

# THE SEMAPHORE

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

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MARCH 2017

**NEXT MEETING:**  
**April 20**  
**Bob Zimmermann**  
presents  
**"Cleveland 1975-1983"**



Not quite Despatch Shops, but volunteers are making great progress on our new open-air rider flatcar. Built on the frame of Lowville & Beaver River No. 23 (ex-U.S. Army), this new car will more than double our passenger capacity for special events. OTTO VONDRAK PHOTO

## A Head of Steam

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There's so much to go on this year, from an expanded train ride schedule to the addition of a real steam locomotive to the mix. Make this the year you volunteer! We can use help in all areas, from greeting customers, to working on train crew, to keeping our equipment in top shape. Are you willing to join the many new faces volunteering this year? Can you spare a few hours to help out?

I hope you will join me at our museum's 80th Anniversary Banquet celebration on **Saturday, March 18**, at the River's Edge Party House. **Doug Eisle** will be our guest speaker to share his experiences working for local shortline operator Genesee Valley Transportation.

Annual Rules Class will be **Saturday, March 25**, and moves to the meeting room at the 40&8 Club downtown. This

classroom session is the first step you need to complete if you are interested in volunteering for train service, but there is important safety instruction in the first part of the class all volunteers should take part in. Contact Mark Wilczek to RSVP.

Our first train rides will be on **Saturday, April 15**, as we host Easter Bunny Train Rides at the museum. This should be a fun event for everyone involving an egg hunt and visits with the Easter Bunny.

**We are making plans for the future.** What do you want to see at your museum in years to come? What ideas could we develop better? How can we grow? I want to hear from you... Please contact me at (716) 474-2833 or [mdow@rochester.rr.com](mailto:mdow@rochester.rr.com).

—Mike Dow,  
Museum President



ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY  
RAILROAD MUSEUM

[www.rgvrrm.org](http://www.rgvrrm.org)

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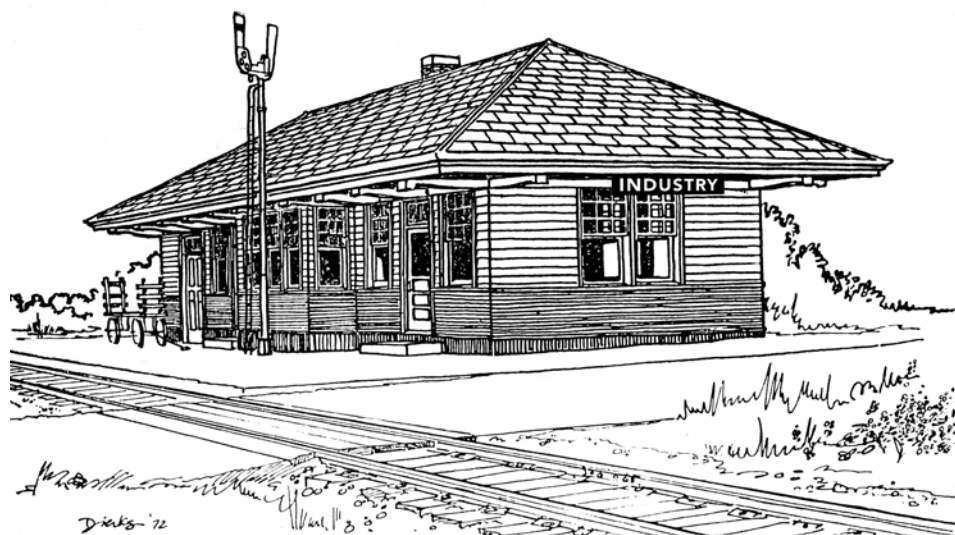
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## 2017 SCHEDULE

Please note some dates and activities are subject to change. Please visit our [www.rgvrrm.org](http://www.rgvrrm.org) and [www.RochesterTrainRides.com](http://www.RochesterTrainRides.com) for details.

**March 18** – 80th Anniversary Museum Banquet

**March 25** – Annual Rules Class at 40&8 Club

**April 8** – Saturday Hands-On Training Day

**April 15** – Easter Bunny Trains Special Event Day

**May 14** – Sunday Hands-On Training Day

**May 20** – Rails and Ales Special Event Day

**June 10** – Saturday Hands-On Training Day

**June 17-18** – Rochester Subway Heritage Weekend

**July 15-16** – Craft Show and Train Rides

**August 12** – Members Picnic at Industry Depot

**August 19-20** – Viscose 6 Steam Engine Train Rides

**August 26-27** – Viscose 6 Steam Engine Train Rides

**September 16-17** – Diesel Days Train Rides

**October 14-15** – Pumpkin Patch Trains

**October 21-22** – Pumpkin Patch Trains

**October 28-29** – Pumpkin Patch Trains

**December 8** – Holiday Open House

**December 9** – Santa Trains

**December 16** – Santa Trains

<https://tinyurl.com/2017-RGV-Train-Crew-Schedule>

<https://tinyurl.com/2017-RGV-Ground-Crew-Schedule>

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**MONTHLY PROGRAM**

Monthly meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at the 40 & 8 Club, 933 University Ave., Rochester, at 7:00 p.m. Please join us on **March 16**, member **Duncan Richards** will present an exciting and colorful gallery of scenes around Rochester in the years immediately following the Conrail split of 1999. This presentation will look at how things have changed locally since CSX became the dominant player in the Rochester area, including some of the myriad of locomotives that were rented or “borrowed” to keep operations moving.

On **April 20**, **Bob Zimmerman** presents “Cleveland 1975-1983.” In the mid-1970’s, many of Penn Central’s old Alcos and F-units migrated from western New York to Cleveland, Ohio. On October 31, 1975, Amtrak inaugurated the *Lake Shore Limited*, providing service west of Buffalo. Cleveland has had an extensive rapid transit system, making it possible to travel from the Amtrak station to Collinwood Yard and other points of interest without a car. Take a look at early Conrail operations, plus Norfolk & Western, the industrial flats, Shaker Heights PCC’s, and the Airporter line, with a few surprises along the way.



The cleanup of Brooklyn Navy Yard No. 12 has begun, thanks to Rand Warner (left), Norm Shaddick (right), and project leader Joel R. Shaw (inside the cab). One of the goals of this long-term cosmetic restoration project is to clean all components and inspect for damage prior to reassembly. The Steam Team can usually be found working each Saturday morning, and they invite you to join them.

**Meetings return to Industry Depot starting May 18.** Starting a half-hour earlier at 7:00 p.m., we will enjoy rides on our museum railroad following a brief business meeting. These events are FREE to attend, so bring a friend!

I am looking for programs for our **September, October, November, and December** meetings. If you have a program to present, please contact me. Thank you!

—Adam Lloyd, Program Chair

**GVT’S DOUG EISLE TO SPEAK AT ANNUAL MUSEUM BANQUET**

Your railroad museum is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year! We have certainly come a long way from our humble beginnings in 1937. Please join us on **Saturday, March 18**, and the River’s Edge Party House off Scottsville Road near the airport for our 80th Anniversary Museum Banquet. Not only will we celebrate the rich heritage of our organization, but we will also look forward to the future.

Our guest speaker will be none other than **Doug Eisele**. Besides being a life-long railfan, Doug has just wrapped up a 23-year career at **Genesee Valley Transportation**. He worked as a conductor, engineer, and superintendent at the Depew, Lancaster & Western and the Falls Road Railroad through the 1990s, and later because director of Operations, Safety & Regulatory Compliance for all five GVT railroads.

While Doug’s slide collection dates back to 1968 and numbers more than 250,000, he has promised to share only a few choice selections during our banquet program. We are pleased to have Doug join us, as you’ll learn from his presentation that the story of GVT’s growth and development is tied closely with our own.

Cocktail hour begins at 6:00 p.m. (cash bar), seating for dinner will begin at 7:00. Enjoy a delicious buffet dinner, plus coffee/tea and dessert. Our special guest speaker will follow the volunteer awards and recognitions after dinner. Tickets are **\$35.00** each and are available from our web site at [www.rgvrrm.org](http://www.rgvrrm.org). Seating is limited, so please purchase your tickets today and join us for this very special event.

—Otto Vondrak  
Event Coordinator

**2017 ANNUAL RULES CLASS**

Please join us on **Saturday, March 25**, for our Annual Rules Class, starting at 9:00 a.m. sharp at the **40&8 Club, 933 University Ave., Rochester, N.Y.** This is the annual rules class required for all volunteers who wish to be qualified in train service this year. This is the first step for any new volunteers who want to become part of train crew or volunteer at the museum. The class is split into three parts.

**PART ONE: SAFETY:** Strongly suggested for ALL VOLUNTEERS, regard-



ABOVE: Volunteer Dave Shields assists Perry Bertsch and Rob Burz installing roof rafters on March 4. ABOVE RIGHT: Rob Burz is the project manager on the flatcar project, and is leading the design and construction. We thank Rob for contributing his valuable skills as an independent contractor to this very important project! RIGHT: You can find a “cast of thousands” each Saturday morning contributing to the flatcar project. Volunteers Dave Buckner, Perry Bertch, Rob Burz, Jeremy Tuke, Chris Playford, and Dave Shields were photographed on the morning of February 25 cutting rafters for the roof. Our goal is to place this car into service this summer, to replace the capacity of two cabooses. We will be able to carry more visitors and reduce the number of congestion points for boarding.



less if you are in train service or not. Covers basic rules, safety, radio rules, and good customer service.

**PART TWO: OPERATING:** The second part of the class is devoted to rules of train operation. This second part is required for anyone interested in volunteering for train service (brakeman, conductor, or engineer).

**PART THREE: AIR BRAKES:** The third part of the class is devoted to air brakes and train handling. This third part is required for anyone interested in volunteering as a conductor or engineer.

Donuts and coffee will be provided in the morning. A collection will be taken up for pizza at lunchtime. Soft drinks are available for purchase from the bar. You must bring a pen in order to complete the tests at the end of each session. The class is FREE to attend, but you must RSVP to **Mark Wilczek** at [mwilczek72@gmail.com](mailto:mwilczek72@gmail.com) so we have enough class materials for every-

one attending. We look forward to seeing many new faces in class this year.

—Mark Wilczek,  
Museum Manager

**BR&P 280  
RESTORATION UPDATE**

About how many boards are on the exterior of a wooden caboose? You might not know, but volunteer **Charlie Marks** could give you a pretty good guess. That’s because he is currently heading up the restoration of our museum’s Buffalo Rochester & Pittsburgh Ry. caboose No. 280. Board by board, Charlie and other volunteers are renovating the caboose inside and out.

The BR&P No. 280 is a museum legend of sorts. It was acquired in 1979 and was the first piece of rolling stock on our

museum grounds. Now it is being restored for the second time in almost forty years, and volunteers are excited to draw one step closer to finishing the project.

This past month, Charlie and his team have nearly finished framing out the corners of the caboose and are moving to the roof. **Jeremy Tuke** installed a new lockset on the door to the bathroom, using some “new old stock” hardware he found in an antique shop. Up on top, the Marks team is replacing rotten boards and preparing to install a new membrane roof that will protect the caboose for many years to come.

When asked about the project, Charlie said, “I am just excited about the progress that’s happening, and once this roof is on we’re one step closer to moving this piece out of the shop.” Everyone is excited to see



**TOP LEFT:** Volunteer Charlie Marks makes repairs to roof of the BR&P caboose on March 4, replacing rotten boards as suggested by our roofing contractor. Once exterior repairs to the body are complete, and new windows are installed, the museum will be seeking funds to have a durable membrane roof installed. **TOP RIGHT:** Jeremy Tuke installs a “new old stock” lockset on the bathroom door inside the caboose. **ABOVE LEFT:** Volunteer Justin Miciilo is replacing some of the modern hardware with more period correct peices on February 25. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Progress continues at a steady pace to complete body repairs and make the caboose weathertight so that it can leave its long-time home in the shop and make room for another project.

this car return to active service. You can usually find Charlie working on the caboose most Saturday mornings. If you are interested in helping with this unique rebuild, please don't hesitate to come on out and get involved!

—Branden Hummer

**OPEN-AIR FLATCAR PROJECT UPDATE**

Under the direction of project leader **Rob Burz**, construction of the roof beams and installation of the rafters took place at the end of February and the beginning of

March. Next steps involve sheathing the roof with plywood and corrugated sheet metal. **Joe Nugent** is working on an upgrade to the air brake system that involves replacing the valves. This will make ongoing maintenance much easier. Volunteers meet every Saturday morning in the Restoration Building.

**TED JACKSON'S ERIE RAILROAD BOOK**

Some of you may be aware that long-time member Ted Jackson was preparing a manuscript about the Erie Railroad's

Rochester Division for publication by our museum. Unfortunately, Ted passed away in 2012 before he could see the fruits of his labor. After some years of interruption, your museum is working to bring this work to print as one of our projects for 2017.

The Erie Railroad territory covered in the new book stretches from Rochester to Corning, along with branches to Attica and Mt. Morris, N.Y. Brief chapters also discuss the Dansville & Mt. Morris and the Bath & Hammondsport lines during their brief years of control by the Erie. Also of interest is the electrification of this route

from Rochester to Mt. Morris between 1907 and 1931.

The book is being edited by members **Otto Vondrak** and **Irene Szabo** (who is also a member of the Erie Lackawanna Railroad Historical Society). While the manuscript review is in progress, the publication is in need of additional photos and information to complete the work. Your museum is seeking any additional materials related to this territory, including photos, maps, and timetables (especially any items from our archive that need to be returned). The scope of the book covers acquisition by the Erie in the nineteenth century right through to the Erie Lackawanna and Conrail eras, including operation by the modern-day Livonia, Avon & Lakeville and Bath & Hammondsport shortlines. Anyone with detailed information on freight and passenger operations during the Erie and EL era is also invited to contribute. Please contact Otto Vondrak at [ovondrak@yahoo.com](mailto:ovondrak@yahoo.com) for details.

**NEW PROJECT:  
CLEAN-UP AND REPAINTING OF  
BROOKLYN NAVY YARD No. 12**

Our 0-4-0 tank engine was built by Vulcan in 1918 for the sprawling Brooklyn Navy Yard complex. It was sold in 1947 to the Dexter & Northern, the switching railroad serving the Dexter Pulp & Paper Co. near Watertown, NY. It was later moved to the Tioga Transportation Museum in the 1970s where it operated in demonstration service for many years until it was sidelined due to boiler tube failure in 1991. It was offered to our museum and brought to

Industry in 1997.

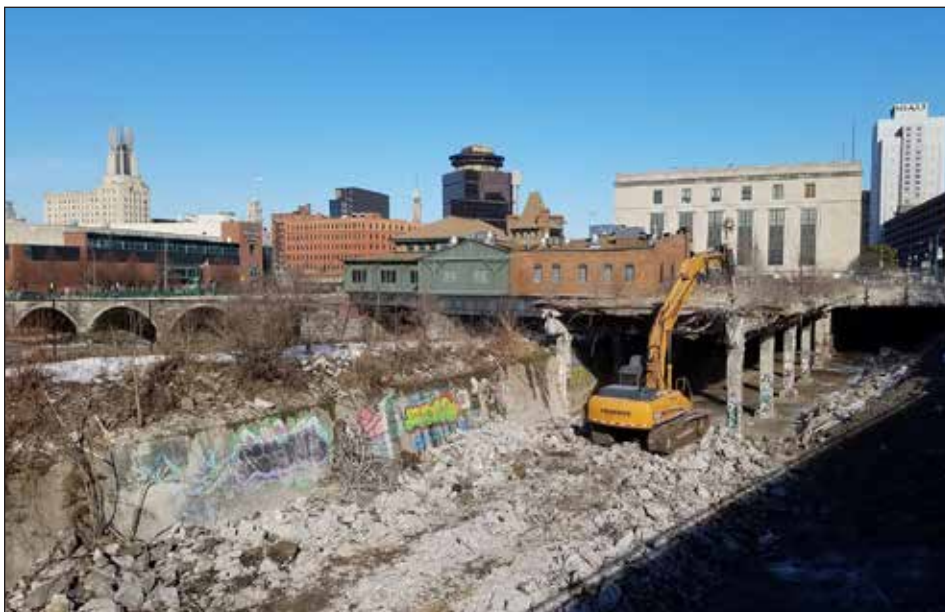
The locomotive was partially disassembled as part of an inspection made to determine the best course of action for restoration and repair. A 2010 analysis prepared by the steam shop at Strasburg Railroad indicated a full restoration to operation was not a project we wanted to undertake. However, your museum is fully committed to a cosmetic restoration of BNY No. 12 so that the engine can be put on public display and used as a teaching tool.

Board member **Joel Shaw** is the leader for this project, with the goal of re-assembling, repairing, and repainting the steam locomotive so that it can be placed on public display. Joel is currently working with volunteers **Rand Warner** and **Norm Shaddick**, but there are many tasks large

and small that could use extra help. If you want to get involved and learn about steam locomotives, the Steam Team can usually be found working each Saturday morning inside the Restoration Building.

**NEW GIFT SHOP**

The North Waiting Room of Industry Depot has been “off-limits” to the public for many years as the space has found use as an office and partial storage for materials that didn’t fit elsewhere. With archival material placed in storage with the library collection, and the rest either discarded or put into storage, more usable space was opened up for the first time in many years. Thanks to **Mike Dow** and **Joe Nugent** for packing and cataloging most of the material that went into storage, we could now



**HISTORY COMING AND GOING:** Rochester’s new Amtrak station is quickly taking shape on the site of the old depot on Central Avenue. By the beginning of March the exterior was complete, and contractors turned their attention to finishing the interior and the underground connection to the new high-level island platform. Originally scheduled for a Fall 2017 opening, officials are considering cutting the ribbon as soon as this summer. The project broke ground in 2015 with the demolition of the 1978-era “Amshack.” The new station is reminiscent of the old 1914 Claude Bragdon design. **LEFT:** The area around the old Rochester Subway Court Street station is being considered for development by the city, and part of the reconfiguration includes construction of a new public park. To facilitate this work, the remains of the old concrete access road to the Lehigh Valley yard was demolished at the end of February. The structure pre-dated the Subway by a few years, and was used to span the waters of the Erie Canal so trucks could access the LV freight yard from Court Street.



**LEFT:** At our February meeting, member Jeremy Tuke brought in several artifacts from the old Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern, an unusual shortline that connected Bradford, Pa., with Olean and Wayland, N.Y. Jeremy reviewed the history of this line, and the events that led to its demise in 1947.

consider opening the North Waiting Room to the public once again.

The plan for 2017 is to construct a wall to separate the public space from our reduced office and crew sign-in area. The wall will be 8' tall and anchored to the floor so as not to alter the original structure of the depot. The east side door will be repaired first, followed by the west side door facing the LA&L tracks. The gift shop will generate more revenue, and create additional display space. A door will keep the public separated from the space intended for use only by crew and volunteers.

Otto Vondrak is leading the project to construct the wall and have the gift shop area finished and open to the public in time for our June event. You can look forward to an increased selection of gifts and souvenirs branded for our museum in the coming year as well.

### **EASTER BUNNY TRAINS APRIL 15**

For the first time ever, the Easter Bunny rides the rails at R&GVRRM! Join us Saturday, April 15, from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for our Easter Bunny Train Rides. Enjoy a mile-and-a-half round-trip train ride that tours our museum grounds and visit New York's largest collection of historic trains. Children will take part in an Easter egg hunt and then visit with the Easter Bunny for photos. Refreshments will be available for purchase. Special event tickets are \$12.00 for adults, \$10.00 for youth/seniors. Purchase your tickets online at [www.RochesterTrainRides.com](http://www.RochesterTrainRides.com).

### **BUFFALO DAY TRIP MAY 6**

Trip chairman **Dave Shields** has organized a special day trip to explore two

important pieces of Buffalo transportation history on Saturday, May 6. The trip will depart from our museum parking lot at 9:00 a.m. sharp where we will travel via deluxe motorcoach to Buffalo. We will ride the **Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's Metro Rail** line, the only light rail transit operation in the state. Following our end-to-end ride, we will tour the NFTA shops located in the old Lackawanna train shed. Following the tour, we will break for lunch at a downtown restaurant across from the shops (on your own).

After lunch, we will be the guests of the **Central Terminal Restoration Corp.** for a special private tour of **Buffalo Central Terminal**. Built in 1929 by the New York Central, the last Amtrak train departed in 1979, and Conrail moved their dispatching offices out the following year. CTRC has been working since 1997 to stabilize the property and find a responsible partner for development. Following the tour, we will return via motorcoach to the museum.

Only 50 seats available for this special railfan daytrip! Tickets are **\$80.00 per person** (\$75.00 for museum members), and can be purchased from our web site at [www.RochesterTrainRides.com](http://www.RochesterTrainRides.com).

## **2017 R&GV Priority Projects**

The following projects have been approved by the Board of Trustees, effective December 1, 2016. These projects are considered essential to the growth and success of our museum and will require several volunteers to complete. To get involved, please contact Museum Manager Mark Wilczek.

- 1. Complete Repairs to RG&E No. 8**
- 2. Complete Lehigh Valley Caboose**
- 3. Complete Open-Air Rider Flatcar**
- 4. Build EK 6 Walk-Through Display**
- 5. ESE Coach Enhancements**



## **80th Anniversary Museum Banquet**

# **March 18**

**AT THE RIVER'S EDGE PARTY HOUSE  
31 PAUL ROAD, ROCHESTER, N.Y.**

Join us for a fun evening of dinner and entertainment as we celebrate 80 years of preserving Rochester's rich railroading heritage!

## **TICKETS \$35.00 PER PERSON**

AVAILABLE AT [WWW.RGVRRM.ORG](http://WWW.RGVRRM.ORG)



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Find us on Facebook! [facebook.com/rgvrrm](https://www.facebook.com/rgvrrm)



A Bath & Hammondsport freight train has an Erie Railroad insulated milk car in its consist that is a cousin to our No. 6603. In an interesting turn of events, B&H steam locomotive No. 11 currently pulls excursions on the Everett Railroad in Pennsylvania. RGVRRM WALLACE BRADLEY COLLECTION