

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

* Rochester Chapter *

THE SEMAPHORE

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FEBRUARY MEETING will be held on Thursday February 19th, at 8:00 PM, at the chapter's meeting room at 49 South Ave., Rochester. On the agenda for the meeting will be the finalization of plans for this years banquet, discussion and vote upon the new constitution (if we are able to overcome recent sicknesses and get it out in time. The meeting will be followed by a movie presentation by Greg Sullivan on his 9,000 mile trip across the U.S. last summer. This promises to be an excellant program, one which all will enjoy. So bring a friend there is always room for anyone who is interested in railroads.

JANUARY MEETING Although the business meeting was short from 8:20 - 8:50 PM it was most gratifying to note we were long on members and friends attending this meeting. Thirty-two members and guests gathered for an enjoyable evening. WELCOME TO THE LADIES Four were present- Arlene, Mrs. Calvin Bulman, Mrs. Gerald Hott, and Mrs. Geoffrey Gerstung. Other guests were Mike Schleigh, Huber Watson, and George Slyford a charter member.

The last of the CN steamers 6218 will be run from Niagara Falls, Ont. to Stratford, Ont. on May 24 th. This trip will be run in cooperation with the Buffalo and Lake Shore Chapters. This may be our last trip with the old gal as her flue time will be up this year. Pete Gores put forth the idea of a club auction. He wants goods and ideas for such a project. Other clubs have had fine success with such a venture as a money making project and as a great crowd pleaser. As chairman of the Monroe County Fair exhibit he would also like some help and ideas. Rand Warner suggested we might work out something jointly with the Kodak City Model RR Club for all the various exhibits that have been suggested for the year.

President Hott apologized for not getting the new constitution changes to members so they can voted on. Hope to start the process by the February meeting.

DUES, DUES, DUES, are now due. Only twenty-one have come to the treasurer so far. It was suggested last month that we should place a surcharge on late payments, so lets get them in quick. If you wait too long you will no longer be a member.

Latest on Urban Renewal. Our man on the inside V.P. Lewis (Bill) Bracey tells us that this year might be the last year in our present quarters, so it behooves us to scratch around for another place to gather. A centrally located place if possible. The station at Caledonia-Mumford has been suggested but seems a bit too far out. More on this at the next meeting.

The preservation of the Dean Richmond mansion in Batavia was discussed. Although we are in sympathy with those trying to preserve the home of the man who forged together the original New York Central we are not in any position to lend a

hand financially. As a side note, your secretary did a large wall painting in one of the rooms as a young high school chap.

A new innovation which we hope will be done this year is the publication of a list of chapter members twice a year. This will be done as soon as the membership committee is organized. (Any takers? ed)

Following the meeting Richard Pearson showed slides of the Wellsville, Addison and Galeton RR. These slides were both very interesting and informative. A 16mm film about the building of the Golden Gate Bridge was also shown. 'The Bridge that Couldn't be Built'.

Respectfully submitted

Leon D. Arras,
Secretary.

NOTES FROM THE GOVERNORS LOUNGE

Quote and Unquote---

----- Ever listen to the musical background on a TV program which has something to do with trains or listen to a radio program and reminisce on some trip or railroad scene you recall from the past. Well your observer in the Governors Lounge does and is not afraid to admit it either. I have always loved the song, 'Let It Snow, Let It Snow'. Some of you may recall that the song was first published during World War II days, and every where you went in a downtown area it was piped to you via loudspeaker which was popular method for a store to advertise its wares in those times.

----- I will always remember a trip to Altoona, Pa. in early January 1944, on a mission for my company. I had left Rochester on the day train on the B&O to Punxsutawney, Pa., to contact the Cambria & Indiana RR at Manver, Pa., and since I did not have to be home at the Superintendants office until 5 days later I found myself with about 3 days to go so I went into Altoona, long a favorite spot of mine.

Did you know that the Cambria & Indiana, 'C&I' on most of its hoppers, owns so many hopper cars that if all 5000 cars were to be returned to home rails at one time they could not accomodate them. Its owner the Bethlehem Steel Co. often receives extra return on the roads operations due to the large per diem collections made by C&I.

Leaving Punxsutawney by the Blue & White Lines, bus what else, I went to the companys office at Manver, and in one day and a half had the information I needed for the Superintendant. The C&I people first got me overnight lodging, then scheduled a mine run the second afternoon to get me to a cross roads to take a south-bound Blue & White bus into Altoona. Incidentally Blue & White which still serves the New Castle, Punxsutawney, Altoona, Cumberland region got its big boost in the early 1930's when the PRR abandoned most of its local service out of Altoona and Blue & White was given certificates of necessity covering several routes between Altoona and 'PUNXSY' and Altoona and Cumberland, Md.

Getting to Altoona in the early afternoon I was lucky to get a room at the old Colonial Hotel, right off Second Ave. and two kitty corner blocks from the PRR station. But I knew that I would not see too much from the Depot so I headed for

the 7th Street Viaduct. Now the viaduct is the west throat so to speak of the depot, yard, and shop layout and right at the foot of the grade up to the Horseshoe Curve. It was cold and snowing, the music was 'Let It Snow, Let It Snow' and the PRR was dispatching trains up and down the Horseshoe one right after the other. Besides that the Altoona & Logan Valley street cars all used that viaduct for all of its 6 lines they were then operating. So although it was dark and snowing, I did not notice the cold and the time went quickly.

It was very easy to see why J. Monroe Johnson, director of Defence Transportation, on more than one occasion remarked that the job the Pennsylvania Railroad was doing and did do during the War saved the Government the necessity of acquiring the railroads as they had to do during World War I.

The tracks west of the Depot and west of the Viaduct were seldom quiet. The steady huffing and puffing of the road engine or engines and the pushers was so characteristic of the PRR. For PRR engines were never known to "crack the stack" as it were but rather smoked more than power on other roads.

There was an almost steady procession of street cars of the Altoona & Logan Valley over the viaduct, built for just one way car service, all lines using the line outbound. Among the six lines was the one to Tyrone, which had just rush hour service the past several years but on orders of the ODT busses were assigned elsewhere and full service resumed. Discontinued in 1945, I had my only ride over the line the following morning, and at Tyrone spent 55 minutes observing the overburdened Pennsy.

But back to the rail traffic to and from the Horseshoe. As I stood there with an eastbound hopper train of coal stopped in the outside tracks I caught the glow of a headlight and around the curve downgrade came two K4's in tandem 'sizzling' to beat the band as they drifted by into the station. I knew from the timetable it was the eastbound 'Steel King'. I was to hear much of that train later on but at the moment I had a glimpse of two freshly painted K4's sporting the new gold stripping, new Keystone number plates on the smoke box door and the new location for the headlight, ahead of the stack instead of on a base plate at the top of the smoke box door. My first view of PRR steam power when all engines acquired the new look, during the war and up to the end. There were some triplexes wandering up and down the main, they were the only PRR power I never cared for.

You say you never heard of the Steel King. Well I was thrilled by her smart looking power, six coaches and lunch counter car. So everytime I hear the song 'Let It Snow, Let It Snow', I still thrill over what was the most beautiful action of the passenger train in a snow storm. Now the Steel King operated on a flat 7 hour schedule from Pittsburg to New York, stopping only at Altoona, Lewistown, Harrisburg, North Philadelphia, Trenton and Penn Station, rolling right through such towns as East Liberty, Johnstown, Lancaster, Paoli and Newark. The only train the PRR has ever scheduled to make the run in 7 hours or less. Even the Broadway and the Aero Train, which replaced the Steel King had schedules of more than 7 hours. The Office of Defence Transportation ordered PRR to discontinue the Pittsburgher the all Pullman train between Pittsburg and New York with through Pullmans to Boston, but allowed the PRR to establish the Steel King, one way Pittsburg to New York, with through coaches Cleveland to New York and Columbus to New York. With these added connections she offered the fastest schedule that has ever been attempted before or since between Cleveland, Columbus, Pittsburg and New York. And not only that she boasted one of two lunch cars the PRR has ever attempted to operate. Discontinued about 1951 the Steel King had a short life of less than ten years, but not only did she thrill me but must have done so to others for I have seen many letters in Trains and Railroad Magazine which praised the STEEL KING.

So passes this edition of the GOVERNORS LOUNGE, I hope it brings back some fond memories for some or promotes dreams for others. Since the Governors Lounge is a fast car I must travel on. See you in a month.

THE BARK PEELER

by Richard Barrett

NEW ENGLAND NEWS NOTES

The Colonial and the Patriot which run between Washinton and Boston have lost their diners. In their place will be a snack bar coach or you may eat in the parlor club car. The wheels of progress turn again. Meanwhile the Bostonian and the New Yorker retain their rather useless diners since these trains do not run thru any normal meal hours.

Boston's M.B.T.A. has purchased nearly 24 acres of Penn Central's (Former New Haven) passenger car shops. The land has been in use by the railroads since 1854 when the Old Colony Railroad first had the property. The land purchased for seven million dollars will be used for a new rapid transt repair shop and storage facility.

A special legislative commission investigating the M.B.T.A. has made the following recommendations;

1. Construction of the South Shore Line to Braintree and the Harvard-Alewife extensions of the Cambridge-Dorchester line as soon as possible
2. Continuation of present studies of dual-powered lightweight rail cars for possible future service as far south as Cape Cod
3. Expedite the Haymarket-North line construction. (To the Malden-Melrose line at Oak Grove). The rail commuter service (B&M Budd cars) from Reading thru Oak Grove to North Station should be continued although a transfer option to rapid transit may be offered at that point.
4. Development of the Southwest Corridor rapid transit project along the New Haven's Dedham branch rather than following Interstate Route 95.

The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission is preparing a subsidy plan for presentation to the New Hampshire state legislature. If accepted and enacted into law the plan would restjre rail passenger service to this now freight only state. The routes involved (all B&M) are from Boston, Mass. to Concord, N.H. via Nashua and Manchester; from Boston to Dover, N.H. via Haverhill, Mass.; and from Boston to Portsmouth, N.H. via Newburyport. (I wouldn't buy my tickets yet)

The M.B.T.A.'s South Shore rapid transit extension is at a standstill again. The problem this time is that the company laying the rail has been unable to meet it's financial obligations. So now the bonding company will have to find another contractor willing to do the job. Some of the cars for this extension are already in service on the Cambridge-Dorchester rapid transit line.

The Vermont Railway has added Lehigh & Hudson River's RS-3 #12 to its roster. It has been repainted and is in daily use.

Unit coal trains are now being handked on the Vermont Railway from Rutland where they are received from the D&H to a utility plant in Burlington.

DISCONTINUANCES

- 11/4 Kansas City South ern joins the freight only club as the South ern Belle makes her last run.

1/5 Erie-Lackwanna's Lake Cites made her last run on ending passenger service from New York thru the Southern Tier to Chicago.

ICC TRAIN*OFF REPORT TO CONGRESS

| | 1968 | 1969 |
|---|------|------|
| Notices filed to discontinue passenger trains | 75 | 52 |
| Interstate passenger trains abandoned | | 120 |
| Intrastate passenger trains abandoned | | 7 |
| Interstate passenger trains ordered kept in operation | | 31 |
| Intrastate passenger trains ordered kept in operation | | 6 |

During the last ten years; 324 notices filed; 719 trains have been discontinued; a ten year total of 428 trains kept in operation; 248 cases withdrawn or dismissed.

TURBO

Turbotrain service between Boston and New York is not included in Penn-Central's regular timetable. However there is a separate timetable for this service which (based on my own opinion) seems to be given out rather grudgingly. It is reprinted here for those who may wish to ride this unique piece of equipment.

| | <u>A.M.</u> | | P.M. |
|--|-------------|-----------------|------|
| | 7:00 | Boston | 7:34 |
| | 7:10 | Route 128 | 7:23 |
| | 7:39 | Providence | 6:53 |
| | 8:31 | New London | |
| | 9:20 | New Haven | 5:13 |
| | | Bridgeport | 4:55 |
| | 10:39 | New York (G.C.) | 3:55 |

Local passengers are not carried between Boston and Route 128 or between New York and Bridgeport

Penn-Central is upset about the availability of equipment. There have been several occasions when trains had to be cancelled because both sets of trains were sidelined with mechanical problems. The possibility of this equipment running beyond the expiration date of the present contract in October, 1970 looks dim.

Meanwhile in Canada where Turbo never really got off the ground (no pun intended) the equipment is undergoing extensive cold weather testing. United Aircraft is attempting to have three units modified and ready for regular operation on the Canadian National in the Spring.

A word of explanation about the title which has been added to this column this month. Bark Peeler is a nickname applied to railroadmen on the North Conway branch of the B&M who live north of Sanbornville, N.H. The term came into use many decades ago when bark was used in the tanning of leather. Most of this bark used in tanneries around Boston was shipped from the forests which literally surrounded the North Conway branch. The city folks were amused by this unusual occupation of bark peeling. Hence the nickname of Bark Peelers came into use for the railroaders who lived and worked the branch. While I never worked for the B&M and the closest I ever came to living along the branch was several summers spent in the Sanbornville area, I

(con't page 7)

THE HOTT BOXCONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Last November a committee composed of Rand Warner, Pete Gores, Harold Caulkins and your President met to investigate and recommend changes and additions to the Chapter's Constitution and By-Laws. Several hours were spent at that meeting and many hours have been spent since then in preparing and editing the proposed changes. There are several basic reasons for these changes to the Constitution and By-Laws; (1) to bring them up-to-date; (2) to specify the duties of officers and standing committees; (3) to be more specific in some areas and to provide more flexibility in others. The proposed changes are extensive--they will more than double the size of the existing Constitution and By-Laws. We hope to review them at the February meeting and vote on them at the March meeting.

TRIPS

The High Iron Company has the following trips scheduled with ex-NKP 759:

- May 30, 31 (2 Day Trip) Hoboken to Binghamton:
Erie out, Lackawanna back.
- June 13 Hoboken to Scranton
- September 12, 13 (2 One-Day Trips) Harrisburg to the
Horseshoe Curve (Altoona, Pa.)
- October 3, 4 (2 Day Trip) Baltimore to Connelville,
Pa. on the Western Maryland.

The Buffalo Chapter has notified us of two trips they propose to operate during the coming months--a "Rapid Transit Package" to Cleveland on March 7, and a May 24th Steam trip from Niagara Falls, Ontario to Stratford.

The Rochester Chapter has made some preliminary inquiries aimed at a Fall trip to Corning, New York. We have just received a very encouraging reply from the Corning Glass Center. We sincerely hope that we will have the active support of the Chapter membership in this attempt to get the Rochester Chapter back into the action. It will take a lot of planning and hard work on the part of many people to make such a trip successful.

COMING EVENTS

Program for March: New 16 mm color film (made following the earthquake) on the Alaska Railroad. Plus an N.R.H.S. slide program on trolleys in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

BANQUET

Friday, May 1st at the Carriage House on Paul Road. Entertainment by Mr. E. C. Eddy of Fairview, Michigan. Mr. & Mrs. Eddy have recently returned from another railfan excursion south of the border. He informs us that work is progressing on the 15 inch gauge Shay locomotive he is building for his Pinconning and Blind River Railway.

The Buffalo Chapter Banquet will be held on Saturday, May 2, 1970 at Laube's Amherst Restaurant.

I have adopted this name for the column and will try to keep it a regular feature until someone tells me to be quiet

Caboose

NEWS ITEMS

From some clippings that Rand Warner has sent me it seems that the Penn-Central's station in Schenectady is going the way of the Rochester station in that it will be turned into a municipal parking lot. In Albany many of our Senators and Assemblymen are talking of taking away some or all of the Penn-Central's \$11 million a year tax break because because of the poor service it is rendering in the area of commuters and intracity passenger traffic. It seems that the railroads have finally convinced the public and their representatives in Congress that the railroads can no longer pay the cost of supporting the passenger service themselves without ruining the railroads financial outlook. There are now several bills pending in Congress that would either subsidize the railroads for the passenger service or on the other hand ones that would allow the federal government to take control and run passenger service and thus lease the facilities from railroads.... I think for most of us who have sadly watched the deterioration of the passenger train in the U.S. find this as a hopeful sign of a brighter future in what is now a very bleak situation. It is hoped that these measures which are now tied up in the White House will soon be passed and put into effect before most facilities are abandoned.

EDITORS PAGE

I suppose one of the fringe benefits in editing a newsletter such as this is the unique opportunity to add your two-cents about a subject which you find near and dear to your heart. As you read in this edition of the Hott-Box our chapter has made certain overtures that if successful would enable us as a chapter to run a fall excursion this year over the Penn-Centrals Fallbrook line to the Corning Glass works. A lot of effort has been put into this by your president in the hopes that this will give the Rochester Chapter a chance to run once more the excursions that made her famous in the past. If this is to be done and be made a success of it will require full and complete cooperation of all members. For if we want to keep on running excursions in the future this first one must be a success financially and most important must create a feeling of goodwill towards the chapter by those that will ride it with us. Thus I am asking all of you to give us that extra effort that will most surely make this an overwhelming success.

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Please excuse all typographical and grammatical errors, for I have been unable to find anyone in my family willing to proofread for me. I also can't spell, however..