



# The Semaphore

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

July 2006  
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## Program for July 20:

### Let's Take a Train Ride!

Yes, it's time to admire the accomplishments of our hard working volunteers by coming out to the Industry Depot on third Thursdays in July and August to enjoy rides on the Rochester and Genesee Valley Railroad!

The Motive Power Group will assemble equipment from our vast inventory of rolling stock for us to appreciate. Trains should be rolling by 6 PM until dark. (A brief meeting will be held - whenever.)

**Where:** Industry Depot, NYS Route 251

Guests welcomed; children must be supervised at all times!

### **Future Programs** (Subject to change!)

**July 20 and August 17:** All meetings and activities are at the Industry location.

**Sept. 21:** *Nickel Plate Diesels*, by Bill Quick

**Oct. 19:** *Photos of the LV and EL*, by Ken Kramer

**Nov. 16:** *American Orient Express Ltd.*, by Bob Achilles

**Dec. 21:** *Depots in New York State*, by John Stewart and Charles Woolever

### **2007**

**Jan. 18:** *Gold Coast and Danbury RR Museums*, by Harold Russell

**Feb. 15:** *RPO Car Operation*, by Chris Hauf

**Mar. 15:** *Members' Slide Night*

**Apr. 19:** *Rochester Branch of LV RR*, by John Stewart

### **Chapter Library**

11 May Street, Webster (by OMID Tracks)

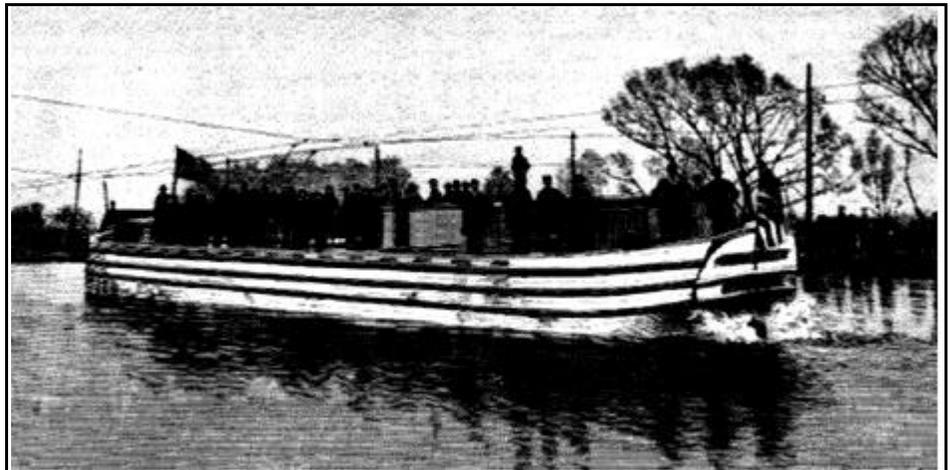
**NOTE: We're back to Summer hours!!**

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

**Monday, July 24, 2006**

**Library Phone: 872-4641**

## **An Electric Trolley System— on the Erie Canal — near Rochester!**



Leave it to our Chapter Historian, Donovan Shilling, to uncover this interesting item of history. His researched article appears on Page 6.

The above was scanned from a colored copy from *Scientific American*. Some detail was lost. Look carefully and you will see two trolley wires over the boat, plus poles on the canal's edge to support them.

## **Update on the Empire State Express fleet**

*by Bob Achilles*

Many of you know that our Empire State Express cars have been out of service since late 2004. After the fall foliage trips run that year, the Ontario Midland moved the cars to Newark for storage instead of Webster. They have been there ever since, have suffered some vandalism, and are not earning us any income.

Earlier this year, the NRHS Board of Trustees authorized an expenditure to cover the installation of a switch by the L.A.&L. off of the L.A.&L. mainline north of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum. That switch coupled with the construction by R&GVRR Museum volunteers of a 1400 foot siding on the property to the west of the LA&L currently used for equipment storage will provide a new home for our cars. They will be less subject to vandalism and will be much more convenient for performing maintenance and upgrading since they will be located at the R&GV Railroad Museum.

Of course implicit in all of this is the need to move the cars via the Ontario Midland, CSX and the L.A. & L. from Newark to Rush. There are several things that need to be done to the cars to prepare them for the move. Work needed includes freeing up a frozen pedestal liner on one of the coaches, installation of AEI tags on all 7 cars and installation of protective plastic covers on 3 of the end door windows to keep them secure while the pedestal liner is being repaired. Currently one of the plastic covers has been installed and the other two are in progress. Once they are completed we can have the Ontario Midland switch out the coach with the bad pedestal liner so we can set up for that repair. The AEI tags have been purchased and programmed. The mounting plates for them have been made and are ready for installation. It is planned to have all this work completed by the time the new siding is ready. Construction of that siding is planned to begin later this summer following the completion of the new trackwork at the Restoration Building.

Help will be needed to complete all of this work. If you can be of assistance, please contact Dave Luca (288-0318) or Bob Achil-

## 2006 Track Motor Car Operator's Schedule

| Date       | Operator A    | Operator B     | Operator C   | Prim TC |
|------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------|
| July 15*   | Mike Murphy   | Bob Mader      | Al Emens     | TC-1    |
| July 16    | Ryan Kane     | Dave Mitchell  | Jerry Doerr  | TC-3    |
| July 22*   | Bob Mader     | OPEN           | OPEN         | TC-1    |
| July 23    | Steve Huse    | Jerry Doerr    | OPEN         |         |
| July 29*   | Joe Werner    | Mike Murphy    |              | TC-3    |
| July 30    | Bob Moore     | Harold Russell | Bob Achilles |         |
| August 5*  |               | Mike Murphy    | OPEN         |         |
| August 6   | Dave Mitchell | OPEN           | OPEN         |         |
| August 12* |               | Bob Achilles   | OPEN         |         |
| August 13  |               | Al Emens       | OPEN         |         |

\* Saturday, rest are Sundays

### One Track Car Operator needed for Sat. and one for Sunday for Diesel Days!

This year we have 45 qualified track car operators including 8 new people. As we need 3 operators each Sunday, there are ample operating opportunities. Please call Harold Russell, 427-9159 or e-mail at Haroldrussell@juno.com if you would like to be included.

## Membership Report

Jessica Stallone, Membership Chair  
585-350-9306; membership@rochnrhs.org

Please add these renewal to your 2006

Roster:

**Michael Root**  
52 Nattlecreek Rd.  
Fairport, NY 14450-3047

**David Goodwin**  
3211 Sweden Walker Rd.  
Brockport, NY 14420-9316

### NOTICE

If you have renewed your membership this year and still have not received your membership card, please let me know. If you have not yet renewed, you should have received a second renewal notice in the mail. Please send your renewal to the address listed on the renewal notice or to this address: **Jessica Stallone, 60 High Manor Drive Apt 1, Henrietta, NY 14467.**

## Depot Guides

by Dave Peet

July 9: Bill Benzing  
July 16: John Stewart  
July 23: OPEN  
July 30: OPEN

We **desperately** need more people to volunteer for Sunday duty as a Depot Guide. Two people makes it much easier and more fun!

Arrive at Industry by 11:00 AM and leave by 4:30 PM (usually there are no more guests from 4:00 PM on.)

Please email Dave Peet at dpeet@rochnrhs.org or phone at 586-8964.

## Caboose Day photos on Page 7

### Charles Robinson recipient of Fairmont Cup for 2006

Rochester Chapter NRHS President, Jeremy Tuke, presents the Fairmont Cup award to Charles Robinson during the 2006 Rochester Chapter Banquet on June 11.

Over the years, Charles has devoted many hours maintaining the Library building and overseeing its contents. [Chris Hauf photo & caption]

## Member Recruiting Night

by Jesse Marks, Publicity Chairman

Bring your family! Tell your friends! Invite your neighbors! At the July chapter meeting, members are encouraged to bring family, friends, and neighbors who are interested in railroads, equipment, and railroad history or just looking to get out of the house. There will be membership applications available for those who would like to join our organization as well.

*Note:* Please be careful when bringing small children to the museum and when around heavy equipment.

## Have you ....

... Signed up for **Track Car Operations?**

... Signed up for **Depot Guide duty?**

## 2006 Special Events

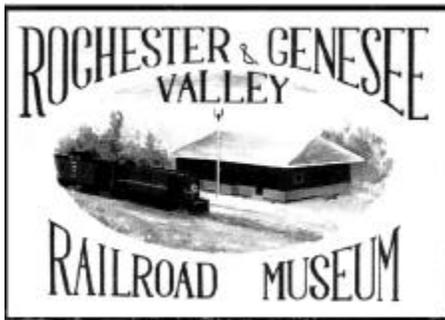
**July 15 - Aug 20** Saturday hours;  
The museums are open both Saturday and Sunday from 11 AM - 5 PM.

**July 15-16 (Sat & Sun):** Trolley Rides begin; "Rochester Subway Anniversary Celebration"

**August 19-20 (Sat. & Sun.):** "Diesel Days"

**Oct 29 (Sun.):** Last day of Joint Operations.





## Motive Power Report

by John Redden

### General:

#### Plymouth Gasoline Locomotive :

June was another productive month for the volunteers restoring the Plymouth BL locomotive. A large steel bar has been carefully fitted to reinforce the side frame of the locomotive. Also, the final hook-up of the fuel system has been completed. Thanks to Ron Amberger, temporary electrical wiring was also installed. This wiring controls the starter, magneto, and the new electric fuel pump.

The original gasoline fuel tank was mounted high in the cab and provided a gravity fuel feed, so no pump was needed with that arrangement. For safety purposes, we selected a new fuel tank location under the Buda engine, and this location requires a pump. The original tank has been restored and installed, as a non-functioning unit in order to maintain the original appearance of the locomotive.

A great deal of work has been put into the restoration of the radiator. Project Foreman Kevin Klees has chosen to essentially manufacture a new radiator that mates with existing Plymouth castings. This serves the vital function of providing cooling to the prime mover, and follows the original locomotive design. Kevin has put forth considerable effort in designing, machining, and assembling parts that will give us a very close replica of the original Plymouth radiator. Machining the slots in the new end sheets to accept the tubes ends is complete. Welding of the new radiator side frame is also complete. This side frame was produced to replicate the original, which was missing when the locomotive was acquired. One of the radiator core sections has been soldered to one end sheet. After cleaning up the other core section it will also be soldered to that end sheet. Then, the other end sheet will be installed and soldering completed. Right now 120 out of 480 solder joints are complete.

Hopefully the radiator will be installed

**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

some time in July. When this is completed, we will be able to start the Buda engine, for the first time in many decades.

### Diesels:

Following on our report from last month, the **EK-9** was re-started this month, and performed switching duties on the isolated portion of Siding 6, near the restoration building.

Matthew Tuke took the alarm bell from the **NKP-79** to his house, removed all of the old paint, and repainted it into a nice bright red. This bell has now been re-installed, so any visitors to the cab of the 79 should check this out. 79 has also had some preliminary work done, in order to get it operable for this summer season. Water and rust inhibitor were replaced in the cooling system, and the batteries have been serviced.

A large group of volunteers have helped to get the **USA-1843** back to operational status. Using Dan Waterstraat's new quad battery test meter, we were able to isolate one bad battery. This month, the bad one was removed and replaced with a recently-acquired battery. This work was performed by Dan, Scott Gleason, Bob Mader, and Norm Shaddick. The 1843 was then inspected, pre-lubricated and started by Daniel Tuke, Charlie Harshbarger, James Johnson, Christopher Hauf, John Redden, and Norm Shaddick. Dick Holbert adjusted the voltage regulator, and got the locomotive auxiliary generator to charge the 1843 batteries again. Dick also made improvements to the on-board communications in the 1843.

Motive Power extends a "Thank you" to Bob Mader and Kevin Klees, who each independently brought their ring compressor tools, to assist in the installation of the pistons into the number one prime mover on locomotive **1941**. All cylinder liners have been cleaned up, properly shimmed, and re-installed, with guidance from Art Mummery. We hope to have most of the remaining parts installed on the engine this month. If all goes well, this prime mover could be back on line before Fall, and we will be able to use the 1941 for the first time in several years.

Our pair of 80-tonners were used for our now-annual Caboose Day event on Father's Day. Both engineers provided us with reports on their operation, and Conductor Steve Huse also sent us a nice written report on his

findings from that operation. Our thanks to all.

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

## Machine shop news:

by John Redden

Work has continued on our three phase converter. James Johnson has connected this to our commercial single-phase power, and has had the converter running. As soon as the output wiring connections are complete, we will be able to fire up our very large drill press. Thanks, Jim.

## Trolley Operations

by Rand Warner

Trolley #168 (P&W) has been running every Tuesday and/or Saturday since April 1<sup>st</sup>, in support of checkout, and operator training activities.

Charlie Lowe and Bob Achilles have been working on overhead adjustments.

Rand Warner, Jim Johnson, Dick Holbert and Charles Harshbarger have completed rail bonding, frog bonding and grounding to support operations of active track.

Bob Miner, Charlie Lowe & Co. have been running down any bugs on Car #168.

Charlie Lowe, Ted Strang, Tony Mittiga and Paul Monte did a heroic job of rail grinding for several hundred feet, to reprofile rail heads to reduce wheel wear.

The new 300kw substation continues to work well, manned by Dick Holbert and Jim Johnson.

Numerous motorman training sessions have been conducted hands on using Car #168.

**The weekend of 15 July will be our official public launch of this new attraction.**

**July 15-16 (Sat & Sun):  
 Trolley Rides begin!  
 "Rochester Subway  
 Anniversary Celebration"**

## Roof Report

by John Redden

Most of our rolling stock is currently displayed and/or stored outside. While this makes the pieces more easily viewable, it also exposes them to the elements. Last year, we had a Roof Repair Party in late June, that performed much-needed repairs on the *Pine Falls* roof. This year, a couple of other pieces of rolling stock are getting attention.

Charlie Marks and his son Jesse, have taken the initiative to repair the roof on the New York Central caboose. While this car had been fully restored and repainted less than 20 years ago, the Rochester weather has not been kind to it. The Marks Team has started structural repairs, and have cleaned up old roofing material. In addition, they have added new roll-roofing to most of the roof of the car. They also re-tarped the remaining exposed areas of the roof until they can be given more permanent repairs. More work will be necessary in the area of the cupola and windows. Once the roofing work is completed, Charlie intends to move to the end platforms, which have suffered considerable deterioration in recent years. Many thanks to Charlie and Jesse for taking on this task.

The other roof that has had recent attention is the tamper. Our tamper was donated by Eastman Kodak about 20 years ago. It is one of our most modern pieces of equipment, having been built in 1969. However the sheet metal roof has been out in the weather for the entire time that we've owned it. The metal was starting to fail due to corrosion, so we removed the roof and took it into the Restoration Building, last Winter. We have been cleaning it up, priming rusty areas, and patching holes. This will not be a restoration to its original condition, but it will protect the roof structure from further deterioration, and keep the water off of the operator's controls for the Tamper. Thanks to Dan Waterstraat, Dale Hartnett, Ed Van Horn, Norm Shaddick, John Redden, and several others, for helping on this job.

### 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.

### Returnable cans can help Steam Fund

You can help turn returnable cans into cash for our steam fund by donating them to the Chapter **any time**. There is a receptacle in the Baggage Room at the Museum.

## Track & Right-of-way

by Rand Warner

Mark Pappalardo & Co. have completed ditch work along east side of main line in Hill Block north of our Depot.

Flat yard grading has been completed north of the Restoration Building by Joe Scanlon's Construction Division.

About 300 feet of French drain has been installed along the east side of Track #6 north from the Restoration Building. Luther Keyes provided backhoe service.

We are now ready to start laying down existing track panels for Track #7 and to start construction of Switches #7 and #8.

Track and Switch parts in 80# DU and 90# RA are staged nearby ready to support construction. New and relay ties and switch timbers are on hand to support yard track construction.

Track should be under construction by the time you read this!! — [Ed. and so it was, see photo on Page 5.]

## Railroad Depots on the Move

by Rand Warner

Quite a number of railroad stations in our area have been relocated to new locations and new uses:

1. DL&W depot at Greigsville - relocated for use as a private residence on nearby Federal road.

2. RW&O depot at Ontario - was relocated recently to nearby local museum site in Town of Ontario.

[Editor: The Democrat & Chronicle had a photograph and article about this move. Information on the museum is available at [www.heritagesquaremuseum.org](http://www.heritagesquaremuseum.org).]

3. B&O/BR&P depot at Hardy's - relocated off site to adjacent private property.

4. Erie depot at Geneseo - relocated within Geneseo to a village park.

5. DL&W depot from Linwood - relocated to Fowlerville area and for a while was "Station 42" restaurant. Now a private residence.

Can you help us to expand this listing Call Rand Warner (425-8586) or Lynn Heintz (768-6984).

### Contributors to this issue

Chris Hauf, Lynn Heintz, Jesse Marks, Dave Peet, John Redden, Harold Russell, Donovan Shilling, Jessica Stallone, Jeremy Tuke, and Rand Warner and various publications as indicated.

## Library Report

Charles Robinson, Chairman

The library will be open for general use Monday evening, July 24, between the hours of 7:00 and 9:00 PM. Our air conditioning is working so come on out for a cool evening read.

Jerry Gillette and the library chairman continue to examine and list the vast collection of Richard Barrett's 35mm slides. We are finding a large number of them that are non-railroad related and can be segregated in a separate filing system. Many are scenes looking out of train windows at the passing scenery and these are of some interest as an example of what can be seen during his trip. Photos of locomotives, cars and interesting right of way are being considered as the most important.

NYMT has had an over flow of railroad acquisitions and we have received a few boxes of maps, time tables and some publications from them. We do appreciate the opportunity to review this material before it was thrown out by NYMT. Gale Smith keeps on enrolling additional books into the computer listing and assigning call numbers.

We look forward to a visit from you on the evening of July 24.

## Shelving

by Lynn Heintz

Donation has been received of 6 pallets of steel shelving from a warehouse in Batavia. The shelf sizes are 12", 18" & 24" by 36" wide, height ranges are 6' & 7'. This is commercial shelving, green or gray; and if you are fussy may need a quick coat of paint.

Initial queries have received the answer that we have enough at Industry, but if any project leaders need some for their project please contact me. I will then offer it to members with the public to follow. The proceeds will be used for the REA truck, which, needs a radiator, distributor, brake rebuild and some profes-

## Flooding

Most of you have probably been following the flooding status as it affects the railroads. One website is [www.railroad.net](http://www.railroad.net).

Jeremy Tuke sent an abstract of the news. Hard hit was the Binghamton area and northern Pennsylvania, involving NYS&W, CN/D&H, and NS. NS escaped major damages but hurt operations from use of flood gates.

CSX/Amtrak was affected between Albany and Schenectady, which reduced traffic thru Rochester.

## WAG Plow Update...

*And searching for descent weather*

*by Jesse Marks*

As soon as a few good weeks of mostly dry weather show up, the scraping, sanding, and priming will resume on the WAG snowplow. The weather over the past week or so (mid June), as many of us know, has been pretty damp, especially around the depot. For every day the plow soaks in the rain, it usually takes at least 2-3 days of good hot and breezy weather to dry it out. When the wood is wet you tend to scrape just as much wood off as paint - I'm trying to avoid that. Watching the weather forecasts, it turns into a guessing game on which days it could really rain and other days where it says chance of rain/thunderstorms but then it turns out to be nice and sunny. Or the classic WNY weather where it is sunny where I live but pouring rain at the depot or vice versa. I'll win this battle eventually. (Thanks for putting up with my weather rant.)

Restoration work still includes scraping and sanding on the east side back half. Some wood repair is needed on the very back as well as on the west side behind the wing. When the wood work is finished on these two sides, sanding and priming can begin. A second coat of primer on the wood behind the east wing is also pending.

The WAG plow site ([www.wagplow.org](http://www.wagplow.org)) will be updated in a few weeks as well. I ran into a technical problem with the site about a week or so ago but have been able to fix it since then.

A few stats about the site to date:

Total site visits since November 2004:

38,368

Monthly average number of visits: 1,827

Most site visits in one month: April 2006:

8,512

Thanks to all!

*Are you tired of having to hand over your money to OPEC every time you fill up at the pump? Tell OPEC where to put their oil by instead sending a donation to the WAG Fund...which is tax deductible...contributions are always appreciated!*

## Shows, etc.

**Sept. 23, 24: Finger Lakes Live Steamers Fall Open House.** Go to FLLS website for map: [www.fingerlakeslivesteamers.org](http://www.fingerlakeslivesteamers.org). \*

**Sept. 10: Buffalo Central Terminal First Train Show,** Buffalo, NY.

**Nov. 4-5: Train Show and Sale** at New York State Fairgrounds, Syracuse.

**Dec. 9-10: New and Expanded Two Day RIT Train Show and Sale.** RIT Model Railroad Club.

## Upcoming Anniversaries

? **2006 is 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** of our legal acquisition of our Erie Depot from Erie Railroad for the sum of \$1.00.

? **2007: 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** of the Rochester Chapter, National Railway Historical Society!

*How can we have significant & appropriate recognitions events & celebrations??*

## An Another Forthcoming Anniversary

*by Rand Warner*

We are sitting smack dab on top of the Erie Railroad's pioneering high voltage, single-phase, alternating current electrification project for its Rochester-Avon-Mt. Morris portion of the Rochester-Corning Division.

Service change over from steam to electric trains was effected 18 June 1907. Interurban style wood and steel cars operated

using 11,000 volt ac overhead, with current pick up by pantograph.

Our present Industry depot was built and opened for use in conjunction with the new electric passenger service.

The present LA&L RR track running past our Depot still has rail bonds on many of the rail joints for 11,000 volt AC.

There are a number of possibilities available for us to highlight our local Erie electrification project's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Stay tuned ...

## Track laying BEGINS!

With grading complete for Track #7, three permanent track panels were placed and connected heading north out of the west bay of the Restoration Building. This is a great milestone which the R&GVRM hopes to keep building on for the rest of the summer with the goal of connected track to the Restoration Building later this summer! Can you help? We need volunteers to help install the track and switches AND we need donations to our Capital Fund so we can continue to fund this project to completion. *[Chris Hauf photo & caption]*



## THE GREAT TROLLEY BOAT TRIAL ON THE ERIE CANAL

Research: **Donovan A. Shilling**

Most of you know about those teams of horses and mules that once towed hundreds of packet and freight boats along the old Erie Canal. Their muscle power moved many tons of cargo and many thousands of passengers helping New York State to win its title as being the "Empire State." However, did you know that a very modern form of energy was once strongly considered to replace old dobbin? Long before the gasoline engine was to dominate our transportation Systems, there were efforts to use ELECTRICITY as a means of propulsion on the Erie Canal.

The year was 1893. President Grover Cleveland had taken office, Thomas Edison had just patented a camera that he called the "kinetoscope" and train loads of people were flocking to Chicago to enjoy a spectacular world's fair, known as the Columbian Exposition. New York State engineers were eager to apply electricity to the Erie's canal boats. The concept was met with enthusiasm. However, the practicality of such a plan needed to be demonstrated to the public and to potential financial backers.

Thus, in March \$10,000 was appropriated to string electric lines above a portion of the Erie Canal's waters to move its huge fleet of cargo vessels. To accomplish this, a site was needed where the canal's course was relatively straight and had an abundant power supply. Accordingly, state engineers chose a location near Rochester, New York for their demonstration. The community was well known as the birth place of many inventions, and more importantly, the city's Cataract Electric Company could furnish an ample supply of power.

On November thirteenth, 1893, a crew of workmen descended upon a section of the Erie canal just east of the village of Brighton, New York in an area between locks 63 and 64. Here they converted a packet boat into a utility vessel. A twelve foot platform was added to its deck enabling workmen to install trolley

span wires above the canal. Others anchored the wires to poles lining the canal every fifty feet stretching along both sides of the water way for over a mile. In record time the overhead wiring project was complete.

Meanwhile, in Pittsford, New York, electrical engineers leased a packet boat called the Frank W Hawley. The boat was overhauled adding the two 25-horsepower Westinghouse motors connected to a fifty-one inch dish-pan propeller. Additionally, two long poles bearing the tiny trolley wheels needed to deliver current from the overhead wires

With this accomplished, word was sent to dignitaries from Albany, Rochester, Brighton and Pittsford. The *Frank W. Hawley*, decked out with American flags fore and aft, was proudly anchored just beyond an area called the eastern wide-waters. It was shaded by Cobb's Hill in water not yet drained from the canal at the season's end. On the morning of November eighteenth, a skim of ice could be seen on the canal's frosty waters.

Buggies were arriving, some from Rochester's New York Central terminal, others from that city and surrounding villages, all bearing great numbers of men dressed in warm top coats, bowlers or high top hats. Over 300 engineers, electricians and political leaders massed along the canal banks. Many boarded the water craft assembling around New York State's Governor Flowers, who was personally interested in the outcome of the novel experiment. Stationing himself behind at the boat's steering wheel, the governor struck his best political pose. Ashore, a group of photographers took pictures of the historic occasion while other newspaper artists made sketches of the unique "trolley-boat."

At a signal from the Governor, an official threw a knife switch. This produced a small flood of bubbling water at the vessel's stern. At first, nothing seemed to happen, then slowly the vessel moved. With ever growing speed the *Frank W. Hawley* floated quietly along at just under five miles an hour, its passengers shouting their approval, applauding and waving their hats to spectators lining the canal banks.

Governor Flowers deemed the experiment "most satisfactory."

So why wasn't the Erie Canal electrified...? There are several possible answers, chief among them, the financial panic of 1893. And too, political wrangling over the electrical contract hampered the plan. There were numerous engineering problems that needed solving, including how to place the trolley wires to accommodate boats traveling through locks, over "wide-water" stretches or under rising and lowering lift bridges. Further was the difficulty of traveling in rural areas not yet served by electricity, plus the fact that water and electricity can often create a potentially hazardous combination. Finally, there was the introduction and rapid acceptance of the internal combustion engine.

State engineers had a great idea, well ahead of its time. However, it just didn't float. What kind of world might we have had today if we'd built our transportation systems based on electricity not

History has its unusual coincidences. One deals with the 1893 trolley line erected above the Erie Canal near Brighton. On September 3, 1927, the city of Rochester initiated its first run of subway passenger cars over that same mile stretch used in the trolley-boat demonstration. Built thirty-four years later, the Rochester Rapid Transit and Industrial Railway electrified the canal bed corridor as part of its new subway line. Like the proposed canal electrification project, the subway succumbed to the internal combustion engines of the Rochester Transit Corporation on June 30, 1956.

"THEY'RE AFTER FRANK HAWLEY".... These headlines appeared on page six of Rochester's morning paper Mr. Hawley was an influential resident of Pittsford, New York. In 1888 he owned a large stock farm and most impressive Victorian home on the village's Main Street. It was said that ~ "made quite a splash" traveling around the community in a handsome tally-ho carriage driven by a uniformed coachman accompanied by a footman who blew a long bugle at intervals.

(Continued on next page)

## 'Trolley' on Canal

(Continued from Page 6)

On his estate he established a baseball field and a deer park, on the nearby Erie Canal he operated a boat line. It was also remembered that he once had many New York City connections and once owned a private rail car on the New York and Hudson River Railroad.

His life style caused him to run up considerable bills of credit. Sometime between 1895-96 he mysteriously disappeared with a mountain of unpaid debts. The Rochester newspaper account stated the Hawley was a "Director of the Cataract General Electric Company, the New York and New Jersey Ice Lines, the Elcho Mining and Manufacturing Company of Randolph, New York, and the Erie Canal Traction Company. The article continued adding, "he has risen from a fifteen-dollar-a-week reporter to the distinction of owing \$100,000 worth of bank notes.... Socially, Mr. Hawley is one of the best fellows that ever lived. He is past master in the art of saying pleasant things. If words were dollars, he would be a multi-millionaire."

Some said he wound up in a debtors prison in Scotland. Others, that he secretly returned to his home from time to time. Hawley's wife, Mrs. Estelle Hawley, continued to manage the farm. She became locally famous for the fine line of Shetland ponies she bred on the farm up until the First World War. Today the estate, known as the Pittsford Dairy Farm, is still in operation in the heart of the village. It boasts of selling the highest quality dairy products and its rich Guernsey milk egg nog is a holiday necessity for hundreds of local citizens.

*Editor: One other canal+trolley experiment comes to mind. In southwestern Ohio, on the Miami Erie Canal, they tried a trolley, running on the towpath, to pull the canal boats.*

*And of course there is the Panama Canal, where electric locomotives pull the boats through the locks to this day.*

## Caboose Day (June 18) photographs of the event



R&GVRR 1654 pulls Erie C254 past the B&O position light signal just south of Switch #6 during Caboose Day 2006. [Chris Hauf photo & caption]



R&GVRR Museum volunteer, Dave Peet, helps a boy and his mother off of Erie C254 visiting the R&GV Railroad Museum during Caboose Day 2006. [Chris Hauf photo & caption]



### Those 'Senior Moments'

Moment #1: At the time of making the Banquet reservation, I wrote two checks: one to the Chapter, an another to a charity. Upon mailing same, those checks were placed in the others envelopes.

The first alert: that I had two collectors mugs, but I asked for one reservation!

The second alert was that the charity wrote back, including the banquet check, asking for the indicated contribution. A correct check was sent - with an apology.

The end result: upon receiving my cancelled checks, it was noted that the chapter had deposited the charity's check in the chapter's account. Neither the chapter's officials nor the bank caught the error. Thus, with our modern technology, it appears that you can take any check payable to whoever, endorse it as a 'deposit' and will be credited to your account! (PS: don't try this at home.)

Moment #2: The weekend of the banquet was lost for me. On Saturday, forgot about a theater organ concert in the evening. Then on Sunday, forgot about the banquet! Thus missed socializing with fellow chapter members, fine food, and excellent program, from what I have since learned.

Must remember to put those dates on the wall calendar. BUT that doesn't work either if you don't look at the calendar—such an almost missed date for weekday TC operation at NYMT; caught that one just in time.

### Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley RR ..

.. is the railroad owned and operated by the Leatherstocking Chapter, NRHS as a tourist line. It was a former D&H branch.

Attempts to find its status, with respect to the flooding, has not bore fruit. However, from news accounts of the area, one would expect that they may have endured severe damage, as the line is near a river. In the past, beavers building dams have been a frequent headache.

Rochester Chapter National Railway Historical Society  
**The Semaphore**  
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Chapter Meeting & Program:  
**It's Summer! Let's  
 Ride Trains!!**  
 (Begins at 6 PM)  
**Thursday, July 20, 2006**  
**Industry Depot**  
**Route 251, Rush, NY**



**Rochester Chapter NRHS**

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*Vice President:* Robert Achilles  
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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 was 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.

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

**InterNet (World Wide Web) addresses:**  
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