



# The Semaphore

June 1996  
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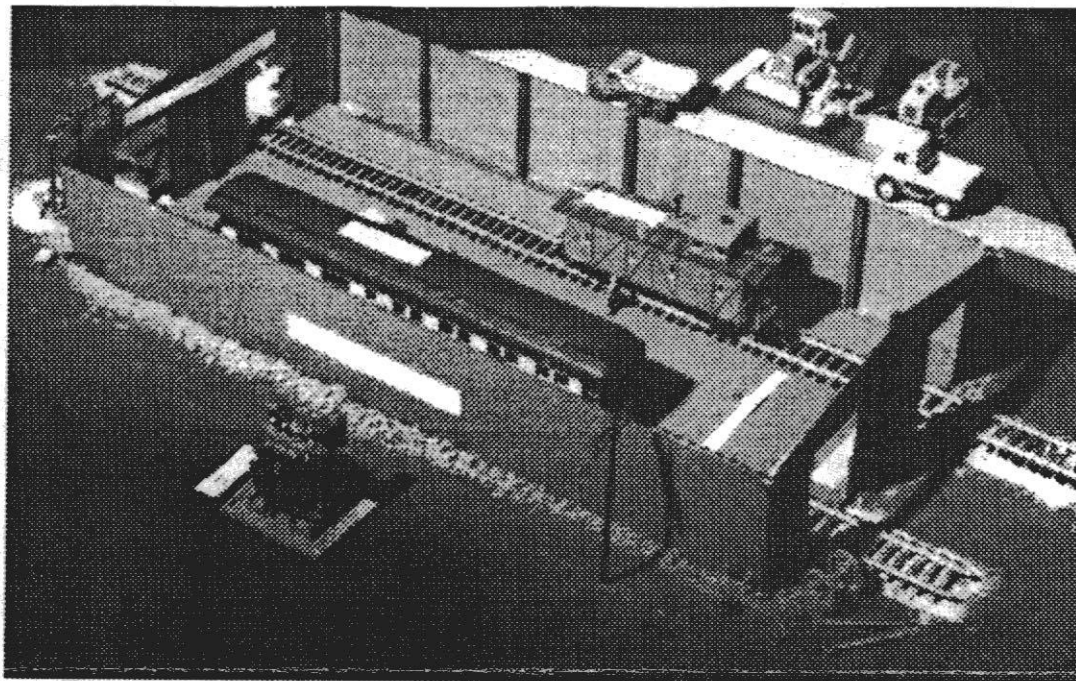
*Newsletter of the Rochester NY Chapter, National Railway Historical Society*

## Program for June 20

### Ride the Cars

For the next three months, the Chapter's meetings will be held at the R&GV RR Museum Depot. For June 20, plans are to enjoy track car rides starting at 6 PM.

Certain to be on the agenda are details of the 25th Anniversary four-day celebration on July 18-21. The 25th Anniversary Committee has prepared a list of priorities of work that should be completed before this event to present the best possible picture for the expected grand entourage of visitors and guests.



### Election Results:

The previously serving Officers and Trustees up for election were re-elected. The complete Board is listed on the cover sheet (Page 10).

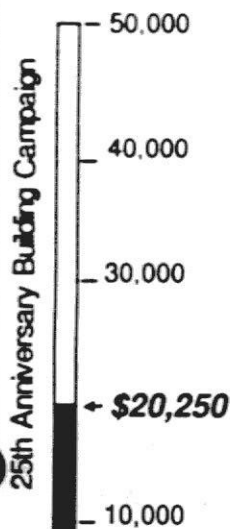
### Work Sessions

Regular work sessions are Tuesday evenings and all day Saturdays. Arrangements can be made for other times.

### Proposed Restoration Building Modeled

Dan Shilling, well known for his outstanding dioramas, modeled to scale (HO) the proposed restoration building. Ground breaking ceremonies will take place on Friday, July 19.

A fund drive is underway for which about 40% of the monies needed have been raised.



## 25th Anniversary Celebration

In honor of the 25th Anniversary of our Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum, your Chapter has planned a four day weekend extravaganza.

### Thursday, July 18: Chapter Night

Evening at the Museum, featuring rides and speeches and special ceremonies. Come and enjoy. Also special exhibits and displays and refreshments.

### Friday, July 19: Media Day

Continental breakfast for invited guests, media and benefactors. Speeches by dignitaries. Train ride to ground breaking ceremony for start of new building.

### Saturday, July 20: Public Day

Train and track car rides. Refreshments. Special displays and exhibits. Extended hours.

### Sunday, July 21: Public Day

Train and tack car rides. Refreshments. Special displays and exhibits. Extended hours.

This is your celebration of your Museum. We hope you will avail yourself of the opportunities. We also need your help to pull it all off successfully. Call **Don Shilling, 381-3171**, to indicate which days you can help.

(More details on what is required was sent in a recent letter and is summarized on Page 2. Also see Page 9. )

## List of Donors to the Depot's 25th Anniversary Fund

As of 1 June 1966

Dave Luca  
Bob McKnight  
John Redden  
Sam and Anna Grover  
Dave and Anne Jacobs  
Fred Jenks

\*\*\*\*\*

George Bauerschmidt  
Keith Blackall  
Mike Bryne  
Ira Cohen  
Bernie Cubitt  
Jim Dierks  
Peter Emmel  
DeWain Feller  
Bob Fitch  
Bonnie Glickman  
Chuck Goodinan  
Dan Gottler  
Charlie Harshbarger  
Chris Hausler  
Rev. Roy Kiggins  
Kevin Klees  
Henry Meech  
Bob and Marie Miner  
Harland Moffitt  
Jim Moore  
Ralph and Barbara Mosher  
Norm Shaddick  
Don Shilling  
Gale Smith  
Stan Swackhammer  
Tom Tischer  
Jeremy Tuke  
Naor Wallach  
John Weber  
Chuck Whalen  
Brian Willett  
Ed Van Horn

Is your Name here? If not, you are welcome to COME ABOARD!

## In About 4 Weeks:

Around June 1st, Chapter members should have received a letter from The Silver Anniversary Committee requesting local members' assistance in preparing for the BIG 25th Anniversary Depot Celebration.

Listed were 26 items that requiring attention before July 18. In addition, extra help is needed for Saturday, July 20 and Sunday, July 21 to greet visitors. Among these duties are: guides, cooks, concessionaires, parking, NYMT guides, ticket sales, track car operators, and store personnel totaling at least 34 positions.

### Don't be Bashful -- Step Forward

The following are standing by their phones awaiting *your* call!

Dave Luca, 288-0318  
Don Shilling, 381-3171  
Chris Hauf, 381-8583  
Jeremy Tuke, 359-8944

## In the Magazines

### The R&GV Museum Depot

#### Railfan and Railroad, July 1996

On page 65, you'll find a color photo of Livonia, Avon & Lakeville two engine consist northbound on its first run on April 15. Added interest is that the view includes our Rochester and Genesee Valley RR Museum! The Kodachrome was by Pete Swanson.

Pete Swanson also authored an article on *The Arcade & Attica* on pages 50 through 55. Both freight and excursion operations are covered, including maps of present and 1915 territories.

#### TRAINS, July 1996

If you have access to the July issue of **TRAINS**, take note of Duncan Richards' photo on page 26 of LA&L's inaugural train to pass our Depot.

Comparing the two photos, it looks like Duncan and Mr. Swanson released their camera's shutters at the same moment, although from slightly different locations.

## Membership Committee Report

Thomas A. Way, Chairman

### Welcome to these new members:

#### John & June Gehrs

443 Peart Ave  
Rochester, NY 14622  
323-2981  
Family membership

#### A. E. Roach

6919 Harrison Ln  
Alexandria, VA

#### Frank R. Shepard

88 Karen Lee Dr  
Rochester, NY 14619  
427-7105

### Add to your April Roster

#### Laurie McFaul

6610 N. Geneva Rd  
Sodus, NY 14551  
(315) 483-9894

#### David J. Monte Verde

36 Rochester St.  
Scottsville, NY 14546  
889-5329

## NOTES

Congratulations to all those Committee Members who have won tickets to this year's Chapter Banquet. For those who could not attend, we are awarding \$17.00 Certificates redeemable at the Chapter Store.

### Membership Synopsis:

Full Membership/Rochester: ....	201
Local Membership:.....	8
Family Membership:.....	26
<b>TOTAL: .....</b>	<b>235</b>

## NYMT Schedule

**June 16:** Phoebe Snow Day

**July 14:** Antique Truck Show

**July 20 & 21:** 25th Anniv. of Depot

**Aug 10 & 11:** Gandy Dancers

Open every Sunday from 11 to 5..

### Finger Lakes Live Steamers Meet

June 22 & 23 from 10 AM to 4 PM

Five miles North of Rt. 318 on Whiskey Hill Rd, between Lyons and Clyde

## Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

by Rand Warner, Chairman, 425-8587

### Home Runs

Congratulations to Mike Bryne, our never still Publicity and Public Relations man for a whole string of publicity hits in the local media recently. They have covered 1940's day for Sodus Excursions, Railroaders Wall of Fame, donations, grants, radio, television and newspapers. Way to go Mike!!

### National Coverage

Thanks to Chris Hauf & Co., we're getting national coverage via the Internet, World Wide Web, photos in *RAILPACE* and feature articles on our 25th Anniversary in *TRAINS*, and *RAILFAN*. He's also drawing in the railfans with plans for another of his famous night photo sessions.

### Beautification

Thanks to Jan Dittmer we have lots of beautiful flowers blooming along our right of way, in front of the Depot, at the track bumpers, at our billboard, and across the street from the Depot. Dave Luca and Bill Chapin have mowed the grass. Chris Hauf and Dave Luca have cleared brush and weeds.

### Communications, Signals & Power

Supt. Neil Bellenger, 359-9985

Bob Miner, John Redden & Co. have picked up several signal relay cases donated by OMID RR, and using John's truck and trailer, have delivered them to our Museums for use on our line.

Neil Bellenger and Rand Warner have been scouting and arranging for donations and delivery of additional signal equipment in other locations.

Jim Johnson is continuing work on the signal relay control box for the signal blocks going north from the Depot. This work is being transitioned

from Mike Dow, as Mike now has a real railroad job in Pennsylvania.

1000 feet of special wire has been ordered, received and delivered; to permit extension of our signal system blocks north of Switch #6 at the top of the hill.

Neil Bellenger and Jim Johnson are providing their electrical expertise to the Electrification Project for our future trolley line.

### Passenger Equipment

Supt. Bob Miner, 671-3589

Bernie Cubitt has been out every Saturday, and other days as well, removing old rivets in the bad panels of the Stillwell coach east side. All the panels are off now. Nothing seems to stop him -- neither wind nor rain nor sleet nor snow nor hail nor .....

Chuck Whalen has "patented" a new process for bending tempered Masonite into S-curves for the ceiling panels over the windows on the Stillwell Coach. He is being assisted by Rick Israelson on the general interior rehab.

Dave Behnke is making new exterior panels for the Stillwell east side, using his "patented" process which results in a new roof for the Kershaw snow brush machine's cab.

Bob Miner is busily making up lists, car by car, for getting our excursion train at Sodus ready for the next season of use.

### Tour of Construction Equipment

Thanks to Joe Scanlon, George Knab, Charles Harshbarger and John McDonald for making our Special Event of demo's of our antique construction equipment so successful on Sunday, May 19. At various times the Bucyrus-Erie backhoe, Bucyrus-Erie shovel, Bay City shovel, Huber grader, and International dump truck were all in use, and were enjoyed by our visitors.

## Freight Information

Chris Hauf, Freight Superintendent

### Recent progress/Future plans

Chris Hauf and others continue work on the PC caboose. Rotten wood flooring and decking has been removed. Chris Hauf has replaced the rotten decking with new pressure treated decking and options for acquiring the proper tongue and groove flooring are being pursued. Neil Bellenger and Chris Hauf have removed all of the grates over the windows restoring the car to its as built appearance. George Knab, Chris Hauf and others formulated a plan to remove the dent in the east side of the caboose. Future work includes the replacement of the missing tongue and groove flooring, removal of the dent, and preparation for exterior painting into PC green.

Dave Luca, Jeremy Tuke, and others have started removing the plywood paneling in the BREP caboose, so restoration can begin. It is neat to see the original BREP interior as the paneling is removed. Check it out sometime! Plans are well underway to restore this caboose back to its as built appearance.

Bill Limburg continues to work on new windows for the Erie caboose. Plans are to have the windows installed by the 25th anniversary celebration in July.

The New York Central Historical Society has provided us some very important information on our flat car. Turns out, the car appears to have been built in 1907 for the New York Central by American Car & Foundry. This makes it the oldest piece of rolling stock in our collection! It was a member of Lot 208-F which was an order for 2050 such 40 foot flat cars for the New York Central. According to Charles Smith, President of the NYC Historical Society, there were 21 cars of this type still in service in January 1941 with all of the cars out of service for the New York Central by June of 1944. Thanks to Mr. Smith and the New York Central Historical Society for their help in



**Freight** (continued from Page 3)

identifying a piece of the car's history!!! As time becomes available, it is the plan to jack up the car to be able to remove the north truck for inspection and possible restoration as a first step in bringing this car back to life.

John Redden, Gene Redden, and others continue to work inside and out on the B&O wagontop caboose. The improving weather conditions have allowed for the continuation of the exterior painting effort started by John Redden last year.

A five car freight train, featuring vintage equipment, was put together and operated in May, pulled by the Fairbanks diesel #1843. What sight to see that engine and that train pulling out of the yard and up the hill into the S-curve!!

**Electrification**

Facilitator: Rand Warner, 425-8587

Electrification of our first 1000 feet of track, starting at NYMT barn lead, and heading south, is actively under way. The first 20 wood poles were ordered and delivered. Charles Lowe and Steve Huse are laying out pole locations and putting in stakes. NYMT personnel have sorted and categorized all available hardware, fittings, wire and brackets. Neil Bellenger and company have the auger truck for setting poles thoroughly operational, and will be relocating it north to NYMT job site. Neil is also ordering equipment and tools for welding rail bonds.

We are looking for a good operational standard gage trolley. It should be double-ended for operation in either direction. The trolley could even be used on a loan basis while we're completing restoration on NYMT's #107 and #157.

We are also looking for a 600 volt DC power supply of 250 to 500 kilowatt capacity. This could be provided from a medium-sized locomotive, a diesel-generator set, a HEP head end power car, a transformer-rectifier setup, or a rotary converter running on 3-phase AC power.

We are also assembling substation & switch gear equipment. We need switches, breakers, metering, lightning arrestors, and panels. If you can help with design or procurement, let us know.

The electrification project will add a new dimension to our offerings and operations for the visiting public, and will fulfill a dream we've had since 1975.

**Maintenance of Way Equipment**

Supt. Norm Shaddick, 865-2773

Our new hi-rail boom/dump truck is now fully operational and all checked out. Hydrovac power brake unit replaced. Radio installed. Bad tires replaced. Truck chassis and hi-rail gear lubed. Rail rack installed. Foot stirrups and hand grabs installed. Brakes bled. Check out run successful from NYMT barn to NRHS Depot. Boom checked out. Dump box checked out. Thanks to George Knab, Bob Miner, Rand Warner, Dick Holbert, Norm Shaddick, Jeff Carpenter, Bob Mader and others.

Crew Car Trailer #3 is taking shape as adapted from former G&W motor car -- at least on a temporary basis. Engine and transmission and axle drive have been removed. A new plain axle from NYMT is being installed. Car is now standing up on end for ease of work below floor line -- thanks to the boom truck. The busy bees on this project include Rand Warner, Dave Luca, Bob Mader, Bob Miner, Norm Shaddick, George Knab, John Redden, and others.

The other G&W motor car "Madermobile" is getting lots of use in work train service, even as its new air brake system is being installed by Bob Mader.

The Roe brothers, Raymond and Leonard, are rapidly nearing final completion of mechanical and structural work on the PRR track motor car. The new roof is going on and an angle iron frame for box over motor is in fabrication.

The Fairmont track crane and crane tender car are still getting more attention from Jeremy Tuke. A new drawbar for the tender was cut out by Gene Redden and has been installed by Jeremy. Both cars are in very active and useful service now on trackwork, for weekends, weekdays, and week nights.

Steve Huse has made and installed seat cushions for Trailer Car TC-2.

**Tool Car & Shops**

Supt. Charles Harshbarger, 266-8339

Suggestions from all our volunteers, and our general membership, are being factored into the plans for our new restoration building and surrounding areas. These suggestions relate to the building size, shape, construction, location, features, equipment, tracks, pits, tools, adjunct sheds, inside and outside storage, etc. Please keep the inputs coming.

Various plans and options are being considered for location and function of additional structures, at appropriate times in the future -- for turntable, water tower, roundhouse, machine shop, sand tower, etc. These plans need to be integrated with other plans for additional trackage north and south of Rte 251.

**Operation Lifesaver Train**

Both Conrail and Union Pacific were operating Operation Lifesaver trains. The UP's was in California. Conrail's toured Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana.

To help law enforcement officers to understand the extent of problems at grade crossings, a television camera was mounted in the cab and monitors were placed in the passenger cars for officials to watch. In addition, a police officer rode in the cab with a radio who took license plate numbers and descriptions of vehicles that tried to beat the train. This officer was in contact with a following patrol car which then stopped the offender. (Source: CONRAIL NEWS)

Lake Shore RR Museum sponsored 'LS' day on May 18.

(Editor's Note: For those who missed Mr. Gerstung's talk at the May meeting, this article summarizes the talk.)

## By Trolley to Olcott

by Geoff Gerstung

Niagara County's enterprising community of Olcott, situated on Lake Ontario, was desiring to market its potential as a summer resort in the 1890's. A means of transporting large numbers from the population centers was needed. A Railroad line, of sorts, seemed to be the solution at the time.

When newspapers headlined the "dawn of a new era" spreading the word about electricity for the first time there was wonderment about its use in transportation conveyance. The question was, could a train be propelled by the mysterious new energy? Use of the street car became common place answering the urban transportation need across the country with cities of the Niagara Frontier no exception. First, horse-drawn cars plied the streets with the new electric trolley following in the 1890's. For some the railroad, or especially the new electric trolley, was the answer to Olcott's future transportation needs.

A trolley line from Olcott, connecting with the electric Buffalo & Lockport Railway at Lockport, was geographically the most sensible route for the proposed rail line. A charter for the Lockport & Olcott Railway was granted in April 1900 for a trolley line between its namesake communities. The line was to be 13.5 miles long. Assuring quick running time the track bed was to be ballasted with rock, furnished with oak ties and 85 pound rails. Work proceeded rapidly with completion desired at the earliest date possible. Burt Van Horn, a prominent local figure, played a major role in establishing the Olcott line and served as the first General Manager.

The official grand opening was on August 29, 1900, being coordinated with Olcott's premier annual day - the "Pioneer Picnic." Record crowds boarded the trolleys destined for a day of fun at the beach. On that day trolleys transported over 13,000 to Olcott. The ride over the new line was indeed special as scenery abounded. Station stops at communities along the route were convenient to on-line patrons also.

Since trolley lines were built primarily to handle the rush hour crowds of workers going to and from their jobs, street car owners began to dream up ways to entice people to ride the cars that would otherwise be idle on evenings and weekends. If a car line could be easily extended to a beach or other attraction a destination would be developed. Olcott Beach was a natural for such a seasonal business. The trolley company purchased the pine grove along the lake front and developed a park. The large Olcott Beach Hotel was erected at the west end of the park. It featured a fine ballroom, dining room, casino and 100 rooms for guests. In the park itself a number of attractions were added assuring activities for an enjoyable outing. The Rialto amusement park was across the Lake Road. The beach, wooded park, hotel and amusement area were developed by the railway to generate off hour traffic. Steam boat service from Toronto brought capacity loads to Olcott and met the railway's dock branch along Eighteen Mile creek also generating trolley revenues.

The Lockport & Olcott and Buffalo & Lockport Railways were consolidated under the banner of the new International Railway Company (IRC) on February 20, 1902, joining other electric lines in the area. This large new company controlled the destiny of the Olcott line until the demise of service in the late 1930's. But, we are getting ahead of our story.

The interurban cars, as the inter-city trolleys were called, were larger and faster than the then typical city street car. The Olcott line saw a newly designed car entering service in 1904. They were described as a "magnificent advance." The new 4000 series cars were built by the J. G. Brill Company of Philadelphia. The could operate in 2 or 3-car trains. A 2-car train would provide a seating capacity of 112. The exterior was the familiar golden yellow and featured large windows topped by arched windows of stained glass in the monitor roof. The interiors were most attractive with wood in a natural finish and seats upholstered in green leather with high backs. The pleasure of riding the open cars was actively promoted and encouraged during summer jaunts in the days before air-conditioning. Yes, the enjoyment and comfort of those riding the

Olcott line were not ignored.

Interurban lines across the country found that an on-line freight business was also to be derived. The Lockport-Olcott Division of the IRC was by no means an exception. Special farm produce trains ran to Buffalo markets with a sizeable business done in fruits, vegetables and dairy products.

Whether strolling in the park, bathing on a sandy beach, boating, fishing, taking in the rides at the Rialto, enjoying a delicious meal, dancing at the big hotel, or just simply the ride to and from, Olcott Beach was a wonderful place to visit. In the warm weather months thousands rode the electric cars to Olcott Beach -- a "Trolley Park on Lake Ontario."

## Cosgrove writes for The Call Board

The April issue of *The Call Board*, the newsletter of the Mohawk & Hudson Chapter, NRHS, contains Dan's article entitled: NYC Signal Towers of Syracuse: Part I. An added bonus was a photo of SS-29, the tower at Ames Street Junction in Rochester.

This issue of *The Call Board* contained other informative articles. One is "Some Recollections of a Former Alco Engineer" authored by Ernest Johnson. These are snippets as this trouble-shooter travelled around solving problems and making observations.

Another is on the workings of the Walschaerts valve gear by Don Barbeau with diagrams.

## MK Rail

Reportedly in MK Rail's 1995 Annual Report, the company is putting up its Mountaintop, PA locomotive rebuilding facility up for sale. (*The Call Board*, 4/96)

Also, they have recalled their six 5,000 hp MK5000C prototypes from Union Pacific and Southern Pacific. They are halting further development and have begun selling the inventory of MK5000C raw materials. (*The Call Board*, 4/96)

**An Interview:****Ira Cohen**

Born in New York City, Ira grew up on Long Island, where he could watch the trains on the Long Island RR. He assumed all railroads were like the LIRR: lots of passenger trains and FM diesels. Thought the C-Liners were the sleekest things! Ira also developed an interest in the NYC subways.

Ira came 'west' for college, SUNY at Buffalo, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree. He returned to New York, but in 1970 decided he didn't like it anymore and moved to Rochester.

He is partial to Conrail, largely because it is local. Ira still maintains an interest in passenger trains: Amtrak, VIA, commuter trains and subways.

Ira joined the Rochester Chapter around 1989. Early on, Don Shilling on one of his recruiting drives, suggested Ira volunteer as a Car Host on the Fall Foliage tours. Ira loved it -- and is still doing it. He also participated in the summer maintenance of the excursion fleet.

Ira is currently the Chapter's Treasurer. Most appropriate as it goes along with his regular work: that of tax accountant with emphasis on individual income taxes.

As far as other RR organizations, he was once a member of the Iron Horse Model Railroad (no longer in existence) and NMRA (still in existence).

Says Ira: "The lil' kid in me is ecstatic when I drive one of the locomotives at the Museum!"

**Wall of Fame**

The announcement of the **Wall of Fame** plaque made the local Gannett newspapers on Wednesday, May 1 in Carol Ritter's column.

For \$50, one can honor a relative railroad employee (present or past; or yourself if working on the railroad) with a brass name plate to be mounted on a large walnut plaque at the Museum.

For details, contact Mike Byrne at 987-1305.

**R&GV RR - The Model**

Among the layout tours at the recent NMRA Regional Convention was that for David Coon. David's planning of the Rochester & Genesee Valley model began in 1978. In present form, it fills a 10x11-foot basement room, plus a segment travelling through a bathroom (Caledonia) to a staging area. The time period is when the Erie controlled this road between Mortimer and Avon. Depicted are Rochester yard & Rochester Belt, Mortimer Junction, Commerce Industrial Park, Bailey, Riverton, Golah, Industry (with industries rather than just the present station), and Avon. Interchange traffic takes place with Lehigh Valley, B&O, LA&L and NYC.

The layout is chest high giving a different perspective the normal waist high ones. The railroad operates with block control and two mainline cabs and one yard controller.

**For B&O Fans**

The B&O Railroad Museum, 901 West Pratt St., Baltimore, MD 21223 has released a gift catalog. Listed are items bearing B&O insignia, also books and videos.

**Present Day Steam**

In the April 1996 issue of **American Heritage** appears "The Power of Live Steam" by John White, Jr. Both current and historical photos are included in this 10 page article detailing some of the present day steam excursion lines.

**Union Pacific presence in Eastern US.**

Joseph G. Streamer writes in *Empire State Express*, newsletter of the Niagara Frontier Chapter, about how the Union Pacific Railroad encountered eastern influence.

The PRR controlled the UP from March 1871 to March 1872. The UP faced a cash crisis in early 1871 and sought a loan from PRR, which was secured by UP stock. This cause UP stock to increase. Subsequently, PRR sold to take a profit; the UP Board was not pleased and voted PRR group off the UP Board. PRR lost its chance of being a trans-continental railroad.

A NYC group took notice and solicited control of UP from PRR. This lasted about a year; the financial Panic of 1873 forces NYC to relinquish its position. Jay Gould of Erie RR fame also entered the picture.

In summary, Mr. Streamer notes that whereas the once powerful Pennsylvania and New York Central roads were doomed to failure after the 1968 merger and now swept into Conrail, today the UP is considering a merger with Southern Pacific. Wouldn't it be interesting if Union Pacific bids for Conrail. "What goes around does sometimes come around."

**Olympic Flame**

The Union Pacific Railroad will contribute a 19-car passenger train to help carry the Olympic flame across the United States on its way to the 1996 games in Atlanta. The train will transport the Flame for more than 3500 miles of the 15,000 mile journey between Los Angeles and Atlanta.

A specially-built "cauldron car" will be on the rear of the train. It will carry the flame between events as well as display it at hundreds of communities along the rail route.

Working with the UP are eight other railroads: Arizona & California RR Co., AT&SF, BN, CP Rail/Soo Line, IC, KCS, SP and Washington Central RR.



## Railroad Poetry

By Dan Cosgrove

While looking over some railroad papers I have, I came across this poem written so many years ago. I attended that testimonial dinner and was shocked to realize that all the participants of that ceremony had passed away, even the author, save for a friend and myself. The author, Ernie Rowell, became a Trainmaster on this division in later years and was a much respected official, and this perspective of the four track main line and the single track West Shore in the 1940s was met with real appreciation at that dinner. Who all was there at that dinner? It really matters not -- every official and all the dispatchers and chiefs not working were there, and they all are gone. Some of the occurrences referred to would be a mystery to anyone not acquainted with the knowledge of the railroad at that time. For instance, "HBS-1, 2000 tons, stalled on Byron Hill". Our L engines, the 4-8-2 Mohawks that were the backbone of our freight power were rated at 2500 tons over Byron Hill. "The Moonlight leaving Genesee" -- The Moonlight was the famous BD-38 that came out of Buffalo eastbound down the West Shore about three times a week -- the Moonlight had all the high cars and all the wide cars and all the double and triple loaded cars that had speed limits of 15 miles per hour on the straight and 10 mph on curves -- the Moonlight picked up all the repaired cripples that had to be babied in to a car shop somewhere. The crews at this point in time worked 16 hour days, but the Moonlight might very well take 30 hours to complete one tour from Buffalo to Dewitt yard, so somewhere in their slow trip down the road they would have to be relieved. It sometimes happened that the day before yesterday's BD-28 might be approaching Dewitt, as today's BD-28 just was departing Buffalo. The white light out at SS-6 at Jordan was for the benefit of the freights coming east to Dewitt, warning them to take water at Amboy as they might be subject to a long wait at Clark Street till Dewitt found a track for their train.

I hope this poem conveys the aroma of the time. There were four dispatchers working in Syracuse at the time. The Terminal man worked the territory from Syracuse Junction (SS-2, just east of the New York State Fairgrounds to SS-44 at Kirkville, the westernmost Mohawk Division Tower). The East End Dispatcher had the territory from SS-2 to SS-20 at Wayneport. The West End Dispatcher had the territory from SS-20 to SS-46 at Depew, which was the first tower of the Buffalo Division. The West Shore Man had the West Shore from SS-2 all

the way along the main line to SS-46 on the Shore. Also remember this was a time when we routinely handled around 70 some odd passenger trains per day and as many more freights, and literally clouds of local trains -- and they worked every trick and every place. There were no quiet times! There were times that seemed almost impossible to handle, but the trains did get handled and the trains did move, but it didn't happen automatically. It took much planning and headscratching -- but it was never, never dull.

**Poem** by E. C. (Ernie) Rowell Train Dispatcher upon the occasion of a testimonial dinner for W.E. Mastin, retiring Train Dispatcher, Sept. 30, 1946.

'Twas three a.m. in Syracuse, Ed Hennigan in the chair,  
Number 68 at 25, left eccentric loose ---  
XB-2 ahead of 10, hot journal on caboose,  
NY-4 at Crittenden, car with broken sill,  
HBS-1, 2000 tons, stalled on Byron Hill.

The East End man was busy, too: busy as a bee.  
NS-1 just west of 6 --- tire off, on 3,  
BW-10 with stock for Clyde, stopped on Lock Berlin,  
Train had parted half way up, caused by a lifted pin,  
Number 21 at SS-8, rear home signal red;  
Switches normal -- signals cleared, the operator said.  
The white light was out at SS-6, Dewitt was holding out.  
The Amboy plug was hard to use, bent and broken spout.

Kellerhouse leaned back and smiled -- the West Shore man was he  
The Moonlight leaving Genesee was late as late could be.  
With wide cars and slow cars and lots of work to do,  
He'd never make it to Dewitt, he'd have to have a crew.  
A jigger west of Churchville had stalled, account low steam, they say;  
He'd double train to Elba, but not without delay.  
Advance DH-1 at Port Byron stood, to meet the CD-2;  
Two hours since they'd left South Clyde, and nothing from the crew.

The Terminal man was going strong, as very well he might;  
Belle Isle full of Hojack cars, and no relief in sight.  
Five westward trains were waiting power, short one Corning crew -  
One over in the Southport pool was the best that he could do  
Tracks 4 and 8 were full of trains, yard couldn't take them in --  
The Pullers running here and there -- and added to the din.

The boys kept grimly at their tasks -- they had a job to do.  
The crossed 'em over, crossed 'em back, and wrong-tracked one or two.  
By six a.m. the scene had changed -- the trains were on their way  
To Mastin, working 8:00 to 4:00, it seemed that usual day.  
But, knowing all the inside facts, I think that you'll agree  
That things were not quite normal in Syracuse at 3:00.

## Annual Banquet: June 1, 1996

### Selected highlights



General area; the buffet table is at the rear with *plenty* of food. The last table served found a full buffet.

*Right:* Marie Miner receives the Fairmont Trophy for 1996. Presenter was Dan Cosgrove, last year's recipient. Marie was honored for the many years she has sold Fall Foliage Trip tickets from the ticket booth as well as phone and mail orders. Marie says the trophy is 'heavy' -- it is!



*Right:* Bob Groman and Chris Hauf preparing for the audio-visual portion of the Rail City program.



## Annual Banquet

Seventy-four attended the Annual Banquet at the Marketplace Inn.

### Fairmont Award

Marie Miner received the traveling Fairmont Award (a rather heavy one according to Marie) from last year's recipient, Dan Cosgrove. Marie was honored for the many years she has sold Foliage Trip tickets, not only at the time of departure at Sodus, but also via mail orders and phone calls. Congratulations, Marie.

Tom Way read the names of those receiving recognition.

Bruce Hodges, VP of NE Region was in attendance and expects to be at our 25th Anniversary Celebration.

### Program:

Bob Groman, the son of the late Dr. Stanley Groman, gave a very informative talk about his father's vision and accomplishments on Rail City, the first steam train museum in the country. He finished his talk with a 20-minute movie film that his father took of 'the last steam train ride' from Canadaigua to Sandy Beach, NY.

On tables were about 14 large photo albums and newspaper clippings that Dr. Groman had accumulated.

The food was great, the Program was great --- our thanks to Mike Byrne and Keith Blackall for the arrangements.

### Bonnie Glickman recovering

About a month ago, Bonnie fell and broke her shoulder. She is currently undergoing physical therapy. We wish you a speedy recovery, Bonnie.

### Rubber bands: they don't make them like they use to!

While your Editor was working on the NYMT Archives (he works on the NRHS Library also), he came across a rubber band around a packet of papers dated in the 1940s. It must have been 50 years old, yet it was in perfect condition: elastic, didn't break, had its 'snap' and showed no signs of deterioration!



## How safe are railroad bridges?

The following information was gleaned from the pages of "The Federal Register" 49 CFR Part 213: Beginning in 1991, the Federal Railway Administration conducted a review of the safety of railroad bridges. This review as prompted by the agency's perception that the bridge population was aging, traffic density and loads were increasing on many routes, and the consequences of a bridge failure could be catastrophic.

After counting the approximate number of bridges that carry railroad track in the US the FRA then surveyed the safety of those bridges. The count revealed that: -- Approximately 100,700 bridges carried railroad tracks in 1991. -- Approximately 10 bridges exist for every 14 miles of railroad, and -- Approximately 120 feet of track per mile is located on a bridge.

The safety survey showed that all of the 21 major railroads have conducted comprehensive, effective bridge inspection programs for several decades. The survey demonstrated that these railroads are acting to safeguard the integrity of their bridges. The findings for the 20 regional railroads were similar to those of the major railroads.

During the past five decades, not one fatality has been caused by the structural failure of a railroad bridge.

Bridges keep going, and going.

The Big Four (NYC), B&O and Pennsylvania Railroads bridges remained in place during the 1913 flood of the Sandusky River in Tiffin, OH. All of the highway bridges were swept away, but they saved the RR bridges by loading them down with loaded coal hoppers. Last year and this year the City of Tiffin is replacing the concrete bridges that replace the bridges swept away in 1913, but the railroad bridges still stand and the B&O (now CSX) continues to carry about 20 plus trains a day.

(Source: "Nickel Plate Road Train Bulletin," 3/1996, Mad River & NKP Railroad Society, Inc., Bellevue, OH.)

## National NRHS News

### Convention Dates:

Charlotte (June 18-23, 1996): some tickets available.

Salt Lake City (June 24-28, 1997)

Syracuse, NY (July 8-12, 1998)

On April 14 & 15, records from the late Allan Vaughn's apartment were moved to Philadelphia headquarters.

### New Chapters:

White Oak, Oak Hill, WV; Twin Forks, Riverhead, NY and Brazos Valley, Lake Jackson, TX. Pearl River Valley Chapter, Bogalusa, LA was reinstated. Total chapters: 171.

### Proposed Dues Structure:

Beginning with the 1997 membership year, the proposed National dues are:

Regular: from \$14 to \$17

Associate: \$15 to \$18

Family: Unchanged at \$2 per person.

The last dues adjustment was in 1992. Of the proposed \$3, \$1 is for Bulletin printing and postage increases; \$1 for improved membership records operations, and \$1 for general inflation.

### Responsible Journalism, Ethics & InterNet

With the advent of computers and on-line services, messages have been posted when they should not have been, either because the person doing so was not in a position to ethically do so, or they just perpetuated 'rumors'.

These problems also appear in 'print'. In this case, the source is often lacking: an employee, company official newspaper report or railfan. In case of company news, it may be proprietary information, release of which, helps the competitors. There is also the need to honor copyrights.

(Your editor affirms the above and makes every effort to assign contributors names or sources.)

## To our good friends and members who haven't had time to donate to the 25th Depot Anniversary Fund Raising Project

It is now half past June. In just a few days you'll be invited to attend the Chapter's special meeting on Thursday, July 18th, 1996. That's when we're going to have our special ground breaking ceremonies especially for Chapter members. The Anniversary Committee's been in high hopes of garnering the \$50,000 needed for our new 60 by 120 foot rail car renovation, restoration and rehabilitation structure.

BUT ... we're not quite there yet. As a matter of fact we're still under the 50% figure. So if you haven't made your tax deductible donation as yet please do so RIGHT NOW! We really need your support.

Your 25th Anniversary Committee.

## Inadequate Information?

The May 27, 1996 issue of **U.S. News & World Report** compares airline safety with that of the railroads. On Page 40 begins a "Special Report" entitled *Running off the rails*.

After reading this, your editor concludes that the writer and support reporters were comparing the classic 'oranges with apples' situation.

The 'oranges' are that "175 people were killed in domestic airplane disasters in 1995." The 'apples' include "1,144 rail workers, passengers, motorists and trespassers were killed" in 1995. The authors gave no breakdown for the latter categories. From reading the InterNet news furnished by Mike Bryne, there is a significant fatality rate just from motorists and trespassers -- that accounts for most of Amtrak's related fatalities.

True, railroad accidents have and are occurring and efforts should be made to reduce the number. Because of recent media coverage, I would have to conclude that this article was biased, improper and certainly incomplete.

**The Semaphore** is published monthly by the Rochester, NY Chapter, National Railway Historical Society. It is mailed free to all Chapter members. Non-member's subscriptions are \$5.00 and run from January 1 to December 31. Chapter meetings are held the third Thursday and the Board of Directors meets the first Thursday of each month.

**Rochester Chapter NRHS Officers:**

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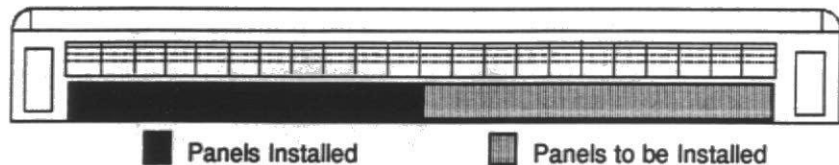
*Printing:* Dave Luca

**InterNet (World Wide Web)** address: <http://www.rochester.ny.us/rail-museum.html>

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: (716) 544-6221. Contributors using a computer are asked to send their submissions on any MS-DOS diskette in ASCII format, as well as a printed copy. **Deadline: The first of each month.**

**Stillwell Coach Panel Installation Status:**

This graphic of the Stillwell coach was extended to represent 22 panels (11 panels per side). All panels have been subscribed. To date, eleven, or those on the west side have been installed.

**The Semaphore**

Rochester Chapter

National Railway Historical Society

P.O. Box 664

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Chapter Meeting & Program:

Track Car Rides

**6:00 PM, June 20, 1996**

Industry Depot, Rush