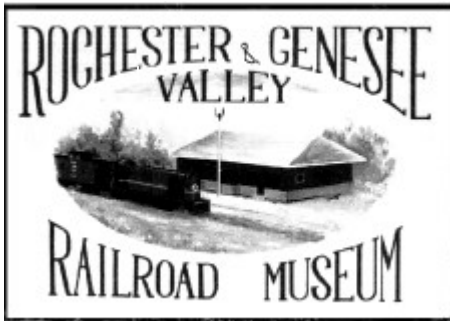
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At the January session, the attendance was rather disappointing. We had two patrons and three staff members PLUS two dozen Krispy Kreme doughnuts! Sorry, no Krispy Kreme's for February, but there may be other enticements!

### NRHS National Convention Schedule

2001 Convention will be held in St. Louis June 19-23. Three mainline excursions are planned, possibly two with steam

2002 Convention will be held in Williams, Arizona where the Grand Canyon RR will be at least one of the several planned trips.



Rand Warner, Director, 425-8587

**Each One Bring One (New)**

We have had a great new influx of talented R&GVRM volunteers this past year, including: Tom Tucker, Beth Krueger, Al Pastorell, Randy Bogucki, Bob Polka, Tom Webster, Larry Baker, Otto Vondrak.

Congratulations to those of you who have brought these new people in, and nurtured them into effective contributors.

If you didn't bring in a new volunteer last year, would you please try to do so this year.

We have all kinds of opportunities for new people to get involved right away in meaningful, satisfying, effective, and payoff-type activities.

Our smorgasbord of projects and programs include just about every skill type you can imagine—whether railroad, industrial, craft, professional, administrative, technical or otherwise.

Let's set a goal of at least a dozen new Museum volunteers for 2001! You can make it happen!!

**Crummy Crews**

**NYC Wood Caboose**

Dale Hartnett & Co. have the roof and cupola tarped for weather protection. The car was made presentable and useable for the Year End Party. Spring will see work resuming on exterior ends, sides, roof and cupola.

**B&O Bay Window**

John Redden & Co. have exterior almost completely repainted and relettered. Interior is now under attack and is all apart for extensive rehab.

**P-C Transfer**

Chris Hauf & Co. have interior restoration completed. Exterior needs full refinishing and P-C lettering. Car was used for Year End Party.

**PRR-N5c**

Chris Hauf and Tom Tucker continue to remove interior rotted metalwork. The car will get extensive new metal flooring etc. this Spring using our new welding equipment -- also some new floor framework.

**Erie #254 Steel**

This car is essentially fully restored and is in constant use throughout the year. Very minor work remains. This car was also used for the Year End Party.

**BR&P Wood**

Dave Luca, Bob Miner, Dale Hartnett and Co. are installing new clear fir sheathing on the west side. Most of the new roof sheathing and cupola sheathing is done. The unit well also get new roof covering after sheathing is completed.

**Construction & Equipment**

*Supt.: Joe Scanlon*

Joe and Art Mummery are getting considerable help and new energy into maintaining our large fleet of heavy construction equipment:

Tom Webster & Tom Tucker are anxious to work on the ATC dozer.

Bob Polka and Neil Bellenger are already helping on Army D-7 dozer.

Joe, Art and Dan Waterstraat are already into the new Mack B-model dump.

Dick Bean & Hiram Colwell have the Case Tera Loader running.

Tom Phillips is back, working on the Barber Greene conveyor again.

Dan Waterstraat and Scott Gleason are maintaining the new Trojan.

Neil Bellenger and Tom Webster want to get into the International 1-ton 4x4 truck.

Joe, Art, John MacDonald and others have been helping on the new Bay City 65 crane.

Dan Waterstraat & Co. are working on the Massey Ferguson front loader.

Chris Hauf, Dick Bean, Cliff Rogers and Rand Warner are into the Ingersoll compressor.

Art and Chris Hauf are working on the welder from Ray Dreimiller.

Joe and Art have the D-2 dozer back in service again.

Joe, Art, Dan, Dick Holbert and Navy Seabees are keeping Army dump trucks going.

Joe, Art and Navy Seabees are working on Cat 12 diesel grader.

Art, Dan and Navy Seabees are working on Mack DM-600 10-wheel truck project.

Bob Miner, Norm Shaddick, Dick Holbert and others are maintaining International tow truck.

Joe, Art and Navy Seabees have been working on Diamond Reo Truck tractor.

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*Left Picture:* Dave Luca, in the middle, nails the first board on the residing of the Buffalo Rochester & Pittsburgh caboose. This was last year, and the caboose was outside. He is assisted by two other museum members.

*Right Picture:* Here Dave installs the first board on the **other** side of this caboose. Now the caboose is under the protection of the Restoration Building.

*(Chris Hauf photos)*



## Carbarn Comment

### RL&B #206

Bernie Cubitt has made drawings of all the wood parts requiring rehab or replacement on this car.

John Weber is making drawings for all the metal parts we have to replicate and fabricate for the car.

Rand Warner is chasing sources for missing appliances for the car.

### Rochester Subway Car #60

Dave Luca has removed several sheet metal roof sections so we can use them for patterns for replacement, and also so we can precisely measure the roof truss (car lines) curvature for an authentic and proper fitting replacement sections.



Dave Luca removing the rotten steel roof panels from Car #60. (Chris Photo)

Cliff Rogers and Rand Warner are installing relocatable wood scaffolding to aid work on the roof.

### Sweeper Line Car #147/#01

Neil Bellenger will be directing roof work completion in the Spring.

Several people are researching leads for a suitable 53-foot flat car to set the car body on.

Lynn Heintz, Dale Hartnett and others are coming up with exterior and interior tongue and groove sheathing.

### DL&W MU Power Car #2628

Jim Johnson has the motor brushes for traction motors, etc.

Mike Dow has rehabbed the MU controller contactors.

Rand Warner is further researching details for low voltage operation, hookup and switchover.

## Diesel Program

Supt.: John Redden

To underscore the maturity of our diesel locomotive program, we are further empowering our motive power foremen in this new year 2001.

Each foreman for each loco will be responsible for beginning of season startup, maintenance, inspection, training, operation, end-of-season shutdown, and winter care taking of the loco assigned to him.

This will formalize the more casual division of responsibilities we have developed over the last twenty years of diesel loco and train operation.

Our diesel fleet now numbers six operable units, with a seventh in transit, thus requiring more structure in our responsibilities

Diesel locomotive foreman for 2001 are:

RG&E #1942 45-ton GE Center Cab:  
**Neil Bellenger**

EKC #6 80-ton GE Center Cab: **Bob Miner**

NKP #79 Alco S-4 Yard Switcher: **John Redden**

Army #1843 F-M H12-44 Yard Switcher:  
**Norm Shaddick**

EKC #9 Alco RS-1 Road Switcher: **Chris Hauf**

LV #211 Alco/EMD RS-3m Road Switcher: **Dick Holbert**

Army #1654 GE 80-ton Center Cab:  
**Jeremy Tuke**

## Engineering

Supt. Jim Johnson

**Progress:** Jim Johnson, Charles Harshbarger and Dick Holbert have completely revamped the layout of the Engineering area in the Depot North waiting room.

We now have additional files and cabinets to contain the data required by all our Museum functional areas. The Reference information is extensive.

Al Pastorell has custom built two special large bookcases to sit on top of the file cabinets.

Rand Warner has procured additional storage furniture.

New bulletin boards have been mounted for posting info on various topics, schedules and projects.

The whole area is becoming more useful and user friendly.

Charles Harshbarger built a new table for the coffee layout.

**Plans:** Complete relocation and consolidation of previously scattered files.

Integrate volunteer technical library in new bookcases to correspond with functional area file cabinets.

Index and log various maps files, drawings and texts.

Review revamped file set ups with Superintendents of all functional areas.

## Sand Blast System

As mentioned in previous *The Semaphore* issues, we are considering several new systems to aid productivity of our restoration and rehab effort at RG&GVRM.

This month we will describe a system approach to an effective sand blast capability. Chris Hauf and Tom Tucker are doing the research on vendors, features, models, and prices.

The system would be complete, just as we described for welding and cutting last month.

The system would include:

- ? a modern high capability blast unit,
- ? special nozzle capabilities,
- ? large capacity sand hopper,
- ? proper headgear and face protection,
- ? proper arms and legs protection,
- ? breathing protection,
- ? sand containment and recover/reprocessing for re-use,
- ? a booth for doing small parts,
- ? air supply controls,
- ? safety equipment,
- ? training.

If any of you readers have had any experience with job related sand blasting, or exposure to professional sand blast equipment or shops, we'd like to hear from you on your words of wisdom. Call Chris (381-5883) or Tom Tucker (442-9860).

Benefits of the new system would include:

- ? Effectiveness
- ? Versatility
- ? Safety of personnel
- ? Productivity
- ? Efficiency
- ? Quality of finish
- ? Economy of sand usage

## Traveling Model Railroad

Dick Luchterhand is building a small N-scale model railroad to take around to area model and railroadianna shows as an interactive, portable exhibit on behalf of our R&GVRM and NYMT museums.

The layout will be adapted or kit-bashed from a larger layout donated to us many years ago by Robert Welch, one of our NRHS members.

The original layout and operating rolling stock was enjoyed by our Museum visitors for several years when it was set up in the South end of the DL&W baggage car.

Now it has been displaced by other larger exhibits which use up the whole car.

Dick's new portable, smaller layout will now be enjoyed by the larger audiences that attend the regional shows.

Another good example of our creative recycling for the public's benefit. Thanks Dick Luchterhand and Bob Welch.

## February Blitz Program

The February "Blitz", where everybody works on a common project on a Saturday morning, is the Erie Stillwell coach.

## Thanks to ...

**Al Pastorell** for wood doors for workbench tops for RPO car.

**Palmer Lindbloom** for offer to donate bench top horizontal mill.

**Dan Waterstraat** for tools and tool board for Restoration Building and chain hooks for Trojan loader.

**Scott Becker** for info on equipment disposition and availability status.

**Stan Teachman** for info on antique rolling stock.

## Wanted

- Mitre Chop saw for metal
- Mitre Chop saw for wood
- HiHi impact drill for masonry
- Chains to fit 14.9x 24 tractor ties
- Hand pallet truck
- Cantilever car lifting jacks
- Hook block for 3/4" wire cable for crane

**Still Another ---  
Reminder to send your dues for  
2001  
Your renewal will had the fuel  
to keep the steam up!!!**

## Line Crew

*Foreman: Scott Gleason*

Led by Scott Gleason, our line crew of Neil Bellenger, Dick Holbert, Jim Johnson, Dan Waterstraat and Charles Harshbarger has set a meter pole and four lead-in poles for overhead wiring to bring 240v/200a service in from Niagara Mohawk at Route 251 to the vault outside our Restoration Building.

Wires have now been spliced and strung all the way in from the meter pole to and through the vault, and then by conduit into another concrete vault inside the building.

The meter pole has been outfitted with all the NiMo specified electrical appliances: meter receptacle, disconnect, fusing, etc.

The availability of a single phase 240v, 200amp three-wire service will be a great step forward to benefit all our many activities on the high level area.

In addition to the obvious benefits of having adequate power to run lighting and power tools inside the building, the new line capacity will permit exterior lighting for night work, power or outdoor welding, sandblasting and painting, and adequate power to run block heaters, pre-lube pumps and battery chargers for our locomotives.

We greatly appreciate this effort that will have so many payoffs. Hats off to our line crew and our line trucks and heavy equipment that made this feat possible on a strictly internal basis — Saving the Chapter much money.

## Visitor Operations

*Supt. Donovan Shilling*

### R&GVRM Depot

Don is putting together a new exhibit for our Depot South Waiting room for the 2001 Visitor Season.

The exhibit, The Evolution of the Locomotive, will be a collection of art work depicting the growth of the steam locomotive from its infancy in the 1803 to its maturity in the 2001.

### NYMT Gallery

Tom Kirn is putting together an exhibit of Wally Bradley pictures for display in the NYMT Gallery for the 2001 season.

This exhibit will feature Wally's pen and ink and watercolor work of stations, trolleys, etc. Wally was an artist for the Rochester *Democrat & Chronicle* and former *Times-Union* newspapers.

## Save Our Children & Youth

If our children and youth are the future of the world, and they certainly are, then we should be doing something to nurture their lives for the good.

Both R&GVRM and NYMT are actively reaching out to our area youth:

### NYMT

Model Railroaders Once-A-Month Hands-on seminar Program by Dick Luchterhand & Co.

Bring Your Own Train Program by Dick Luchterhand & Co.

Eagle Scout service projects coordinated by Doug Anderson.

### R&GVRM

Young Railfans program coordinated by Dale Hartnett.

Boy Scout Merit Badge program coordinated by Dale Hartnett & Co.

High Schooler's Public Service Project coordinated by Lynn Heintz.

Collecting bicycles for Asbury Church Dinning Caring Center to give to youth.

Operation Lifesaver outreach, coordinated by Dave Hulings, to reach kids in school about railroad safety.

Nurturing high school and college age youth to join our efforts and sharing the fellowship.

Providing a "railfan home-away-from-home" for youth enrolled in area colleges.

Eagle Scout public service projects.

## ALCO Centennial

May 26, 2001 will mark the official centennial of the American Locomotive Company. Alco was the combination of ten companies: Brooks Locomotive Works, Cooke Locomotive & Machine Works, Dickson Locomotive Works, Manchester Locomotive Works, Montreal Locomotive Works, Pittsburgh Locomotive & Car Works, Rhode Island Locomotive Works, Richmond Locomotive & Machine Works, Rogers Locomotive Works, and Schenectady Locomotive Works.

The week-long celebration will be held in Schenectady, N.Y., the headquarters of Alco and will start on May 19. Events schedule include a train ride, talks by William Withuhn of the Smithsonian, "trolley" tours, a birthday party with cake, tours of the old ALCO plant, reprinting of two ALCO history books, exhibits at the Schenectady Museum and other activities. [Bridge Line Historical Society *Bulletin*, Feb. 2001]

## Kewin Interview

Erie  
(Continued from Page 1)

1940's Bob would often slip away from his home on Oxford Street with his good buddy, Robert Hemmings, making a bee-line to the Atlantic Avenue rail yards. For endless hours they'd watch the big Mohawks, Mikados and yard engines steam into the round house or enter the yard for servicing at the coaling tower, ash pit or water facilities.

To Bob, the mighty locomotives with their blistering fire boxes, great plumes of smoke and blasts of hot steam, made them the most powerful objects on earth. By his own admission, he was "bananas at the point." Visiting the yard so often, he soon became a fixture to the yards staff. Even the yardmaster, Clarence Shaw, seemed to tolerate the brawny lad. In 1943, he remembers that an engineer offered him his first fide in the cab of a locomotive. It was a freight train bound for Geneva at 9:00 P.M. It was late in the evening when he arrived there and well after midnight when he finally caught a Greyhound bus back to Rochester. He didn't relate what his parents had to say about his early morning hours.

While Bob enjoyed countless rides to Charlotte in the cab of an H-5 Mikado, he vividly recalls a Sunday journey to Batavia with engineer Charlie Riggs in 1944. As the loco passed the Batavia Golf Course, a golfer was about to address the ball. Just then an impish Charlie gave a sharp blast on his steam whistle. The startled golfer swung, missed the ball, and had the embarrassing experience of watching his five iron take flight down the fairway.

On another occasion he had a Saturday ride to Buffalo's Gardenville Yards. It was in 1945 in a Mohawk number 2762 L-2. An automatic Simplex stoker did the work of fueling the fire box. As the crew lay over in the Buffalo yard, a most extraordinary thing happened. The loco's fire went out. He remembered the scrambling that followed with a wide variety of burnable material being forced into the fire box. Journal box waste, lubricating oil, kerosene and even wood was used to rekindle the fire. Fortunately, the steam pressure hadn't dropped too low and with the aid of the engine's blower the coal soon took fire. This accomplished, the loco was then able to steam up and proceed back to Rochester.

Not long ago met Al Matteson, an New York Central engineer, now 93. Al was one of the many railroad men he'd met as a lad so many years ago. It was a great reunion with the two both recalling chaps like the red-

headed Irishman they all called "Shamrock." The generous redhead worked at the Atlantic Avenue yards and offered Bob a variety of extra rail-related "souvenirs." Bos still has an assortment of warning torpedoes somewhere in a cellar corner.

It seems that Bob was not beyond mischief as a teenager. Some of his buddies and Bob placed three of his newly acquired torpedoes on the trolley tracks located near Colby street. Not far beyond this point, the young "hoodlums" draped a length of clothes-line just under the catenary line. As planned the wheels of the trolley blew the torpedoes with three remarkably loud reports and the clothes line neatly snagged the trolley pole from the electric wire stopping the rushing car and leaving its shaken occupants in the dark. Bob often speculated, wondering a little guiltily, if the incident gave the poor motorman a heart attack. Apparently the miscreants didn't stay around long to admire their handiwork.

On other occasions the young railfan was offered rides to the Kent Street yards to pick up "flyers," a string of full or empty rail cars, that were due back for sorting at the Goodman Street yards. Bob's greatest thrill however, came as he was watching cars being shuffled from track to track near the bridge over East Main Street in the Goodman Yards. Most of the train crews quit at 10:30 P.M. according to Bob's recollections. At that time an engineer took him aboard his loco and allowed him to man the throttle as the switch engine returned on track four to the Atlantic Avenue yards. Bob admits the felt "as porky as a hog on ice," when given this chance of his young lifetime. He can still recall how smoothly the throttle responded to his touch and how great it felt to have his head out the cab window while watching the shiny tracks flash by.

It was Nick Feely who invited him to join the Rochester Chapter in 1945. At the Chapter's meeting place in the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad office building, he recalls making the acquaintance of John Woodbury and Ward Shaffer. Before entering military service he recalled two very enjoyable railfan excursions with his fellow Chapter members -- one to Lyons on the Central and then on the New York, Ontario and Western and another, to Saint Catherines in Canada. Both trips were under the direction of Buffalo Chapter's Rush Shapley. Their membership at the time, being triple that of the Rochester Chapter and the local members were happy to join with the larger, neighboring organization.

In all, Bob wouldn't trade his early rail-

fanning experiences for anything. Funny thing though, he stated, none of his three children ever shared his interest in either the plumbing business nor in their father's romance with railroading.

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## February Anniversary Dates

Feb. 22, 1866: First railroad bridge over Hudson River at Albany, N.Y. opens to traffic.

Feb. 1, 1913: "New" Grand Central Terminal opens.

Feb. 16, 1925: Michigan Central R.R. opens new Niagara River span over gorge.

Feb. 1, 1968: New York Central merges with the Pennsylvania R.R.

(Dates and events from NYC Historical Society Calendar)

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Our Historian, Don Shilling, has been approached to provide a "Calendar of Past Events" devoted to Rochester area railroads and related industries. He accepted!

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## Picture This . . .

- ? An NYMT trolley picks up visitors from NYMT and trundles them down to the foot of the S-curves to an intermediate waiting room station.
- ? The passengers unload for transfer to a train.
- ? An R&GVRM loco powered passenger train picks them up at the waiting room for the ride down to our Depot.
- ? The process is reversed for the return of the visitors to NYMT.
- ? This could happen very soon -- possibly as soon as 2001!!

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## New Aqueduct idea proposed

What to do about the Board Street Aqueduct over the Genesee River in Rochester has been discussed frequently. The latest proposal is to use one side of the aqueduct to extend the existing "walk-ways" now under construction along the river.

The archways would be enclosed with glass to protect pedestrians from the weather and still allow viewing of the river. One side of the wide space would be for the walkway, the other side could be used for shops.

This stone aqueduct was constructed about the mid-1800s to carry the Erie Canal over the river. With the demise of the canal, it was used to carry the Rochester Subway plus a freight track that was used until recently. [*Democrat & Chronicle*, Feb. 1]

## PBS shows "Streamliners"

WXXI showed an American Experience production entitled "Streamliners" on Feb. 5.

The hour program detailed the evolution of the first two streamlined trains developed by Burlington and Union Pacific Railroads. Interestingly, a Mr. Budd was president of the Burlington, who made contact with another Mr. Budd in Philadelphia, whose facility had developed construction techniques using stainless steel.

The use of stainless steel resulted in stronger, lighter cars—the Burlington 3-car train set equaled the weight of one standard heavy weight car!

The concept of streamliners was developed to reverse the decline in passenger traffic in the mid 1930s. However the competition from the rapid rise of automobiles and then the jet airplane won. Added to the mixture was Federal regulation—which this program emphasized.

It was an interesting piece of history, but for a railfan, it seemed that about half of the hour could have carried more detail. Nothing was mentioned about Santa Fe's trains, and the New York Central and Pennsylvania entries was just mentioned. [GS]

## Amtrak collides with freight train at Syracuse

As this issue was being put to "bed" (Feb. 5), the headline news was reporting that an Eastbound Amtrak train collided with the rear of a CSX freight train outside of Syracuse. The Amtrak train was just leaving the station so was not up to track speed.

Several Rochester travelers, who were physically disabled, were on board. It appears that two people were hospitalized, the remainder were being transported to area hotels.

The cause of the accident, and why the two trains were on the same track, has yet to be determined.

**Update:** The Rochester *Democrat & Chronicle* reported that the train was carrying 98 passengers and four crew members. Sixty-eight were injured with 63 being treated at three area hospitals and eight were admitted.

From the published photograph, neither train appeared to have derailed. The last car on the freight apparently was carrying lumber, which was scattered about.

**Have you Paid your Chapter and NRHS 2001 Dues?**

## A Book Review:

### The Niagara Gorge Belt Line - A Pictorial Album

The Niagara Frontier Chapter, NRHS, has just released this new book. They are to be congratulated for publishing an interesting album of a unique trolley line.

The Gorge Belt Line made a complete circle around the Niagara Gorge, running from Niagara Falls to Queenstown, crossing to Lewiston and returning. On the Canadian side, the line ran along the rim; on the US side, it returned at the water's edge along the river.

The over 100 photographs are arranged as you would travel the line. All are sharp and well-reproduced. The 68 pages of this softbound book includes a full color foldout map.

Our Chapter store carries this item in its inventory. [GS]

**The Toronto & York Division** of the Canadian Railroad Historical Assoc. sent about 500 flyers to be distributed. Unfortunately, USPS regulations do not permit us to enclose the original flyer with our newsletter. The second "unfortunate" is the reproduction on the right needs "help".

The show is March 17 from 11 AM to 5 PM, and March 18 from 10 AM to 5 PM.

The place is Toronto Congress Centre, 650 Dixon Rd., Toronto with free parking. The map indicates the Centre is near the intersection of Route 27 and Airport Rd. Route 27 intersects with Route 427 which connects with the QEW.

Prices are \$9 for Adults, \$6 for Seniors and \$4 for Children 6-14. The accompanying letter noted about a 1/3 reduction for currency exchange.

Flyers will be at our meeting.

In return, they have requested our Chapter's publicity for distribution at their show.

## Chuck Zehner, originator of Tracks Ahead, died in December.

In the mid-'80s, he began producing a show for a local cable access called "Just Trains" which ended with 87 shows. He then took a magazine format concept, called "Tracks Ahead", to Milwaukee PBS affiliates. "Tracks Ahead" is currently in its fifth series of 13 shows each and is seen on more than 150 PBS stations.

Besides producing the show, Mr. Zehner assisted in finding sponsors, helped line up stories nationwide and as host on the first show. [*Model Railroader*, March 2001, pg 45]

## Four die in Ohio RR accident

Last week, a car hit a train at a grade crossing. As the train dragged the car along, another train on an adjacent track hit the car, killing the four occupants.

The grade crossing was protected by flashing lights, which were working, but not by gates.

*26th Annual*



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Chapter Meeting & Program: <b>Rails in Rochester</b> by Don Shilling February 15, 2001 40 & 8 Club 933 Universtiy Ave.
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**The Semaphore** is published monthly by the Rochester, NY Chapter, National Railway Historical Society. It is mailed free to all Chapter members. Non-member's subscriptions are \$5.00 and run from January 1 to December 31. Chapter meetings are held the third Thursday and the Board of Directors meets the first Thursday of each month.

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Contributions to *The Semaphore* are welcomed and encouraged from all readers. They should be mailed to: Gale E. Smith, 299 Seneca Park Avenue, Rochester, NY 14617-2433. Phone: (716) 544-6221. Contributors using a computer are asked to send their submissions on any MS-DOS diskette in ASCII or TXT format, as well as a printed copy. **Deadline: First Day of Each Month.**

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**Pouring the Restoration Facility Floor!**

The Restoration Building is up and running! Now we need to provide it with a concrete floor. We raised the dust to finish the space. Now we've faced with dust all over the place. One hundred dollars will buy a batch of concrete. The estimate for the floor is \$25,000; we'll need 250 batches (!). Help "cement" together a great project. Maybe we'll even let you write your name and date in a slab! [Don Shilling]
