



The Semaphore

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

December 2005
Volume 48, No. 4

Program for Dec. 15:

Williamsport in the Late Steam Era

by Bill Bigler

"Tonight's talk will be about the late steam era in Williamsport PA, one of the most fascinating but least known railroad spots in this part of the country, during the '40s and '50s."

Bill was born in 1940 and spent the first 10 years in Franklin PA near NYC, PRR and Erie branch lines. In his teen years, he lived in northeast Ohio on the mainlines of the NKP and NYC; a few miles away was the B&O's Lake Branch with those huge 2-8-8-2's.

He graduated from Cornell's engineering school and served his 2 year ROTC commitment in the Army, one of them in Vietnam. In 1998, Bill retired from Corning, Inc. after 35 years. He is a member of the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society and NRHS. Bill is married with two grown children and four grandchildren and lives in Big Flats, NY.

Future Programs

2006

Jan. 19: *Railroad Stories of Long Ago*, by Michael Rickert

Feb 16: *Mike's Photo Gallery*, by Mike Roque'

March 16: *Member's Slide Night*

Chapter Library

11 May Street, Webster (by OMID Tracks)

Winter Hours in Effect

Hours: 2:00 to 5:00 PM

Sunday, January 22, 2006

NOTE: Because of the Holidays, the Library will not be open in December.

Library Phone: 872-4641



SEASON'S GREETINGS!



Construction & Equipment

by Joe Scanlon

New Drainage Pipe Installed

As of the end of November, 2005 the grading for the rail yard North of the Restoration Building is substantially complete. The CAT tractor pan, under the steady guidance of John McDonald, has performed the lion's share of the earthmoving, assisted by



Chris Hauf photo

Scott Gleason and Joe Scanlon operating the D7 push-cat and Dan Waterstraat minding the fill with the Trojan loader and the Galion roller. Joe Scanlon did the final grading for the rail yard with the Huber-Warco road grader.

But the real news for November came from the pipe layers! Utilizing the Trojan loader and our Bucyrus-Erie 20H hydraulic excavator the members of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad museum learned a new trade - pipe laying! Lead by Dale Hartnett, members Jeremy Tuke, Chris Hauf, Dave Luca, Charley Harshbarger, Dave Peet, Sam Swisher, Nathan Dunn and Bob Achilles installed 42 linear feet of 12-inch diameter reinforced concrete pipe near where new switch 7 will be installed. The crew used the 1960's vintage method of batter boards and double sidelines to put the pipe to proper line and grade. John McDonald and Scott Gleason manned the Bucyrus 20H excavator to cut the trench and lower the pipe into place. This new drainage line is critical for the new rail yard, ensuring that the yard will drain properly.

This time of year we give our thanks for friends and family. Let us also give thanks to the legion of determined volunteers who showed up this year at the museum - from seasoned construction professionals to rank beginners - from R.I.T. students to retirees - who worked shoulder to shoulder and got a tremendous amount of heavy construction work done this year! Our combined efforts succeeded in getting an estimated \$40,000.00 worth of site improvements done up on the hill this year! Congratulations and thanks to all those who helped!

Merry Christmas!

Happy New Year!

====\$13,600>

Capital Fund Drive Campaign

\$72,000!

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25-Year NRHS Chapter Members:

Alton E. Matteson

Charles Petersen

Our congratulations to Alton and Charles. Both gentlemen received a Twenty-five year pin and a letter from National Officers.

[It has been a while since the Chapter has honored a twenty-five year member, and since we are about 200+ strong, that must mean we have a 'younger' group coming in as replacements?]



Bob Miner presents the 25-year pin and letter from the National to Charles Petersen at the October meeting. Mr. Alton E. Matteson also was a 25-year honoree, but was not able to attend; he received his pin and letter by mail. (*Mike Roque' photo*)

Membership Report

Jessica Stallone, Chair
585-615-4862, jessy@tsny.com

No new members or changes of address for this period.

On December 1, 2006 the Chapter was informed, from National President Greg Malloy, that the 2006 Membership Renewal would not be mailed from National until the week of December 20th. At the Chapter's monthly Trustees' meeting that evening, I was asked to mail a 2006 dues renewal form to all of our members ASAP.

When you get your renewal paperwork, please consider renewing right away so that the Chapter does not miss out on greatly needed funds.

Thank you. Jessica Stallone

Now what to do

The end of Year 2005 is near, along with being able to have contributions/donations qualify for the 2005 Tax Year.

Because of the tardiness by the National in distributing member's dues packets, the usual method of making contributions when paying your dues is absent.

By this time, you should have received a letter from Jessica Stallone, our Membership Chair, with information on paying your local, national dues and making contributions of various funds at local and national levels.

The primary local funds we are asking you to consider donation to: 1) Rochester Operating Fund, which supports our yearly operating expenses, 2) Capital Fund Drive, with the goal of raising significant funds needed to complete the Restoration Building Complex and the addition of a siding west of LA&L RR needed to support Excursion Chapter Train Set.

**Send your remittance, payable to Rochester Chapter, NRHS, to:
P.O. Box 23326, Rochester, NY 14692-3326.**

Chapter 2006 Calendars

Chris Hauf stated the 2006 Chapter Calendar should be available at the December meeting.

The 2006 Calendar will feature views, in color, of the Rochester Subway. Next year (2006) is the Fifth Anniversary of the ending of this famous subway: the last to be constructed in a small city and one of the first to end service.

The cost will be \$15.00 per calendar, plus \$2 per calendar if you want them sent to you. To order calendars by mail, send your check, made payable to Rochester Chapter NRHS, to: Rochester Chapter NRHS, Attn: Chapter calendar, P.O. Box 23326, Rochester, NY 14692-3326. Be sure to include the address(es) to where calendar(s) will be sent. For additional information, contact Chris Hauf (585-381-8583) crhauf@frontiernet.net.

Chapter's Biannual Rail Trip Announced.

See Page 7 for the itinerary of the May 7 through 25, 2006, escorted Rail Tour to California and Texas.

Looking for Gift Ideas?

Consider the Chapter Store at the General Membership Meeting (12/15) or NYMT Gift Shop on any Sunday. Depending on which one you visit you should find:

Books (Railroad and Traction)

Videos (DVD* and VHS, including

"The End of the Line .. History of the Rochester Subway"*

"Vanishing American"*, documenting a steam excursion trip between Rochester and Salamanca on the B&O.

Coffee mugs

Shirts

... And other "goodies!"

Contributors to this issue

Jim East, Chris Hauf, Dave Luca, John Muchler, John Redden, Charles Robinson, Mike Roque', Harold Russell, Joe Scanlon, Jessica Stallone, and Rand Warner and various publications as indicated.

Rita J. McDonald

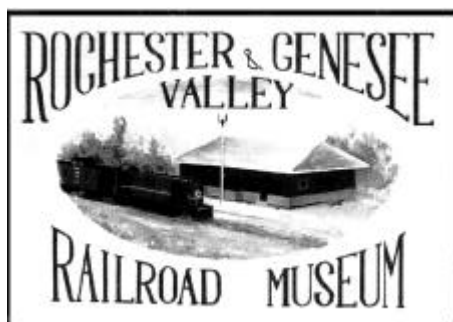
John McDonald's mother, Rita J. McDonald, passed away during Thanksgiving week. We extend our condolences to John, his family and relatives.

PS&N 2006 Calendars available

John Muchler, who is a chapter member, is also Treasurer, Newsletter editor and defacto curator of the Pittsburg, Shawmut and Northern Railroad Company Historical Society museum on the Allegany Co. Fair Grounds in Angelica, NY.

They purchased a quantity of black and white Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern RR calendars as a fund raiser for restoration of their 4 wheel bobber caboose that was constructed in the Angelica Shops in 1912. They are not selling as well as desired.

For a donation of at least \$7.00 you can have a Shawmut 2006 wall calendar. Order from John at 88 South Main Street, Avoca, NY 14809; or by phone: 607-566-9598 or email: jmuchler@stny.rr.com. Membership information is also available.



Motive Power Report

by John Redden

Steam Locomotives

The Steam Team met again in November, to continue planning for cosmetic and functional restoration of our two steamers. We started some tasks on #12 such as removing the air reservoir and its associated piping from the smokebox. Dave Peet started to dismantle the front pilot beam for restoration. We plan to move number 12's saddle tank to the restoration building and install it on the loco, to cover its boiler. The cab exterior will be restored with old paint removal and repainting of the cab, and eventually all of its exposed parts. There was some additional work on the re-assembly of the Heisler fireless valve gear performed by Ron Amberger.

Diesels:

The diesel locomotives have been drained and positioned for the Winter. They have been placed on trickle chargers, in order to keep their batteries from freezing. We moved several more new-to-us batteries to our temporary charging station in the Depot baggage room, and placed them on charge. We expect to place several of these used batteries in our larger locomotives, whenever the weather permits.

As reported last month, we drained the coolant from the #1 prime mover on 1654. We continued this month with the disassembly of its piping and hoses, to attempt to diagnose the problem with the cab heater. Although we found several hoses that were dried out and in need of replacement, we were unable to locate the cause of our cab heater troubles. The system was re-assembled with several new hoses, and the radiator was re-filled. 1654 is now back in service, but with an unheated cab, unfortunately.

EK-6 was having some relay troubles, so its low voltage interlock contacts were cleaned up by John Redden. It is now behaving much more reliably.

Plymouth Gasoline Locomotive

Progress continues on the 6 ton Plymouth

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

Model BL locomotive.

Since last month, the rear axle pedestal shoes have been removed, cleaned and re-installed. These castings support and guide the axle bearing boxes. New pedestal liners have also been fabricated and installed. Also, one of the new axle thrust bearings has been fabricated. These large bronze washers go between the inside of the wheel and the bearing box to restrain lateral motion of the axle. On the rear axle of the Plymouth, the original thrust bearings had completely worn away. Originally these bearings would have been slipped onto the axle before the wheels where pressed onto the axle, with a very heavy-duty press. Since we lack such a wheel press, it was necessary to make the replacement bearings in two halves. Kevin designed these new bearings, and he is in the process of machining these parts from raw stock. They will be slipped over the axle and pins will be installed into link plates that connect the two halves.

After fabricating another thrust bearing it will be necessary to fit them up into the locomotive. Some lateral clearance is necessary so the axle can move up and down to accommodate track elevation changes. The Plymouth will need to have the bearings test fitted and possibly have their thickness reduced to assure the proper clearances. Then the rear axle can be re-installed permanently.

Once the rear axle is reinstalled the remaining transmission components can be reinstalled as well. Then the front axle can be serviced. Hopefully reinstalling the engine can take place early next spring.

Thanks to:

Jeremy Tuke, John Redden and Kevin Klees for donating bronze materials to fabricate the Plymouth axle thrust bearings.

The **estate of Paul Klees** for donating a medium sized air compressor for the machine & woodworking shops

John & Elaine Redden for donating new heater hose and radiator hose material for the 1654 #1 prime mover

All of our **Motive Power Volunteers**, and also to **Kevin Klees, Ron Amberger**, and **Norm Shaddick** for their input to this article.

Library Report

Charles Robinson, Chairman

Because of conflicts with seasonal parties, the library will skip its regular open session on a Sunday afternoon for this month (December).

We will resume our normal schedule of being open a Sunday afternoon after the third Thursday in January and the months thereafter until Spring.

In addition as an aid to the library staff, the last Monday evening for a work session will be December 5. Thereafter until Spring the staff will be working at the library on Monday afternoons between 1:30 and 3:30 PM. The winters get dark and cold in Webster late in the evening and we thought that we should show up at a less threatening time.

A large number of photo albums and scrapbooks have been placed on the library shelves for viewing purposes by the members. They are better there than in a drawer. Jerry Gillette and the library chairman have continued sorting and sleeving and placing in albums the remaining loose rail photographs.

As usual, Gale Smith continues with the assigning call numbers and cataloging the books the donated books that still remain in boxes. Just as we think we are caught up, another box of donated materials arrives!

The library chairman on one of the warm days in November climbed up on the roof to add a little more caulk around one of cupolas to repel any more leaks that might be thinking about starting.

Look forward to seeing chapter members again in January. Enjoy the holiday season and start 2006 with an exciting visit to the library. The heating system is working very well!

"End of Line" viewing draws 500

A special viewing of the recently released in DVD format with added features was shown at Irondequoit High School. Roughly 500 attended the event. Film makers, Fred Armstrong and Jim Harte were on hand to answer questions. Rochester Audio Visual Association hosted the event.

This DVD is available at the Chapter Store, NYMT's Gift Shop and others.

Trolley Substation

Rand Warner, Facilitator

It was a great day, Tuesday, 15 November, when the new 480V 3-phase 400 amp service was hooked up and made live by our Niagara Mohawk and O'Donnell Electric Co. crews.

The 3-phase service was hooked up for the substation, and a single phase 100 amp service of the 480V was hooked up to the NYMT Bldg.

Our NRHS electric crew of Jim Johnson, Dick Holbert & Co. is now doing step by step checkout of the substation.

Rand Warner has procured dc output ribbon fuses for the substation, has completed double bonding all rails under the existing trolley overhead structure, and is now cross-strapping connections between the two rails.

Scott Gleason has completed the overhead positive output feed to the trolley contact wire.

Jim Johnson and Dick Holbert have completed the negative output feed to the trolley return rails.

Bob Miner and Charlie Lowe at NYMT are beginning installation of the contact wire hardware in the overhead trough in the new NYMT trolley storage shed.

Ted Strang at NYMT is working on the panic bar assembly for the substation door.

Dick Holbert, Jim Johnson, and Rand Warner have been making insulation resistance tests on all the new wiring installed, as well as on the existing trolley overhead structure. Scott Gleason cleared tree branches that were touching the overhead.



On November 1, 2005, Scott Gleason ties in our dual 350 MCM positive output cables from the trolley substation to trolley overhead contact wire, using RGVRM bucket truck. (*Rand Warner photo*)

We still need to trim branches that could drag and scratch on the side of the trolleys when they operate.

Dick Holbert has written up a plan for personnel access to the substation.

Dick and Jim are working labeling all conduits and components in the substation in accordance with UL [TM] requirements, and in conjunction with operating procedures being developed by Neil Bellenger.

By the time you read this, we would hope to have gotten P&W Trolley #168 out of the new barn, and into live checkout using power from the new substation.

AND THAT WILL TRULY BE A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR OUR TWO ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TOGETHER OVER ALMOST THE LAST TEN YEARS.

Shows

March 11-12: Rochester Model Railroad Club, 150 South Clinton (First Universalist Church) Sat. 10-5; Sun. 1-5.

March 26: R?IT Show and Sale, Student Union, RIT Campus

Peace on Earth
and Good Will
to All

Thanks to ...

Victor Corso for donation of gas engine with gear reducer and chain drive for use on M.O.W. equipment.

Rand Warner for donation of 7" angle grinder, 1/2" deep socket set, combination wrench set, antique coffee pot for cabooses, and offset box wrench set.

Ruston Paving of Victor, NY for donation of the 12-inch reinforced concrete pipe used for the recent storm sewer installation.

Track & R.O.W.

Supt. Randy Bogucki

Randy, Mark Pappalardo, Duncan Richards, Tony Mittiga & Co. have installed over 80 new ties in our mainline connection route between RGVRM and NYMT this past year!

Charlie Lowe & Co. at NYMT are putting in new ties in the south leg of the loop at the NYMT barn area - to strengthen this trackage for future trolley operations.

We have a brand new switch timbers (first ever!) to aid in construction of new yard trackage coming in to our Restoration Building from the north end.

Due to the extensive efforts of the Construction/Heavy Equipment crew, we have grading and drainage nearing completion to permit the necessary track construction north of the Restoration Building. [See story on Page 1]

Dave Luca and Randy Bogucki have put a lot of work into clearing (and re-clearing)

Steam Scene

by Rand Warner

On Page 82 of the April 1936 RAILROAD STORIES Magazine is a picture of a high stepping Atlantic of 1896. The caption reads: "The Famous 1027 on the Atlantic City Railroad. Forty Years Ago, she was the World's Fastest Locomotive, often making 115 m.p.h. on the Camden-Atlantic City Run. She had 13 and 22 by 26 cylinders and 84-3/4 inch drivers." (Compound cylinders)

"Rebuilt to No. 25 about 1904, with smaller drivers and simple cylinders, Scrapped 1928."

This very high speed on a regularly scheduled passenger run using conventional equipment was achieved about 110 year ago!

Are you listening - Turbo Trains and Acela Trains ... that sometimes run, but have still to meet specifications and expectations??

Wanted

- Small skid steer loader, Bobcat or equivalent
- Cantilever car jacks for working on passenger cars
- Rail skates for chocking parked strings of rail cars on hills
- Wheel chocks for safety parking our heavy construction equipment

How Trolley Operators handled problems in the old days!

[A true trolley car story from Rochester, submitted by Rand Warner who it found it *Railroad Stories*, April 1936, Page 42.]

"Some time ago, the trolley wheel of a street car in Rochester, N.Y. came off the wire while turning east onto Main Street at University Avenue. The fork that held the trolley wheel jammed and pulled the entire trolley-pole assembly, as well as about ten feet of running board, off the roof before the car could be stopped.

"This happened about 5:30 P.M., at peak load period. Immediately traffic was tied up, as this switch was used by about eight car lines. Each motorman and conductor had his own idea as to how to get traffic moving. Most of them wanted to switch the car to another track and push it to a car barn.

"Then one of them solved the problem. He disconnected the wire leading from the cab along the car roof from the trolley assembly, bent the end of it in the shape of a "Y" and then, standing on the remaining wooden running board, he held one fork of the "Y" against the trolley wire while the car proceeded. When one fork of the wire got hot, he switched to the other fork.

"The car, loaded with passengers, proceeded through the heart of Rochester' business district during the rush hour as though nothing had happened. Traffic was tied up less than three minutes."

THE ROCHESTER, CORNING AND ELMIRA TRACTION COMPANY

Ted Jackson

Recent issues of the Semaphore have indicated anniversaries of the abandonment of various interurban trolley lines in the Rochester area. Among them were the Rochester and Sodus Bay, 1889-1929, (described in "The Royal Blue Line" by William R. Gordon), the Rochester and Eastern, 1900-1930, ("The Route of the Orange Limited" by William R. Gordon), the double-track Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern, 1906-1931, ("The Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern" by William R. Gordon and James R. McFarlane) and the little Lima and Honeoye Falls, 1898-1916, ("A Railroad for Lima" by Paul Worboys). The book on the R.S.& E. also includes a brief sketch about the Buffalo, Lockport and Rochester, later

called the Rochester, Lockport and Buffalo, 1908-1931. One of its cars is currently being restored by our Chapter. From 1906 to 1934, the Erie Railroad from Rochester to Mt. Morris was electrified and this is described in William R. Gordon's book "Erie Railroad, Rochester Division". So the Rochester area had six electric interurban operations that have been well documented.

But what about the Rochester, Corning and Elmira?

During the Interurban fever of the early 1900's, there were many proposals to build interurbans. Although many of these lines did some freight business, their main interest was frequent passenger service, much of the time with single cars. With much shorter trains than that of a conventional steam railroad, the lines could be built much more cheaply. In particular, much less grading was required because traction cars could ascend inclines quite easily. (At the point near Thruway exit #45 where the Lehigh Valley went over the Auburn branch of the New York Central, the Rochester and Eastern went over both of them.) Many interurbans including most of the ones which served Rochester competed directly with steam railroads and in many cases siphoned off considerable passenger traffic because they could operate more cheaply.

One proposed route was between Rochester and Elmira. In 1906, the Rochester and Elmira Railway Company was incorporated. The route was projected to go from Rochester, through Avon, Lakeville, Scottsburg, Groveland, Dansville, Perkinsville, Wayland and down the Conhoccot Valley to Corning and on to Elmira. The original route went up the east side of Conesus Lake but was later changed to the west side and the railway's name was changed to the Rochester, Corning and Elmira Traction Company. As one would expect, this proposed charter was opposed by all three railroads with whom it would have competed, the Erie, Lackawanna and the Dansville and Mt. Morris. From Groveland to Elmira it was in direct competition with at least one of these all the way. From Groveland north, however, the route would have less competition and a Charter was given.

Now that they had their charter, the R.C.& E. needed to raise the money to build the line. Although the backers were from New York City, they felt that the people who would most benefit from this, the northern part of the route and particularly, Conesus Lake, could be per-

sueded to buy stock in the Company. This may be why the initial construction was started south of the Conesus Lake. Grading started in Scottsburg, and progressed, east of present day NY 256, in northerly direction towards the Lake. This work continued until it reached a farm owned by a woman by the name of McMillan. Miss McMillan was out of town at this point and she sent instructions to the manager of her farm. In this letter, Miss McMillan said "... I have hoped that the Trolley R.R. would buy the farm but if they do not wish to do so, I will sell the lot for \$500.00 as per offer in letter last November. I should wish payment in full before they begin work on my land. Please insist on a shipping station at the point you proposed." According to the story, the manager did as instructed. Apparently, the Company did not have sufficient funds to buy the lot and was denied access to the property. That was the end of the R.C.& E.

About this same time, the Erie electrified their line from Rochester to Mt. Morris and significantly increased the frequency of their trains. They also increased the frequency of trains coming into Lakeville. With all of this competition, one wonders how successful the R.C.& E. would have been if it had been completed.

Burma-Shave(R) Signs¹

by Harold W. Russell

How many of us can remember Burma-Shave(R) signs? These were the little red signs placed at intervals along the highway that contained humorous slogans and verse ending with the last signs saying "Burma-Shave". This was a popular brushless shaving cream at the time. It is our set of these signs along the right-of-way of the Rochester and Genesee Valley Railroad Museum that renewed my interest. Here is the story of the signs based on what I have found on the Internet² and the book³ by Frank Rowsome, Jr.

HISTORY

In the mid 1920's the grandfather of Leonard Odell was an enterprising attorney in Minneapolis, MN. As a sideline he made liniments in a space next to his office. Sales were poor and limited to a few drugstores in the area. His son, Clinton, was an enterprising salesperson who realized the limitations of this product since it was only sold to people who were ill. The local drug whole-

(Continued on Page 6)

Burma-Shave *(Continued from Page 5)*

saler gave him a sample of Lloyd's Euxesis, a British brushless shaving cream. It was a smelly, sticky mess. Clinton hired a cosmetic chemist who, after three hundred tries, developed the formula for Burma-Shave.

Normal marketing techniques brought mediocre results. Clearly, some innovative advertising was required. It was 1925 when Clinton's son, Allen, against all advice of seasoned advertising experts, erected a series of ten to twelve sets of the little signs along the roads leading to Albert Lea and Red Wing, MN. The little red signs in a row had the advantage because you could not just read one of them and stop. The time devoted to reading this ad was much greater than the average time for a billboard. The novelty, originality and humor of each sign increased product awareness.

Sales in the area quickly skyrocketed. In 1926 the first signs were erected in Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin. Sales went from nil to \$68,000. In 1927 signs were erected in most Midwest states and sales reached \$136,000. By 1929 the signs appeared throughout most of the United States and sales were \$272,000.

At first, the signs alternated by years between orange with black letters to red with white. In the 1930's the orange and black was omitted. In South Dakota, the signs were blue with white lettering due to a state law stating that only red could be used for signs indicating danger.

The first five⁴ signs contained the jingle with the last stating *Burma-Shave*. The back of all signs also contained the words *Burma-Shave*. Where the states taxed the signs by the number of times the product name was used, the rear of the signs remained blank.

Near college towns, it was found that the signs had a mysterious way of disappearing on dark nights. To reduce theft, fastener heads were counterbored into the wood that required a special wrench to be unscrewed.

Besides college boys, some of other natural enemies of the signs were rodents. Cows were a minor hazard. They liked to rub themselves against the signs giving them a bright shine and tilting them slightly. By far, the greatest enemy of the Burma-Shave sign was the farmer's horse. The post was just the right height to scratch the horse's back. This procedure would quickly break the sign off at the post. The problem was solved when the Burma-Vita Company raised the height of the post to ten feet. The advent of the tractor that replaced the horse helped too.

The sign sets were loved because they

were so light-hearted. The theme of the signs varied with the times - from public service, witty observations, hints for women about men, puns and outrageous humor during the depression to patriotic during World War II. Safety was always popular. The signs provided what the traveler wanted - carefree travel with amusement. By 1963 driving speeds had increased and because of the Interstate system, traffic on two-lane highways diminished. The signs lost their novelty and were taken down. Today they can only be found in antique shops or museums. At their peak, 7,000 of the little sign groups could be found in all states except New Mexico, Arizona and Massachusetts.

DESIGN OF THE SIGNS

The first signs were 1" pine boards, 10" high by 36" long. By the 1930's the design of the signs was more or less standardized and they had grown to be 12" to 18" high and 40" long. They were set into the ground with wooden posts nine feet tall. Set back from the road's edge was usually nine or ten feet. In time, this was increased to forty to fifty feet. The signs were spaced thirty to sixty feet apart. This distance varied depending on the highway speed.

The signs were predominantly painted red with white lettering with a lettering font called "Painter's Gothic". Single letter lines used 4" high letters; double line, 3 1/4".

SIGN SLOGANS

The Internet can be a source of the various sign slogans. The slogans on the signs fell into different categories. Here are a few for you to consider, some of which have a railroad theme:

1937 Slogan at the Rochester and Genesee Valley Railroad Museum.

DRIVE
WITH CARE
BE ALIVE
WHEN YOU ARRIVE

1939

DRIVE LIKE
A RAILROAD ENGINEER
TAKE IT EASY
WHEN THE ROAD'S
NOT CLEAR

1941

REMEMBER THIS
IF YOU'D
BE SPARED
TRAINS DON'T WHISTLE
BECAUSE THEY ARE SCARED.

1941

TRAINS DON'T WANDER
ALL OVER THE MAP
FOR NO ONE
SITS ON
THE ENGINEER'S LAP.

1949

GUYS WHOSE EYES
ARE IN
THEIR BACKS
GET HALOS CROSSING
RAILROAD TRACKS.

1949

HE SAW
THE TRAIN
AND TRIED TO DUCK IT
KICKED FIRST THE GAS
AND THEN THE BUCKET

1950

HE TRIED
TO CROSS
AS FAST TRAIN NEARED
DEATH DIDN'T DRAFT HIM
HE VOLUNTEERED.

1951

TRAIN WRECKS FEW
REASON CLEAR
FIREMAN
NEVER HUGS
ENGINEER.

1951

TRAIN APPROACHING
WHISTLE SQUEALING
PAUSE!
AVOID THAT
RUNDOWN FEELING

¹ Reprinted with permission of *Mainline Modeler Magazine*

² Roadside Architecture in 1950's America: www2.kenyon.edu

Burma-Shave Slogans of the Fifties: www.fiftiesweb.com

³ A Plume/Penguin Book

⁴ In some instances, four or six.

Happy Hanukkah

*Best Wishes for
2006!*

CALIFORNIA COAST, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND TEXAS ESCORTED RAIL TOUR

The Rochester Chapter NRHS is sponsoring it's 7th semi-annual 2 week escorted rail trip. The trip departs Rochester SUNDAY MAY 7, 2006 AND RETURNS THURSDAY MAY 25, 2006. (18 Days).

The trip departs and returns from the Rochester's Amtrak Station on Central Avenue. All rail travel is on Amtrak and is in standard sleeping rooms except from Santa Barbara CA-Los Angeles (3 hours) will be in coach.

Stops will be made in Glenwood Springs Colorado, (1 night), San Francisco CA (3 Nights), Monterey and San Luis Obispo CA (1 night each), Santa Barbara CA, (2 nights), Los Angeles CA (1 night). We will then be traveling by Amtrak to San Antonio Texas for (3 nights) staying on the famous Riverwalk. All hotels are AAA 3 diamond except in Beverly Hills CA which will be 4 diamond property.

Tours include 5 course dinner on the Wine Train in Napa Valley CA, tour of Hearst Castle, tour of Santa Barbara, movie stars tour in Beverly Hills CA and tour of San Antonio Texas.

Total bussing on trip 400 miles over a 3 day span in California.

Meals 60% which include all meals on trains and all breakfasts in hotels.

Trip includes all rail and sleeping car fare, all hotels, all taxes and transfers, all tours, baggage handling, all tips except for meals on trains and sleeping car attendants.

Cost is \$2975.00 per person double occupancy in standard sleeping rooms on trains.

For more information please telephone Jim East, Chapter Tour Guide at 585-377-5389.



Editor'

S

Last September, I took off on a road trip to Binghamton and vicinity. Primary purpose was to attend a theater organ concert at that city's Forum Theater with an instrument which I never heard before. Secondary was to visit local rail sites.

First was overlooking the yard by the DL&W depot which is coming along nicely with its restoration. Saw a "trash" train leaving the yard going west with gondolas filled with rubble. However, I missed seeing the really big yard there.

The following day was a trip into Pennsylvania going to Big Bend, which fascinated me on the map as the "big bend on the Susquehanna River" figures into my Smith family history. Well, if you blinked you would have missed Big Bend! But the area apparently has a lot of railroad history. After breakfast at the local diner, took PA

Route 171 towards Susquehanna in anticipation of seeing the famed Starruca Viaduct. Most of the road was freshly paved, but still with many turns and mounds. Several miles after passing Susquehanna came to a small hamlet and crossroad, then around the bend — WOW! There was this great stone structure constructed in the 1850s.

Its like seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time. From pictures you don't get the same sensation as actually seeing it. I knew that the D&H passed under it, but could not find signs of the ROW, until I looked at my pictures at home: my van was parked on it!

Rochester Chapter National Railway Historical Society
The Semaphore
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Happy Holidays!

Chapter Meeting & Program:
**Williamsport, PA - in
 the Steam Era**
 by **Bill Bigler**
 7:30 PM
Thursday, December 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				