



The Semaphore

September 1996

Volume 39

Number 1

Newsletter of the Rochester NY Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

September's Program:

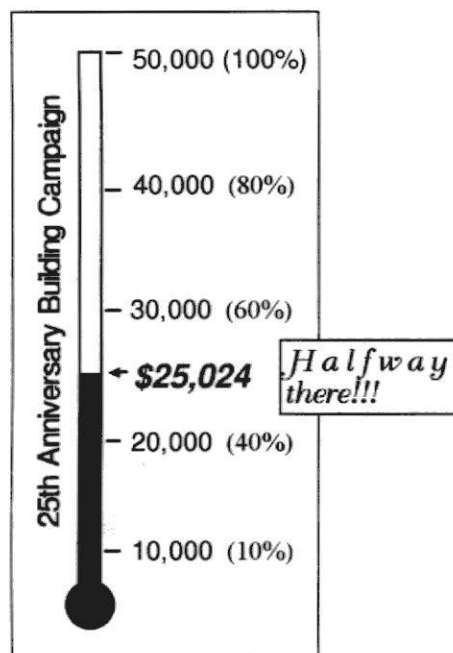
This is the first of our 1996-97 Season Membership Meetings to be held at the 40&8 Club on September 19th at 8 PM.

The program for September will be titled "*A Fallen Flag Railroad Memories*." Chapter member Jack Matsik will present a color-sound video from his collection. The video is a special PBS Altoona TV show (produced by Penn State) interviewing retired PRR employees about their life working for the PRR. It is full of person stories and impressions of the "P" Co., supplemented with interesting photo documentation. A video projector has been rented so that we can show large full screen images.

Program Committee

Jack Matsik (Chairman)	442-6269
Bill Limburg	586-9470
Dan Cosgrove	352-6931
Dave Luca (Board liaison)	288-0318

The Committee welcomes suggestions and ideas for future programs at forthcoming meetings at the 40&8 Club. Just contact any of the above committee members.



It's Fall Foliage Trip Season

Duncan Richards photo

Work Parties at Sodus

The first Fall Foliage Trip is the fast approaching Sunday, September 22!

It is now 'coach cleaning time'. If at all possible, your assistance on Wednesdays of September 11 & 18 is requested to wipe down the seats, and other 'polishings' of our excursion train set. The sessions start about 10 in the morning and run till dark. On the 18th the loading and parking areas will be groomed.

On Monday, Sept. 16, the coaches will be vacuumed. And Friday, Sept. 20, they will be 'watered' -- the filling of the water reservoirs for the restrooms.

So far, Bob Miner has been working mostly alone. Let's give him a hand (or two).

Fall Foliage Trip Info

These 34-mile round trips are between Sodus and Newark through changing scenery.

Trips are scheduled for noon and 2:15 on these dates: Sept. 22 and 19, and Oct. 6, 12, 13, 19 and 20. Boarding is at the Ontario Midland depot on Maple Ave. in Sodus.

Tickets cost \$10 for adults, \$6.50 for children ages 3 to 15 and free for children younger than 3 who ride on a parent's lap. Sept. 22 is Family Day when children's tickets will be \$3.50.

For mail orders, send check and self-addressed, stamped envelope to NRHS Rochester Train Tickets, P.O. Box 1161, Webster, NY 14580. For information or credit card orders call 224-0581.

NYMT gets 'new' trolley

On Wednesday, September 4, the trolley in the former Spaghetti Warehouse on Central Ave. was removed and transported to NYMT museum's campus. It will be temporarily stored under a tarp until a place can be prepared to shelter it. A window, section of the exterior wall and part of a sprinkler system had to be removed to get the trolley out to the street.

GRS Provides Grant

The General Railway Signal Foundation gave a grant of one thousand dollars to the Chapter for its Restoration Building Fund.

The Chapter is most appreciative of having been honored for this consideration.

Sick List

Our best wishes to a continuing good recovery by Bonnie Glickman, following shoulder injury and surgery.

Our best wishes to Bill Chapin for a strong recovery from recent heart surgery. Give him a call.

Former PRR/GV Canal to become Greenway

You will be able to walk from Rochester to Southern Tier as New York state buys RG&E rail bed to create 90-mile greenway. The was originally the Genesee Valley Canal. When the canal was abandoned, the Pennsylvania Railroad used the tow path as their embankment for a railroad from the Southern Tier to Rochester. This railroad was abandoned in 1950s. Fortunately, RG&E had utility rights that protected the corridor and will retain these rights.

Governor Pataki announced the plan recently at Canawaugus Park in Scottsville. The sale must still be approved by the state. Sections of the corridor has already been developed as greenway. (Source: *Times-Union*, Sept. 5, 1996)

Another Greenway Underway

The Lehigh Valley Trail will be developed between Victor and Caledonia using the right-of-way of the former Lehigh Valley. This made the local papers as Kodak will donate ash from Kodak Park boilers for paving the trail. (Source: *Times-Union*, Sept. 6, 1996)

NARP Flyer enclosed

For your information, the National Association of Railroad Passengers requested we alert members of Amtrak's funding situation.

Another Interview

Charles Harshbarger



Charlie 'sipping' his favorite beverage at a recent Trustee's meeting.

Charlie was born in Clifton Springs, NY and moved to Rochester in 1960.

His occupation is in contrast to his interest in a 'competitor' in that he is a straight truck and tractor trailer truck driver. But this knowledge has been very beneficial to the Chapter's goals, as it extends to his interest in heavy construction equipment.

Charlie's interest in railroads are the Lehigh Valley and New York Central. In that aspect, he is interested in seeing more former Lehigh Valley equipment restored to original livery, as well as the preservation of existing railroads.

He became a member of the local Chapter in 1985 and is currently a Trustee of the Chapter. Charlie is also serving on the Preservation Committee and various subcommittees. Past Chapter activities involve Car Host on past trips to Corning and trips to area railroads to salvage donated items.

Charlie is also a member of the Anthracite Railroad Historical Society, New York Museum of Transportation and Lehigh Valley Historical Society.

If the figures are supported, then Amtrak employees and suppliers pay taxes that exceed Amtrak's Congressional funding. Does that mean they pay their own wages?

Membership Committee Report

Thomas A. Way, Chairman

Welcome to this New Member:

William K. Heron
70 Mandy Ln
Rochester, NY 14625
381-6933

Please add to April Roster:

John J. Kernan
90 Beacon Hills Dr. N.
Penfield, NY
14526
671-8719

Notes and Other Tidbits

The end of August means the end of year for 1996 memberships. Starting September first, I will be accepting new 1997 memberships.

Membership Class Breakdown:

Regular.....	122
Student/Retiree.....	15
Supporting.....	43
Sustaining.....	9
Patron	13
Benefactor.....	7
Sponsor.....	5
Life.....	5
Family	32
TOTAL:	251

Stillwell work resumes

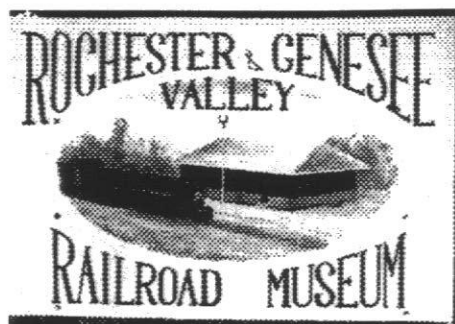
The Stillwell coach was recently relocated to the lower yard so that work on its restoration can continue. The car was moved to allow preparation for the 25th Anniversary Event.

Another local PRR artifact removed.

The abutments that carried the Pennsylvania Railroad across the Erie Canal were visible from Interstate 390 near the airport. They were recently removed.

Depot's mascot expands family

The grounds at the depot 'inherited' a very affectionate feline several months ago. On noticing she was expecting John & Jane Weber provided an 'apartment' at their home. The Webers report she now has five 'children', and doing well.



Rand Warner, Chairman, 425-8587

General

By the time you read this, another Annual Picnic will have gone by. Hope you could enjoy it with us.

Our Summer meetings at our Museum are over; the September meeting will be at the 40 & 8 on University Ave.

In the next few months we should be thinking about our visions, goals, and priorities for next year's plans. We'd sure like to hear from you.

(Editor: Next year is the Chapter's 60th Anniversary!)

Motive Power

Supt. John Redden, 594-2227

Formal inquiries made on three steam locos by Rand Warner.

Candidate for main reservoir for RG&E #1941 was acquired and brought in through arrangements by Jeremy Tuke, transportation by Rand Warner and trailer by John Redden.

Fuel for NKP #79 pumped thru strainer/filter by Bob Cowan to remove jell and bugs. This successful approach will be applied next to EKC #6.

Train Operations

Supt. John Redden, 594-2227

For our August meeting, a mixed train consist from Depot was provided, using FM Army #1843, to meet a loco/caboose train at Reid's Crossing. EKC #6 and Erie Caboose provided service to NYMT end of the line.

Wait till you see what they come up with for the picnic!

Freight

Supt. Chris Hauf, 381-8583

Penn-Central caboose primed by Chris Hauf, now for P.C. green.

MDT Reefer circulating fan motors investigated by Bob Miner & Co. We want to run them.

Chris Hauf, John Redden and Rand Warner are investigating leads.

Passenger

Supt. Bob Miner, 671-3589

Excursion consist at Sodus being prepped for season by Bob Miner, Dave Luca, Rand Warner, Ira Cohen, Keith Blackall and others. Checkout of air conditioning, brakes, trucks, restrooms, lights, batteries, fans, etc. is continuing. The ever present and ever urgent task of window cleaning and plastic polishing continues to tax us.

Gale Smith is restoring the kitchen in the Pine Falls sleeper-lounge. It really sparkles. (Editor: Only about 1/5 done!)

Chuck Whalen, Rick Israelson, Dave Behnke and Bernie Cubitt are continuing work on Erie Stillwell ceiling, side sheathing and windows.

Engineering Dept.

Supt. James Johnson, 467-1672

Additions continue to be made to our Volunteer Technical Library for the Museum. These books are an invaluable resource for many railroad technologies that are fast disappearing from practice, along with the people who worked in those fields. Keep 'em coming!

Communications, Signals & Power

Supt. Neil Bellenger, 359-9985

A set of antique crossing flashers has been brought in from Attica by NYS/DOT Region 4 and Conrail.

Work continues on above and below ground wiring for extending signal system up and over the hill, thanks to Neil Bellenger, Mike Dow, Jim Johnson and Charles Harshbarger.

Visitor Operations

Supt. Don Shilling, 381-3171

We thank all our faithful volunteers who have staffed our all time record of weekday tour groups this year.

Tour groups have accounted for about 50% of our head count so far this year, a significant trend.

Tool Car & Shops

Supt. Charles Harshbarger, 266-8339

The large tool box donated by Jim Deane has been put into good service storing our flammable fuels outside and under cover. This is a plus for safety, security and our insurance.

Construction & Equipment

Supt. Joe Scanlon, 392-8841

A new acquisition has arrived just in time for the picnic. It is an Austin-Western yard crane of 6-10 ton capacity with all wheel drive, all wheel steering and extension boom. Thanks to George Knab, Joe Scanlon, Dan Swauger and Engineers Joint Training Fund for this prize.

Tom Phillips has the Barber-Greene crawler conveyor running. It still needs more work, but there is light at the end of the tunnel.

We received a B-30 Mack water truck and a 6-wheel Mack dump truck through arrangements by Joe Scanlon and George Knab. The dump truck has already been put to work hauling fill.

Buildings and Grounds

Supt. Dave Luca, 288-0318

Location for new restoration building being finalized by Dave Luca, Joe Scanlon and George Knab.

Preliminary site plan from John Weber and Rand Warner approved in present form by Town of Rush for our new Restoration Building.

Preparations for relocation of Buffalo, Lockport & Rochester interurban waiting station made by George & Dave Knab and Rand Warner. If everything goes as planned you will see this great new addition at our Picnic.

Track & ROW

Acting Supt. Rand Warner, 425-8587

Switch #7 completed by John Redden and now operational.

Track extension for Siding #7 graded, ballasted and ties and plates placed by John Redden, George Knab, Joe Scanlon and others.

Remainder of track materials being sorted and stacked by George Knab, Dave Luca, Rand Warner, John Redden, Chuck Whalen, Don Wawrzniak, Jeff Carpenter, Charles Harshbarger and others, using Lorain crane and Ford fork-lift, operated by George Knab.

Three switches at NYMT rebuilt with new switch stand timbers by John Redden, Rand Warner, Rick Israelson, Charles Harshbarger, Dave Luca, Bill Chapin, Chuck Whalen & others.

Maintenance-of-way Equip.

Supt. Norm Shaddick, 865-2773

Much work has gone into completing the Pennsy track motor car ("RoeMobile") for operational use by Bros. Roe, Bob Miner, Bob Mader, Norm Shaddick, Jeremy Tuke and others. It is now in revenue service.

The "Barbara Richards" trailer car #3 is now complete and in regular revenue service these past two months.

The Roe Brothers have now offered to tackle one of those pesky V-4 Wisconsin engines. Way to go!

Norm Shaddick, Jeremy Tuke and Bob Miner are getting track weed spraying instruction from Ted Strang and Larry Kaisner of NYMT, to provide more crews.

Electrification

Rand Warner, Facilitator, 425-8587

Charlie Lowe and Eric Norden of NYMT have prepared bracket arm assemblies for trolley overhead.

Charles Lowe and Charles Robinson of NYMT have provided specs and technical standards.

Jim Johnson is cleaning insulators and testing resistances.

Track crew works on Railroad Days

Sunday, August 11, saw a contingent of the ROW gang adjusting switch mechanisms and replacing switch timbers at the NYMT barn. Museum visitors got a first-hand look at track maintenance.



Charles Harshbarger operates the track crane while Chuck Whalen and Rick Israelson guides a switch timer, Norm Shaddick looks on.



Norm, Chuck, Rick, and Rand Warner routes the timber into position.



Rand adjusts the linkage on one of the switches.

Electrification continued

Neil Bellenger, Charles Lowe, Eric Norden and Rand Warner are ready to "dress" poles and place.

Pole locations have been determined to desired specs for clearance, span, etc.

Power supplies are being investigated by Rand Warner, Jim Dierks and George Knab.

Runnable trolleys are being investigated by NRHS and NYMT.

Thanks to ...

Jim Deane for platform crane detail drawing and specs.

George Knab for assortment of hydraulic hoses and belts.

Rand Warner for hand tools.

Cal Bulman for assorted track tools and parts for construction equipment.

Charlie Harshbarger for offer to donate Massey Ferguson tractor.

Jim Deane for rolling stock info.

Wanted

- Hydraulic conduit bender
- Anvil with or without base
- Operable skid steer loader
- Clip on DC ammeter 0-1000 amps

- Insulated copper wire #10
- Impedance bonds for signals
- Copper feeder cable #4-0
- Diesel generator set 250-500 KW
- Hydraulic fluid, antifreeze
- Lube oil 10-30 or straight 30
- Diesel fuel & kerosene

THE SILVER METEOR EXPERIENCE

by DAVE VELTRE

I had toyed with the idea of spending the night in New York City so I could catch the New York Rangers/New Jersey Devils NHL play-off game that was to be played in Madison Square Garden (which is actually built above Penn Station). But my sensible self maintained control of my compulsive self and I decided to bide the time away in Amtrak's first class lounge in Penn Station until it was time to board my Florida bound train the ill-fated Silver Meteor.

At about 6:20 p.m., I boarded the Silver Meteor and settled into car 10, room A. I had been working hard all winter and decided to treat myself to first class accommodations all the way to Deerfield Beach, Florida, where I would accompany my parents on the long drive from Florida, where they reside in the winter months, to their home in Rochester, New York. My bedroom consisted of a long bed/couch, private bathroom, air conditioning and a very large window through which you can watch America pass you by as you relax on the train. Little did I know at the time this window would shortly reveal to me the severity of a catastrophic situation of which I was soon to be involved.

The Silver Meteor consists of 16 cars and handles about 450 passengers. The train is actually in two sections that split in Jacksonville, Florida. One section heads to Tampa, while the other ends up in Miami. There are 6 coaches, 2 lounge cars, a dining car, a buffet dining car, 2 slumber coaches, 2 sleepers and 2 baggage cars. I was in a sleeper on the Miami section.

My attendant, Paul, was a very congenial fellow. He greeted and welcomed me aboard. He told me that dinner in the diner would begin after we left the Newark, N.J. station and presented

me with my complimentary meal vouchers (three of which I would never use).

Newark came and went fast, so I headed to the buffet car. There were not too many people on the train at this point,

so I wasn't surprised that I actually dined alone at my table. Breakfast, however, would be another story, because in Philadelphia and then Washington, we would pick up enough people to really fill up that train.

Dinner was great. I feasted on mahi-mahi, rice, vegetables and topped it off with a delicious piece of Georgia peach pie. I have been riding Amtrak for the past 15 years, and I must say that their quality and service in the food service department has improved 150% from what it was.

After dinner, I went to the lounge car, purchased a small bottle of wine and returned to my bedroom where I had the very thick Sunday New York Times awaiting me.

No phones, no kids, no problems for the next 20 hours. Relaxation. The train forces you to do it. That is the beauty of it. There I was laying in bed, sipping wine, reading the newspaper, as America passed by my window.

We were nearing Philadelphia when suddenly, outside my window, I noticed a large black billow of smoke rising into the twilight horizon. A large abandoned warehouse was burning from the very middle of the structure. I could just see the flames through its shattered windows. The train passed within two blocks of this awesome sight and I thought to myself that only on a train could you get the magic opportunity to pass through America's backyards and watch the drama of everyday life unfold before your eyes. The window of a train almost becomes a movie screen of sorts.

Philadelphia at night is a beautiful sight. The modern and the old mix to create a spectacular skyline. I anticipated rolling into D.C. that night. Most of the monuments are visible from the train and are really a sight at night. But not to a soon after departing Philly, the gentle rumble of the train lulled me into a comfortable, deep sleep.

A sudden jolt accompanied by a loud bang threw me from the bed into and through the wall that separates the large bedrooms. (This wall can be removed to create a "suite".) The train was riding

very rough and rocking violently back and forth. I somehow managed to get to my feet and look out my window. I saw mud slapping against the window and knew that we were off the tracks. My thought at this point was of the fatal crash in Alabama and I was hoping we wouldn't hit water. I somehow felt safe and secure in this strong structure as the train bore on. I knew that anything outside of water or maybe a mountain couldn't stop this strong steel train. It was like a wild roller coaster ride and I was just hanging on for dear life.

Finally, the train came to a sudden halt, that again threw me around a bit in my bedroom. Everything was eerily still and silent. My next instinct was survival. I knew I had to get out of the train as soon as possible. My window was covered with mud. Through the mud I could see some light so I figured sunrise was not far off. I grabbed my emergency window handle and pulled, but unfortunately all I got was a broken handle in my hand. I then opened my door and went to the window across the hall, but this side of the train was up against a bank. The window itself was up against the dirt. I then returned to my nearest exit which was right next to my bedroom, but upon looking through the door window, I could see that the car behind me was resting at a different angle than mine, and a corner of that car was pressed against my door, thus making the exit impassable. I noticed the car filling up with smoke. I turned to make my way to the other side of the car. The whole car was very quiet and nobody was out of their rooms but me. Upon reaching the other side of my car, I found our attendant, Paul, was already successful in opening the door. He asked if I was OK I responded that I was and then looked outside. Toward the front of the train there was a very bright fire belonging to the engine. The bright orange fire lit up the pre-dawn sky. The car ahead of us laid perfectly horizontal across the track bed. Our car was completely off the track bed and laying in the ditch along the tracks. There was debris everywhere.

Then I saw a man wandering on the track bed crying out loud "Oh my God,

this is so horrible, oh my God". I knew at this time what a disaster this was. My thoughts then turned to the

people in my car. It was getting very smoky and I knew we had to get people out. Nobody was out of their rooms yet so I started knocking on doors and telling people to exit toward the diner. (This was the next car in front of us and even though people were disoriented, they all knew where the diner was.) Some people were too afraid to leave their rooms. An elderly woman had hit her head very hard and needed medical attention. I instructed people to leave their luggage and exit the car as soon as possible because it was filling with smoke. We would come back for luggage and personal belongings later when we knew it was safe. Eventually Paul, Carlos (another Amtrak employee) and myself managed to get everyone off the car.

The fire was now raging and there were no sirens yet. I wanted to get to where the fire was because I felt that was where help was needed. I figured most of the severely injured were more towards the front of the train. But my way was blocked by the car in front of us which lay across lay across the track bed, its front end jutting into the woods, its its back end still attached

to the train. As it was still too dark to negotiate a way through the woods, it looked as though we were hemmed in until rescue or daylight arrived. We were surrounded by thick woods on either side of the train and far off behind the train I could see the lights of a bridge. At this point, I went on to help the people in the car behind ours.

In the woods west of the train, I saw a flashlight. As the flashlight grew nearer, I could see the orange glow of the fire reflecting off a badge. To everyone's relief, a policeman had found us. In a few minutes, sirens were heard on the other side of the jackknifed train. Rescue efforts were basically split in two: one for the front of the train, and one for the back, separated by the jackknifed cars.

We waited for some morning light before we attempted to move out of the wreckage area. As it grew lighter, the

extent of the damage became apparent. The train track was strewn over the ballast in pieces and pointing off in different directions. Railroad ties were everywhere, whole and broken, train axles and wheels, shredded pieces of metal, and many injured people sitting or laying on the bed of stones that the train derailed off of.

We followed the policeman towards the back of the train. Rescue workers had already cut a trail through the woods for us and we were heading towards that location. I could see the train that we hit directly in front of us. I could also see the CSX piggyback car the Amtrak engine hit. It was upside down on the west side of the tracks and had completely crushed the trailers that were on top of it. The impact must have been tremendous. That's an awful lot of weight to flip over like a pancake.

We were led down through the woods and into a parking lot. Rescue workers with stretchers dashed through the woods, while the greatest assembly of ambulances I've ever seen in my life whisked injured passengers away as soon as they came out of the woods. It wasn't long before news helicopters were everywhere, and I knew that I should try to reach my loved ones before the media broke the news.

Welcome to Selma, North Carolina, where the phone book is about one inch thick, and that includes the yellow and white pages. We were then bussed to the local National Guard Depot where the Red Cross had set up shop, while Amtrak coordinated transportation for those that could travel to their original destinations.

We were treated to real southern hospitality. Wal Mart came down with bags of new clothes, food and toys for the kids. The Salvation Army was there, as were many volunteers, too numerous to mention. But I think the one thing on every passenger's mind was to get to a phone to reach their loved ones and assure them everything was OK. But phones were hard to come by. The one phone in the depot had a police guard on it. It was for official use only.

So I took a hike and managed to find a

convenience store. I finally made a call about 10:00 a.m. to the relief of my family. They could now rest easy knowing I was OK.

Later that day, Amtrak bussed us to our desired destinations. I sat in my hotel room that night and watched the news coverage of the wreck. I saw my car, the burning engine and the wreckage spread over the track. I realized how lucky I was, and thanked God. I had a hard time falling asleep that night.

Its been two weeks since the crash as I write this. I still tense up when I hear a train whistle. I get a sinking feeling when I see a passing Amtrak train. But I know that will all pass.

My love for trains is too strong to let the trauma linger for long. If anything, this crash reinforces my belief in the safety of passenger train cars, especially Amtrak's Heritage Fleet. These are strong cars built in the 40's and 50's and built to last. The casualty total was low for such a crash and I think the durability and strength of these trains should get the credit.

It may be awhile, but I'll be back riding the rails again, someday.

Certainly the Root of Some Evil

by Dan Cosgrove

Jim came to work on the railroad in the late 30s, where he hired out as an operator and agent on one of the branch lines of the New York Central. He worked in many similar capacities for many years, sometimes as an agent, sometimes as a telegrapher-clerk, sometimes as a car distributor, and as time went on he acquired seniority enough so that he had the opportunity to take over the agent's position in a fairly large city on a busy branch line of the railroad.

As the agent he was very knowledgeable as to the concerns of the railroad, and to the way the railroad conducted its business. For example, he knew very well that the railroad frowned on any co-mingling of moneys -- by that I mean he knew full well that every time he

Continued on Page 7

Root of Some Evil

(Continued from Page 6)

received money from a customer of any sort that money must never find itself in to his pockets or his care no matter what the circumstances. The auditors came around frequently and unannounced. They had total authority to open all books, examine all the accounts, the till was open as well as the safe to their prying eyes.

Jim knew this and had no problems with this whatsoever, as he was totally honest. However, there were times when your best precautions could not avert trouble. If a client came in for example and paid his bill with cash, and perhaps with large denomination bills, Jim might have to go to his own wallet to make change for the customer. If this happened, Jim would immediately go to the bank and get the bills changed and back in to the proper place as soon as possible.

One day just such a thing happened and before he could make the needed changes, the auditors came in, and willy nilly or no, Jim was disqualified from working as an agent. Jim was not discharged, but a career change was indicated. He showed up at our Dispatcher's office, literally hat in hand. He found out that there was a small signal tower on the freight line, what we called the Lake Line where he could work as an operator. It was a small tower with hand thrown switches located -- well actually it was located just at the east end of what is now the Carousel Mall where the Hojack branches off the main line. Park Street, known as JG was a ground tower, located at ground level so the operator could line up his switches and then clear the signals inside the tower and this is where Jim went to work.

He had not worked there one week, when a Southport coal train eastbound in to Dewitt came racing around the curve from Syracuse Junction when a journal on a coal car thirty cars deep, burned off and hurled the car of coal almost totally over the small building, crushing it and poor Jim. I later saw a

photo of the derailment and there was this huge car of coal laying on its side the contents scattered all over and two pathetic legs sticking out from underneath the car. The tower was never built, the switches were electrified and the controls were installed at Clark Street. Jim is not the true name of the man involved, but his is a true story.

TIDBITS

US Presidents Travelling the Rails

US Presidents have traveled the rails since 1836 when Whig party candidate William Harrison campaigned (and lost, but won four years later). The last president to use railroads regularly was Harry S Truman.

Franklin Roosevelt had the finest rail cars. His private car was *Marco Polo* furnished with well-upholstered furniture and brass-railed rear platform. In 1942, the Pullman Co. and the Association of American Railroads refurbished another private car, dubbed the *Ferdinand Magellan*. Weighing 142 tons, it was the heaviest car to ever ride the rails with 5/8 inch thick armor plating and 3-inch thick windows. (Source: *USA TODAY*, August 28, 1996).

Buckeye Crossbuck signs

The Buckeye Crossbucks was proposed four years ago. They were invented in Ohio and first installed there. Six thousand experimental signs were installed at highway crossings in Ohio

They differ greatly from the traditional signs which have been in use since 1883. The new signs feature the word "yield" and reflective red-and-white striped shields set at 45-degree angles to bounce train lights onto roads and car headlights onto tracks.

Are they effective? The *Columbus Dispatch* reported that 65 accidents occurred at Ohio railroads crossing so far in 1996: the same time period in 1995: 90, and for 1994: 95. It also was noted that these railway accidents was steadily decreasing the last 20 years because of other safety programs (and fewer railroads (?). editor).

In 1997, the Federal Highway Administration will decide whether to allow -- or require -- the crossbucks throughout the country. (Source: *The Van Wert Times-Bulletin*, August 20, 1996).

PRR Symposium

Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania is sponsoring the PRR Sesquicentennial Symposium "There's Always Room For One More" on October 11-13. On the slate is a variety of events, speakers, steam train rides. Cost: \$150. Contact the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, PO Box 125, Strasburg, PA 17579 (717-687-8628).

Conrail downgrades NY Mainline

In January, Conrail downgraded its mainline from Hoffmans, NY (west of Schenectady) to Chicago from Class V to Class IV. This means a reduction in speed from 70 to 60 MPH for fast TV freights and 90 to 79 MPH for passenger trains. This reclassification has little effect on passenger trains which were limited to the 79 MPH speed limit because of lack of safety devices.

The reclassification resulted from extensive cost studies, which showed the corporation could save "millions of dollars per year" in fuel costs by slowing its fast freight trains by 10 MPH plus the added cost to maintain the trackage at Class V standards. This also means that superelevation (banking) on curves could be reduced, which will slow Amtrak trains. (Source: *The ESPA Express*, August-Sept. 1996)

Depew Station 'Sports' Flowers

Several ESPA members planted flowers along the walkway between the Depew Station and the platform. Many Amtrak passengers have commented favorably. (Source: *The ESPA Express*, August-Sept. 1996)

Spencerville-Elgin (Ohio) Railroad Re-energized.

After being idle for three years, this section of the former Erie (EL) mainline to Chicago will be put back in service between Lima and Glenmore, OH. The R.J. Corman Railroad, which operates other shortlines, will operate and maintain the line. One of the two tracks will

be salvaged. A grant of one million dollars was obtained; a \$2.6 million is the estimate to renovate the line. The line will be used mainly for agricultural products. (Source: *Van Wert Times-Bulletin*, July 30, 1996)

Interested in Lima Loco pictures?

The Allen County Historical Society obtained the negatives of Lima Locomotive Works. Lists of available photos are \$2.50 for the Shay units; \$2.00 for the rod engines; call for diesel units. Address is 620 East Market Street, Lima, OH 45801 (419) 222-9426.

FROM ALONG THE WIRE...

(News from other Chapters)

Niagara Frontier

Niagara Frontier Chapter is sponsoring 'Rails to Baltimore' on October 18-21. Travel will be over 1250 round-trip rail miles via Amtrak, Amtrak's electrified corridor and Metroliner. Fare is \$335, including tickets, lodging, museum fees and local transportation. (Source: NF-NRHS flyer)

St. Louis

The St. Louis Chapter, NRHS is sponsoring two day-long train trips through the heart of historic Land of Lincoln. The route is St. Louis-Springfield-South Pekin (south of Peoria) on the UP's former Chicago & North Western Railway Peoria-St. Louis line. There are three segments for each day: 1) Springfield Family Day (detrain and visit local sites until the train returns from South Pekin); 2) South Pekin Express (round trip between Springfield and South Pekin); and 3) Railfan's Delight (round trip on train for entire trip).

Featured will be Union Pacific's Excursion set: the beautifully restored UP's E9 streamlined passenger diesels and Streamliner and Astra Dome cars. The dates are October 19 & 20. Information from The Land of Lincoln Limited, St. Louis Chapter, NRHS, 11221 Manchester Rd., Suite 321, St. Louis, MO 63122. (Source: Chapter's flyer)

Lancaster

The Lancaster Chapter, NRHS is sponsoring a trip to Manassas, VA with four

options while in Manassas. Boarding will take place at Harrisburg, Elizabethtown, Lancaster, Parkesburg, Paoli and 30th St. Station in Philadelphia.

The date is October 19. Information from Lancaster Chapter, NRHS, 72 Stuart Run Rd, Quarryville, PA 17566. (Source: Chapter's flyer)

TV Chapter to run Steam

The Tennessee Valley Chapter will commemorate its 35th Anniversary by running a steam doubleheader on October 5. Locomotives are #610 and 4501 pulling the eight-car *Dixie Land Special*. Info: (423) 894-8028 (Source: Chapter's flyer)

C&O 4-8-4 #614 in Action

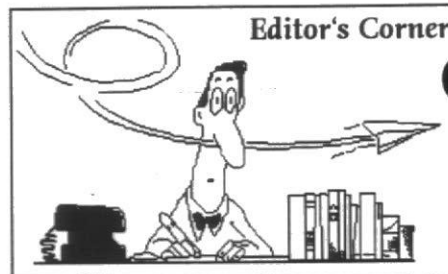
Six 175-mile round trips are being offered by combined sponsorship of The New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Museum Commission, The United Railroad Historical Society and N.J. Transit.

The trips are between Hoboken and Port Jervis over the old Erie Mainline and include the 200' high Moodna Viaduct.

The 614 was the last commercially built mainline passenger engine being built in 1948 by the Lima Locomotive Works.

The weekend dates are October 12,13; 19,20 and 26,27. For info: (908) 236-7773. (Source: trip flyer)

Editor's Corner



I wonder if our printer, Dave Luca, is tiring of these 10-page issues of *The Semaphore*? He prints over 400 copies!

Thanks to our many contributors, there is still a good backlog of stories and information for future publication. A couple were received almost a year ago.

Included with this issue is info on what other chapters are doing, particularly with fall foliage trips, which appears to have the greatest appeal for the public. It is certainly true with our Sodus trips, which are paying for the Empire State excursion fleet. Your couple of hours working on our fleet contributes to public awareness and pleasure of us.

Don Shilling displays diorama at Railroad Days

Another of many of Don's wonderfully detailed dioramas was featured at the recent Railroad Days. This one depicts a museum of 'antique' railroad equipment. (Your editor wishes we could afford reproduction by lithography to show better detail.)



News from the National NRHS

National's Summer Board of Directors Meeting Highlights

Railway Heritage Grants

From the 27 grant requests received totaling over \$104,000, the Review Board awarded these ten grants totaling \$26,000:

\$1,500	Galloping Goose Historical Society	Restore Dolores, Colorado Depot
800	Gulf Coast Chapter	Restore SP&S Baggage Car
5,000	Harrisburg Chapter	Refurbish Harris Interlocking Tower
2,000	Midwest Chapter	Restore Nickel Plate Coach
1,000	Mohawk & Hudson Chapter	Index Alco Historic Photos
4,000	Old Dominion Chapter	Restore Southern Ry. RPO Car
1,000	Roanoke Chapter	Construct Archival Facility
3,200	Sunbelt Chapter	Restore SL-SF Steam Locomotive
5,000	Tennessee Valley Chapter	Purchase Steam Locomotive Repair Equipment
2,500	Washington DC Chapter	Restore Interior of <i>Dover Harbor Pullman</i>

Two new Chapters chartered

Western Montana Chapter in Missoula, MT and North Texas Chapter in Dallas, TX brings the number of chapters in USA, Canada and Great Britain to 173. Historically, there have been 222 chapters chartered.

Dues Increase

In April, the National Board approved a \$3.00 dues increase. Starting in 1997, the annual dues will be \$17.00 for Regular and \$18.00 for Associates, while Family memberships remains at \$2.00. Add to this, your local chapter dues.

Nominations for Elected Officers

All incumbent National Officers and 15 of the 16 Regional Vice Presidents were renominated for 1997. No additional nominations were received from the chapters, and no nomination had been received for the vacant Sunshine Regional VP position.

Convention Dates

Salt Lake City (June 25-29, 1997)

Syracuse (July 8-12, 1998)

Sacramento (week of June 21, 1999)

Other News...

Milk Cans, Mixed Trains and Motor Cars tells the story of the New York, Ontario & Eastern Railway's connection to the dairy industry of upstate New York. The more than 500 illustrations include structure drawings, photos, maps and graphs. \$54.95 postpaid: Ontario & Eastern Chapter, NRHS P.O. Box 713, Middletown, NY 10940.

Members of the Collis P. Huntington Chapter, NRHS take turns as volunteer narrators on board the "Cardinal" on its trip through their area. NRHS NEWS states it's a great way to promote goodwill with Amtrak in the area of local chapters. Contact Tommy Lassak, CPH's Chairperson Amtrak Narration Program at (304) 722-4691.

National compiling list of RR workers

The National is compiling a list of members who currently work or used to work in the railroad industry. All names and employers will be held confidential and information will not be released without prior written approval from the employee. This is merely a preliminary study for future development. NRHS members should send a note or postcard stating which railroad organization they are/were employed by to: Dick Davis, P.O. Box 278, Strasburg, PA 17579-0278. Any questions? Call (717) 299-6786 evenings or Tuesdays during the daytime at (215) 557-6606.

Canadian researcher requests help

Mr. Allan E. Rafuse of Cobourg, ONT is researching the Cobourg & Peterborough Railway of the mid 1800s, and has found a Rochester connection. Here is the main part of his letter:

".... the Cobourg & Peterborough Railway ran between these two towns in the middle of the previous century. In 1866, this railway was reorganized and became the Cobourg, Peterborough & Marmora Railway & Mining Company. At this time the railway was purchased by a group of American entrepreneurs who were essentially interested in moving the Marmora iron ore to market in Pittsburgh. One of these capitalists was Issac Butts of Rochester. This man was, I believe, the editor of a Rochester newspaper, who died in November, 18784.

"I know nothing more about this gentleman, but would like to include more information regarding his interest in the C.P. & M.R.&M. Co., as well as any other aspects that might breath life into this man's character. What I am seeking, therefore, is an interested person who might assist by researching local information regarding this person, for subsequent inclusion in a proposed book."

His address is: Mr. Allan E. Rafuse, 181 Armour Court, Cobourg, Ontario, Canada K9A 4S6.

(This editor apologizes to Mr. Rafuse as his request was mailed in March.)

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:

President: Dave Luca

Vice President: John Weber

Treasurer: Ira Cohen

Recording Secretary: Jeremy Tuke

Correspondence Sec.: Don Shilling

National Director: Bob Miner

Trustees: Neil Bellenger, Charlie Harshbarger, Steve Oagley, John Redden, Joe Scanlon, Rand Warner,

The Semaphore Staff:

Editor: Gale Smith

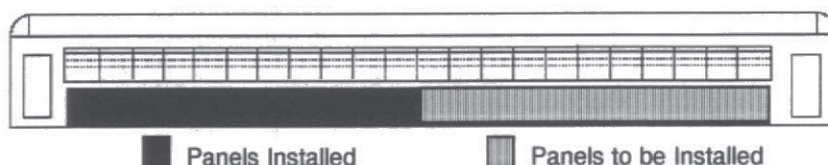
Printing: Dave Luca

InterNet (World Wide Web) address:
<http://www.rochester.ny.us/railmuseum.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

Rochester, NY 14603

Non Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Rochester, NY

Permit #826

Chapter Meeting & Program:

A Fallen Flag RR Memories

by Jack Mastik

8:00 PM, Sept. 19, 1996

40 & 8 Club

933 University Ave.