



The Semaphore

Newsletter of the Rochester NY Chapter, NRHS
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June 2001
Volume 43, No. 10

Program for June 21:

Enjoying Our Railroad

Session No. 1

Once again we adjourn our meetings for June, July and August to the Rochester & Genesee Valley RR Museum at the Depot on Route 251.

And again, we will enjoy the results of the tremendous amount of work and effort that our devoted volunteers have done during the past year.

What will be running at each meeting is dependent upon the weather and availability. So you will have to come out for a first-hand look!

A brief business meeting will occur.

Start time: about 7 PM and continues the last one leaves.

NOTE: On the following Thursday, June 28, members of NRHS and NYMT are invited to ride Trolley #168 at NYMT. These festivities are from 7 to 9 PM.

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

7:30 to 9:30 PM

Monday, June 25

Library Phone: 872-4641

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Year 2001 Special Event:

Trolley Days Return to Rochester

In preparation for our major public event on Saturday, June 30 and Sunday, July 1, we have a large array of tasks underway.

Electric overhead has been extended beyond Giles Crossing by the line crew, under the direction of Scott Gleason, and assisted by Neil Bellenger, Dick Holbert, Dan Waterstraat, Charlie Lowe, Rand Warner, Randy Bogucki, Dick Luchterhand and others.

Bob Miner's shop crew at NYMT has been pre-fabbing down guys, back bones and pull off's, all in accordance with plans from Charlie Lowe.

Art Mummery, Jim Johnson, Dan Waterstraat, Rand Warner and others have been working with and operating the 250kw diesel generator substation.

Rand Warner, Bob Miner, Dick Luchterhand and Randy Bogucki are installing rail bonds and cross straps for the new line extension.

Bob Miner, Charles Robinson and company are checking over and checking out NYMT Trolley #168 for operation.

Charlie Robinson is working on training details and schedules for our trolley crew operating personnel.

Jim Dierks, NYMT our event coordinator, has hosted planning meetings and is coordinating media and invited guest contacts.

We expect to begin operations in the newly extended area by June 9th to facilitate checkout, formal training and event rehearsals.

NYMT has built a new boarding platform ramp for passengers to enter Trolley #168.

RGVRRM will build a new loading area for passengers to board track cars just south of Giles Crossing. This task will also entail some site preparation work.

Neil Bellenger will be coordinating additional work at the substation, for a better enclosure -- with Bob Mader's donated tent over the electrical end and improved fencing for visitor safety and security.

The Schedule:

At NYMT end of our rail line:

Thursday, June 28:

For NYMT and NRHS Members
7:00 to 9:00 PM

Friday, June 29:

For Media and Special Invitees
11:00 AM to Noon

Saturday, June 30: & Sunday, July 1:

For General Public
11:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Banquet: Successful Event

Thanks to Elaine Redden and Janet Dittmer for the arrangements for the Annual Banquet at the Gateway Inn. The food was plentiful and excellent, and the service was outstanding. Which should lead to a return visit!

Our speaker was **James Boyd**, Editor Emeritus at *Railfan and Railroad Magazine*, who accompanied a slide show on the history of Alco PA locomotives. He has documented his research in a new Morning Sun book.

Jack Matsik was named the **Fairmont Award** winner for his service as the former Program Chairman of six years, enthusiastic modeler in his Pennsy RR empire in his attic and extensive collection of PRR "HO" cabooses.

Jeremy Tuke, Development Committee Chair called Rand Warner to the podium to present three checks towards the Subway Car #60 Restoration Fund, which totals \$2,500! These funds, given through the Rochester Area Community Foundation, were contributions from:

Harvey and Carol Simmons

Richard and Vickie Schwartz

The third contribution was announced, but awaits the receipt of the check by the Committee.

For the record: The recipient of the 1999 Fairmont Award was **Donovan Shilling**. It was not reported in *The Semaphore* last year when the banquet was held in conjunction with the E-L Historical Society Convention.

Depot Tour Guides

Here is the June and July Schedule for Tour Guides at the Depot. The hours are 11:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

Sunday, June 10:

Rick Israelson
John Weber

Sunday, June 17:

Tom & Tony Way
Lynn Heintz

Sunday, June 24:

George Bauerschmidt
David & Carol Pattridge

Saturday, June 30:

Tom Saul
Tom Forsyth
John Weber
Lynn Heintz

Sunday, July 1:

Al O'Brien
Mike Root

Sunday, July 8:

open

Sunday, July 15:

Tom & Tony Way
Lynn Heintz

Sunday, July 22:

John Becker
Gale Smith

Sunday, July 29:

Otto Vondrak

If you encounter a conflict, please trade with one of the other people listed here.

Call out for Track Car Operators

Now that the R&GV RM is open for the season, there is always the need for track car operators. Not only Sundays and the Special Events, but also for the weekday tour groups.

If you are a certified TC operator, please sign up for a session or two. For weekends, call Jeremy Tuke, 359-8944, jnm2k@frontiernet.net; for weekdays, call Dave Soble, 244-2117.

Year 2001 Special Events

Special Events for this year for R&GV RM/NYMT joint operations are:

June 30/July 1: **Trolley Days**

July 22: **Model Steam & Gas Engines**

Aug. 18/19: **Diesel Days**

Sept. (open)

Oct. 28: **Season Closing**

Fall Foliage Train-Coach Report

By Bob Miner

The clock is ticking, the days are flying by. Soon it will be September and the Fall rides will be ready to run. The question is, will the coaches be ready?

They still need cleaning from the Santa Train Rides.

Wednesdays are NYC Coach work day. If you are retired or not at work on Wednesdays, come out to Webster and work on the cars.

You can:

- ? Vacuum and mop the floors.
- ? Fix the broken chlorinator on the toilet.
- ? Install diaphragms between the cars.
- ? Change out a window with new Lexan.
- ? Fix a water leak in the water line under a car.
- ? Get out a broken grease fitting on a gen-motor.
- ? Finish HEP (headend power) wiring on Car One.
- ? Finish the counter in Car 3.
- ? Wash the batteries.
- ? Put water in the batteries.
- ? Replace the bolts on the draft gear strap on ABC.
- ? Put new piston packing cups on the slack adjuster engines on the brake cylinders.
- ? Remove the old "Empire State Rail Car" signs.
- ? The windows that have not been replaced must be polished in late August or early September so the passengers can see out.

We need people to take on a task and follow it through to completion. Most of the tasks will require more than one visit to finish.

If you decide to come out on a Wednesday afternoon, call Bob Miner (671-3589) and let me know so I can be there. Work can also be done in early evening until dusk.

People keep saying that the Fall rides bring in the cash. The Chapter needs to support many activities. If you do not keep the NYC Coaches running, the cash will NOT be there to fund your pet project.

National NRHS Dues to increase

In 2002, the National portion of the annual dues will increase from \$17 to \$20 for Regular members; last increase was 1997.

Membership Report

Beth Krueger, Chair
Janet Dittmer, Assistant

These New Members will be voted in at the June Meeting:

Thomas E. Eivart
165 Floverton St.
Rochester, NY 14610; 288-0131

Interests: Rolling stock restoration, Museum tour guiding, Library, Historical construction equipment.

Drake A. Smith
1516 Lake Road
Webster, NY 14580; 265-2197
Interests: Rolling stock restoration, Trips; Publication/historical research.

Robert H. Valkinburgh
30 Cole Road
Pittsford, NY 14534; 624-2026
Interests: Rolling stock restoration.

Welcome aboard!

Gift Shop Workers Needed

Please give Marie a call at 671-3589 to spend a Sunday (or two, or more) from 11 AM to 5 PM for work at NYMT. Two people are desired each day: one to handle sales in the Gift Shop and another to welcome our visitors and sell Museum Admission/Track Car ride tickets.

Coordinator for Tioga Central Dinner Train Trip needed

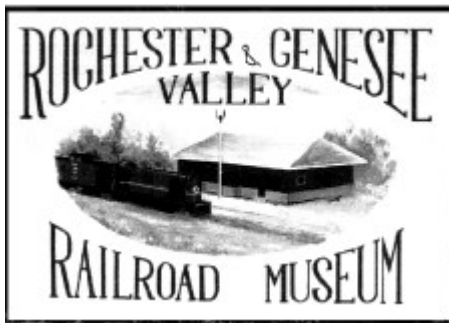
If a member will step forward to serve as a coordinator for a trip to Wellsboro, PA to ride the Tioga Central Dinner train—then we can have another exciting trip, and a wonderful dinner while riding the rails.

For information, call John Redden at 388-9124 <ejredden@frontiernet.net>. John organized the last trip several years ago, and thanks to John and Jerry Bertoldo we had to whole train to ourselves on an extended trip.

After the unusual accident that this train encountered several years ago, it is now back

"Dead man's switch" deactivated

A question to the "Just Ask" column in D&C asked why this switch did not stop the recent runaway train in Ohio on May 15. Answer was that this switch is deactivated when the brakes are applied. The engineer had applied the two brakes, but accidentally engaged the throttle when he left the cab to throw a switch. [*Democrat & Chronicle*, June 6, 2001, Pg. 2A]



Rand Warner, Director, 425-8587

Restoration Facility

At a meeting of our volunteers held on Saturday, May 12, we reviewed overall plans for phased electrical work and phased air line work in and on the Restoration Building, and the Master Drainage Plan.

Results of this discussion will permit us to submit estimates of phased work to the Board of Trustees before proceeding further with expenditures on materials.

Thanks for help in preparing the plans from inputs by Jim Johnson, Charles Harshbarger, Joe Scanlon, Tom McTighe, Dave Luca, Rand Warner and others.

On our recent trip to Pittsburgh and the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, Scott Becker and Dan Bower toured us through their shop areas and inspection pit for work on trolleys. This was a very valuable and enlightening experience for us all.

A meeting will be held Thursday evening at 6:30 PM at the Museum on June 14, for further discussion of Restoration Building and surrounding yard trackage and construction priorities. This discussion will be in conjunction with our regular 2nd Thursday Operations/Volunteer meeting hosted by John Redden. Jeremy Tuke will host the add-on discussions.

Painting Frenzy

Tom Tucker, assisted by Chris Hauf, has a painting frenzy going. MAJOR progress is being made on painting of construction equipment. To date, Tom has painted the Cat 15 and Cat D-8 dozers, Rome road grader, and former New York State three wheel road roller. He is really on a terrific roll here.

Chris has done a baggage hand truck, undersides of passenger cars running gear, and our M.O.W. side dump car.

Dale Hartnett, the Young Railfans, and others, have pitched in to paint loading steps, picnic tables, etc., and are now re-painting the South end of the Depot.

The New Millennium Year 2001 vj

surely go down as our best painting year ever!!

Keep it up everybody, and we'll really have something to show our visitors!

Pittsburgh Salvage Trip #2

A war party of eight descended on Pittsburgh the weekend of May 18-20 to complete salvage operations on three rail cars at Station Square.

From the MU Power car we removed electrical, mechanical and brake system components, and some interior hardware and window frames.

From the molten steal carrying car, we removed coupler components.

From the remains of the open platform wood coach, we removed truss rods, queen posts, and more interior hardware.

On the way home we picked up a bucket for our Bucyrus-Erie 22B shovel from Erie, PA.

Thanks to our hardworking volunteers: Norm Shaddick, Neil Bellenger, Steve Huse, Cliff Rogers, John Redden and Rand Warner.

Thanks to John Redden for use of his ever faithful single axle trailer, pulled by Rand Warner's trusty Suburban.

Thanks to Scott Becker for hosting us at Pennsylvania Trolley Museum along with Dan Bower, and for help on coordinating travel logistics.

Elaine Redden and Marge Warner came with us and took charge of inspecting Pittsburgh on foot, on land, and on water.

Oh yes -- we sure did see a LOT OF ACTION on NS, CSX and Pittsburgh Light Rail Systems, all in close proximity to the work site. Film and video usage was brisk, to put it mildly.

Wooden Water Tower

Thanks to the generosity of Rochester Gas & Electric, we now have a wooden water tower on hand for our steam locomotives and terminal.

Dick Beidenback and Keith Blackall were our liaison at RG&E Ginna Nuclear plant and worked on arrangements with us.

The tank was 13-1/2 feet high with a conical top and about 13-1/2 feet in diameter at the wooden walkway around the base. It had set up in the air 48 feet on a steel leg structure. RG&E had carefully taken it down without any damage to it.

Art Mummery, Rand Warner, Bob Mader and Brian from Mendon Enterprises cased the job ahead of time.

Art masterminded the operation on site. Art, Bob, Rand, Neil Bellenger, Dick Bean, John Redden and Chris Hauf removed the roof and walkway to get the size down to an acceptable level for transport, and installed interior bracing previously prepared by Bob Mader. We also cut up the steel legs sufficient to get them on a flat bed trailer. Our Austin-Western yard crane was taken to the job site and used continuously for this work.

On Monday, May 7, we loaded the stripped tower onto Mendon's lowboy and it was delivered to our museum, along with a flat bed load of steel parts. Art, Scott Gleason, Rand and Mendon's driver got the tank unit unloaded.

Tuesday evening, we got the flat bed trailer unloaded so Mendon could take it back. Art, Scott, Rand, Charles Harshbarger and Dan Waterstraat accomplished this task using our Army crawler crane.

Thanks to Art Mummery for directing this operation and for all our many good helpers.

We now have a viable 5000 gallon water tank with good cedar/redwood planking/staves; about as large a tank as we could ever hope to move over the road intact, and certainly adequate for our foreseeable steam loco work.

The tank is an absolute dead ringer for the tank on the BR&P/B&O RR at Mumford, shown in the book on BR&P/B&O stations so we certainly have a valid prototype for our new-to-us unit.

Steam Team

John Redden, Ron Amberger and Kevin Klees now have all of the tubes out of the Vulcan #12.

They had our lagging contractor in again to look at the project and determined the loco cab does not have to come off.

Plans are in process to moved the Vulcan #12 into the Restoration Building for the lagging removal. First we have to get the Burro crane finished to get it out.

From the Pittsburgh salvage trip we have acquired replacement main reservoirs for the Vulcan #12 and Heisler #1 if we need them.

Hydro tests by John Redden & Co. have showed up serious leaks in the coils and separator of the Vapor Steam Generator in EKC #9. Until these are repaired or replaced, EKC #9 will not be a viable steam charging supply for Heisler #1. Ron Amberger is looking at alternatives.

Track & Right-of-way

Rand Warner, Acting Supt.

Progress: The Gandy Dancers have been hard at work on Track #6 extensions to put it fully into service. Wheel stops are in place, ballast has been placed and tamped, and all rail is spiked and bolted. Thanks to John Redden, Norm Shaddick, Rick Israelson, Rand Warner, Dan Waterstraat, Jeremy Tuke, Dale Hartnett, Dave Luca and Randy Boguki.

A full tractor trailer load of new (first time for us!) ties was ordered by John Redden, approved by the Trustees, received by Tom Tucker, and stacked by Charles Harshbarger.

Three small trailer loads of replacement switch timbers have been delivered to NYMT switch sites by Mark Pappalardo and Rand Warner, for installation at switch frog areas.

Two truck loads each of rip-rap and #3A ballast have been ordered by Rand Warner and delivered to site.

Main line track was inspected by Rand Warner prior to season opening and any critical areas have been addressed.

Plans: Install rip-rap on west facing slopes at week areas and culverts.

Continue ballasting Track #6 and thin areas at NYMT loop.

Start grading and construction of Switch #7 and Track #7 for connection to west interior track at Restoration Facility.

Continue working on implementation of Master Drainage Plan.

Lay out Track #8 and Switch #8 so we can do #7 and #8 in tandem.

Construction

Joe Scanlon, Supt.

Now that the mud has finally dried up (again) we hope to get on with several important construction tasks:

1. Further implementation of Master Drainage Plan.
2. Excavation north of Restoration Facility and fill south of same.
3. Regrading of intermediate level area.
4. Regrading of areas to west of LA&L RR trackage.
5. New entrance road from Route 251 to Restoration Facility.
6. Prep for Historical Construction Equipment National Show to be held at Canadagua in August.

Motive Power

John Redden, Supt.

Spring start-up of our diesel fleet is underway with all assigned loco foremen.

John Redden is prepping NKP #79 and it may be running when you read this.

Norm Shaddick has been working on Army #1843 and its is now running.

Chris Hauf had EKC #9 back in operation at beginning of June.

Neil Bellenger is continuing major rehab on RG&E #1941, with assistance from John Redden and others.

Bob Miner has EKC #6 going all the time. It was never out of service.

Dick Holbert will be prepping and pre-lubing LV #211 for start-up.

Final arrangements are made for moving our Army 80-ton center-cab GE loco DLA #1654 to our Museum site this month of June.

We are enjoying the fruits of our labor over the winter with not one but TWO blue Army TrackMobiles in active service!!

Storage

Jeremy Tuke, Facilitator

Major progress is being made in allocating, utilizing and relocating our total of nine trailers and two storage reefers.

The Diamond Reo tractor driven by Charles Harshbarger is in use at least once a week.

The lowboy with the replacement CAT engine for the Army D-7 dozer has been moved up near the Restoration Facility.

Substantial progress on the reorganization of the heavy equipment area west of LA&L RR is noticeable week to week.

Much material on the intermediate level below the Restoration Building has been cleared and rearranged.

Cleanup has overpowered our 2-yard dumpster and we have had to upgrade it to a 4-yard with once a week pick-up.

Dan Waterstraat and Scott Gleason have built 120 feet of temporary track on the west side of LA&L RR to hold our passenger, freight, and trolley trucks. Some are already relocated.

Don't Forget!

Remember that on **Thursday, June 28**, members of our Chapter and NYMT have a special invite to ride Trolley #168 at NYMT from 7 to 9 PM. This is a prelude before the General Public gets the opportunity that weekend.

Wanted

- Hand pallet truck
- Cantilever rail jacks
- Hilti impact drill for masonry
- Caterpillar yellow enamel
- Allis Chalmers orange enamel
- Sponsors for Rochester Subway Car #60
- Sponsors for Vulcan Steam Loco #12
- Trolley poles for interurban car
- Trolley brakes for interurban car
- New permanent anti-freeze
- New hydraulic fluid
- Garden tractor mower - 36" minimum cut
- Sponsors for RL&B interurban #206
- Good operating surveyor's level

Thanks to ...

Jim Johnson for extension cords.

Charles Harshbarger for shelves and cabinets.

Rand Warner for large adjustable wrenches and brakeman's lantern.

Dorothy Boyer for railroad slides from Curt's estate.

Ron Amberger for info on steam sawmill.

Dick Bean and **Lynn Heintz** for info on antique Ford parts.

Dale Hartnett for info on MOW equipment and self-propelled doodlebugs.

Walter Morey for offer of track material and shop cart.

Hiram Colwell for donation of telegraph insulators, spikes, etc.

Bob VanVanKenkburgh for inputs on development of Subway Car #60.

Vince Milliken for assistance on rubber mounted crane donation and loco move logistics.

Operating Engineers and **Dan Swauger**, and coordination by **Joe Scanlon**, for donation of high quality surveyor's transit.

Steve Huse and **Rand Warner** for hauling the Bucyrus-Erie 22B shovel bucket from Erie, PA.

Brian Chestner of Erie PA for finding this bucket for us and arranging the purchase.

John Redden for leads on heavy equipment donations.

CATERPILLARS ON PARADE

By Joe Scanlon

Rochester New York is gaining some notoriety with the very interesting "Horses on Parade" program currently spotlighting horses decorated up by local organizations.

But the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum has its own version "Caterpillars On Parade" thanks to member Tom



Joe Scanlon Photo

Tom has painted up the museum's recently acquired 1932 Caterpillar model 15 crawler tractor and it looks great! It looks so good that Tom dragged out the vintage Caterpillar D8 tractor donated to the museum by Byron Dewitt of B.R. DeWitt, Inc. and gave that a fresh coat of "Caterpillar yellow." We now have a D8 that looks like it just rolled out of the factory!

Tom also pulled out the museum's vintage Rome road grader and painted that up too. Now he's on a roll, and has his spray gun going every weekend!

All of these gems, (which we used to call diamonds in the rough!) are on display on the West side of the depot parking lot. When you come out for the summer meetings be sure to check them out! And look up Tom Tucker and congratulate him on a job well done!

Heavy Equipment

Art Mummery, Supt.

Even though our heavy equipment lowboy trailer is still being prepped and primed, it is being put to use to move the replacement Cat engine for our Army D-7 dozer, etc.

Tom Tucker and his crew have the Cat D-4 dozer just about ready to go back together with new band linings, etc.

Art Mummery is working to get the ATC mini-dozer running. Neil Bellenger redid the fuel tank.

Our second air compressor on rubber, a gas job donated by Ray Dreimiller, is ready to reassemble. Dick Bean, Chris Hauf, Rand Warner and others are working under Art's guidance.

Art Mummery has repaired the broken

axle bearing on our trusty Lull forklift and the unit is back in service again. Art has also been rounding up parts to get our ever-in-use Ford forklift back up to full capacity on the lift.

Repainting of the Rome road grader, by Tom Tucker, has now inspired interest in getting this machine running and into service again.

Similarly, Tom's painting of one of our Cat D-8 crawlers has raised interest in making this near operational unit serviceable again.

Progress will be resuming soon on rehab of the Cat-12 road grader, Bay City 65 crane, and Koering excavator. We're looking forward to the arrival of a conventional backhoe tractor.

Library Report

Charles Robinson, Chairman

The Library will be open for general use on Monday evening June 25 between 7:30 and 9:30 PM. Come on out to see how well our volunteers have organized the library. Easier to find materials now!

This season's project is to reside the East side of the building. Last summer the library volunteers did a very commendable job on the West side. Recently, Bill Limburg, Bob Miner and the library chairman took down about half of the old siding on the East side. The siding was found to be a lot tougher than we expected but with much tugging and prying, off it came. We were very pleased to find that the timbers inside the wall did not show serious rot and are sound enough not to need replacing. Of course the other half of the siding has to be removed. Hopefully, out good fortune will continue. The open siding is now covered with tarps. Another work session has been scheduled to remove the remainder.

Gale Smith has added still more books to our catalog listing and ready to be shelved. Additional shelving capacity for these books will be expanded shortly. Jerry Gillette is making a catalog of our outstanding collection of railfan and railroad periodicals that identifies the shelf location. Steve Oagley has been going over the latest addition to our Rochester Historical railroad collection and there is some more of the fabulous John Woodbury collection that came from his daughter's estate. We look forward to organizing it and making it available for study.

The library staff will be at the library on the evening of June 25 to welcome you. So stop by and see what we have assembled.

IC RR drops trial on crossing nets

Illinois Central has abandoned the experiment of using steel nets to prevent drivers who try to beat the trains by steering around the gates. This demonstration project was used at three locations. Drivers were confused or aggressively tried to defect the devices. In many instances, the protective barrier was activated at the wrong time, falling on vehicles or trapping them between the net and the tracks. [*Chicago Tribune*, via *Spike & Tie*, Blackhawk Chapter, NRHS via < RailroadHistorical-Editors@yahoo.com >]

The History of the Wellsville, Addison and Galeton Railroad

By Chris Bigham

The Wellsville, Addison and Galeton Railroad (WAG) was incorporated in 1954 to purchase 91 miles of former Buffalo and Susquehanna (B&S) trackage from the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O). This former B&S trackage had seen dwindling profits for a number of years and the tracks were physically separated from the rest of the B&O system due to a flood that washed out track in 1942.

The B&O acquired this trackage back in 1932 when they merged with the B&S. The 37-mile Wellsville branch was built in 1895 between Wellsville, NY, and Galeton, PA, by the B&S and the Wellsville, Coudersport and Pine Creek Railroad. The Addison and Northern Pennsylvania Railroad built the 54-mile Addison Branch in 1883 between Addison, NY and Galeton, Pa. The B&S built the 8-mile Ansonia Branch between Galeton and Ansonia, Pa in 1896.

The B&O's asking price for the property was \$250,000, which many area businessmen proclaimed to be a steal. Included in the deal were six ex B&S steam engines, four cabooses, one snowplow and numerous work cars. The Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) approved the sale to Salzberg and the start-up date was set for January 1, 1956.

The WAG did not intend to use steam power when they began their operations. A small battery-powered diesel (#300) was sent from another Salzberg-owned shortline, The Southern New York Railway (S&NY). Two Whitcomb diesels, #1010 and #1012, were leased from the Rock Island Railroad and two unusual GE centercab diesels, #1200 and #1300, were purchased from the Ford Motor Company.

After the first few months of operation, the WAG discovered that these diesels were too light for a railroad with mountainous terrain and a severe grade of 2.85% on the Wellsville branch. The #300 was loaded back onto a flat car and returned to the S&NY. The Whitcombs were returned to the Rock Island. The WAG however did like the GE centercabs and arranged to purchase five heavier engines, #1400-#1800, from the Ford Motor Company. They were delivered in late 1956 and throughout 1957.

The delivery of new power allowed the WAG to scrap the six remaining steam engines. These engines did see some use in the beginning months of the WAG. Only one of the steam engines, #3127, was ever relettered for the WAG.

The Sinclair Oil Refinery announced in 1958 that they were closing their large plant in Wellsville. This was a major loss of traffic for the Wellsville Branch. The WAG had stationed a switcher in Wellsville to switch the refinery.

With the loss of the refinery carloads, the WAG looked elsewhere to supplement its freight operations. Seventy-eight wooden boxcars were purchased from numerous railroads and placed into interchange service. Steel boxcars, gondolas and tank cars were also purchased for the WAG interchange fleet. The total number of cars in interchange service soon grew to 761 cars.

When a bridge between Elkland and Addison showed structural weakness, the WAG quickly applied for abandonment of this trackage in 1959. The interchange in Addison was with the Erie, which the WAG already connected with in Wellsville. A second interchange with the Erie was not needed. There were also no freight customers between Elkland and Addison. The ICC approved the abandonment petition and the #1700 powered the scrap train as the track was torn up in 1960.

Since the WAG had seven engines on its roster and only two or three were needed for freight operations, spare engines were leased out for scrap trains on abandoned railroads. WAG engines were used on scrap trains for the New York, Ontario and Western and the Leigh and New England Railroads.

In 1964, the New York Central (NYC) petitioned the ICC to abandon its trackage between Westfield and Elkland, which paralleled the WAG between the two towns. Abandonment was approved but the WAG bought two short segments of the NYC in Westfield and Knoxville to ensure freight service to local customers.

The WAG expanded again in 1964 by purchasing the Coudersport and Port Allegany Railroad (C&PA). This 16-mile shortline connected with the WAG at Newfield Junction on the Wellsville branch. The C&PA was originally built as a narrow gauge railroad between Port Allegany and Ulysses but now only stretched from Roulette to Newfield Junction. The C&PA had two GE 44-tonners, D-1 and D-2. The C&PA abandoned its track from Roulette to Coudersport when the WAG took over. Freight operations were infrequent; maybe once or twice a week with just three or four cars.

The WAG went looking for new motive power in 1968 when the aging GE centercabs kept breaking down on the two daily trains

that left Galeton. The WAG purchased 3 F7s and an F7B from General Electric. These engines had seen service on the Southern Pacific Railroad out west before they were traded to GE. #2000 was quickly placed into service. The F7B was found to be unrepairable and used for parts. The F7s were a major improvement over the old GE centercabs.

Just when the WAG's motive power situation was looking better, traffic on the Wellsville Branch was seriously declining. Carloads on the Wellsville Branch and on the C&PA dropped to new lows. An abandonment petition was filed with the ICC for the abandonment of the Wellsville Branch and the entire C&PA.

#2100 had just been released from the Galeton shops in June 1969 when news arrived from another Salzberg shortline, the Louisiana & NorthWest (L&NW), that additional motive power was needed in Louisiana. The L&NW served an ammunition plant that was shipping large quantities of materials for the Vietnam War. The decrepit GE centercabs were put back into service on the Wellsville branch.

The WAG quickly placed another F7 order with GE when the centercabs became increasingly unreliable due to their old age. The shop crews spent more time fixing the engines than the engines spent hauling freight trains. Four F7s were ordered and delivered in November 1969. #2200 emerged from the WAG's shop in March 1970 with #2300 entering service later that year.

The ICC approved the abandonment of the Wellsville Branch and the C&PA in May 1970. The Erie Lackawanna (EL) and several shippers filed objections immediately citing their concern over the loss of rail service. The ICC considered the objections but still ruled in favor of the abandonment. More objections were filed but there were no objections to the abandonment of the C&PA. The C&PA's last run was in December 1970 but WAG trains would continue on the Wellsville branch.

A fire of unknown origin in January 1971 destroyed the WAG's carshop. The loss of the 1894 building and its contents was reported at over \$500,000. Lost were five freight cars, engine parts, numerous tools and supplies. The WAG opened a new carshop/enginehouse directly across from its headquarters in December.

Penn Central (PC) gave the WAG more bad news at the beginning of 1972. The PC canceled the lease on over 300 WAG boxcars that the PC had been leasing. Changes in per

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The History of WAG

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diem rates stated that the wooden cars were too old for revenue service. The WAG's steel boxcars were kept in revenue service whereas the wooden boxcars were returned to the Galeton yards.

While ~~the~~ WAG waited for the ICC's decision on the Wellsville branch, the railroad was still running to Wellsville at least once a week. The remnants of Hurricane Agnes struck the region in June. The Wellsville crew made it to Pusher Siding when they encountered a washout and returned to Galeton with their train. The WAG filed with the ICC to reroute traffic due to flood damage from the Wellsville interchange to the Ansonia interchange with PC. The ICC agreed and continued to debate the abandonment petition of the Wellsville Branch.

The Elkland tannery burned down in 1972 dealing a major blow to the WAG. The tannery was the WAG's biggest shipper and responsible for most of the freight on the Elkland branch. The tannery decided not to rebuild its plant leaving the tannery at Westfield as the WAG's largest customer.

In April 1973, the ICC approved the abandonment of the Wellsville branch. Surprisingly, the ICC's decisions stated that the branch could be abandoned due to declining traffic levels and not because of flood damage from Hurricane Agnes.

C&PA D-2 began the scrapping of the C&PA in 1973. After the scrapping was completed in 1974, D-1 was loaded onto a flatcar and shipped to Mexico. D-2 was later sold to the Stewartstown Railway. Just as #1700 led the scrap train on the north end of the Addison branch, the engine led the scrap train on the Wellsville branch. By this time, #1700 was the only centercab still in service. #1500 and #1800 were stored dead in the Galeton yard being used for parts for the #1700.

More flooding disrupted WAG service in September 1975. Heavy rains associated with Hurricane Eloise washed out the track below Westfield. Service resumed in October.

The WAG was having serious money problems as 1976 began. Flooding repairs and the loss of business from the flooding, put the WAG's operating expenses in the red for 1975. In April, the WAG filed with the ICC to abandon the rest of its 40-mile trackage. The railroad claimed it was delivering less than 34 carloads per mile operated. Flooding again washed out the WAG's tracks below Westfield. A decision was made not to repair the track resulting in a further loss of

traffic. As the WAG waited for the ICC abandonment decision, employees were busy scrapping the wooden boxcars that were no longer in revenue service. #1700 was put up for sale and prospective buyers were visiting the Galeton yard in 1977 to inspect the engine. In September, the ICC gave permission for the WAG to abandon its remaining trackage. Objections to the ICC's decision were soon raised by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PPUC). The PPUC claimed that the WAG knowingly made errors in bookkeeping to paint a bleaker financial picture when business was not that bad. They also claimed the WAG was making poor business decisions resulting in a loss of profits. The WAG filed its reply with the ICC to the PPUC's objections at the end of 1977. After looking at both sides' reports, the ICC again decided that the WAG could abandon in March 1978.

Around this time, #1700 was purchased by Bob Dingham for use on his new shortline, the New York and Lake Erie Railroad. #1700 was moved to the Ansonia interchange but was refused by Conrail because of bad wheels. The unit was returned to the Galeton enginehouse for repairs. The sale eventually fell through.

In September, the WAG employees filed with the ICC for employee protection from abandonment because they were union employees. The union employees were concerned about the loss of their jobs and felt that the ICC should protect them. The ICC later ruled against the union employees because the WAG abandoning all of its trackage and not just a segment of its trackage, which would have protected their jobs.

The final freight run of the WAG occurred on March 13, 1979. Three days later, the WAG moved to Ansonia the stranded boxcars that had been isolated in Westfield and Knoxville from the flooding in 1976. These boxcars were loaded onto trucks and shipped back down to Gaines Jct. where they were put back onto the tracks.

Even though the WAG had permission to abandon, numerous runs were made to Ansonia throughout 1979 to retrieve boxcars that were being returned from revenue service. Scrapping of these boxcars was being done in the Galeton yard. Caboose #C103 and #C104 were freshly painted for their new assignment for the L&NW and moved to Ansonia. On November 7, 1979, the last run of the WAG was made. About 30 railfans watched in misty rain as #2200 and #2300 (coupled nose-to-nose) left the Galeton yard for Ansonia. #1700 was at the end

of the train as it was going to Ansonia in preparation for shipment to its new owner, the Lake Shore Railway Historical Society. The F7s were going to the GE plant in Hornell, NY, for rebuilding and resale. Twenty-four years of WAG service had come to a quiet end.

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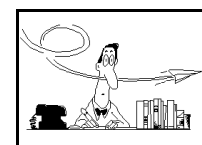
Thanks to John Stewart who forwarded and granted permission to reprint this article from his website. That site is: www.railroad.net.

Lackawanna & ALCO Celebration: August 10-12

To celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Delaware Lackawanna & Western Railroad and the 100th Anniversary of the American Locomotive Company (ALCO), GVT Rail System has planned a special weekend for August 10 through 12 for a number of events.

They will include two rare mileage excursion trips pulled by multiple Alco lash-ups with photo run-buys, a Friday evening slide show, and day and night photo-sessions at Scranton's Bridge 60, featuring "under and over" shots.

Details are available via e-mail <DL&W-ALCO@gvtrail.com> or via USPS with a SASE sent to: GVT Rail System, DL&W-ALCO Days, 8364 Lewiston Road, Batavia, NY 14020.



Editor's Corner

I took a full roll of photographs of the Banquet. However, the film was ASA 1600, dated 1992. Even though it had been stored in the freezer for maybe 15 years, the results were images of low contrast and very grainy.

Chris Hauf had taken a few shots with a digital camera. Unfortunately, he has been out of town on a business trip, so that source was not available.

Don't know what happen with our Postal Service on the May issue. It was mailed on Wednesday, the normal day. But only a few copies were delivered by Saturday, May 12. That was the date of two events at the Depot: 1) Depot guide training, and 2) Young Railfans Annual Breakfast—which was reasonably well attended regardless.

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Chapter Meeting & Program: Enjoying Our Railroad Session No. 1 June 21, 2001 R&GVRM/Depot NYS Route 251 at Industry

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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.**

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]
