



# The Semaphore

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

March 2003  
Volume 45, No. 7

## Program for March 20:

### "Chemung Valley Railroading and Beyond"

### "The Big Dig in Binghamton"

by Rob Piecuch

Co-founder of the Chemung Valley Railway Historical Society

This is a two-part slide show. The "Big Dig" refers to the removal of the rail equipment from the DL&W station.

#### Notice:

#### Meeting Time Change

Store open at 7-7:30PM

Business Meeting will start  
PROMPTLY at: 7:30 and ends at 8:00

Program: 8:15 PM

During the Program, the Store will be  
CLOSED.

### Library Hours

2 to 5 PM

Sunday, March 23

Library Phone: 872-4641

## Track Car Training Schedule

March 22: Classroom

March 29: Classroom

April 12: Classroom & Hands on with cars (weather permitting)

April 26: Hands on with Track cars

May 10: Hands on with Track cars

May 18: *Opening Sunday*

All classes are to start at 9 AM and will be held at the NYMT



What event occurred in January 1939 that affected a Western New York railroad?

Answer on Page 2.



### March's Scenic Picture submitted by Jesse Marks

Former Grand Trunk & Western No. 6325, now in her new Ohio Central paint, steams west out of Dennison, OH on Sept. 23, 2001. Picture courtesy of John Stewart, Milford, Ohio.

### ***B&O Museum Roundhouse roof collapses.***

The 1884 roundhouse, which is the center of the B&O Railroad Museum complex, lost half of its slate roof under weight of the February 15/16 snowstorm that hit the east coast. No one was injured, as the collapse occurred around midnight.

The Museum is now closed. The 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad founding, called "Fair of the Iron Horse 175, Festival of Trains" has been cancelled.

The museum's web site, [www.borail.org](http://www.borail.org), is updated frequently to keep the public aware of the status of the damage. Currently, there are a number of pictures of the damage, and of the work being done to remove the debris.

That status of the historical collection is being evaluated.

According to *The Baltimore Sun's* report,

the first portion of the roof collapse around midnight, followed several hours later by more. A temporary cover was placed over the roof to reduce further damage until structural engineers can evaluate the situation.

The roundhouse circular format came from 22 sides of equal size. It stands 123 feet from the floor to the top of the cupola, which survived the collapse. It covers nearly an acre of ground and contains a 60-foot

### ***National Convention is ON***

The 2003 NRHS National Convention is still slated for June 30 through July 6. A highlight of the convention was the tie end with the 175<sup>th</sup> B&O Anniversary, "Fair of the Iron Horse". The latter has been cancelled.

The NRHS National Office sent e-mails to Chapter editors to state that the Convention will go on as scheduled.

More info on Page 6

## Two New Young Railfans

Dale Hartnett

The Chapter's Young Railfan program is growing!

**Nicholas Pernot**, a student at Gates-Chili, and **Sam Estes** who attends Wheatland-Chili both joined the group in February as the result of our recent membership recruiting drive.

Both Nick and Sam have attended their first work sessions at the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum. Nick and Sam joined forces on removing hardware from the Chapter's BR&P caboose. Nick also took a turn at sanding flooring that's destined for the restoration of the museum's NYC Crossing Shanty. Nick's dad, Bernie, helped out with body work on the Burro crane.

The Young Railfan group is a Chapter outreach program organized through the Venturing Program of Boy Scouts of America. The program is open to young men and women between the ages of 14 and 21.

Welcome to both Sam and Nick! We hope you enjoy your time with us!

If you know a young person who would like to consider joining the Young Railfans, please contact Dale Hartnett at 585/243-0139.

## Harold Russell has been busy!

Master Railroad Modeler, Harold Russell, is noted for his many plans of railroad structures and maps. His latest appears in April 2003 issue of **Model Railroader**. Detailed is the coal pier at Sodus, N.Y. along with a brief history of its operation. The plan of the pier occupies three pages(!) and still is 1/8 of HO scale. The plan has to be enlarged 800% to be HO scale. [The scale drawing is 1:696.]

In addition the following drawings will soon be appearing:

1. Cohocton Engine House in a future issue of **Model Railroader**.

2. Cohocton Erie Depot in a future issue of **Mainline Modeler**.

3. Central Square Depot is schedule for the March 2003 issue of **Mainline Modeler**.

4. Westdale Freight House drawings in a future issue of **Mainline Modeler**.

**A**

The last trains ran over the "Peanut" line. They met at Holcomb before returning to their respective terminals'.

Story on Page 7.

## John Hixon In Memoriam

by Rand Warner

Long time Chapter member John Hixon passed away on January 30, 2002 at age 83.

John was well known and active in the life of the Town of Rush.

He really enjoyed the railroad atmosphere and ambiance of our Chapter and our Museum.

John was our advocate to the Town of Rush, as a member of the Town Planning Board, when we were much in need of friends back in our early start up days at the Depot.

John will probably be best remembered for his inspiration to the "Four Quadrants Vision" -- a dream so bold back in the 1980s that it was at that time hard to grasp.

John really believed in us, and in our future, and could see it better than we could in our early days. He was very proactive about our long range expansion plans, and never missed an opportunity to push on behalf of those plans.

As we grow west of the LA&L RR, and south of NYS Route 251, we should thank John for his vision.

We thank John's family for indicating that gifts be made to the Chapter in John's memory.

## WNY Railpace Slide Show 2003

This annual slide show is scheduled for 7 PM on March 29, 2003 at the Whistle Stop at 1388 Exchange Street, Alden, NY. This location is just east of the Village and across the tracks from Alden Depot, which is now part of a lumber yard.

Several Rochester Chapter members will be participating.

**Duncan Richards** will present "25 Years in NY";

**Randy Bogucki** will present "My History".

In addition, **Peter Swanson**, who photographs much Rochester activity, will present "Personal history in the Rochester area".

Other topics are: "The Legacy of Alcos", "Night Changes: The difference in atmosphere between night and daytime photography", "The 92882 project", and films of the LV, PC, El and N&W. This event has taken on a more formal format compared to the recent ones is Lyons.

Advance cost per person is \$15; \$17 at the door. The night will feature buffet dinner of chicken wings and beef, as well as snacks and dessert. Cash bar with beer at \$5 a pitcher. [**RailPace**, March 2003, pg. 47.]

## Membership Report

Janet Dittmer, Chair

### Address change:

James R. Moore  
157 Deseyn Dr.  
Canandaigua, NY 14424

## One Last REMINDER ....

... to renew your Chapter and National memberships. If you have not renewed by April 1, the National Office will send you a reminder. **NOTE:** Your label on this newsletter **WILL NOT** indicate your renewal status. (The early renewal Chapter discount for seniors **expired** on January 31.)

The renewal rates are: Single membership is \$40.00; Family - \$52.00, and Student (under 18 and in school) is \$30. This is for both National and Chapter memberships. Contributions are greatly appreciated!

**Anyone not renewing by April 1, will be dropped from the newsletter mailing for the April issue. This includes subscriptions not renewed.**

### Any corrections/address change?

**Moving?** In order not to miss any newsletters, please send new information to Janet AND Dee as well as the date of the move. Please either e-mail Janet corrections to <daveluca@frontiernet.net> or send to Membership Chair, 983 N. Winton Rd., Rochester, NY, 14609-6824. (This will give quicker service over sending to the Chapter's PO Box.) Please no phone messages. Changes and omissions will appear in the next issue.

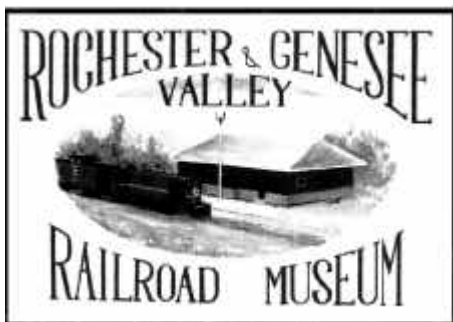
To ensure delivery of your newsletter, also notify Dee Mowers, 21 Coleman Ave., Spencerport, NY 14559; e-mail: <dmowers@frontiernet.net>.

### Membership Rates:

National + Chapter membership:	\$40
Above as Family membership ....	\$52
Local* .....	\$20
Local as Family* .....	\$29
(* Holds National membership elsewhere)	
National only.....	\$20
National as Family only.....	\$23
Subscriptions only: .....	\$8

### Contributors to this issue

Dick Bean, Janet Dittmer, Dale Hartnett, Chris Hauf, John Redden, John Stewart, Rand Warner.



## Make a Day at the Museum!

by Dale Hartnett

Many of our museum volunteers find it difficult to join in on the Saturday work days.

With this in mind, members are invited to join in a special work party following each day of track car training.

Here's how the system works:

1. Come out for track car training (either a classroom or an operating session).
2. Stay the remainder of the morning and help with one of our work projects. (We'll come up with something that fits your interests and abilities).
3. Stay for lunch on us!

Since you'll be at the Museum for track car training anyway, make plans to spend a bit more time. Your help is especially needed during this Spring clean up/fix up time.

If you have questions, please contact Dale Hartnett at 585/243-0139 or

## Winter Sleepover

by Dale Hartnett

It's hard to say which was the best part of this year's Winter Sleepover: the food, the entertainment or the good times.

On Saturday, February 22 John Redden, Steve Huse, Randy Bogucki, Chris Hauf, Kurt Zobel, Tony Mittiga, Rand Warner and Dale Hartnett enjoyed a strip steak dinner with all the fixings.

The evening's entertainment consisted of videos of several railfan steam excursions, including the Sacramento Railfair. Chris Hauf brought along a special treat in the form of a retrospective of the past dozen years at the R&GVRR Museum, produced by Bernie Cubitt. From the "Golden Spike" ceremony linking tracks with the line from the NYMT to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, it was interesting to see how much our operation has changed and matured over the last decade.

Those who stayed overnight in the Erie caboose and Penn Central Transfer Caboose awoke to a chilly morning with sleet,

freezing rain and snow (but much less wind than had been forecast). A "stick to your ribs" breakfast topped off the event.

Many thanks to John Redden for arranging this year's winter sleepover and to Chris Hauf for providing the entertainment.

Keep watching *The Semaphore* for upcoming social events. Make plans to join in the fun!

## Motive Power Update

by John Redden

### Gasoline Locomotives:

The Plymouth locomotive took another leap forward this month; the list of accomplishments by our group is impressive. On the first of the month, a battery, solenoid and wiring were hooked up to the Buda engine, and it was rolled over with the starter. Although it is not running on its own power, everything was turning, and the oil pump was doing its job. The following week, Gene and John Redden started machining five flanges for the exhaust manifold at Gene's home shop in Olean. Kevin Klees and Rand Warner brazed the intake manifold back together, using Gene Redden's brazing torch.

The locomotive, as distinguished from the prime mover, got some attention this month as well. Rick Israelson, Rand Warner, Norm Shaddick, and John Redden removed the clutch lever, friction wheel rack and pinion, and brake lever assemblies. These were sent to Kevin's home shop in Hamlin for rehabilitation. The two operating levers were returned, fully restored, to the Depot, before the end of the month.

Thanks to Kevin and all of his assistants for the considerable progress this month.

### Steam Locomotives:

Bill Chapin, Rand Warner, and John Redden got the crosshead keys out of the Heisler Fireless locomotive on February 8. This completes a job that was started by Norm Shaddick and Ron Amberger. After the crossheads were properly positioned, a press was fashioned out of a hydraulic jack and wooden blocks, and the keys were "popped" out of their slots in short order. Later in the

## Managers

**Railroad:** (Motive, Rolling stock, MOW, ROW)

**John Redden:** 388-9124; ejreden@frontiernet.net

**Infrastructure:** (Buildings, grounds, shops, construction, communications, signals & power, heavy equipment)

**Dave Luca:** 288-0318; daveluca@frontiernet.net

**Visitor Experience:** (Visitor, Train & Track Car operations, 4-Q Vision, Special events)

**Dale Hartnett:** 243-0139; dhartnet@wuhf.sbgnet.com

month, Ron, Rand and John built a press to separate the crosshead from the piston rod.

### Diesel Locomotives:

Our Gold Star goes to Dan Waterstraat this month. He built a battery charger for the RG&E locomotive, and it is a thing of beauty. It came complete with a schematic diagram. This charger will be used with our new set of batteries, that are to be purchased this Spring, with money donated by our Membership. Don't miss out on your chance to help out with this worthy cause - we have raised about 75% of the needed funds to purchase a complete, new set of batteries for this unit. Feel free to contact Dave Luca or John Redden with any questions that you might have on this fund drive.

Thanks to all who volunteer their time, talents and money to keep the Motive Power projects moving forward.

## Freight Equipment Update

by Chris Hauf

This past month has been a busy one in the freight car department. Work has restarted in earnest on our BR&P caboose. Over the past several years, the 280 has had all of its B&O installed interior removed, its BR&P window arrangement re-framed, all new siding put on the west side of the exterior of the car and all new wood on the roof over the south end of the car.

This past month, Chris Hauf has begun the facing of all the interior cabinets. The BR&P originally built most of their interior cabinets with tongue and groove wood. When the car was rebuilt by the B&O in the 1960's, the original cabinets were replaced with plywood versions in the exact same BR&P configuration. The museum decided to leave the plywood cabinets in place since they are in very good condition and simply face them with 5/16 of an inch by 3 inches wide tongue and groove pine. This will make them look like the originals while saving the B&O originals. Chris has also built a new conductor's desk. Bill Limburg

(Continued on Page 4)

## Freight Equipment

(Continued from Pg. 3)

is working on completing the window sashes, and we hope to see them at the museum soon. Jeremy Tuke removed the toilet for cleaning and rebuilding. Dave Luca is working with Chris on plans for putting a finish roof on the caboose. And we must also thank several of our Young Railfans as they have been helping to remove the doors off the interior cabinets, helping remove molding inside to make ready for the facing and cleaning up and priming the exterior ladders, railings and grab irons.

On the research side, Chris Hauf has visited, photographed, measured some of the interior appointments, and collected paint samples in Don Brown's BR&P caboose. Thanks to Don for inviting us out to see his caboose and providing other extensive historical information on the BR&P cabooses. Did you know our BR&P caboose had both a cupola mounted lantern and a roof mounted Westinghouse Clarion air whistle? We have one of the lanterns in our collection, and it has been restored for future installation, however, we still need to find a Clarion whistle. Can you help us find one? Please contact Chris. Dave Luca has also provided Chris with photographs of a BR&P caboose in Belmont, NY which went to the Wellsville, Addison and Galetton Railroad, and thus it was never rebuilt by the B&O?. So, the interior is pure BR&P including the fold down upper bunks at the end of the caboose.

And on other B&O fronts, John Redden, Dale Hartnett and the Young Railfans have been removing the old flooring from the B&O wagon-top caboose in preparation for the installation of a new floor. Dale has even been working to clean up some of the old flooring for re-use in the rebuild of the museum's NYC crossing shanty.

Stay tune for more info in the coming months. We hope 2003 is going to be a very

## Museum Operations

by Jeremy Tuke, President

Let's not forget the Museum this Winter. Staff is urgently needed at the New York Museum of Transportation, our sister museum, in the ticket and gift shop areas.

If you can help out for any of the upcoming Sundays, please contact Bob Miner at 671-3589, or e-mail to: [alfred\\_m\\_2002@yahoo.com](mailto:alfred_m_2002@yahoo.com); or Jim Dierks at 473-5508; [jdierks@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jdierks@worldnet.att.net).

**Your help will be greatly appreciated!**



New facing was applied to some of the cabinets inside of the BR&P caboose. Originally, the BR&P would have had a sculptured arm rest for the cupola seats. The R&GVRM has decided to leave the B&O installed armrests as they are inside the 280 and simply face them rather than rebuilding them to match the BR&P. If you look close on the inside of the armrest, you can see the many years of wear from railroaders climbing in and out of the cupola of the caboose, and the Museum felt we should not destroy this neat piece of history. Once restored, we will include photographs to show the original armrest configuration and a little story telling why we decided not to change it. (Chris Hauf photo)

## Thieves hit Strasburg Rail Road.

In early February, thieves broke into the Strasburg Rail Road's engine house and took the following items:

Number plates from Engines #31, #90, #475.

Classification lights from Engines #31 and #89.

One new classification light.

Six rear end marker lamps: four kerosene, two converted to battery operation.

One photograph of Engine #89 on the Green Mountain.

One Strasburg Rail Road rule book (red loose leaf format).

One small locomotive brass bell and yoke.

One ICC steam locomotive defect chart.

They also destroyed a steel door.

Apparently there were two perpetrators as they left many footprints and tire tracks in

the snow. Pennsylvania State Police are investigating.

They took railfan collectibles, so beware on the lookout for these items at railroad shows. [from internet <[info@nrhs.com](mailto:info@nrhs.com)>].

## Fire damages Virginian Railway Station rescued.

On January 29, 2001 the historical Virginian Railway passenger station in Roanoke was extensively damaged by fire cause by a homeless person. After much negotiations and fund raising, rehab work can start. This 1909 structure was the only significant public-use one built by the Virginian Railway as a symbol of its commitment to the city.

Norfolk Southern, who acquired the Virginian, will donate the station and the land to the Roanoke Chapter, NRHS and Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation, with the provision that if the structure is destroyed or torn down, the land would

## Electrification

*Facilitator: Rand Warner*

### VISION

Detail plans are now taking shape as we anticipate regular operation of trolleys for our visiting public. Initial operations will probably be one or two Sundays a month during our peak Summer season.

### TROLLEYS

Former Philadelphia & Western Stafford cars, #161 and #168, will be the backbone of rolling stock. Car #168 has been operated on several occasions. Car #161 is now in active rehab at NYMT, and car #168 will at the least, require some tune-up. NYMT will be spearheading operation and maintenance of these two trolleys.

### TRACK

Regular operation of trolleys will put additional stress on our track, especially at curves. We will need to put in additional ballast, especially at outboard edge of ties on curves. We also need to recheck ties and spikes. Proper elevation of curves will help a lot in controlling stress on track structure.

### OVERHEAD

We have a number of additional wood poles erected beyond the current end of active overhead, so we have the opportunity of incrementally extending the overhead, and length of operations, as time and energy permit.

### RAIL BONDING

We want to double bond the active trolley track for increased electrical integrity and public safety. This will require us to order and acquire an additional stock of rail bond materials. At the same time, we will put in additional grounds and cross straps.

### SUBSTATION

Detail plans for the substation are complete. To date, satisfactory review has been received, along with permits, from Town of Rush and NYS Board of Underwriters. We are actively working with Niagara Mohawk's Engineering, and Customer Service Departments, on the hookup arrangement for three-phase, 480 v, 400 amp commercial power.

### TRAINING

NYMT will be conducting additional trolley operator training sessions, as was done for our last public operations, "Trolleys Return to Rochester". Start of active training will be contingent on availability of an operational substation. Planning can start now.

### LAUNCH

Getting regular, active trolley operations

on the air will take a coordinated effort by NYMT and R&GVRM. Our existing joint visitor operations committee, called "Transitown", will coordinate all phases of training, publicity, schedules, and other details of launching and sustaining this new

## Operational Possibilities

The combined trackage of our interconnected R&GVRM and NYMT has the potential for many special events for our visitors.

If you visualize our main line with branches, or splits at each end: Switch #6 for R&GVRM and the Loop Switch for NYMT, you can imagine various interesting scenarios:

### 1. Lehigh Valley RR

NYMT loop switch represents branch to Rochester and R&GVRM Switch #6 represents branch to Naples.

### 2. New York Central RR

NYMT loop switch represent branch to Charlotte and R&GVRM Switch #6 represents branch to Lyons to Geneva.

### 3. Erie Railroad

NYMT Loop Switch represents junction at Avon and R&GVRM Switch #6 represents junction at Corning.

### 4. Pennsylvania Railroad

NYMT Loop Switch represents junction at Stanley to Sodus Point and Canadaigua, and R&GVRM represents junction at Hinsdale.

You can probably construct other examples.

Image running a "Lehigh Valley Day" or a "New York Central Day" featuring simulated road operations and real road equipment.

We have already done timetable operations using track cars. Think what we could do with trains!!

## Thanks to ...

**Gary Warner** for a large assortment of rigging supplies, 6"x6" blocking, contractor air hose, heavy equipment support items, battery and cables, and 2000 watt AC automotive generator system.

**Al Pastorell** is working with a source for our various sizes of tongue & groove wood sheathing for cabooses, trolleys, reefers, and buildings. He is also working on a source for steel sheeting for Subway Car #60.

## Library Report

*Charles Robinson, Chairman*

The Library will be open for your use on **Sunday, March 23 from 2 to 5 PM**. This will be the last Sunday date until next winter. Until then, we revert to a Monday night per month.

Unfortunately, 'Old Man Winter' forced us to close on the Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> date – and also on the following two Mondays, which are the staff's work night. We trust that you did not make an unnecessary trip through ice and snow and bitter cold.

**Robert McKnight** donated a number of books which we did not have. Among them are several rare ones, dating from 1920s and before. The more fragile ones will be placed in our Archives, rather than on the shelves to avoid excess handling.

### Missing Magazine Issues:

Dave Luca in consolidating several magazines found that we lack the following issues. Can you provide copies?

**Railfan & Railroad:** January and February of 1999.

**Railfan:** (ca 1975): Vol 1, Issues Nos. 2, 3, 4, 11

**Trains:** October of 2002.

### TRAINZ installed on Library's computer.

The train simulator program, "Trainz", has been installed on the late model computer with 17-inch screen that was donated by Norm Shaddick.

Gale Smith donated the program and had difficulty with its installation. Bob Miner worked out these details.

So come out an run passenger/freight trains from the cab, or lineside, through interesting trackage and scenery. You can even have a "wreck" if you wish.

### Museum Brochures available for distribution

They list the 2003 Special Events programs.

The brochure outlines the attractions to be found at the Rochester & Genesee Valley RR Museum and the New York Museum of Transportation.

Pick up a few to pass out at the library, the two museums or contact Chris Hauf.

## Railway Express Truck

by Rand Warner

Our 1939 Ford V-8 Railway Express Truck has a lot of potential for R&GVRM.

A running truck could be our publicity mascot in local parades, such as Rush Hometown Days.

A running truck would be a fairly unique offering amongst US rail theme museums, and appreciated by our public visitor.

A running truck could support various special events, such as a complete end-to-end demonstrations of how railroads handled express and mail.

A running REA truck could also tie in with authentic, prototype interfaces to trolley operations.

A running REA truck could even perform useful gopher functions around and between our R&GVRM and NYMT museum.

This truck is mechanically complete. It needs a good set of replacement front fenders. TLC is needed for body and mechanical rehab.

Talk to co-Foremen on this project: Dick Bean and Lynn Heintz.

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### E-L Diner #741 exterior to be restored.

The Erie Lackawanna Dinning Car Preservation Society signed a contract with Ozark Mountain Railcar of Forsyth, MO to restore the exterior of this car. Target date is Summer of 2003 with car emerging in E-L gray/maroon/yellow scheme. Inside work will depend is in the future as fund raising progresses. [*Chemung Valley Flyer*, Jan/Feb 2003]

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### D&R Narrow Gauge RR announces 2003 season

The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad sent a flyer announcing its 2003 season, which runs from May 10 to October 31. Several special events are also scheduled. Fare is \$60 for adults; \$30 for a child ages 5-11. Discounts are available for NRHS groups. Their web site is [www.durangotrain.com](http://www.durangotrain.com).

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### Montana Rockies Rail Tours releases 2003 trip catalog.

The catalog lists 13 tours. Most of the rail tours are limited to Montana and Idaho. Motorcoach tours extend the territory to Washington, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and Canada.

Their catalog will be at the Chapter's library. If you want your own color, illustrated catalog, write: Montana Rockies Rail Tours, 4100 McGhee Rd., Suite 1, Sandpoint, ID 83864.

## Toronto Model Railway Show: March 15, 16

The Toronto & York Division, Canadian Railroad Historical Association is holding their 28<sup>th</sup> Annual show at the Toronto Congress Center, 650 Dixon Road, Toronto (Near Route 27 and Airport Road).

Saturday's show is 11 AM to 6 PM; Sunday's is 10 AM to 5 PM. Admission is \$9.00; Seniors (65+) \$7.00; Children (6-16) \$5.00; Under 5, free. (All admissions are in Canadian collars.) Parking is free.

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### Hornell's Alstom recalls workers.

Alstom had a contract to construct 230 push-pull cars and overhaul 134 others for New Jersey Transit. The trucks were being obtained from Buckeye Steel Corp. in Columbus, OH. However, Buckeye filed for bankruptcy. This forced Alstom to lay off about a 100 employees. *Two groups have been recalled.* [*Hornell Evening Tribune*, 1/24/03].

[Editor has recently read that an outside group of investors were planning for buying Buckeye Steel. If successful and if they will continue to build trucks is not known.]

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### LV Sayre, PA Station gets 99 year lease

The large Lehigh Valley station will be securely in the hands of the Sayre Historical Society with the signing of a 99-year lease. The society hopes to receive two grants for \$250,00 and \$80,000 which will be used for the restoration and modernization of the building. It will be used to display historic artifacts of the community including railroad items. [*Sayre Evening Times*, via *Chemung Valley Flyer*, Jan/Feb 2003]

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### Chili freight complex proposed

This \$32 million intermodal cargo transfer project would link the region's rail, air and truck shipments ~~ona 57-acre site in Chili~~.

The graphic suggest that two railroads, CSX and Rochester Southern would serve the complex.

Initially about 250 union jobs would be created and saving to regional businesses would be millions of dollars annually. [*Democrat & Chronicle*]

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### See Page 1 for Track Car Training Sessions!

We need to staff this popular attraction on Sundays, some Saturdays, and some weekdays for tour groups.

It's FUN, so plan on attending!!

## Early Rochester Car Makers

In the last issue mention was made of the firm Reese, Ashley & Co. as building passenger cars for the Auburn and Rochester Railroad Company.

Dick Bean took up the request for additional information. He noted that the old city directories were much smaller and a little vague. He did find in the year 1848 several horse cars in Rochester and this company, according to the directory was connected with the Rochester and Canal Railroad.

Continuing: "Some of these railroads in fact all of them were within the bounds of present Rochester. Some were bobcat type cars with one horse, others were much longer with two horses in tandem. One of the first was a rail line on the east bank going three miles between Rochester and Carthage (near present day Driving Park bridge). Fare was one shilling each way and they carried freight on open cars. They were not popular at first as the Erie canal opened in 1825 and took the people's interest most of the time But in time the people too an interest and then wanted cars on Titus Avenue, Mount Read, Brighton, Pittsford, and all over the city at that time.

"On May 8<sup>th</sup> 1848 the first omnibus was drawn by four horses in front of the Eagle Hotel at the four corners and made trips to Mount Hope Cemetery on the south and to steam boat landing on the north. Rochester was well on its way to having horse drawn street cars. At that time there were 48,000

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### "Star Spangled Rails" is theme for NRHS National Convention.

The Washington, DC NRHS Chapter and the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society has formulated and ambitious program of events.

Besides numerous train trips over some fascinating lines, both freight and Amtrak, there are rides via a track speeder on the 'Ma & Pa'.

Electric traction fans will visit two modern day operations: Metro Subway and the MTA Light Rail.

There are also sight-seeing tours around the Baltimore area.

Registration packages are scheduled to be mailed in mid-March for those who have registered. To obtain a registration form, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Star Spangled Rails, PO Box 441668, Ft. Washington, MD 20749-1668, or visit [www.starspangledrails.org](http://www.starspangledrails.org).

## **Demise of the Peanut Branch (by Amos T. Kreige)**

### **Part II: Choo Choo Crews Take bye by Tour (by Clyde Blackwell)**

[Taken from the Rochester *Democrat & Chronicle*, January 8, 1939 and January 14, 1939.]

The death knell of the Peanut Branch, soubriquet for the short strip of railroad linking Holcomb and Caledonia, has been sounded and the demise is imminent. After months of tension felt up and down the short line, New York Central officials delivered their ultimatum. Operation on the fame 85-year-old branch will cease January 15. With the fate of the road, pending for a long time, become a certainty now, business men in Honeoye Falls are awaiting action of the Lehigh Valley, which as considered a possible connection between its line in the village and the Central road.

Engineers are completing a local survey of the narrow strip of land lying between the two roads. If the proposed connection becomes a reality it will run, it was learned, from the Lehigh track diagonally past the offices of the William E. Despard Coal and Builders Supplies Company to the site of the former New York Central Station, distance of 1,500 feet.

This would relieve a situation viewed with alarm by the Hamilton Mill, heaviest shipper on the line, as well as the Snider Packing Company, Stuart Caves Builders Supplies, William E. Panser, coal dealer, and other business dependent upon the branch for freight service.

According to a report submitted last year to the Interstate Commissioner by Examiner J.S. Pritchard, the average number of carloads forwarded annually from Honeoye Falls from 1932 to 1937, was 223, and 102 were received. The present rate of taxation on the railroad property assessed at \$18,000 is \$14 per \$1,000 assessed as compared with a \$2 per thousand in 1867 and on an assessed valuation of \$20,000.

Owned originally by the Canandaigua & Niagara Falls Railroad Company, later absorbed by the New York Central, the branch line connecting Canandaigua and Niagara Falls, of which the "Peanut" is a part was laid, it is affirmed, as a stratagem of railroading to prevent a possible connection between the New York and Erie and the Great Western of Canada at Suspension Bridge.

The first toy-sized passenger train rumbled into the village on July 28, 1853,

which marked the beginning of over three-quarters of a century of train service for the townspeople. Only the oldest inhabitants of the area can recall the ancient stone block-house where water was pumped into the wood-burning locomotives. Relegated to the past also was the station restaurant conducted for many years by Mrs. Mortimer Locke, where passengers and crew on the early morning train alighted together to eat breakfast.

Barnum's Express was the local term applied to hand-propelled wagon which tote light express and baggage to and from the trains. Gone, too, is the covered bridge, picturesque adjunct of the road in the early days.

In an early period great shipments of barrel staves and hoops came in on the branch for manufacture of barrels at the cooper shop, operated by Stephen Ritzenthaler, and formerly one of the largest industries in the village. Neal Brothers and Brooks, proprietors of the Enterprise Strawboard Factory which shipped out carload lots of shoe-box material to the New England States, are remembered locally as prominent shippers of half a century ago.

Listed among other leading shippers were Cutler and Tring, Humphrey and Holden, Downey and Lay, F.P. Jobes, dealers in farm produce, coal, and building supplies. From the Big Horn country of Wyoming came carloads of horses and cattle on the branch to be sold at local auctions.

#### **PART II**

Hoarse pipings of a locomotive whistle over the rolling fringe of the Bristol hills sounded the death wail of the 'Peanut Branch' of the New York Central today. For after today one-train-a-day freight service from Canandaigua and Batavia will meet dead ends at Caledonia and Holcomb. Then they will back to their starting point. The track between Caledonia and Holcomb will be torn up.

#### **Final Runs**

In the little Holcomb station, the pot-bellied stove crackled early this afternoon. Station master Frank D. Boughton hunched over this telegraph key, chattering the message that the single east and westbound trains would meet in front of the station for the last time in 15 minutes.

Swaying down the 85-year-old line with three cars and a caboose, was the locomotive from which Engineer Tom Moynihan of the eastbound with his five-man crew had been waving goodbyes ever since they'd left Caledonia.

At Golah, West Rush and West Bloomfield, already struck from regular schedules on the 25 miles of 'dead' track, old men stood and saw another mark of their youth vanish with the steam of the moving train. At Honeoye Falls and Ionia, only regular stops, the old men came down to take a closer look and talk with the friendly train crew.

At Honeoye Falls, however, negotiations may preserve a railroad, for the Hemlock branch of the Lehigh Valley Railroad that crosses the Central tracks may be connected with present Central track. Because trains can't go at right angles a few hundred feet of track will have to be installed to complete the line.

#### **Last Meeting**

The westbound freight, with another three cars and a caboose puffed to a stop in front of Holcomb station. Engineer F.G. Smith sat in the warm cab waiting to hear the whistle on Moynihan's locomotive down the grey misty air.

Smith is the dean of the run, having piloted engines over the track for 31 years, was fireman of the 'Peanut' as early as 1904. Doing a maximum of 30 miles and hour, Smith and Moynihan took their usual eight hours to complete the 75-mile run from Batavia to Geneva today.

"It'll seem strange to say goodbye to my friends," was all Smith would say as he spoke of the hey-day of the line when three passenger trains and three freight trains rumbled on the "Peanut" each day. He's seen passenger service dwindle, to two of three passengers a trip, finally to out of existence in 1938.

#### **Farewell With Smile**

Moynihan puffed his train into a spur. He and his crew got out. In the crew as C.H. Lawrence, of Batavia, fireman; C.F. Beswick, of Oakfield, conductor; L.B. Kurtz, of Lyons; F.J. Stickney of Batavia, brakemen; and J.J. Wassink, of Batavia, expressman. On Smith's train were T.J. Ferris, Batavia, fireman; Fred Schraffenberger, of Lyons, conductor; T.G. McMahon, of Dresden, and L.A. Gordon, of Geneva, brakemen.

The crews met, shook hands and joked. Then Smith and his crew climbed back on the train. Black smoke puffed from the stack, the wheels slipped, the train moved slowly past Moynihan's train up the snow-covered tracks. A whistle piped over the hills for the very last time and the echoes finally faded into the silence.

[From Central NY Chapter's *The Green*

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Chapter Meeting & Program:  
**"Chemung Valley Railroading  
and Beyond" &  
"The Big Dig in Binghamton"**  
by **Rob Piecuch**  
933 University Ave.  
**Thursday, March 20, 2003**

**NOTE Time Change!**

**Store Opens: 7:00**

**Business: 8:00**

**Program: 8:15**

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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] (Each block indicates \$1,000)

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