

THE SEMAPHORE

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

VOL. 61 NO. 5
JULY-AUGUST 2018

NEXT MEETING:
August 16
MEETINGS MOVE TO
INDUSTRY DEPOT
Enjoy Train Rides!



Your museum operated a rare double-header for our June 21 museum member meeting, including Lehigh Valley Alco RS3m no. 211 and former Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Alco RS-1 no. 20. Monthly museum meetings will return to the 40&8 Club beginning in September. OTTO VONDRAK PHOTO

A Steamy Summer

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Volunteers Rob Burz and Joe Nugent began exploring the possibility of bringing working steam to our museum more than five years ago. Aside from the logistics of operating steam, we realized quickly we would need to increase capacity. This led to the acquisition of a 40-foot flatcar and the design and construction of our open-air rider car. Many other improvements have also taken place all around the museum since then, increasing our business overall.

Building on last year's success, we are excited to welcome back Scott Symans and Viscose No. 6 on **August 18-19 and 25-26**. Once again our visitors will be able to experience all the exciting sights and sounds of steam railroading. **We will require your help to make it a success.** Everyone will need to pitch in and make a contribution to not only ensure the safety of our visitors, but to create an enjoyable

experience for everyone. Even if you only volunteer for a half-day, your contribution helps. More details about the event are available on page 6.

This is just one example of exploring new ideas to advance our mission and to draw new visitors to the museum. Speaking of new ideas, I also want to ask for your thoughts on events we could add to our calendar this year and next. As we move into our next stages of development and expansion, your support will be most important. Would you like to help make your museum better, but you're not sure where to start? Please contact me at (716) 474-2833 or mdow@rochester.rr.com. I'd like to hear from you!

—Mike Dow
Museum President



www.rgvrrm.org

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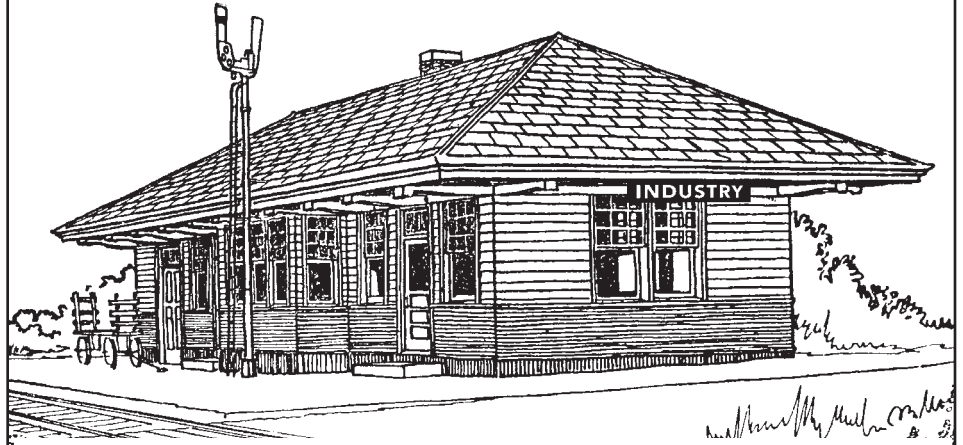
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2018 R&GV SCHEDULE

Please note some dates and activities are subject to change.



August 18-19 – Steam Train Rides

August 25-26 – Steam Train Rides

Sept. 15-16 – Diesel Days Train Rides

Sept. 22 – Oktoberfest Train Rides

Sept. 23 – Finger Lakes Limited

Oct. 13-14 – Pumpkin Patch Train Rides

Oct. 20-21 – Pumpkin Patch Train Rides

Oct. 27 – Trick or Treat Train Rides

Dec. 1, Sat. – Santa Train Rides

Dec. 7, Fri. – Holiday Open House

Dec. 8, Sat. – Santa Train Rides

RochesterTrainRides.com

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MONTHLY PROGRAM

Join us for our final summer meeting at the depot on August 16. Starting a half-hour earlier at 7:00 p.m., following a brief business meeting we will enjoy a ride on our museum railroad all the way up to the New York Museum of Transportation. After a brief tour of the car barn, we will return and tour current projects in RGVRM's Restoration Shop before returning to Industry Depot. This event is FREE to attend, so bring a friend!

Meetings return to the 40&8 Club, 933 University Ave., starting **September 20 at 7:30 p.m.** We are now seeking programs for the fall and winter seasons.

I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to serve as Program Chair these past few years. Since I plan to relocate away from Rochester this fall, I feel I must step down and allow someone else the opportunity to fill this role. Please contact me if you are willing to take over scheduling our monthly meeting programs. Thank you.

—Adam Lloyd, Program Chair



The Railfan Overlook has become a popular addition to our museum experience. The best views are during the morning hours as our trains climb and descend the Hill Block.

LV CABOOSE 95100 PROJECT UPDATE

Student member **Tyler Mullen** helped with some needle-scaling on the south end of the caboose weekends in June and July. **Charles Bell** has been helping Saturday mornings with the interior work. Having completed some further disassembly of the interior to get access to the window areas, we are now ready to move forward with re-assembling the interior walls.

—Sam Rosenberg, Project Mgr.

BR&P CABOOSE UPDATE

Our Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh caboose received its first coat of exterior paint at the end of July, thanks to volunteers **Dale Hartnett**, **Dave Luca**, **Jeremy Tuke**, and **Lynn Heinz**. Volunteer **John Redden** constructed and installed a new cover for the underbody tool box. Work continues on installing windows and completing other projects to make the caboose weathertight once again.

—Charlie Marks, Project Mgr.

MOTIVE POWER DEPT.

RG&E 8: Years of switching coal hoppers at Russell Station took its toll on this 110-ton GE switcher as coal dust infiltrated the body and held in moisture that has caused much damage to the steel. We're making progress on rust removal and clean up of the cab. Components underneath the floor have been removed to facilitate

repairs to the side walls and cab frame members. Badly deteriorated steel will be removed and replaced with brand new material. **Tyler Mullen** has begun cleaning up some of the air equipment in preparation for paint. In the meantime, **Jim Johnson** is cleaning up some of the electrical equipment that we removed. **Dave Scheiderich** continues to assess the rust damage. Repair work on the No. 1 engine will continue as soon as **Joe Nugent** fabricates a tool that can be used to bar over the engine.

LV 211: **Mike Dow**, **Jim Johnson**, **Dave Scheiderich**, and **Dan Waterstraat** continue to troubleshoot the battery charging system on this locomotive. It is still not charging correctly, resulting in poor operating performance. The locomotive last ran on June 21, pulling a first-ever double header (but not m.u.-ed) with former LA&L 20 for our monthly meeting night, to the delight of members and guests alike.

—Joe Nugent, Motive Power Supt.

FATHERS DAY TRAIN RIDES JUNE 16-17

More than 400 visitors joined us for Fathers Day Weekend train rides on June 16 and 17. We operated our regular schedule of trains and enjoyed unseasonably warm temperatures throughout the weekend. **Regional Transit Service** loaned us their restored 1957 GM Transit Bus to exhibit inside the Restoration Shop. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped out!



SUBWAY TOUR



LEFT: On July 14, your museum sponsored a special tour following the route of the Rochester Subway using a vintage 1956 GM Transit bus restored by volunteers from Regional Transit Service. Our first stop was the site of Rowlands Loop near the corner of Meadow Street and Ellwell Drive in Brighton. **BELOW:** Twenty-five riders joined the special tour, including some past and present RTS employees. The tour generated another \$1,200 to be applied to the ongoing restoration of Subway Car 60. **BELOW LEFT:** Regional Transit Service graciously loaned their restored bus for display inside our Restoration Shop during our Fathers Day Train Ride Weekend on June 16-17.



ROCHESTER SUBWAY BUS TOUR JULY 14

Thanks to the cooperation of **Regional Transit Service**, we were able to charter their restored 1957 GM Transit Bus for a special trip tracing the route of the old Rochester Subway. Starting from Pittsford Plaza, we visited the site of Rowlands Loop before we took a high-speed run on I-590 and 490 towards downtown (the interstates are built on the bed of the Subway, which in turn was constructed on the old Erie Canal). We stopped at Court Street, where we discovered a new high-rise condominium being constructed on the site of the old Subway station and tunnel entrance. **Otto Vondrak** led the tour and discussed how the Subway ran under the Rundel Library (which was built in 1934 after the subway

opened), and then across the aqueduct to reach the west side of the city.

Our next stop was unscheduled, pausing behind Nick Tahou's (the old B&O station) to show where the Subway interchanged freight with the Baltimore & Ohio. We then followed the route of the Subway along Dewey Avenue to the site of Lexington Ave. Station. Here we saw where the old New York Central and B&O bridges crossed over the Subway (and the canal before that). Then we swung over to the General Motors plant on Driving Park and explored the site of the Subway loop and car barn. A few hundred feet of actual Subway track remain here to serve a freight customer connected to the Rochester & Southern. After a brief stop at the downtown Transit Center, we returned to Pittsford. The trip

was a successful fundraiser adding more than \$1,200 for the continued restoration of Rochester Subway Car 60.

CRAFT SHOW CABOOSE RIDES JULY 21-22

Your museum hosted Craft Show Caboose Rides on July 21 and 22. Unfortunately, several vendors backed out at the last moment, which left us fewer crafters than we would have liked. Weather was unusually warm on Saturday, and gray and rainy on Sunday. On the bright side, the addition of a bounce castle from **Air Affair** (bouncehouseofrochester.com) was a huge hit with our young visitors. Several volunteers came out to help, and conductor trainees received valuable hands-on instruction during the weekend.



ABOVE LEFT: No, this is not an accident scene. Volunteers Norm Shaddick, Rand Warner, and Dave Luca were getting our Trackmobile started on June 9 so it can be used this later this season. **ABOVE:** Sam Rosenberg is the project manager leading the reassembly of our Lehigh Valley caboose. It is being restored to its late 1970s appearance. Current projects include re-assembling the wooden interior and making minor repairs to window frames. **LEFT:** By the end of July our Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh caboose got some fresh coats of red exterior paint as part of the project to backdate this car to its 1930s appearance. Next tasks include assembling and installing new windows and doors and prepare for new roofing.

**BUS TOUR TO HORNELL
AUGUST 4**

Thanks to the efforts of trip chairman **Dave Shields**, your museum had the rare opportunity to get a private tour of **Alstom USA** in Hornell and **American Motive Power** in Dansville. These railroad equipment rebuilders are generally not open to the public, but employees took time off on a weekend to open their facilities to 53 museum members and guests.

Dating back to the 1880s, the Hornell Shops were used by Erie and Erie Lackawanna until 1976. Conrail briefly reopened the shop to perform some locomotive rebuilds, but again closed the facility in February 1977. The Hornell Industrial Development Agency purchased the property from Conrail and in 1978 General Electric

set up shop rebuilding locomotives for other customers. Morrison-Knudsen became the next occupant in 1982, continuing the tradition of heavy overhaul and locomotive rebuilds for railroads across the country. When MK entered financial difficulty in 1995, Amerail was formed to complete the remaining contracts.

Alstom USA first moved into the old Erie Railroad Hornell Shop site in 1997, and the facility has been used to rebuild old and manufacture new passenger rail cars ever since. Alstom recently signed a lease agreement with the Hornell Industrial Development Agency to stay in their current facilities through at least 2030. Alstom operates 13 locations in the United States, including Hornell.

Among the projects we saw inside the

shop included rebuilt Type 7 light rail cars for Boston's MBTA Green Line, double-decker push-pull coaches for MBTA commuter rail, light rail cars for Baltimore MTA, rapid transit cars for Philadelphia's PATCO, and the next generation of Amtrak's high-speed trainsets destined for the Northeast Corridor.

We also made a brief stop at the **Erie Railroad Museum** housed inside a portion of the restored Erie Depot. The museum is home to a number of artifacts related to the Erie, Erie Lackawanna, and Conrail years in Hornell. We then took a quick tour of the Alstom electrical component factory on the other side of town before stopping for lunch at Wegmans.

Our next stop was Dansville and **American Motive Power (AMP)**. Launched

RIGHT: Our August 4 bus tour to Hornell included a visit to the Erie Railroad Museum, located in a portion of the restored Erie Depot. **BELOW RIGHT:** On August 4 we enjoyed a rare tour of the shops of American Motive Power, located in the old Foster-Wheeler Plant in Dansville. Several locomotive rebuilding projects were taking place simultaneously inside the old boiler fabrication facility.

in 2005, the company moved into the old Foster-Wheeler boiler plant, occupying more than 250,000 sq. ft. The first customer orders shipped in June 2006, and AMP became an approved engine rebuild vendor for CSX. AMP offers complete overhaul and remanufacturing services, including engine remanufacture, truck rebuilding, wreck repairs, fabrication, paint services, electrical and mechanical modifications, and more. During our tour we saw a variety of diesel locomotives being rebuilt, and also saw AMP's expanded production space under construction.

Everyone had a great time on this trip. If you have suggestions for interesting day trips you would like the museum to consider for 2019, please contact Trip Chairman **Dave Shields**.

**STEAM TRAINS RETURN
AUGUST 18-19 AND 25-26**

We are excited to welcome back Scott Symans and the **Viscose Co. 0-4-0 No. 6** locomotive this August to operate the only steam-powered trains in New York State! Steam will operate on **August 18, 19, 25, and 26**, on an extended run to BOCES Crossing, thanks to the cooperation of the New York Museum of Transportation. Once again, this event will require all hands on deck to be successful.

Engineer and Fireman: All candidates must be approved by Jim Otto and receive training from Symans or his crew.

Car Hosts: Responsible for the safety and comfort of visitors while they board, ride, and disembark from our trains.

Conductor: Selected from our pool of operating personnel, the conductor is responsible for the safe movement of our train in accordance with the schedule.

Coal and Water Servicing: We will need volunteers to tend to the coal and water supplies and be ready to assist with fueling needs of Viscose 6 between runs.

Fire Patrol: This crew consists of two volunteers inspecting the tracks and right of way for any stray embers left behind by the steam engine after each run. The Fire



Patrol will extinguish any smoldering embers before they have the chance to ignite.

Cashiers: One volunteer cashier will work the ticket window, while a second will work the gift shop window. Must have the ability to smile, press buttons on an iPad, and make change as needed.

Upper Yard: Volunteers will meet all trains and assist with boarding and disembarking from trains, as well as directing visitors to museum exhibits.

Switch Tender: One volunteer will man the junction at Switch 6 and help expedite the movement of trains.

Exhibitors: Do you have a vintage automobile or working steam engine or tractor to display for the weekend? We are looking for interesting exhibits for our visitors to enjoy.

This will be a very high profile event for our organization. We will need a number of volunteers to help us to make this event a success. If you have never volunteered before, consider coming out to help on these two weekends. To help with train crew, contact **Jim Otto**. All other volunteers contact **Otto Vondrak**.

**THE END OF AN ERA:
FAREWELL TO DIESEL DAYS
SEPTEMBER 15-16**

Your museum hosted its first Diesel Days back in 1998, when operation of our full-size equipment was a rare novelty, compared to the usual Sunday public track car operations. Diesel Days quickly grew to become our most popular event, often drawing the highest attendance of the



LEFT: Thanks to Ken Freeman (pictured) and John Redden for taking on the project to replace the wooden walkways on our Kodak tank car. Built by General American Tank Car in 1930 to ship chemicals between Tennessee Eastman in Kingsport, Tenn., and Kodak Park in Rochester, it was later used for company service within the plant, and donated to RGV in 1996. BELOW LEFT: David Scheiderich, Dave Kehrer, and Joe Nugent worked to replace the bumper on Track 4 in Industry Yard on July 28.



★ NEW EVENT ★
FINGER LAKES LIMITED
SEPTEMBER 23

The Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad advised they would not be able to operate a Fall Foliage Express for our museum this year, citing schedule disruptions as a result of this year’s aggressive tie replacement project. While we are disappointed our New York Central *Empire State Express* coaches will not move this year, your museum is pleased to announce a new **Finger Lakes Limited** trip scheduled to operate on the **Finger Lakes Railway** departing Canandaigua on Sunday, **September 23**. Using FGLK equipment and train crews, two trains will run at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., operating a two-hour round-trip schedule to Clifton Springs and return. The trip will operate on a portion of the old New York Central Auburn Road Branch that has been freight-only since 1958. One coach of the three-car train will be reserved for a special on-board beer tasting conducted by local craft breweries, including Canandaigua’s **Peacemaker Brewing** and **Naked Dover Brewing**.

Due to the limited number of tickets available, his train ride SOLD OUT within three weeks of listing the event. We will be looking for museum volunteers to help out as car hosts, cleaning the train between runs, and selling concessions and gift shop items. If you are interested in helping out, please contact me. I look forward to seeing you all on the trains!

—Otto M. Vondrak, Events Supt.

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season. In the early years, it was not uncommon to see up to three or four different locomotives operating at once. This would not have been possible without the dedication of so many volunteers who worked tirelessly to not only acquire but also keep our historic fleet in operating condition.

As our operations evolved, and we added additional days of diesel train runs, it became increasingly difficult to promote Diesel Days as a “special” event. As your museum is continually updating the operating schedule with new and exciting special events, the decision has been made to retire the annual Diesel Days event after this season. We will be putting together a special program to celebrate the 20th anniversary and give the event a proper send-off. Please join us on September 15 and 16!

★ NEW EVENT ★
OKTOBERFEST TRAINS
SEPTEMBER 22

Due to overwhelming popular demand, your museum has added a second craft beer event to the operating season. This event will be very much like our popular Rails & Ales event in May, but with a different seasonal twist...

Put on your *lederhosen* and please join us for **Oktoberfest Trains** on **September 22!** Visitors will enjoy samples from local craft breweries from 12:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Trains will depart every half-hour to transport visitors between tasting stations located at Industry Depot and the Upper Yard. Please spread the word and join us for this fun new event!

—Otto M. Vondrak, Events Supt.



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We are excited to welcome back Scott Symans and his Viscoxe Co. 0-4-0 No. 6 on August 18-19 and 25-26! PHOTO BY OTTO M. VONDRAK