



The Semaphore

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

April 2005
Volume 47, No. 8

Program for Apr 21:

Chinese Steam #3

by Duncan Richards

Duncan will present another of his interesting slide shows featuring a continuation of railroads in China.

Meeting starts at 7:30; Program follows meeting at about 8:15. Stores is open before and during intermission.

Visitors are always welcomed!

Future Programs

May 19 *Dunkirk, NY - One Railroad Town* by John Stewart. Railroads and Locomotive builders. (*Change from previous listing*)

June, July & August: Operations at the Museum.

Oct. 12: *New York's Bridges* by James Stewart

Nov. 17: *Rochester Transportation* by Donovan Shilling

(These Programs are subject to change.)

Chapter Library

11 May Street, Webster (by OMID Tracks)

Hours: 7:30 to 9:30 PM

Monday, April 25

Library Phone: 872-4641

Museums to expand Summer schedule

Beginning July 9 and ending on August 27, both museums will be open on both Saturday and Sunday!

This change should help in getting more publicity, such as we do on Diesel Days. Also allows for those Sundays, which if like last year, gets 'wiped-out' with rainy weather.

Track work can continue, allowing for intervals for track car passage. This is really an added benefit, as it demonstrates to our visitors on hand operations.

Trip Committee Needs Your Help!

by Dave Luca

For the past 15 years, the Chapter has been sponsoring Amtrak escorted train trips. Two experienced guides escort all of our trips. The duration of these trips have been 3 to 5 days with a 2-1/2 week trip every two years. Each Christmas season we sponsor two weekend trips to New York City. Our 5-day trips have traveled to New England, Washington DC, Branson MO, Mackinaw Island, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City and Nova Scotia. Our two-week plus trips have traveled to the northwest, southwest, Rocky Mountains, across Canada and have included Alaska and several National Parks. On all of our trips we travel by train as much as possible before we use motor coaches. The Chapter's profits average over \$9,000.00 each year, making them the second largest source of income the Chapter has. Additionally, as you all have read, Amtrak is in serious financial condition and needs all the support they can get.

We have been able to keep our advertising costs at a minimum over the years, but of late our free or low cost advertising has disappeared. We may find it necessary to spend several hundred dollars per year, in the future, thus reducing our income considerably. We have always offered fair pricing for our trips and this is necessary to compete with other travel groups. As a Chapter, we are not using one of our best and least expensive resources, our membership. Only 5% of our membership supports these trips either by traveling with us and/or giving us names of people who might be interested in going. The January and February 2005 issues of the Semaphore mentioned space was still available on all of the 2005 trips as well as describing the trips. This generated only 2 phone calls with only 2 members deciding to go. These will be the first two new Chapter members that will be traveling with us in 3 years! We understand that many of you may not be able to travel with us. By contacting us with the names of anyone interested in our scheduled trips, we can send them information. Ideas for different trips are welcomed. If we are able to run additional trips, the Chapter will benefit with much needed income.

We still have some space available on our May trip to Quebec City, Montreal, and the Adirondack Mountains as well as our early October fall trip to Boston and Maine by rail. Space also remains on our Pre-Christmas 3 and 4-day trips in December, traveling to New York City to see the Christmas Show at Radio City Music Hall starring the Rockettes.

PLEASE: consider helping your Chapter out by supporting these trips either by attending or finding someone who would be interested in going. Our telephone number for Amtrak trips is 585-377-5389. If we want to continue operating and developing our Chapter and museum at the current level, additional income is necessary. These trips can generate this with very little physical help from the membership

Finally, the Chapter members traveling with us on any of our Amtrak trips receive a \$5.00 discount per trip. This could cover part or the entire local portion of your annual dues.

The Rochester Chapter Trip Committee

See Page 3 for 2005 Trip Dates!

A Date to Circle - May 7! Pancake Breakfast!!

Again the Young Railfans will be holding another of their fine "More Than You Should Probably Eat" pancake breakfast on Saturday, May 7 from 8-10 AM at the Industry Depot.

Bring an appetite because you will need it for the pancakes, sausage, eggs and home fries. Refill your plate as many times as you like!

Proceeds from the pancake breakfast will be used to support the Young Railfan program at the R&GVRR Museum.

You can eat and leave, BUT you really should stay to help finishing preparations for the Museum's season opening the following weekend on Sunday, May 15.

Guests are invited to join us, so bring along the entire family!

"Hands-on" brakeman training schedule

Saturday, April 23

Saturday, April 30

Saturday, May 7

All classes start at 2 PM.

The "Book of Rules" classes were offered last Fall.

You must take both the "Book of Rules" and the "Hands On" classes to qualify to operate. In addition, new brakemen will also need to serve a period as a "trainee" before being certified to "solo". A list of qualified brakemen and brakemen-in-training will be posted.

IMPORTANT. You must reserve a slot for the "Hands On" sessions. Contact John Redden <ejredden@rontiernet.net> for your reservation. Sessions for which there are no advance registrations will be canceled!

Track Car Training Class Schedule

by Bob Achilles

Classroom:

April 23 9 AM [All dates are

Hands-on:

Saturdays]

April 23 9 AM

April 30 9 AM

May 7 9 AM

A makeup session will be scheduled for Tuesday, May 10 at 7 PM (if necessary).

Classroom sessions will all be held in the NYMT gallery. Hands-on training will begin immediately outside the new NYMT trolley barn. Please be prompt

Everyone who plans to operate any track car on the property (even if they have operated before) is required to attend one classroom and one hands-on session.

"Day of Caring"

Chris Hauf has arranged for a group from Kodak to do projects at the Museum on April 29.

This is just one of the many undertakings that various volunteers from Rochester's industries contribute to the annual "Day of Caring" program.

Contributors to this issue

Bob Achilles, Janet Dittmer, Dale Hartnett, Chris Hauf, Chris Hausler, Lynn Heintz, Dave Luca, John Redden, Charles Robinson, Harold Russell, John Stewart, Rand Warner and various publications as

Young Railfans Dates:

Sat., April 16 10 AM-3 PM

Sat., May 7 7 AM-11 AM

(Pancake Breakfast)

Sat., May 21 10 AM-3 PM

Two Groups to visit May 21

RR Modelers:

The Lakeshore Division of the National Model Railroad Association will be visiting in conjunction with their Spring meeting. They will be here in the morning and midday, for tours, track car rides and a midday train ride.

Boy Scout Troops:

A group of scouts from Livingston and Wyoming Counties will visit to complete work on their Railroad Merit Badge. A small work party will be on hand.

Museum Tour Guides

We will be scheduling Tour Guides shortly. One or two guides will be needed for Sunday; the Saturday guide will be the track car operator for the time being.

A class for new guides will be held on Saturday, May 14 at the Depot.

Coordinator this year is Dave Peet; 586-8964.

Two Trustees to be elected in May

Each of the six Trustees serve a three year term. Thus two are up for election.

If you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact John Stewart at 387-9185, or <rgvrr@rochester.rr.com>.

The Board meets once a month (sometimes a special meeting at a membership meeting). The principal duties are to: 1) develop policy, 2) approve expenditures, and 3) any other items that requires Board action.

Charles Lowe presented trolley talk

On April 7th, Charles Lowe of NYMT discussed the history of Rochester's streetcar transportation from horse car days in 1860s to the end of the subway in 1957 to the current activities at NYMT on streetcars. The presentation was before the Honeoye Falls-Mendon Historical Society.

Chris Hausler's installment on the telegraph was suspended this month for a very timely parody concerning Amtrak on Page 7.

Membership Report

Janet Dittmer, Chair

Welcome to this new member:

Keith Graves

2959 McCorkindale Road

Caledonia, NY 14423

585-538-14423; Kcgraves@rochester.rr.com

Interests: Rolling stock restoration; Trips;

Museum tour guide; Museum operations;

Track car driver.

Update on Address:

Bob McKnight's new apartment number is 111.

The 2005 membership currently stands at 200, plus several subscriptions.

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: \$10*

* Effective January 1, 2005.

2005 Chapter Rail Tours

The Spring Tour:

Canadian Spring Adventure to Quebec City and Montreal by Rail; May 30 (5 days, 4 nights). Visit Montreal, Quebec, and along the shores of Lake Champlain.

The Fall Foliage Tour:

Fall Foliage Tour by Rail: Boston, Portland and the Maine Coast; Oct. 6 - Oct. 10 (5 days, 4 nights). Visit Boston, Portland, Freeport (shopping at L.L. Bean), Kennebunkport, Trolley Museum.

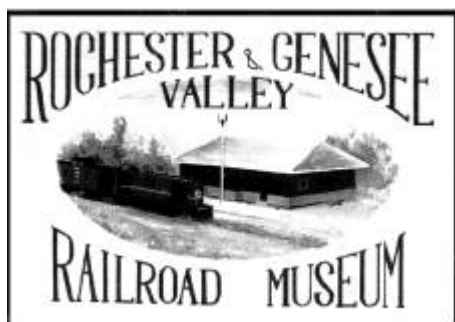
The Pre-Christmas Tours:

Dec. 1 - Dec. 3 (Thursday-Saturday) &

Dec. 9 - Dec. 12 (Friday-Monday)

Off to the "Big Apple" for the famous Christmas Show at Radio City Music Hall, and shopping.

If interested in any of these trips, make reservations with Jim East. His phone is 585-377-5389.



MUSEUM MUSINGS

I watched part of the Pope's funeral early this morning. The mass was filled with ritual on a grand scale – ritual that is very familiar to any practicing Catholic.

I was struck by how important ritual is in each of our lives.

Think about it. We all mark our days, our birthdays and our celebrations by rituals. Without rituals, our drive to work, our birthday celebrations and Thanksgiving Dinner would just not be the same.

The same most likely applies to our museum guests. It's an important ritual when our track car operators punch tickets. The shout of "All Aboard!" needs to be part of the mix. And sounding the track car (or diesel) horn at Reid's Crossing re-enforces the experience.

There are other rituals we should be (and hopefully already are) known for: a warm, friendly greeting when visitors arrive at Industry Depot, a chance to hear the telegraph clatter out a message and the smell of coal burning in the depot stove on a cool day.

While we often tend to think of a museum as a collection of artifacts (and that's an important aspect), our guests often view their visit as an experience.

The quality of that experience is often driven by the consistency of the rituals. We need to remember the "All Aboard!" and "two longs, a short and a long" at the crossing and the ticket punch.

We need to be aware that there may be more rituals we need to add to our own routine.

Is there another smell guests should smell?

Is there another sound they should hear?

Is there some object they should be able to handle?

How do we tap into the deep recesses of a visitor's mind to bring an experience (and long lost memories) to life?

We look forward to hearing your thoughts!

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

General

Thanks to Charlie Harshbarger and James Johnson, for exploring alternative locations for Motive Power tools and supplies. We have operated the Department for years, with our tools, parts, and supplies stored in several separate locations. Charlie and Jim are making plans to correct this situation, and we thank them for their initiative.

Steam Locomotives

We continue to make slow, but steady progress on our Heisler Fireless locomotive. We have determined a plan for having its pressure vessel inspected, for the purposes of getting it certified for use. The remaining task, prior to this inspection is the removal of the throttle valve.

The steam charging valve that had been removed last month, was disassembled and inspected by the team of Kevin Klees, Norm Shaddick, Rand Warner, and Bob Mader. This valve was found to be in good condition, and will be cleaned up and re-assembled.

Our Steam Team continues to meet on the first Saturday of the month, at the Depot, at 9:30. Anyone with an interest in our Steam Program is invited to attend.

Diesel Locomotives

The electrical cabinet doors for the 1941 locomotive have been finished, thanks to Harold Russell and Kevin Miller. They now have a nice coat of shiny gray on the outside, and Glyptol insulating paint on the inside.

The cabinet itself continues to get attention from John Redden. We are planning to replace some badly corroded framing pieces, along the floor of the cabinet, prior to re-installation of the doors.

This month, Norm Shaddick serviced all of the diesel locomotive batteries, that are located in the Yard. This included checking out the charging circuits, and adding distilled water as needed.

Gasoline Locomotives

Randy Bogucki has started the re-assembly of the six-cylinder gasoline engine for the

RG&E TM-5 Trackmobile. If (or when) a transmission for this unit can be located, we will be able to re-assemble it into a functioning locomotive, that has long-standing historical ties to the Rochester area.

Norm Shaddick serviced our two serviceable TM-5 Trackmobiles with hydraulic fluid this month.

Thanks to all of our Motive Power volunteers. Because of them, we have seven serviceable Diesel locomotives, two steamers, of which one is on-its-way to becoming operable, two serviceable gasoline-hydraulic Trackmobiles, and an extremely rare and historic gas-mechanical locomotive that is well along in its restoration to operation.

Thanks to Norm Shaddick for contribut-

Collections Management

by Rand Warner

Collection management is professional, proactive, intentional and pre-planned attention to achieve organizational goals for a museum's collection

It addresses accession of and provisions for taking in new items, as well as deaccession for disposing of surplus or unwanted items.

It nurtures the collection in terms of filling voids, meeting objectives, and taking advantage of opportunities as presented.

It also looks at the balance in the collection, to maintain a level playing field of priority, or to specifically address an urgent priority, against defined criteria.

Another aspect of collection management is care and feeding of the collection, i.e. location, inspection and securing of artifacts; as well as protection, stabilization and restoration of artifacts once on our property.

Finally, there are all the administration and record keeping details.

We are continuing to work on improving our NRHS/R&GVRM Collection Management Policy.

Please clear any contributions with one of the above listed managers before bringing it/them to the museum.

Construction Equipment

by Rand Warner

Scott Gleason and Dan Waterstraat, with support from Joe Scanlon and Art Mummery, are doing a yeoman job of relocating our many pieces of heavy equipment on the west side of the LA&L RR line.

Using stakes set by Dave Luca and Rand Warner for reference, our heavy equipment is being line up at the west edge of our land for benefits:

1. Improved appearance for visitors
2. Like items of equipment grouped together facing east
3. Clearance for future siding off LA&L with switch north of mile post.

The siding is being laid out using guidance provided by Tom McTighe, Vice President/Engineering for LA&L RR.

Engine Rebuilds

by Rand Warner

As further evidence of the huge value of our Restoration Building, consider the following simultaneous engine rebuilds going on concurrently:

1. Lynn Heintz & Co. swapping engines and engine parts in 1939 Ford REA truck.
2. Randy Bogucki working on flathead 6-cylinder gas engine from RG&E/EKC TrackMobile.
3. Art Mummery, Dave Luca & Co. working on CAT engine for D-4 bulldozer.
4. Art Mummery, Dick Bean & Co. are working on motor for yellow air compressor on rubber.
5. Art Mummery & Co. are working on engine for Blue Miller Welder. Dale Hartnett has painted a frame on rubber to go with it.

Probably none of these projects would be happening even in the summer time, let alone the winter time, if it were not for the wonderful blessing of our Restoration Building! We have even got painting projects on now in the middle of the winter!!

Outreach Efforts

by Rand Warner

We now have upwards of six volunteers helping out part time and full time at Rochester's Enrico-Fermi Elementary School #17 Model Railroad Project. Thanks to Bill Chapin, Dick Jones, Dick Luchterhand, Bruce Schwendy, John Smith and Rand Warner.

We also have some new rolling stock. Thanks to Bob Trout for a Lionel diesel switcher, and to Bill Chapin and Rand Warner for Lionel steam engines.

Progress

by Rand Warner

Our friends to the east from the Central New York Chapter put out a very fine quarterly publication "Central Headlight".

The first quarter 2001 issue has two very interesting articles about fast passenger service on the New York Central.

The first article by Thomas Mechan talks about a 100 mph run making up time near New York City over 100 years ago. The second article by Sheldon Lusting compares New York Central vs. Amtrak schedules for a number of different routes in the whole northeast area: Amtrak now vs. New York Central 50 years ago. In all but one case, New York Central was faster.

Nowadays Amtrak is fighting to keep 79 mph territory vs. 60 mph freights. Class I railroads resist the extra track maintenance required for higher speeds.

Check your timetables, books, and history info from the 1890s and even 1880s. There were a lot of trains making 80 and 90 mph to maintain timetable schedules back in those days.

It would be interesting to compare current Amtrak and Trailways bus schedules!

Ford REA truck progress

by Lynn Heintz

Finally, the flywheel dilemma has been resolved and the engine is ready to be put into the truck. The oilpan was removed to allow the flywheel to be swapped by Rand Warner, Bob Mader and myself. Rand assisted in sorting and cleaning the rear of the truck while Bob installed one of the new (to us) rear axles with the second to follow shortly along with a lube change.

Our next work session will see the engine components reattached and oil pressure brought up for a prelube. If all things fall into place we will try to fire it up. The next hurdle will be locating a good radiator as the repairs to ours are out of reach.

We are asking, if any members might be interested in underwriting the cost of one or more repro signs for the outside, please contact one of us.

**The NYMT and R&GV RR
Museums open on Sunday,
May 15.**

**WOW! Only a month away
and so much to do!**

Roof Repair Party Planned

by John Redden

If you've always wanted to work on rolling stock at our Museum, but weren't sure how to get started, here is your golden opportunity. On the weekend of June 24th and 25th, which is a Friday and Saturday, we will be hosting a Roof Repair Party.

As you might have noticed, several of our passenger cars are in need of cleanup and repainting, especially in the roof area. To that end, we will be organizing an event to allow our members to participate in a fix-up weekend. For now, we will limit this activity to a single weekend. If there is enough interest, we may expand this later, to a couple of more weekends this Summer.

Planned activities include an evening meal at the Museum, some sort of entertainment (perhaps an outdoor slideshow in the Yard), an optional all-expenses-paid sleep-over in the cabooses, and a nice breakfast at the Museum.

We will have our primary concentration on the *Pine Falls* roof. If there are enough volunteers, we will expand our activities to other cars.

Don't like heights? I don't either. No Problem! We are planning several alternative work projects that will allow volunteers to keep both feet firmly on the ground, if they so desire.

In the event of rain, we expect to adjourn to our deluxe, all-steel restoration facility, where jobs can be handled, regardless of the weather.

In order to effectively plan this project we are requesting that interested parties contact us, no later than June 17th. This will allow us to make certain that preparations are made to accommodate everyone for food and sleeping quarters.

Contact John Redden at ejredde@frontiernet.net.

"Explore FDR's America"

Amtrak and The History Channel (THC) are partners for the THC four-hour special of "FDR - A Presidency Revealed". Franklin D. Roosevelt was a frequent rail traveler, and used the first designated presidential rail car and advanced legislation that expanded railroad service in many towns in America. The program will air in two segments, April 17 and 18.

THC is also sponsoring an online sweepstakes with the program. [*American Rail Link*, Issue 202]

Library Report

Charles Robinson, Chairman

The library starting with this month, April, will switch from winter hours on Sunday afternoon to summer hours on Monday evenings. This month the library will be open for general use between 7:30 and 9:30 PM on Monday evening April 25.

We have been removing duplicate copies of books from our shelves and now have surplus railbooks for sale. Come on out and see the selection.

Unfortunately, despite the chairman's repeated efforts with roofing cement and web the library skylight still leaks.

Thanks to the help of Bob Fleck and Ben Vernille all the boxes of surplus railfan magazines have been removed from the library. Still remaining are the boxes of New England railfan material that is going to be given to a New England railfan group.

Jerry Gillette and Bob Miner have been doing a splendid job of continuing the listing of the large Charles Best collection of color slides. As Bob has suggested, the collection needs further sorting as slides are not grouped properly. The current listing is an effort to come up with some sort of compilation to guide those who might be willing to go farther to make the collection more useful. Is someone interested in volunteering to properly organize this collection of unusually good color slides?

Gale Smith continues to log in our latest additions to the tape collection and a few more books.

The library chairman has removed surplus books where there are excessive copies on the shelves to make room for more books. These surplus books will be for sale so be sure to show up at the library to view what is available.

Remember the library will now be open on the Monday evenings after the third Thursday this month and thereafter until winter starts in again.

Shows, etc.

April 23-24: *Finger Lakes Railfair*, Ithaca, NY, sponsored by Cornell RR Historical Society, NRHS. At "The Field" on NYS Rte 34, four miles north of Rte. 13. Sat: 10-5; Sun: 10-4. Adults: \$5; Children 3-12: \$2; Family: \$10.

July 5-9: *National NRHS Convention*, Portland, OR.

July 5: 10-Year Anniversary Celebration, Steamtown National Historic Site, Scranton, PA. Year-long celebration.

Wanted

- Ballast hopper car
- Ballast regulator
- Tie inserter
- Cantilever passenger car jacks
- Magnetic base girder drill
- Rail skates
- Wheel chocks
- Ballast #3A
- Relay ties
- Relay switch timbers

Contact Rand Warner at 425-8586.



Don Wawrzyniak confers with a visitor at the recent RIT show in conjunction with the Chapter's display. [Gale Smith photo]

Interesting WebSites

by Lynn Heintz

This railfan hobby has developed some weird splinter groups in recent years. If you are interested in coal mines and coal breakers or diesel horns complete with sounds, check out these websites.

<http://www.undergroundminers.com/>

<http://www.dieselairhorns.com/index.html>

Some Historical Dates

by Lynn Heintz

March 17, 1936: Floods cause \$8.5 million in damage, in the Susquehanna-Allegheny watersheds. \$4 million in lost revenue to the railroads. All service was restored 3-22-36.

April 4, 1929: American Railway Express name changed to Railway Express Agency.

Rochester's Industrial RRs

by Rand Warner

Our Rochester regional area has had a rich history of small, special purpose, industrial railroads and their associated motive power.

In the City of Rochester:

- Kodak Park Railroad (100 miles of track, 100 car trains); steam, fireless, diesel, gas/battery/electric locos.

- Rochester Gas & Electric; three locations:

Russell Station - 2 diesels;

Bebee Station - one diesel;

Mt. Read Steam Station - TrackMobile

- Gleason Works: Fireless steam loco.

- Odenbach's Shipyard: Whitcomb and Plymouth

- Pfaudlers: TrackMobile TM-5

- Delco Products: Trackmobile TM-9

- General Motors: TrackMobile TM-9

-Van Lare Sewage Treatment Plant: Narrow gauge

In the County of Monroe:

- Dolomite/Howard Road/Gates: Locomotive crane

- Scottsville/Gypsum Mine: narrow gauge

- Garbutt/Gypsum Mine: narrow gauge

- Despatch Car Shops at East Rochester: Steam and diesel

- Sabine Metal/Gypsum: Underground narrow gauge electric

Surrounding Monroe County:

- Quarry Lime Rock between B&O and LV

- Salt Mine Retsof: Underground electric, narrow gauge

- Stone Quarry at LeRoy: steam

- Mobil Plastics at Canandaigua: TrackMobile TM-3

- Jones Chemical at Caledonia: two TrackMobiles

Summary:

What have we forgotten? Who can fill in some missing details? Contact Rand Warner at 425-8586.

Remember the Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, May 7

Details are on Page 1. Bring your family and an good appetite!

Spencerport RL&B Trolley Station

by Rand Warner

Thanks to many wonderful people in the Spencerport area, and Bernie Cubitt and Bud Nichol's volunteers, the wooden depot has been donated, buttoned up, structurally repaired, and made ready to relocate back into the center of the village again.

A house mover has been hired and under written, and a new foundation has been planned and sponsored.

This is a wonderful example of small town cooperation from the private, public, government, commercial, and educational sectors.

In its new location, the depot will serve as a museum, and as a convenience to canal travelers.

All it really takes is one good spark plug person with a passion. Thanks Bernie!!



This picture was taken last week of the restoration of the former Spencerport RL&B Trolley Depot. The upper part of the siding sports a nice cream color; the bottom a dark red. Roofing will be applied soon. The volunteers had to do considerable work on the roof line to 'bring it back to specs'. Plans are to move the building to the center of the Village once the foundation has been constructed. [Gale Smith photo]

Historical RR Dates

from *American Rail Link*, Issue 2002; Phil Houle, compiler.

4/8/1851: A group of Rochester, NY businessmen organized the New York and Mississippi Valley Printing Telegraph Company. It started operations with 550 miles of wire and the license to use a printer invented by Royal E. House.

4/8/1856: The New York and Mississippi Valley Printing Telegraph Company changed its name to "The Western Union Telegraph Company", signifying the union of "Western" lines into one system.

4/8/1957: Batavia, NY opened a new railroad station. The *Empire State Express* was the first official eastbound train to use the new tracks. Westbound rail traffic began on April 11th.

4/8/1997: CSX and Norfolk Southern agreed on the division of Conrail.

4/11/1863: Oswego and Rome Railroad Company was incorporated in the state of New York. It was leased on September 7, 1863, to the Rome Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad Company. On April 16, 1913, it became part of the New York Central.

4/11/1899: The Fall Brook Railway Company was leased to the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Company.

4/12/1862: Union volunteers led by James Andrews stole a Confederate train near Marietta, Georgia. They were later caught.



Chris Hausler shows off his telegraph display as part of the Rochester Chapter's display at the recent spring Batavia Train show. Chris has brought this great interactive display to three shows this spring, and we really appreciate his effort. His display really adds to the Chapter's display. [Photo & caption by Chris Hauf]

ARL Subscription Info, Excerpts

George Reed, publisher of *American Rail Link* invites interested parties to subscribe at no cost. The address is: americanraillink@twcny.rr.com. Mr. Reed issues *ARL* on a weekly basis.

Two Syracuse ladies and their dog were killed by an Amtrak train in Brookston, Ind., near West Lafayette.

The last three cars of an Amtrak train derailed near Lyons, NY. None of the 110 passengers were injured.



Editor's Corner

This issue could easily have been 12 pages! -- Thanks to all who have contributed articles.

They will be kept in the "que"; but please keep them coming!

After an hour with a Frontier tech rep, my e-mail is back on line -- after rebooting the computer for each session.

The following is from the April 2005 issue of *Tower Topics*, publication of Utica & Mohawk Valley Chapter, NRHS. It was written by John Weber, that Chapter's Editor. Used with his permission. It is so timely considering Amtrak's financial situation. I hope you will find it amusing -- if not frightening! Chris Hausler's articles on the telegraph will continue in the May issue. (Editor, *The Semaphore*)

Listening In On The Future???

by John Weber, Editor, *Tower Topics*

TRAVEL CUSTOMER: Let's see... I'll dial 1-8-0-0-U-S-A-R-A-I-L

RECORDED MESSAGE: You have reached a non-working number. For rail travel assistance, please call 1-8-O-O-E-S-P-R-A-I-L.

CUSTOMER: OK... 1-8-O-O-E-S-P-R-A-I-L.

RECORDED MESSAGE: This is Empire State Passenger Rail. If you are calling on a touch-tone phone, press 1. ...For schedule information, press 1; for fare information, press 2; for reservations, press 3; to purchase tickets, press 4; to speak to an ESPR representative, press 5.

CUSTOMER: I guess I'll press 5 -- here goes.

ESPR REPRESENTATIVE (after several minutes of Muzak):

ESPR: Ms. Bookbinder -- How can I help you?

CUSTOMER: I'd like to travel overnight, Utica, NY to Chicago. What trains are available?

ESPR REP: Sir, ESPR only serves New York State, so we can only get you as far as a destination in New York. You'll have to find another carrier to take you through Pennsylvania, Ohio and so forth.

CUSTOMER: Well, can you get me to the Pennsylvania state line around Westfield?

ESPR REP: Sir, ESPR only provides passenger service to Buffalo-Depew. We don't have enough passenger demand to operate beyond Buffalo.

CUSTOMER: Well then, how am I supposed to transfer to another train in Pennsylvania?

ESPR REP: Well, as a matter of fact, Pennrail, the Pennsylvania State Rail Transportation Authority, doesn't operate through that piece of Pennsylvania around Erie anyway, only between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. So your best bet is to catch a Greyhound bus in Buffalo and ride it right through Pennsylvania to Ashtabula, OH.

CUSTOMER: Do you know the bus schedule out of Buffalo?

ESPR REP: No sir, I don't have that information. I suggest you call the bus company, or check out www.greyhound.com.

CUSTOMER: Well, what kind of train schedules do you offer between Utica and Buffalo?

ESPR REP: We run westbound Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

CUSTOMER: What -- only every other day???

ESPR REP: We find that we can achieve a very good load factor by running on alternate days, and that means a lower fare for you! And, of course, we run the train on Saturday for passengers that would like to spend part of their weekend in Buffalo, returning Sunday.

CUSTOMER: OK, what's my choice of train schedules?

ESPR REP: We run just one westbound train -- that would be our Train #1, originating Albany/Rensselaer at 6pm, arriving Utica at 8:10pm and Buffalo at 12:17am, next day.

CUSTOMER: I don't suppose there's any meal service?

ESPR REP: Oh yes, we have vending machines on the train for soda, candy bars, Twinkies -- stuff like that.

CUSTOMER: So let me get this straight -- I arrive in Buffalo in the wee hours of the morning and have to find a bus to run me through Pennsylvania and on to Ashtabula.

ESPR REP: Or you could check into a hotel in Buffalo if you don't like riding buses at night, and leave the next morning. We can offer you a special rate at Motel 6.

CUSTOMER: What are my options at Ashtabula?

ESPR REP: I know that Trans-Ohio Transportation Authority provides rail service through Cleveland to Toledo, but I think from there you have to find your way to Indiana Rail in Indianapolis or to the Chicago, South Shore & South Bend RR at South Bend. Your best bet is to take the South Shore, because it still runs all the way to Randolph Street Station in Chicago. From Indianapolis, you'd have to switch to the South Shore anyway at South Bend or Hammond

CUSTOMER: So at Toledo I need to transfer to a bus again to get me to Indianapolis or South Bend, am I right?

ESPR REP: Yes sir, or you could rent a car -- we can get you a special discount rate with Rent-a-Wreck. Now, do you want a reservation from Utica to Buffalo, and for what date?

CUSTOMER: No thanks -- you know what? I think I'll take my chances with strip searches, stale peanuts and claustrophobia, and take a plane.

ESPR REP: We thank you for calling ESPR! Check us out again for your travel needs.

Could train travel come to this without a national passenger rail system? We hope not, but please advocate your support for a national system to your elected representatives! -- Editor [John Weber]

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Chapter Meeting & Program:
China Steam #3
 by **Duncan Richards**
Thursday, April 21, 2005
Starts: 7:30 PM
40 & 8 Club
933 University Ave.

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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: (585) 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. Also can send by e-mail to: gale299@frontiernet.net. **Deadline: First Day of Each Month.**

Restoration Building Floor Fund

by Dave Luca

One of the Chapter's major goals for 2005 is the installation of the inspection pit and concrete floor in the east side of the Restoration Building. Chapter volunteers will perform the pit excavation and the slab grading. Pre-qualified concrete contractors will perform the concrete placement work. The estimate for this is \$75,000.

Help "cement" together a great project! Each block represents \$3,000.

\$3,000				
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