



The Semaphore

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

November 2004
Volume 47, No. 3

Program for Nov18:

The Oil Creek Rail Road Company

by Dick Senges

The Oil Creek Rail Road Company was chartered in 1860 and existed until 1866 when it merged with other shortline oil transporting railroads in western Pennsylvania to form the Oil Creek and Allegheny River Railway Company. The OCRR ran 37 miles from Corry, PA to Petroleum Centre.

Trackage was 6-foot gauge. Its main purpose from 1862 to 1865 was to transport oil from the area to the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad (also 6-foot gauge) in Corry. In 1865, standard gauge was added allowing connections to other railroads such as the Philadelphia and Erie.

At first, oil was hauled in wood barrels on "flats" or in converted stock cars. In late 1865, the Densmore two-tank oil tank car (two vertical oil tanks on a flat car) was invented. The horizontal iron tank car arrived in February 1869.

Dick Senges retired from Eastman Kodak in 2000 where he worked as a Purchasing Manager. He is enjoying his retirement and said he should have retired 30 years sooner.

He enjoys model railroading, especially the historical research and scenery aspect. His HO scale, standard gauge line depicts the Oil Creek Rail Road, circa 1866, and also the 1800s logging and mining railroad.

Dick is editor and publisher of the *Rochester Model Rails* model railroad newsletter (it's on the Web). He has authored articles for *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *Mainline Modeler*, *Oil-Industry History* and several NMRA regional newsletters.

He has achieved NMRA Achievement Certificates as Master Builder-Scenery, Master Builder-Structures, and Model Railroad author. Dick is also a volunteer and scenery consultant for the Medina Railroad and Fire Museum in Medina, NY

Meeting at 7:30; Program at 8:00

Store open before and between meet-

2004 Fall Foliage Express Season Concludes

by Jeremy Tuke

The 2004 Fall Foliage Express season concluded following the Sunday, October 17th trips. The Chapter operated six 90-minute round trips in 2004, with trips at 12:00 and 2:15 PM each weekend day of the first three weekends in October.

While ridership was typically a bit light for the first weekend, the balance of the trips were either sold out or nearly sold out. Ticketing was handled through Wegmans again this year, and this arrangement has proved to be very successful for the Chapter.

The weather was mostly cooperative for the trip days, and our passengers all seemed to truly enjoy themselves. This season our horseback riding "train robbers" increased the number of "heists," much to the delight of our patrons. Many people rode specifically to see this portion of our trip.

The Fall Foliage trips are one of the Chapter's main sources of income which allow us to accomplish the many other activities we undertake, particularly the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum in Rush, NY. While the final figures are still being determined, it appears that ridership was higher than the 2003 season, in spite of lowered seating capacity due to one of our coaches being side-tracked for mechanical reasons.

This points to the need for a renewed and dedicated effort to continue to work on and upgrade our equipment. It requires no less

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Future Programs

December 16: *Twenty our hours in the life of a Railroad* by Duncan Richards (Note change in program previously published.)

January 20: *NRHS Convention, 1973* by Bob Mader

February 17: *Maintenance of Way* by Richard Wagner

March 17: Members' slide night

April 21: *Chinese Steam #3* by Duncan Richards

May 10: *Lehigh Valley 16 mm movies* by Ken Kramer.



The train is about to depart on the first trip on the first day of running. The weather 'obliged' with frequent rain shows that day!

that 15 volunteers per day to staff our train each trip day, handling responsibilities as car hosts, concession, ticket booth and store operators, mechanical people, EMT's and parking lot crew. Forty-six Chapter members, including three brand-new members, worked to make the trips successful, and safe and enjoyable for our riders, and deserve the Chapter's gratitude for their time and efforts.

Thanks to the efforts of Dave Luca and Bob Miner, along with several other dedicated volunteers, many, many hours of work on the equipment made our train ready for

(Continued on Page 4)

Christmas Tree Train First two weekends in December

Volunteers needed to operate

The Christmas Tree Train rides will be held on the first two weekends in December: Dec. 4, 5, 11 and 12. Volunteer times will be from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If you can help with either an engineer or a caboose host, please call Steve Huse at 586-5802.

Chapter Library

11 May Street, Webster (by OMID Tracks)

Hours: 2 to 5 PM

Sunday, November 21

Library Phone: 872-4641

Now on Winter Hours: Please note change in Day and time

In Memoriam - 29 October 2004**Dan Cosgrove**

Our beloved Dan has been a fixture around the Museum for many, many years. He loved to be there and we loved to have him there - to talk and reminisce with.

Dan was a highly esteemed dispatcher for New York Central RR out of Syracuse. Bill Chapin and Bob Burke both worked for Dan as towermen.

Dan was a very outgoing and personable guy—some one you really enjoyed being around.

Dan had the Publications responsibility for our Chapter for many years. He was also our Corresponding Secretary for several years.

Dan started a local railroad retirees group over ten years ago and has been their faithful leader ever since.

Dan represented every thing good about the railroads—their operations and service, their employees, and their romance.

We wish our very best to all of Dan's survivors and family.

Dan Cosgrove joined the Chapter in
RW

New York City Trip: Dec. 10-13

The 14th Annual New York City Pre-Christmas trip includes orchestra seat for the Christmas show at Radio City Music Hall starring the Rockettes, shopping, a dinner and continental breakfasts.

This escorted trip departs Rochester's Amtrak station Friday morning, December 10 and returns Monday evening December 13, 2004 (3 nights).

The trip cost is \$610-640 per person, double occupancy. Children's rates are available.

Please call the Chapter's tour guide: Jim East at 585-377-5389.

Brakeman Training Classes to be held

Our Book of Rules class will be held Dec. 4 and Jan. 8 for brakeman training. The hand-on session will be in the spring. Brakeman training is a requisite for engineer training.

Contact one of the managers for more details.

Second installment on the Telegraph, by Chris Hausler, appears on Page 7.



John Redden collection

Young Railfans Dates:

Sat. Nov. 6	All 10 AM-3 PM
Sat. Nov. 20	
Sat. Dec. 4	
Sat. Dec. 18	

WAG plow has website

Jesse Marks has created a new website based on our WAG (B&M X3215) snow plow.

Link: <http://www.geocities.com/wagr4271/WAG.html>

Chapter's WebSite

This site contains Chapter news, images of *The Semaphore* since 2001, a sampling of historical photographs in our collection, among other interesting items.

The URL: www.rochnrhs.org

Beth has photo in Trains

The December 2004 issue of *Trains* magazine has Beth Krueger's photo entitled "Labrador Heavy Haulers" on a 2-page Gallery spread (pages 68-79). It depicts four early 1960s Wabush Lake MLW RS18s hauling an ore train as they cross a bridge over the Ashuanipi River in Labrador. She took the photo in July of 2000 in this very remote area of interior Labrador.

Congratulations, Beth!

Membership Report

Janet Dittmer, Chair

Welcome to these new members:**C. D. "Pete" Peterson**

74 Yorktown Drive
Webster, NY 14580
671-3882 <mjandp@aol.com>

Interests: Trips, Library, Museum tour guide, Publications and Historical research.

Also an avid rail trail bicyclist.

Jim O'Keefe

21 Crossbow Drive
Rochester, NY 14624
889-9336 <Jimoke@juno.com>

Interests: Rolling stock restoration, Trips, Museum tour guide, Library, Publications, Historical research, Museum operations, Track car driving and Overall bull work.

Jim has already volunteered at the museum and also the fall foliage train trips.

Richard Onorevole

179 Cresthill Ave
Clifton, NJ 07012-1512
<Rev66@oponline.net>

Address change:**Beth Krueger**

PO Box 82
Westby, Montana 59275

406-385-2260; her e-mail is still:
<yardengine1919@hotmail.com>

Membership Contact:

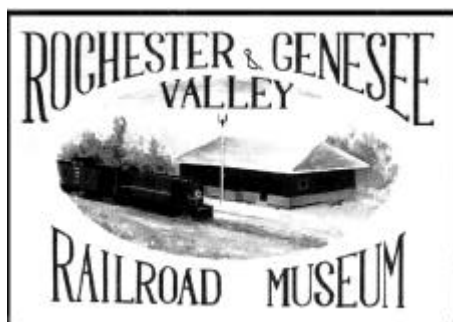
Janet Dittmer, Membership Chair
983 N. Winton Rd.
Rochester, NY 14609-6824
<daveluca@frontiernet.net>

Membership Rates:

National + Chapter membership: . \$40
Above as Family membership \$50
Local* \$20
Local as Family* \$27
(* Holds National membership elsewhere)
National only \$20
National as Family only \$23
Subscriptions only: \$8

Contributors to this issue

Janet Dittmer, Dale Hartnett, Chris Hauf, Chris Hasuler, Lynn Heintz, Steve Huse, Jesse Marks, Dave Luca, John Redden, Harold Russell, John Stewart, Jeremy Tuke, Rand Warner, Charles Woolever.



MUSEUM MUSINGS

by Dale Hartnett

Last Saturday morning I heard the news that we had lost Dan Cosgrove.

The announcement left me sad because Dan was always such a joy to be around. I'll miss his good cheer.

Dan was always good for a story or two about life on the railroad and was a tremendous source of information on operations of the New York Central in upstate New York. I'll miss that, as well.

For years we had talked about doing extended video interviews with Dan to capture his stories, his experiences and his spirit for future generations. We were finally close to doing that. Dan was preparing a list of topics he wanted to discuss. I had an appointment to arrange for a student intern from SUNY Brockport to help shoot and edit the video. We were going to tape in the spring.

Now the opportunity is gone.

This all raises a series questions about what we are as a museum and as a historical society. Should we concentrate on collecting more artifacts? Or should we concentrate on collecting more memories?

What can we do to collect more recollections of those who worked on the railroad? How do we handle these collections?

How do we make sure we capture those thoughts before they fade or before the sources leave us?

What can we do better than any other museum or historical society in maintaining an archive of first hand accounts for researchers, families and the general public?

We can have all the artifacts in the world, but people like Danny Cosgrove bring those artifacts to life.

We could surely use one or more people who would take on this important work. Is that person you?

Managers

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

Chris Hauf: 381-8583; crhauf@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@foxrochester.com

Motive Power Update

by John Redden

Steam Locomotives

Work on the steam locomotives continued at a good pace this month. Matthew Tuke and John Redden continued stripping old paint from the cab wall of the 0-4-0T, Brooklyn Navy Yard #12. We used both chemical stripper, and electric heat gun, to loosen and remove the paint. The engineer's side is now almost completely stripped to the bare metal.

We have made good progress on the running gear of the Heisler fireless steam locomotive this month. The right-side piston, piston rings, valve, and valve rings were cleaned up and re-installed. The heads were re-installed with brand new gaskets, and the valve covers were cleaned up, painted, and re-installed. Finally, the crosshead guide was cleaned up and re-installed. Later in the month, on the left side, the crosshead guide, piston heads, and piston were removed, cleaned up, and re-installed all in one day! Also that day, the cylinder relief valve actuating lever assembly was removed, after considerable effort. Finally, the front coupler assembly was disassembled and removed, in order to clean it up, and measure it for a new block of oak.

The list of folks who have worked on the Heisler this month is rather long - we thank everyone who has donated their time and talents toward our goal of making this our first operational steamer - Ron Amberger, Randy Bogucki, Kevin Klees, John Redden, Norm Shaddick, Matthew Tuke, Rand Warner, and two new volunteers from the RIT Model Railroad Club, Joe and Tom.

Diesel Locomotives

Rand Warner has continued cleaning up and repainting the EK-6, particularly the running gear and step areas of this unit. This unit has become noticeably shinier in recent months.

Norm Shaddick and Bob Mader drained the 211 for the Winter, and Chris Hauf drained the EK-9. Our larger locomotives

have been switched around, and parked for the Winter months, and our anti-freeze-equipped engines have been positioned for easy access in the Wintertime.

Norm Shaddick has checked and adjusted all of our anti-freeze equipped prime movers in the Motive Power fleet, for protection against freezing in the colder months. He also checked several other rail-mounted maintenance vehicles for anti-freeze protection.

Plymouth Gasoline Locomotive

Progress continues on our 6-ton Plymouth Model BL locomotive. Using the large metal lathe, the cross shaft pillow block flanges were machined. These flanges had up to 1 inch of wear which happened after the right side bearing failed many years ago. Future steps include rehabbing the crossshaft with new bearings, and reinstalling the rest of the transmission components.

Thanks to Kevin Klees for input to this article.

Machine Shop

via John Redden

Thanks to Palmer Lindblum, we have a brand new 5" x 20" Atlas benchtop lathe. Kevin Klees mounted the lathe with a brand new motor onto a small portable bench. A 4-jaw chuck came with the lathe donation, and Kevin Klees donated a new 3-jaw chuck, a collet set, tool holders, and other tooling. A new custom made bolt for the Plymouth transmission has already been fabricated with this lathe.

We also have a brand new 3-ton arbor press. These are very useful in pressing smaller bearings onto shafts, and for broaching keyways into pulleys and gears.

Scrap Drive cleaned-out the area

On Oct. 3, volunteers gathered scrap around the museum. Later a scrapper came to pick it up and also cut up several pieces of equipment deemed scrap.

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FF Express Concludes

(From Page 1)

the season. There were a number of behind the scenes volunteers as well, including Chris Hauf, who handled the production of our printed materials and advertising graphics, to Dave Peet's increased involvement with publicity. We are also grateful to the crew who came back out to Sodus every Monday following the trips and cleaned and watered the cars to be presentable for the next weekend's trips.

Thanks go also to the management and crew of the Ontario Midland Railroad, who worked so hard to help us ready the equipment and work through some mechanical challenges as the season began, and who provided safe, accommodating and courteous train operation for our trips.

The greatest reward and indication of a successful season is seeing the joy in the faces of children who are having their first train ride, and the nostalgic remembrances of the parents and grand-parents on a fun family outing.

Hats off to everyone who made this possible!



Charles Robinson and Eric Drum attends to a request of a customer at the Concessions stand.



Our train bandits have obtained their loot and are leaving in a rather leisurely pace!

Below, the two bandits visited all four cars and retrieved 'money bags' that supposedly were safely 'stashed' in the luggage racks.

Trolley Substation

by Rand Warner

Our Substation team has recently installed the dc output disconnect and fusing, the internal ground bus system and connections to all components, and connected conduit through the underground trough for the external trench to the trolley overhead pole.

We are now ready to pull ac and dc wiring in the substation to connect all the previously mounted components, and install the external ground wells.

We plan to stake out the trench, stage all needed materials, and dig the trench with the Chapter's newest Gradall. Then we will install conduit and backfill it with sand. Next we can pull the dc cables.

Concurrently, we are working the power service hookup issues and options with Niagara Mohawk and contractors/suppliers.

We have just had a preliminary inspection by Underwriters Labs on all work to date and everything was satisfactory.

Thanks to Jim Johnson, Dick Holbert, Charles Harshbarger and Bill Chapin.

Huse is Humming

by Rand Warner

Steve Huse wears many hats for the Chapter—all of them marked ACTIVE.

For almost as long as we have been having Chapter Picnics, Steve has automatically taken care of all the drinks, cups, ice and coolers.

For the last couple years, he has been scheduling and honching the cleaning of the Chapter's excursion car set. Before that, he managed the parking lot, and still does.

Steve initiated the Christmas Tree train concept and has managed this enterprise each year as it has grown every more successful.

He also proactively manages all our many fire extinguishers for our Museum buildings, motive power and rolling stock, our Library and our Excursion Train Set. And he maintains our First Aid kits.

We really appreciate Steve's interest, dedication, expertise and commitment.

Two pre-CW steamers found in ocean

Two pre-Civil War steam locomotives are several miles off the coast of New Jersey. They were originally discovered in 1985, but significance of the find was two years ago. A federal judge has ordered the relics protected. Although 90 feet down, an effort is planned to retrieve them. [American Rail Link, #177]



Mystery Station - Can you identify?

Submitted by John Stewart

The weather sign on the end states "Whee__", there were also some number.

(Answer is on Page 6)

Big Dig Continues

Const. Supt. Joe Scanlon
by Rand Warner

In spite of questionable weather and conditions, we are still moving dirt, excavating north of the Restoration Building for expanded trackage to enter the building, and putting fill in south of the building so we can extend tracks out the south end of the building towards Route 251.

Work has involved our Bay City 38 shovel, Army D-7 dozer, Trojan loader, Gallion roller and two Army dump trucks.

Operators included John McDonald, Scott Gleason, Dan Waterstraat, Joe Scanlon, Dave Luca, Rand Warner, Jeremy Tuke and others.

Neither wind, nor rain, nor snow, nor hail, nor **mud**, shall keep these guys from their appointed rounds. They are just unstoppable!

Did you see it?

Jim Dierks of New York Museum of Transportation had a nice "Bright Spots" in the Friday (11-5-04) issue of the *Democrat and Chronicle*. He highlighted various aspects of transportation: the horse, trolley, automobile and trains, that are on display. (Because of size, two modes are not displayed boats and airplanes, – however, archival materials may be available.)

Jim also have a 'plug' for our combined museum operations during the summer via the popular track car rides.

Nice article, Jim!

Wanted

- Set of electric or air powered cantilever jacks for work on our Excursion Train car set.
- More asphalt millings for our roadways, walkways, parking areas, and equipment pad areas.
- Portable magnetic base girder drill, electric
- Skid steer loader in operable or near operable condition

Railroads installing recorders

NS has and BNSF is testing video cameras on their engines aimed at what the engineer sees. Included are audio recorders that record horn sounds and bell ringing. The principal purpose is to monitor the situation at highway crossings. The tape records many hours.

NS expects to install an additional 1000 on the locomotives by year end. [*Trains*, Nov. 2004]

Heavy Equipment

Supt. Art Mummery

Master Mechanic, Art Mummery, has been applying his expertise to our most recently acquired Gradall Ditcher, to get it into useful operational service on our various construction projects.

He has swapped the auxiliary "upper" engine power unit from our old, no longer functional, Gradall onto the new machine. The fuel tank has been mounted, and now fuel, electric and hydraulic lines must be properly connected.

We look forward to use the "new to us" machine. The first "revenue" job for us will probably be the digging of the trench for electrical conduits at NYMT out to the trolley overhead connection. We may also be able to use the Gradall to back fill the trench with sand.

Thanks to Art and his helpers: Scott, Dan, Dave, Rand, Joe and others.

Shows, etc.

Nov. 14: Batavia Train show at the Holiday Inn. Chapter will have display and store tables.

Nov. 26, 27, 28: Medina, NY: Holiday Santa Train Rides. Also, **Dec. 4, 5, 11, & 12**

Nov. 26, 27: Finger Lakes Railway Santa Clause Trains; 5 trips per day; Shortsville to Canandaigua; sponsored by Lehigh Valley Historical Society; Info: 585-289-8022.

Dec. 4 & 5: Finger Lakes Railway Santa Clause Trains; 3 trips per day; Geneva to Cayuga; sponsored by Geneva Rotary Club; Info: 789-0574 (315 area code?)

Thanks to ...

Pat Weaver for large lathe donation for machine work.

Palmer Lindblom for donation of brand new Atlas lathe for making small parts.

Kevin Klees for donation of lots of metal stock, bearings, hardware, etc. for restoration of Plymouth critter.

Kevin Klees for donation of new 4-jaw chuck and other tooling for our machine shop area.

Kevin Klees for a brand new 3-ton arbor press.

John & Elaine Redden for a barrel of lubricating oil for 211 & 1843.

John & Elaine Redden for a case of rust inhibitor for 211 & EK-9.

Norm Shaddick, John & Elaine Redden for a new battery for the Maintenance of Way Department.

Night Work

by Rand Warner

The Track Department is working "under the lights" again. This time it's not just tie change outs near Switch #6, but also change out of Switch stand timbers at Switch #2 next to the steel sheet piling area.

Working in cramped quarters with long switch timbers is tricky business, but "Randy's Resourcefulness" always pays off!

Thanks to Randy Bogucki, Supt., Mark Pappalardo, Duncan Richards, John Redden and other stalwarts.

Upcoming Anniversaries

by Rand Warner

75th Anniversaries of Abandonment of Rochester area Interurban Lines:

? Rochester & Eastern: July 30, 2005

? Rochester Lockport & Buffalo: April 30, 2006

? Rochester & Syracuse: June 28, 2006

50th Anniversary of Closing of Rochester Subway for Passenger Service: June 30, 2006.

2007: 70th Anniversary of the Rochester Chapter, National Railway Historical Society!

We have some time here to plan some significant and appropriate recognition events & Celebrations!!

We missed One:

Rochester & Genesee Valley RR opened October 1854!

Lynn Heintz sent an e-mail to alert us that 150 years ago, in October 1854, the Rochester & Genesee Valley RR (from which the museum derived its name) opened for business from Rochester to Avon.

Forty years ago next year, Bill Gordon published his book titled "Erie Railroad-Rochester Division."

To celebrate these anniversaries, Bond Shilling and Lynn are going to spend some time this winter reviewing the book in attempt to reorganize, update and improve it.

They are seeking new information, stories, photographs, maps, etc. that have surfaced in the last 40 years. If any members are interested in this effort, please contact Don, or Lynn by phone (585-768-6984) or e-mail (lheintz2@rocheser.rr.com).

Library Report

Charles Robinson, Chairman

Please note that this is the month that the library changes its hours for ordinary use. During the winter months, the library will be open on a Sunday afternoon once a month. For November, that **Sunday will be November 21 between 2 and 5 PM. So come on out to stay warm at the library.**

We have plenty of reading material plus an array of truly exciting rail tapes!!

We are grateful to Dave Luca for getting the gas turned on and the furnace working. Also we do wish to thank George Bauerschmit for his efforts in trying to fix the leak in our water line so the water can be turned on once again. Our brigade of gallon milk containers is working well for flushing the toilet but frankly that is getting old. Hopefully our plumbing will be restored to working order soon.

Charles Woolever replies to B&B question

Your editor posed the question of why "board and batten" siding was used instead of "clapboard" on many RR structures before 1900s. His reply:

"1875 to 1910 (note the end date) is the era of Carpenter Gothic architecture. According to the reading I did, this was an attempt at converting Gothic architecture (stone) into wood. It can be seen in many Victorian-era houses.

"The characteristics of this architecture are vertical board & batten, gingerbread, bay windows, sharp roof pitch, with lots of sawn ornamentation with the invention of the coping saw.

"You can see this in the Avon station and many other stations in Western New York.

Tid Bits

During the rebuilding and upgrading of the Panhandle Sub, BNSF is using six inches of asphalt paving under the rack ballast to prevent dirt from working up into the ballast. The asphalt provides enhanced track access and erosion control [*Trains via Highball*, Oct. 2004]

Residents of Ridgely, WV are complaining about the smoke from Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's steam engines. Tests have shown that the locomotives are releasing emissions above legal limits. Diesels are being used to push the train into the terminal. A diffuser was installed in the stack to change the draft and cut down on the smoke. They are looking into installing overfire jets in the firebox plus more care in firing techniques to lighten the problem. [*Potomac Rail News*, Sept. 2004]

The American Orient Express was schedule to operate westbound on CSX on the weekend of Oct 30/31. A crew change was scheduled in Syracuse around 7:30-8:00 PM and then continue to Cleveland. So Rochester passage would have well into the dark hours. Did anyone see it? [from the Tom Trencansky via Chris Hauf and the internet]

NYC Subway 100 years old - On Oct. 27, 1904, the first Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) line opened. (London had the first one; Boston's was the first in the US.) [*USA Weekend*, Oct. 15, 2004]

The marvelous Richard Barrett collection is still the main thrust of the library staff. Jerry Gillette and Gale Smith are continuing with the efforts to add the books to our computer listing and to assign them call numbers.

Both Bill Limburg and Dave Luca are working on plans to build some nice shelving to store the Barrett book collection in a special section of the library.

The library chairman has been working on miscellaneous items such as slides, timetables, railfan news letters, railroad brochures and the like to properly list and locate them in the library.

If you have a spare gallon plastic milk container or containers please bring them with you filled with water when you visit.

Hope to see you Sunday afternoon November 21 to enjoy our selection of railfan items.

"That said, I think times changed and new appearances were in order after 1910 like Colonial and Art Deco.

"From what I can tell, the cost between B&B and clapboard was negligible with B&B being slightly cheaper. B&B was done as an easy way to cover a wall but the boards shrank at different rates especially compared to the beams they were nailed to so the batten was added to cover the seam. Plaster and wall paper on the inside walls tended to crack from the shrinking.

"Clapboard was designed to splash the water away from the building due to the angle of the boards. B&B was vertical so the moisture dripped right to the foundation.

"But, I think the answer to our question lies more in a change in the architectural styling of the ear and that was "in"."

B&O Museum opens Nov. 13-14

B&O Museum in Baltimore re-open Nov. 13-14. In February 2003, a snow storm dumped three feet of snow on the roof of the famous 1884 roundhouse resulting in the partial collapse of the roof. The lantern dome was installed on May 5th, which completed the three parts of the roof reconstruction.

Some of the historic locomotives and cars were damaged or destroyed. Contributions are welcomed.

In the Spring, the museum is planning a Grand Opening. Details can be read on www.borail.org. [Letter to supporters, June 14, 2004]

Dates in RR History

10/29/2001: Concourse skyway bridge was erected over the main line of CSX Railroad at Utica's Union Station.

10/30/1882: First regularly schedule train on the **Genesee Valley Railroad** arrived in Rochester, NY from Honesdale, PA.

10/30/1902: A New York Central freight train broke apart east of Grimesville then smashed back together and blocked the track and several switches. The West Shore continental Limited passenger train, headed for the Exposition at Buffalo, crashed into the wreckage. Limited engineer, George Garrison of Rochester, suffered a fractured wrists. Most passengers continue on to Buffalo.

11/01/1869: The New York Central and Hudson River Railway Co. was organized. This was the forerunner of the New York Central System.

11/01/1897. The Union Pacific, unable to meet its expenses, was sold at foreclosure. The buyers, a small group of investors including E.H. Harriman, paid \$100 million for the line from Omaha to Ogden.

11/01/1980: CSX Corporation came into being as a result of the merger of the Chessie System, Inc. and the Seaboard Coast Line Industries, Inc. [*American Rail Link*, Issue 179]

Answer: "Mystery Station" photo on Page 4

John later was able to identify the station that was originally at Garbutt and moved to Wheatland on the B&O.

CSX problems

CSX has had its share of problems in the Rochester area. They also have them system wide. Reports are that their track structure is not up to par. Compounding this is the recent hurricanes along the Atlantic coast.

Installment No. 2 on the



The Morse Sounder by Chris Hausler

The sounder is the principle receiving instrument of the Morse telegraph system. The telegrapher listens to the patterns of clicks made by the sounder and converts the patterns in his mind to the letters, numbers and punctuation of the Morse alphabet, writing or typing the resulting message.

The sounder was not the original receiving instrument. Originally, a “Morse Register” was used. The register was a more complex instrument which would record the incoming dots and dashes on a strip of paper tape being pulled through the register by a weight driven clockwork mechanism. Usually, it would do this by embossing them on the tape with a metal point which fitted into a groove cut in one of the rollers over which the tape passed. This ability to make a record of the incoming message was considered an important feature of the Morse system. Earlier electric telegraphs such as the British needle system required that someone watch the fleeting movements of several needles and call out to someone else to write down the message so perceived. This left no “impartial” record of what came down the line. The Morse system however did, on the paper tape.

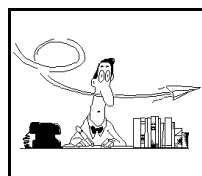
Within a short time, however, telegraphers using the Morse system noticed that by listening to the clicking made by the register while it was embossing the tape, they could determine what the message was before looking at the tape. More importantly, it was more efficient in that the telegrapher could immediately recognize when transmission errors occurred and ask for a retransmission. With the tape, they had to wait until the message or messages were complete and the tape examined thus making it slower and harder to identify to the transmitting operator

where an error had occurred. Originally the telegraph companies frowned on this practice and threatened to terminate employees who “received by sound”. Within ten years or so however, the benefits of “receiving by sound” were so apparent to everyone that in order to get a job as a telegrapher, an ability to receive by sound at a good rate had to be demonstrated. As a result of this, a new simpler instrument, the “sounder”, was developed to replace the register. All it did was make a loud clicking noise from the incoming signal. The loss of the permanent tape record was no longer considered important. Another feature of reading by sound was a resulting reduction in required staff at each telegraph office. With the tape, it was necessary for the telegrapher to read the tape out loud and another person, the copyist, to write down the message. Otherwise the need to move ones eyes between the tape and the paper on which the incoming message was being written made it too easy to lose ones place along the tape. With reading by sound, only one person was required as his ears were doing the receiving while his eyes were concentrated on what he was writing on the message blank. This efficiency of operation, which relied on simple instruments and that most flexible of computers the human mind, is what made the Morse system so successful and is an important reason why it remained in service for so long.

There are two primary types of sounders, the “local sounder” and the “main line sounder”. The main line sounder is wired directly in series with the main line telegraph circuit and performs all the receiving functions with this one instrument. The local sounder is a simpler instrument and is placed in a “local circuit” with a separate “local battery” to power it. The local sounder is driven by a “main line relay” which is wired directly in the main line circuit. This combination of two receiving instruments and local battery is more sensitive and can be used successfully under more marginal line conditions than the single main line sounder, but it does require a local power source. In the days when a “battery” was open glass jars with noxious chemicals in them, the local sounder configuration was not very portable. But it was better in an office environment and became standard.

Sounders were frequently mounted in a wooden boxes with one open side known as a “resonators”. There were several popular styles of resonators but the triangular sided box, known as the “Acme” style resonator is probably the best remembered. Another popular resonator with a rounded back was known as the “Mascot” style. The purpose of

the resonator, whatever its form, was to focus and amplify the sound much like a megaphone does for a human voice. This was very important in noisy environments such as railroad stations and large telegraph offices with many instruments going at once. This was not enough however for some telegraphers, and it became popular to try and further enhance or otherwise make the sound of their sounder unique by wedging a small tobacco can between the resonator box and the stop standard of the sounder. This would increase the “vibrating surface” and give a fuller, or at least “tinnier”, sound. Although many brands of similar tobacco cans were used, for some reason the red Prince Albert can is best remembered. Phil Ault in his book, “Wires West” said it best when he stated, “For many years the telegraphed messages that kept the business of America running bounced off the stout frock coated figure of Prince Albert on the front of a thousand bright red tobacco cans.”



Editor's Corner

Receiving your The Semaphore Late?

Over the last several months the delivery of our newsletter has been sporadic. For the September issue, some members got their issue on a Tuesday; others got it the following Tuesday—all Rochester addresses!

It was mailed two days later than usual. October 11 was a federal holiday; post office closed. And I was one day late—Sorry!

Normal production is the Monday after the first Thursday of each month, so that any action by the Board of Trustees can be included.

We have inquired at the bulk mail center, and they stated that they have up to ten days to deliver bulk mail material. Back several years, the USPS policy was that such mail could be held two days at each postal facility, so for Rochester and branches, that would mean four days.

Several issues ago, local delivery was on the day of the meeting! Yet, Otto Vandrak, near New York City, got his the previous Saturday.

Maybe vacations had an effect; then all the political mailings.

One possible solution would be to offer First Class (or what ever they call it now) option at additional cost to you. It is estimated that this would be \$5 per year.

Rochester Chapter National Railway Historical Society
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Chapter Meeting & Program:
**Oil Creek Rail
Road Co.**
by Dick Senges
7:30 PM
Thursday, October 21, 2004
40 & 8 Club
933 University Ave.

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 \$8.00 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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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)

InterNet (World Wide Web) address:
<http://www.rochnrhs.org/>
