



# The Semaphore

get

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

September 2005  
Volume 48, No. 1

## Program for Sept. 15:

### Nickel Plate Railroad

by The Nickel Plate Historical Society members.

Although the Nickel Plate did not enter Rochester, it did serve Buffalo and coordinated with the Lackawanna for service to the New York City area.

Mention the NKP, and one thinks of the 700 series "Berkshire" steam locomotives, that permitted the road to emblaze their cabooses with the slogan: "High Speed Service".

**Remember:**

## Future Programs

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

**Nov. 17:** *Rochester Transportation* by Donovan Shilling

### Chapter Library

11 May Street, Webster (by OMID Tracks)

**Hours: 7:00 to 9:30 PM**

**Monday, September 19**

**Library Phone: 872-4641**

### 2005 Capital Fund Drive - Update #4

The 2005 Capital Fund Drive Committee reports that in the month of August was one of severe drought for advancing our Capital Fund Drive revenues! The Drive, at a little over \$13,600, is a long way from the \$72,000 goal to be reached by October!

Obviously, it will be extended so that you can consider donations at tax time (sorry for that reminder!).

## BIG DIG – 2005

by Joe Scanlon

The Big Dig for 2005 officially occurred on Saturday, August 27, 2005. On that day, the earthmoving army of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum brought out their heavy artillery and assaulted the hill North of the restoration building. Since we now have many seasoned veterans of earthmoving battles in our ranks from previous big digs, the outcome was predictable, and the hill lost. The final score: earthmovers 1,500 cubic yards, hill: zero.



John McDponald pilots the Cat D8 tractor and tractor pan through the dirt with Joe Scanlon pushing on the rear with the Cat D7E dozer. This dig area lines up with the large railroad door on the east side of the Restoration Building [Chris Hauf photo & caption]

**That's right, our earthmoving army moved 1,500 cubic yards of earth in one day!**

We fielded just about everything we had in our assault on the hill: the R.G.&E. Trojan loader, our Bucyrus-Erie 20H hydraulic excavator, our ex-Army CAT D7E bulldozer, our 2 Army dump trucks and our ex-Vitale Construction White 10-wheel dump, and our CAT D8 tractor pan. Since so many of our members have helped in previous earthmoving chores, just about everyone knew the drill and went right to work. Like every successful military campaign, a competent support staff kept the troops pushing forward, keeping operators supplied with

(Continued on Page 3)

## Adirondack Train Trip: 10/22

At press time, the Rochester contingent for this trip stands as 49 — a good showing!

Our September 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline was to coordinate space estimates. The Buffalo Chapter has declined to participate because of the 6 AM time to catch the train, but some of their members may go on their own.

Thus there may be more seats available. Jim East, our coordinator, has started compiling a *waiting list*. Call Jim at 585/377-5389 to reserve your space. He will keep you informed about this Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> trip to Utica and riding the Adirondack Scenic Railroad. **So on the phone!**

Thanks to George Reed and his *American Rail Link* newsletter, initiating this trip.

## End-of-Summer Picnic, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>

Our Annual End-of-Summer picnic will be at the Industry Depot on Saturday, September 10 starting at 1 PM.

The Chapter will provide the meat, sweet corn, salt potatoes and the beverages. We ask that you bring a dish to pass.

Cost is \$5 per person. Please contact Dale Hartnett at 585/243-0139 or <dhartnett@rochnrhs.org> to sign up.

We will have equipment operating, so this is a good chance to have some fun and even invite a guest or two. For safety reasons, we ask that if you do bring small children, you must keep them very close to you at all times.

====\$13,600>

Capital Fund Drive Campaign

\$72,000!

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## Track Car Operator Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Operator A</u>	<u>Operator B</u>	<u>Operator C</u>	<u>Primary Car</u>
Sept. 11	Gary Dettman	Ed Van Horn		TC-3
Sept. 18	Phil McCabe	Dave Peet		TC-1
Sept. 25	Bob Achilles	Gary Dettman		TC-3
Oct. 2 (RIT Day)	Joe Werner	Harold Russell		TC-1
Oct. 9	Bob Achilles	Harold Russell		TC-3
Oct. 16	Phil McCabe	Bob Achilles		TC-1
Oct. 23	Randy Bogucki	Bob Achilles		TC-3
Oct. 30	Bob Achilles	Tom Dunham	John Becker	TC-1

**Thus the Track Car Season ENDS. Thanks to all the operators who made the season another success.**

## Depot Guides Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Guides</u>
Sept. 11	John Brankacz, Judi Benton
Sept. 18	Jeremy Tuke, Don Stinson
Sept. 25	Bob Fleck, Dale Hartnett
Oct. 2	Open
Oct. 9	Bob Moore
Oct. 16	Open
Oct. 23	Open
Oct. 30	Harold Russell

**To sign up as a guide, contact: Dave Peet at 586-8964, or [davepeet97@frontiernet.net](mailto:davepeet97@frontiernet.net).**

*Thanks to all the volunteers that served as Depot Guides for this season. Our visitors appreciated it!*

## Special Events at the Museums

**October 30 (Sun.)**

**Last day of Joint Operations.** Track car rides end. The NYMT remains open from November through April on Sundays.

### Contributors to this issue

Jim East, Dale Hartnett, Chris Hauf, Ted Jackson, Dave Luca, Dave Peet, John Redden, Mike Roque', Harold Russell, Joe Scanlon, Rand Warner and various publications as indicated.

## NYMT needs Gift Shop/Ticket Seller help

Jim Dierks, of NYMT, is looking for volunteers to assist in the Gift Shop.

Please give Jim a call at 473-5508, or e-mail at [j.dierks@att.net](mailto:j.dierks@att.net).

Although Track Car rides and Industry Depot will be closed after October 30, NYMT operates on all Sundays throughout the year. So volunteers for the gift shop are needed.

## A Belated Announcement!

On July 12<sup>th</sup>, Susan and Chris Hauf welcomed Lindsay Claire Hauf to their family. By now, we can assume that Chris and Susan are seasoned to the newest family arrival!

## Bike Trip in October

*by Rand Warner*

John Stewart and Rand Warner would like to promote a **bicycle trip on the NYC RR Cascade Branch ROW from Penn Yan to Dresden.**

This should be an easy, manageable, and interesting ride. There are many factory ruins along the way, and real railroads at both ends of "The Outlet Trail".

We can trailer the bikes down to the Penn Yan end. The grade is downhill from Penn Yan to Dresden. We can spot someone's car at Dresden to get a driver back to the trailer.

Good places for eating at both Penn Yan and Dresden so no one should go hungry.

If this appeals to you, please contact John Stewart at 387-9185, or Rand Warner at 425-8586.

## Membership Report

*Jessy Stallone, Chair*

585-615-4862; [jessy@tsny.com](mailto:jessy@tsny.com)

*No Membership Report for this issue.*

## Car Trip to St. Marys, PA

We plan on car pooling on Sunday, September 18, to St. Marys, PA to ride two novel railroads. In the AM, it is the 2-foot gauge Teaberry & Southern. In the PM, it will be the Daguscahonda & Western.

Meet at Industry at 7 AM sharp. Call Dale Hartnett at 243-0139 or email: [dhartne@brockport.edu](mailto:dhartne@brockport.edu).

## Chapter seeks COLOR Rochester Subway photos for calendar

*by Chris Hauf*

The Rochester Chapter is planning on publishing an all color 2006 Rochester Subway calendar this fall as another way to commemorate 2006 as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of service on the Rochester Subway. To do so, we need to find images to use for the calendar so we can get them printed and available early this Fall. The Chapter has a few color images in its collection that are both color and calendar worthy, but we need some additional images. Do you have a color image or images you might be willing to share and see published in the Chapter's 2006 calendar? You will receive a free calendar if your image is used.

Images will be scanned by the Chapter since the calendars are produced digitally. The originals will be quickly returned to the owner once the scans are complete. Images need to be color and high quality (good exposure, sharp, etc.). Prints or slides are both acceptable. If you have something you would like to contribute, please contact Chris Hauf [chauf@rochnrhs.org](mailto:chauf@rochnrhs.org) or (585)

## Take a look!

Our websites are:

<http://www.rochnrhs.org>, and

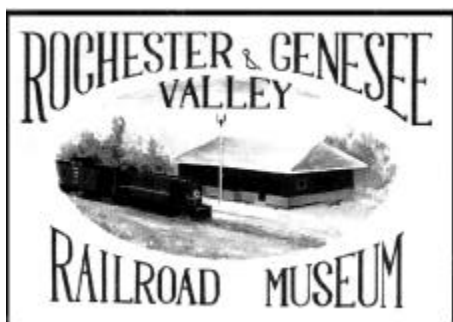
<http://www.rgvrm.org>

The former site has photos of the Library roof removal, and other recent events.

The latter site has photos of the BIG DIG that took place on July 30<sup>th</sup>.

### All in glorious color!

At press time, these sites have not been updated because of the Mike's involvement with Diesel Days preparations and the Big Dig operation.



## MUSEUM MUSINGS

by Dale Hartnett

*Museum Musings should return next month.*

### 2005 Chapter Rail Tours

#### The Pre-Christmas Tours:

#### Space still available.

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

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.

#### **"The End of the Line-Rochester's Subway" to be released in DVD format with added extras**

This documentary about the birth and death of Rochester's Subway, was produced in 1994 by film makers Frederick Armstrong and James P. Harte. It has been shown on PBS and The History Channel and earned a Bronze Telly Award and was voted Best of the Fest at Rochester Independent Film Festival. (The VHS tape is currently being shown in the Gallery at NYMT.)

Because of the controversial decision to bury its experiment with rapid transit, Armstrong and Harte have decided to re-master the film onto DVD *PLUS* add forty-five minutes of extra features including:

Over 150 archival photographs

Artifacts of the subway

A period motion picture and soundtrack

Original artwork

Video of the subway's last surviving passenger car and one of the last men to operate it

Unique footage of the subway's doomed remains.

This DVD is expected to be released in mid-September. The price is \$29.95.

Contact: Fred Armstrong, Animatus Studio, (585) 232-1740.

W e b :  
<http://www.animatusstudio.com/subway>.

## 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@brockport.edu. (*new email address*)

## Big Dig (Cont'd from Page 1)

drinking water and doing an awesome job of controlling traffic up and down our one-lane haul road, and keeping the big wheels rolling! We even had non-members volunteer to help, in the form of professional operating engineer Brian Chestner and his son Joshua, who drove all the way from Erie Pennsylvania to help us out. Brian helped diagnose mechanical problems with our Bay City model 65 dragline, and got pressed in to service operating our 20H excavator to keep the battle going our way when the D8 tractor pan suffered a mortal blow in the form of a severely cracked exhaust manifold.

For those of you that were able to get out and watch the battle, the men and ladies of the construction battalion put on an impressive show. For those of you who didn't, hopefully pictures will help give you an appreciation of our historical event.

A walk up the hill to the North side of the restoration building will show you the results of the battle - you can now see about an acre of level land coming out of the building that's pretty much ready for a rail yard!

There were a lot of hard workers out at the museum on Saturday, August 27, 2005 who made the dirt fly, and did it safely.

## Protecting the Big Dig

by Rand Warner

In anticipation of heavy weather from hurricane Katrina, Joe Scanlon, John McDonald, Dan Waterstraat, Scott Gleason, and Dave Luca made a special effort on Tuesday 30 August to dress all our working slopes for proper drainage -- so we didn't get massive erosion and runoff problems. Rand Warner checked all ditches and culverts to be sure they were clear.

Fortunately we did not get the anticipated heavy rains and did not sustain any water damage.



The Cat D8 tractor pan heads around the north end of the Restoration Building as it heads to the south end to dump a full load of dirt on the fill. [Chris Hauf photo]



Joe Scanlon runs the D7E dozer through the excavation area to move some additional dirt into place for the Cat D8 tractor pan to pick up on its next trip. [Chris Hauf photo]



Mike Roque' takes a full load of dirt off to the fill area in one of the museum's former military 5-ton dump trucks. [Chris Hauf photo]

## Motive Power Report

by John Redden

Motive Power had a very productive month in August, thanks to our volunteers. Our largest and smallest locomotives each had a lot of maintenance and repairs performed upon them. Also, many of our other diesels had maintenance work in preparation for our annual Diesel Days event.

The 125-ton RS3m, LV211 had a variety of cleaning and restoration work done, thanks to a large group of volunteers that were led by Mike Dow. In addition to Mike and his family, this group includes: Tom Webster, Chris Stilson, Dick Holbert, Jessie Stallone, Mike Roque, James Johnson, Randy Bogucki, and Sam Swisher.

The work log for this month contains a very long list of tasks. We'll hit some of the high points here. Brake rigging was lubricated and freed up. radiator shutters were loosened up, lubricated, and in some cases, repaired. These were later tested, and now function with compressed air. There was general cleanup of the frame and truck assemblies. Several handrail bolts and rivets were replaced. All of the sanders have been serviced and tested, and new temporary rear sandboxes have been fabricated. The short hood got a thorough cleaning, with old paint and rust removed, and fresh primer applied on the interior. Various air filters and appliances were removed, cleaned, and lubricated. A nice set of new carbonyl filters were fabricated and installed. Three of the traction motors were cleaned out and lubricated. The recently-rebuilt number one traction motor blower was found to be seized up, and the fuses that had been retro-fitted by our CS&P guys several years ago, did their job and protected the new motor. As a result of this, a similar fuse block was fitted to the number two traction motor blower circuit as a preventative measure. An air brake pipe support bracket was welded onto the number one truck. New emergency shutdown buttons were located and installed. The hand brake chain was cleaned out. Pedestal liners were lubricated and freed up. Extensive battery maintenance was performed. Windshield wipers were serviced and renewed as necessary. The air horns were cleaned out. The wheel slip circuitry was tested and a new buzzer was installed and tested. Radiator fans were tested. Several pipes in the air brake system were replaced.

Incidentally, this is just an overview of the considerable volume of work that was performed. "Hats off" to Mike and his crewmembers for completing so many tasks on the 211 this month.

At the other end of the scale, our smallest (and oldest) internal combustion locomotive also received a great deal of attention this month. The 6-ton Plymouth model BL had the following work performed by Kevin Klees and his assistants: The large drive wheel has been reinstalled along with the clutch operating linkage. Several new pivot pins were fabricated to replace worn components. The rag joint which connects the drive wheel to the engine flywheel has been installed with custom made bolts from the machine shop. These large rubber discs allow the drive wheel to slide back and forth about one inch to engage the friction drive wheel. One axle roller bearing has been reassembled and a further one is being cleaned. Plans are under way to fabricate and install new axle thrust bearings to replace the missing and worn originals. This will eliminate the sideways motion in the axles which has allowed the wheels to wear into the side frame of the locomotive. A new gas tank has been procured and will be mounted inside the frame under the engine. The original gas tank is mounted above the large drive wheel only a few feet in front of the operator. It was decided, for safety reasons, to locate the tank forward of the prime mover. Fabrication of a weldment to replace a missing radiator side casting is almost complete. One of two original side frame castings was missing when the locomotive was donated. Also plans to make a radiator core are progressing. Rand Warner has volunteered to locate headlights and other accessories for the locomotive. He was able to find the headlight from the Plymouth L-2 at the NYMT and verify that the BL had a similar headlight.

In addition to the aforementioned two locomotives we can report that the NKP-79 has had its new fuel tank installed and is again marked as "In service" on the roster. Thanks to many volunteers, including Matthew Tuke, James Johnson, Ron Amberger, and Rand Warner, it was lubricated and started in August, for the first time in about two years.

Our U.S. military 80-tonner number 1654 received a brand new set of batteries, thanks to the generous donations of several Chapter members. James Johnson, Norm Shaddick, Rand Warner, and Art Mummery helped with the removal of the old batteries, the preparation of the battery box and the installation of the four new batteries, whose acquisition was arranged by Chris Hauf. This should make our second 80-tonner a much more reliable performer in the future. Thanks to all who donated toward our latest set of batteries.

As has become our custom for the past few years, the month of August was selected

for our annual Diesel Days event. We had a total of five diesels operating over a period of two days. This entailed some additional work on the fleet, that this year, included the EK-6, the LV-211, the USA-1843, the USA-1654, and the NKP-79.

Not to be left out, our Steam Team removed the tattered tarps that had been covering the pressure vessel on the Heisler Fireless locomotive, and also lubricated various parts of the running gear. Ron Amberger and Norm Shaddick also inspected and took notes on the manufacturer's markings on the pressure vessel for future reference.

THANK YOU to our Motive Power Volunteers, for their continuing financial support, and many hours of labor that keeps our fleet of engines in good repair. Also, thanks to Norm Shaddick, Kevin Klees, and to Mike Dow, for providing input for this article.

WOW – what a busy group of volunteers!  
[Editor]

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## Steam Team Meets

This team meets the first Saturday of each month. Anyone interested in 'steamers' is invited to attend. For information, contact John Redden at ejredden@frontiernet.net.

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## Windows 'Hospital'

The Stillwell Car is being used to refurbish the windows from the Excursion Train. **Work sessions are underway on Wednesday evenings at Industry. You are invited!**

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## You've Just Got to See This

by Rand Warner

Dick Luchterhand and the NYMT model railroad crew have built an awesome **N-gauge replica of the former Rochester Subway system.**

This long, narrow layout models the downtown streets, downtown buildings, and much of the trackage to outlying areas.

They have N-scale running trolleys, including our car #60, and are now getting into the freight and M.O.W. equipment.

The open cut and underground sections exhibit substantial realism, as does the actual operation.

This is a really neat project, and just in time for the 50th Anniversary of the end of passenger service 30 June 1956.

Make a point of getting up to the NYMT Model Railroad Room to see this gem! Nice work guys!!

## Things are Looking UP in Spencerport

by Rand Warner

Due to a lot of hard work and coordination by Bernie Cubitt and Bud Nichols, the Spencerport RL&B Interurban Depot is not only moved back to its original location area, but has been jacked up and put on a new foundation so the first floor is level with the canal embankment. The basement will contain showers and laundry for the boaters.

What a great asset to the community right now, and what a great legacy to leave for future generations.

Sure does show what a couple of real spark plug people can accomplish!

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## Track & R.O.W

Supt. Randy Bogucki

### Track Inspections:

We have had not one, not two, not three, but four recent track inspections of our main line connecting R&GVRM and NYMT;

1. Inspection by Randy Bogucki
2. Inspection by Tom Mctighe
3. Rail flaw inspection &
4. Inspection by visiting professionals

All have commented that we have very respectable trackage that should be safe. Meanwhile, we keep right on working.

### Trackwork:

Randy Bogucki and the night crew continue to replace weak main line ties.

Mike Dow & Co. have replaced ties and done rehab work at Switch #4.

Rand Warner & Co. are working on the extension of Track #6, and the new NYMT siding into their new barn.

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## Joint ESPA and RRTC Convened on Aug. 16

About six members of the Empire State Passenger Association (ESPA) and members of Rochester Rail Transit Committee (RRTC) met at the 40 & 8 Club on University Ave.

Bruce Becker, President of ESPA and guest speaker, gave an informative presentation on Amtrak, its problems and its future aspects to this sparse group.

Interested persons are invited to sign up for e-mail notices for future meetings by contacting: Dave Luca at daveluca@frontiernet.net or 585-288-0318.

## People - Our Most Important Asset

by Rand Warner

**Members:** who provide support, money, gifts, encouragement, information, connections, and serve on committees.

**Volunteers:** who staff our programs and projects, providing hands-on labor, operations, skills and leadership.

**Benefactors:** Those outside our organization who make important donations of artifacts, materials, tools, equipment and service.

**Visitors:** who bring us interest, enthusiasm, information, revenue, member

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## Railway Express Agency

Foremen: Lynn Heintz and Dick Bean

"It's in there" -- just like the oregano. We finally have the newly re built V-8 motor adapted and now installed in our 1939 Ford REA truck. Thanks to Lynn Heintz, Bob Mader, Norm Shaddick, Rand Warner and our trusty Austin Westen yard crane.

Lynn Heintz and Dick Bean are working on a replacement radiator, either rebuilding ours or finding another one.

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## Fall Foliage RR Trips

The Chapter's *Fall Foliage Express* will **not** be running this year. The train set is in Newark and not convenient to work on, unlike when it was in Webster. The required work requires a crane to remove a truck. So you might want to fill the void with other trains.

#1 of course would be the Amtrak/Adirondack trip on October 22 (See page 1).

Western NY RR Historical Society may be running out of Medina. The Finger Lakes Railroad has run foliage trains in the past. The editor has not seen any publicity on these two possibilities.

Arcade and Attica is a possibility close to home. Whether a steamer will be used is unknown.

A prime candidate, with a steamer, is Western Maryland RR out of Cumberland, MD. There concern that this may be the last year that it runs, at least to Frostburg. You can check at [www.wmsr.com](http://www.wmsr.com).

Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad, of the Leatherstocking Railway Historical Society, Oneonta, NY is running

## Thanks to ...

**Tim Ehmman** for assistance with our substation and trench projects.

**Ramy Day Merchantile** for donation of railroad signal parts and lenses.

**Rand Warner** for donation of tools, hardware, and artifacts.

**Wayne Turnblom** for donation of Deitz Kerosene depot platform lantern.

**Bob Achilles** for the donation of a backpack leaf blower.

**Dick Holbert** for the donation of a set of wooden steps.

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## Buffalo Railroad Stations

by Rand Warner

Our friends to the west, the Niagara Frontier Chapter, have been running a great series on the various railroad stations of Buffalo. See recent issues of their newsletter "Empire State Express". The latest issue features the DL&W depot.

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## Buffalo's LV Station Demolished

This modern station, built in 1955 at Dingens and South Ogden Streets, replaced a neoclassical one built in 1916 located on Pearl Street. The latter was demolished in 1960.

This new terminal was convenient to suburban sections, only a few feet from NYS Thruway and 10 minutes away from downtown by taxi.

Lehigh Valley Railroad passenger service in Buffalo ended on Feb. 3, 1961 with the arrival of the Maple Leaf, thus ended 115 years of LV passenger service.

The 1955 station was quietly demolished in December 2004. [L&WV RHS *Laurel Lines*, Jan. 2005 via *Tower Topics*, Feb. 2005.

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## Shows, etc.

**Oct. 16:** *RIT Model RR Club Fall Train Show*, RIT Student Union.

**Nov. 5 & 6:** *Train Show/Sale* at New York State Fairgrounds, Syracuse.

**Nov. 13:** *Batavia Train Show/Sale*. Batavia Downs Race Track

# Diesel Days - 2005 Views

asking



← R & G V R R GE 80-tonner #1654 waits for the many Diesel Days visitors to board the engines and cabooses before heading south to the R & G V Railroad Museum.

Caboose C254 with a full platform of Diesel Days visitors enters Industry Yard. →



← Track Car, TC-1, is full with Diesel Days visitors starting their return trip to NYMT ater riding the diesels.

During Diesel Days, the track get quite a workout. To make sure everything is in top condition, our track crew including two visiting professional track inspectors sets out to inspect → railroad.

## What a Turnout!

by Rand Warner

We fielded 30-40 volunteers for Diesel Days for both Saturday and Sunday, August 20 & 21. Having so much good help everywhere makes things go very smoothly and makes it much easier to deal with any problems that do come up.

Special thanks to the big contingent from RIT.



Diesel Days visitors board Erie caboose #C254 and F-M USA #1843 in the R&GV Railroad Museum's Industry yard.

## Library Status

The Chapter's Library in Webster now sports a white membrane roof, said to last 30 years. White was chosen to reflect sun rays in the summer. The roof did cost more than we had in the fund for replacing it, so donations would be nice so that monies can be returned to the general fund for other purposes.

That said, the exterior needs a new coat of paint. A pledge has been received for the cost of the paint. HOWEVER, it did not include the labor; SO we're for volunteers to spend a couple of hours painting the exterior.

Some water damage inside requires some drywall work and a panel of drywall to replace where the skylight was.

Additional shelving is needed so that the large Barrett collection can be displayed. [GS]

## THE ROUND PIE STATION

by Ted Jackson

One of the principal passenger routes of the Rochester Division of the Erie Railroad extended from Rochester to Corning. Almost all of the communities it served were on or very close to the old US Route 15 (now partly NYS Route 15 and partly NYS Route 415 or I-86). By the 1860's until World War I, passenger service generally consisted of four trains in each direction although during much of that period, the Erie also ran as many as three pairs of "accommodations". These were mixed trains designed to aid travelers who had scheduling problems or who had missed their intended train.

Over much of that time, one pair of trains carried a sleeper between Rochester and Jersey City. Some of them also had parlor cars. However, we have no record of any of them carrying diners. This was typical of many branch lines in that the runs (generally three to four hours from Rochester to Corning) were too short to justify them. However, people can get hungry. How would they manage?

One common solution was the use of "news butchers". These would be employees of the Union News Company who would ride the trains and would sell newspapers and other reading material as well as refreshments much as some commuter trains do today. Some of the communities along the route would also have some sort of restaurant in their depots to serve their patrons. These were probably the predecessors of the "fast food" restaurants of today because some passengers already on the train would often get off the train at a stop, grab something to eat and get back on the train. Since station stops were usually only long enough to handle passengers, baggage, express and mail, the service would have to be very fast.

One such facility that has been documented was at the depot in the hamlet of Conesus. The business district of Conesus has been the victim of several fires but in its heyday, the community had a number of stores and shops and even had two hotels, both having stagecoach service to the depot to meet all trains. Train time was a busy occasion in those days.

Quite a bit of folklore has been handed down over the years about this restaurant and much of what follows has been gleaned from a number of "letters to the

Editor" written to the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle in 1923. The Conesus depot had a restaurant in the south part of it which also included living quarters for the proprietors. From what we can gather, the restaurant was first operated by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Coleman as early as the Civil War. Mrs. Coleman employed several women and children to pick and deliver wild strawberries and black raspberries from Marrowback Hill and the section known as Calabogue from which pies were made. Pies were also made from apples, peaches, grapes, custard and mincemeat.

What made these pies unique was that they were round. In those days, pies were generally made in oblong pie tins and sliced into squares, much like a sheet cake. A small round pie that could be bought whole was a novelty and just the thing for a quick purchase to take back on the train. Furthermore, these pies, apparently, were of excellent quality and were known all up and down the line. So much so that Conesus was referred to as the "Round Pie" station, some trainmen announcing the station arrival by that name.

During the Civil War, with troop movements heading south, it was common for the Colemans to bake 500 pies a day and the whole family would have to pitch in. These pies originally sold for five cents but in the 1880's were made larger and sold for a dime.

An excerpt from a letter by A.A.Mann, who was the Station Agent in 1885: "I well remember so many passengers got off the train at one time that they could not all get waited on while the train was standing in the station. The last would come out with both hands full of pies to find the train moving away. Giving one lunging at both hands full of pies and another at the fast-moving train, down would go the pies on the platform and a rush made for the rear end of the train, sometimes missing the train, but always losing the pies." On the other hand, another letter stated: "The conductors in those days were all good scouts and regular fellows well met. Each passenger had time to get off and buy a pie, which sold for ten cents."

Finally, from a letter to the D&C by S.E.Hitchcock in 1935, referring to some item that had been written about Frederick Douglas,

"..... During these years Mr. Douglas had relatives living in Richmond, Ontario County and he frequently came from New York or Washington to visit his Ontario County friends. He came from

Corning by the Erie Railroad, leaving the train at Livonia where he was met by horse and carriage and conveyed to his destination."

"He always got off the train which stopped at Conesus and bought a pie to eat on the train. I saw him several times in the restaurant on that errand. After receiving his pie he would tell Mrs. Coleman with a smile (and no one but Mr. Douglas could produce just such a smile) "Now I think I'll take three or four more, if you have them, to carry to my friends". So a package was made up of four more pies (he always bought blackberry when he could get them) and then, having paid his bill, he was ready to resume his journey. The train always waited. No conductor, not even the redoubtable Louis Fahy, would ever call 'all aboard' until Mr. Douglas was ready to go."

"On one occasion, I went to Rochester on a train on which he was a passenger. After leaving Conesus, the conductor when he took my ticket said "Go back in the car. Mr. Douglas wants to speak to you." I went wondering if it could be true. He had turned the seat in front so I could sit facing him, and saying that he had noticed that I got on the car at Conesus, asked me many kindly questions about the history of the restaurant and its proprietors. Arriving at Livonia, he left the train and I followed while the train stood, and as I looked over the party which met him I wondered how many of his pies would reach Richmond."

Later proprietors of the

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### **R&GV RR Marked Lanterns**

R&GVRRM marked Star Brakeman's Lanterns are available again. Cost is \$26 (+tax) for lantern without battery; \$30 (+tax) with battery. Contact Chris Hauf (crhauf@frontiernet.net) if interested in purchasing one.

### **New T-shirt issue**

To satisfy requests how to purchase one of our signature yellow 'Train Crew' t-shirts, Chris Hauf arranged for a new one for the public. The base color is forest green with yellow lettering. The Diesel Days design (RG&E 1941) appears on the shirt, sans Train Crew lettering and dates.

The price is \$13.00 each (\$15 if mailed). He has all adult sizes. Contact Chris at 585-381-8583; crhauf@frontiernet.net. Sales to date has covered the cost of procurement.

Rochester Chapter National Railway Historical Society  
**The Semaphore**  
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Chapter Meeting & Program:  
**Nickel Plate**  
**Railroad**  
 by **NKP Historical Society**  
**Members**  
**7:30 PM**  
**Thursday, September 15, 2005**  
**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 \$10.00 after 1/1/2005 and run from January 1 to December 31. Chapter meetings are held the third Thursday and the Board of Directors meets the first Thursday of each month.

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Contributions to *The Semaphore* are welcomed and encouraged from all readers. They should be mailed to: Gale E. Smith, 299 Seneca Park Avenue, Rochester, NY 14617-2433. Phone: (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. Recent donations in **BOLD**.

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

\$3,000	\$3,000			
\$3,000	\$3,000			
\$3,000				
\$3,000				
\$3,000				