



# The Semaphore

Newsletter of the Rochester NY Chapter, NRHS

P.O. Box 664, Rochester, NY 14603; Published Monthly

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Volume 40, No. 2

## Program for October 16:

### "Susie Q .. and More"

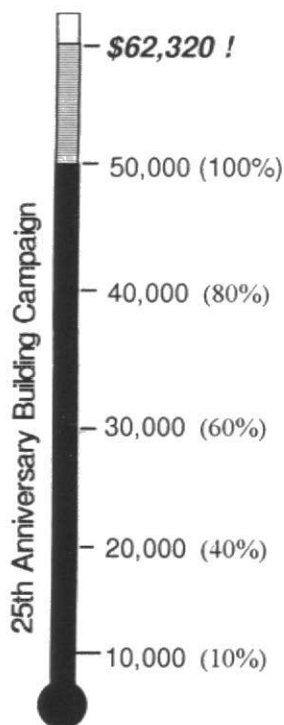
The next meeting will be held October 16 at the 40 & 8 Club.

The program, titled "Susie Q .... and More" will be given by Darrel Rathbun. Darrel will present a slide program covering his last 13 years of railfanning on the Susquehanna (NYS&W, thus *Susie Q*). His most recent railfan trip covered railroading in Maine. He will present some Bangor & Aroostook (BAR) to round out the evening.

## 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. Contact any of the Committee members.



## We're off ...

### ... to a GREAT START!

As *The Semaphore* goes to press, the Excursion Train has been operation for two Sundays, two trips each. Of the four trips - THREE has been sold out! And the fall colors have not even arrived yet!

## Annual Picnic A Success

Coordinator: Rand Warner

Another great picnic down the road on Saturday, Sept. 6. We had a great crew, a good crowd and decent weather, and we cleared about \$300.00.

Thanks to John Redden & Co. for the swell operations events, to Bob & Marie Miner & Co. for great food, to Marge Warner & Co. for setup and cleanup and to all our many volunteers that assisted in so many different ways.

This picnic, without a doubt, was the smoothest operation we've ever had.

## Can you spare a couple of hours on Wednesdays at Sodus?

Bob Miner would appreciate a few helping hands at Sodus preparing the Chapter's five cars on Wednesdays. He is there at 10 am until way late in the afternoon -- maybe even into the evening.

"Many hands make Light work" is a good motto. Bob would probably appreciate a call (671-3589) so that he has a better opportunity to schedule the various tasks.

## Last Call for NYC Trip

A few seats remain for the Dec 19-21 (Fri-Sun) trip to New York City via Amtrak train. Highlight is the Christmas Show at Radio City Music Hall. Two breakfasts, a dinner, show admission, hotel and train fare are included in price which is \$360 to \$390 depending on accommodations. Call Jim East at 377-5389 for details.

## Two "Community" Projects:

### High School Public Service Project

Coordinator: Lynn Heintz

Student volunteers from Notre Dame High School in Batavia are again at work prepping and painting our heavy construction equipment.

Lynn Heintz is coordinating this project, with Joe Scanlon providing input data on color schemes and priorities.

Benjamin Heintz and Bill Brogan now have our diesel air compressor on rubber all prepped and primed and ready for the final coat.

Nice work guys!

### Kodak Volunteers "Make A Difference Day" Community Service

Project Coordinator: Rand Warner

On Saturday, October 25, we will have a group of Kodak volunteers at the Museum from 9 AM to 4 PM, assisting us on our various projects. We expect at least a dozen or more volunteers, so be sure you are ready with proper tools, safety equipment and materials for the projects in each of our priority areas for which you are responsible.

Thanks to Dan Waterstraat for making this effort possible through Kodak's Community Relations area.

We will have projects for the volunteers indoors and outdoors so we can accommodate rain or shine weather conditions.

**Depot Guides for October****Sunday, Oct 5:**

Bernie Cubitt, 352-3064  
Dee Mowers, 352-4521

**Sunday, Oct 12:**

Chris Kingsley, 458-8419  
Dave Soble, 244-2117

**Sunday, Oct 19:**

Vic Parmenter, 924-2649  
Dave Berner, 223-9388

**Sunday, Oct 26:**

Larry Boehme, 425-1246  
Bruce Mathews, 248-5317  
Jim & Joy Lethbridge, 398-2259

*If an Act of God forces you to change your guide appointment, please trade with one of the guys listed above.*

**Three more "Funds" on the books**

**Reefer Moving Fund:** Chris Hauf has procured a wood-on-steel reefer in the Buffalo area. The donation of the car was gratis, however the cost of transporting it to R&GV RR Museum is not. It is estimated that \$1800 will be needed. On the table is a challenge contribution of \$1000 to be matched.

**Window Replacement Fund:** Flyers outlining the necessity of replacing the windows in the Excursion Fleet have been placed in the fleet. Each \$100 will purchase a window; \$50, half a window. A plaque will be mounted in each car listing contributors.

**Generator purchase:** As mentioned on under "Wanted", approximately \$5,000 will be needed to purchase a diesel generator set for the Electrification Project.

The Restoration Building, EKC #6 Prime Mover and Pennsy Caboose Funds are still active.

**Chapter Members Receiving 25 year NRHS pins**

Four Chapter members received silver pins honoring their 25 years as NRHS members. They are:

Robert Mader,  
Gordon L. Fewster of North Carolina,  
Robert G. McKinney,  
Baron H. Rightmyer of New Jersey.

**Library**

by Charles Robinson

The library chairman, after four weeks running trolley cars at the Seashore Trolley Museum in Maine, has returned to find significant progress on the library in Webster thanks to a devoted group of workers. Rick Israelson, Dave Luca, Bob Miner, Steve Oagley, Gale Smith, Rand Warner and others have made steady progress in painting the exterior and preparing the interior for painting.

The library now has several bookcases ready to be filled. Rand and I obtained a large group of bookcases from the Rundel Library surplus auction and Don Shilling has brought in two more cases. A friend of Sheldon King, Mrs. Sylvia L. Curry of Lyons, donated a group of wall shelves. Lynn Heintz has provided four more badly needed chairs. A few more small file cabinets donated by Fred Cupp, who has moved away, have also appeared in the library. We now have starter furniture, but still need a large table and floor lamps for lighting. However real progress has been made to outfit the building.

Now that winter is coming, the biggest problem facing the library is heat. Surprisingly the old air conditioner works, however the old furnace needs extensive repairs or replacement. Fortunately a few members are trying to correct this deficiency and hopefully there will be heat this winter. Another problem is a leak in the roof that has defied several attempts to locate and to seal the offending hole. We will keep trying.

Because of an overflow of the NRHS archives at NYMT, it has been necessary to move a few boxes of magazines to the library.

Thanks to the efforts of the members coming to the library on Monday evenings, the interior should be repainted shortly.

**Our Sympathies**

Our sympathies to Don Wawrzyniak and family for the recent loss of his father, Henry (Hank) Wawrzyniak.

**Membership Report**

Thomas A. Way, Chairman

**New Members:** None

**Changes of Address:**

Edward J. Coogan  
35 Christy Pl. #248  
Brockton, Mass. 02401

Mark & Elaine Philipppy  
222 Palmer Rd  
Churchville, NY 14428

**Membership Statistics:**

National + Rochester.....	200
Rochester only.....	8
Family.....	31
<b>TOTAL: .....</b>	<b>239</b>

**New Membership Chairman Announced**

Tom Way wished to resign as Membership Chairman. His work schedule did not permit his attendance at most meetings, and therefore felt another person should fill this position.

Chris Hauf stepped forward, volunteering to assume the duties of Membership Chairman. Questions, changes of address, etc. should now be sent to him.

Christopher Hauf  
28 Candlewood Dr.  
Pittsford, NY 14534  
Phone: 716-381-8583  
E-mail: crhauf@frontiernet.net

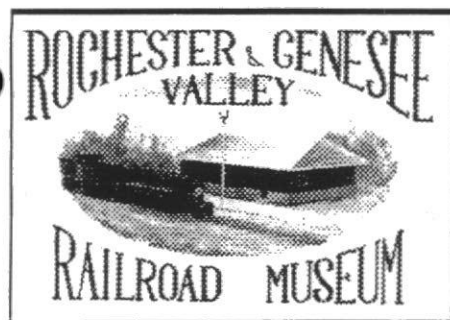
Our thanks to Tom for fulfilling these duties over the past several years.

**Sick List**

We're all sorry to hear that **Leonard Roe** had a serious motorcycle accident last month (August) resulting in hospitalization and a number of broken bones.

Leonard is now out of the hospital and recovering at Grand Vic Senior Living Community, 2140 Five Mile Line Road, Penfield. His room is #242 and his phone is 249-9832. We all wish him a speedy recovery. Leonard would love to hear from you by a visit or phone call.

**Thomas Mundrick** recently had a series of successful operations and is now home recuperating.



Rand Warner, Manager, 425-8587



### **What a Difference a Day Makes**

Every day you, as one of our volunteers, spends at our museum complex really makes a big difference.

We thank you all for all your time and we know there are many other activities competing for your time.



### **New Restoration Building**

Coordinator: Rand Warner, 425-8586

Site preparation work has continued all through the summer on weekends, weekdays, and weeknights. One heck of a lot of dirt has been moved by our people using our equipment.

Building requirements have been reviewed and spec'd out for response.

Various proposals have been received from vendors and contractors and are being reviewed.

Features, equipment and utilities for the building are being investigated and evaluated.

A number of other railroad, trolley and museum shop buildings have been investigated for good and bad points and personnel from other rail organizations have been contacted for comment.

Preliminary drawings for cross section and roof structure have been prepared.

Track routing from Switch #6 area to the building is in planning.

Thanks to Don Shilling, Dave Luca, John Weber, John Redden, Joe Scanlon, Lynn Heintz and Rand Warner.

### **Wanted for Our Future Line Side Industries**

Coordinator: Rand Warner, 425-8586

Information on equipment and technology for the following line-side industries that would add realism to our railroad, car loadings for our trains, and would provide materials we use in our Museum projects:

- Sawmill and logging
- Small sand pit
- Small gravel pit
- Small stone crusher
- Small ice pond
- Small mining operation.

If you have special interest or knowledge in any of these areas -- please contact Rand Warner.

Line-side industries will broaden our visitor interest and experience base, and can also expand both our visitor-ship base and our volunteer base. It is a logical extension of our rail, rubber, and crawler mounted equipment and activities, and can make more effective use of our composites land areas. It can also be

### **Books Just Waiting To Be Written & Stories Just Waiting To Be Shared**

East Rochester Despatch Shops  
Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad  
New York Central Falls Road  
New York Central Auburn Road  
New York Central Peanut Line  
New York Central State Street Line  
New York Central Genesee Brewery Line

Pennsy Line into Rochester  
New York Central Charlotte Secondary.

Rochester & Southern Railroad  
Genesee & Wyoming Railroad  
Dansville & Mount Morris RR update  
Bath & Hammondsport RR update

Our Chapter has put out some great publications over the past 60 years, and we sure have some very fine writers and historians in our midst now. With the advent of desktop publishing, maybe we could even reduce the total effort required to put out the next book.

### **Computer Coverage**

Thanks to Chris Hauf, our Rochester Chapter, our Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum, (and in the near future, the New York Museum of Transportation) are enjoying the visibility, publicity and interest generated by our first class Web Sites/pages. (see pg. 10)

This effort and offering is being continually expanded in coverage, quality and quantity, and reflects well on the whole Chapter.

If you have items of news, needs, or items for sale from our various Chapter and Museum functional areas, please contact Chris. We are getting 1000 hits per month.

Nice piece of work here!

### **Safety**

Coordinator: John Redden

Monies have been and will continue to be budgeted for safety improvements.

Steve Huse has procured, and will be installing, new fire extinguishers.

Dave Hulings will be procuring and installing additional first aid kits. He has also taken Red Cross first aid instruction so he can train us.

Dave Hulings coordinates our *Operation Lifesaver* activities and is meeting with our local regional and New York State representatives on ways in which we can be a more effective advocate for *Operation Lifesaver* in the Rochester metropolitan community area.

### **Visitor Operations**

Supt: Don Shilling, 381-3171

We have had a very heavy dose of tour groups this year which has required a lot of effort from our tour host staff.

We can always use more tour hosts, relief backups, and substitutes. Please call Don if you can help out or be on call.

We are continuing to paint up and spruce up our grounds. New signage is now complete and in use. We have a dumpster on the grounds for recyclables and rubbish.

(Continued on Page 4)



## ***We Can Handle It -- We Have the Technology***

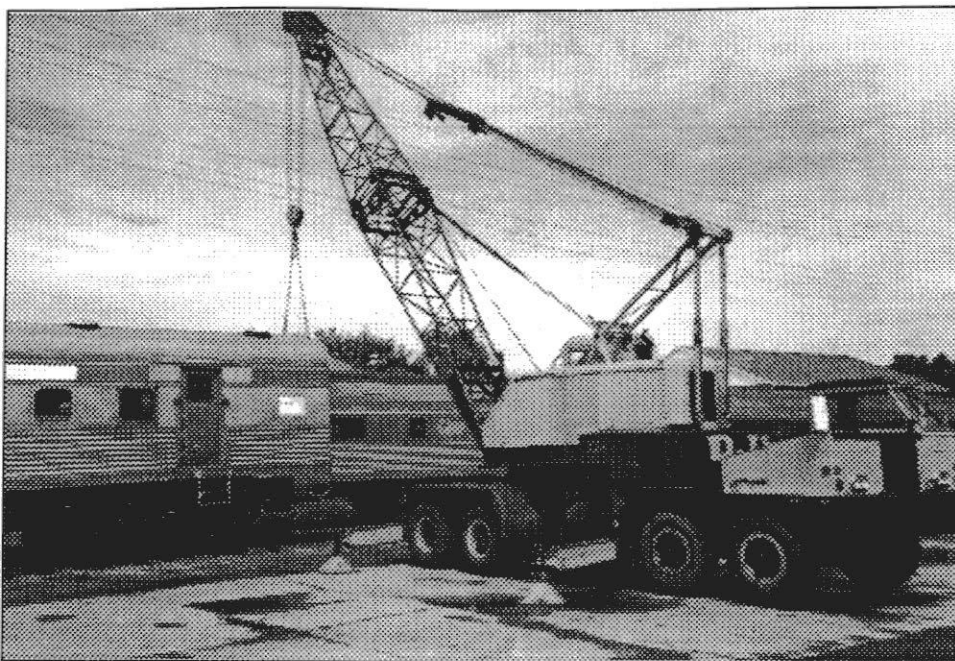
Last month our Heavy Construction forces used our 35-ton P&H truck crane to lift the carbody of our *Alonzo B. Cornell* NYC RR Railway Post Office car off the trucks to permit needed repairs prior to our Fall Foliage Excursions.

Another first for Rochester Chapter: using our own people and our own equipment to lift our own passenger cars!!

What an organization!

The Chapter's 35-ton P&H crane lifts the RPO car off its trucks for work.

*Bob Miner photo,  
scanned by Tony Testa*



## ***Passenger Equipment***

*Supt: Bob Miner, 671-3589*

Rand Warner and Chuck Whalen are getting Erie Stillwell coach ready for painting.

MU Power car roofing is pulling loose along east side edge and needs attention before winter.

We have brushes and 5-gallon buckets of roof paint ready to go for DL&W baggage car, B&O baggage car, and *Pine Falls*, and we still have some work left coating MU Power car.

### **NOTE:**

Some careful preparatory work is required on *Pine Falls*, DL&W baggage and MU Power car, before roof can be tarred. Please coordinate with Dave Luca and Chris Hauf on this.

Much work has been done on our NYC RR excursion train set under Bob Miner's direction, in preparation for Fall Foliage Excursion season.

## ***Freight Equipment***

*Supt: Chris Hauf, 381-8583*

PC Transfer caboose interior is almost completely restored. This caboose was successfully used at our Chapter Annual Picnic.

MDT reefer has been a great exhibit and display hit with our visitors this year, featuring a very fine collection of mounted photos showing activities at the East Rochester Car Shops.

We are looking at a number of sources for a box car and a flat car.

Money is now being raised to truck in our wooden bodied FGEX reefer car. What a find! We have approximately 50% of the needed \$2,000 raised or pledged to date. Please call Chris if you can help.

## ***Visitor Operations*** *(Continued from Page 3)*

When equipment is relocated, we will be extending our crushed stone walking areas further north, and removing our damaged wooden planked walkways.

Have you seen our series of Burma-Shave signs, with their safety jingle, placed along our right-of-way north of Switch #6?

## ***Train Operations***

*Supt: John Redden, 388-9174*

Train operations for the summer season are now complete and part of our history.

Diesel powered trains were featured for our summer Chapter meetings for June, July and August at the Museum, for our Annual Picnic at the Museum in September, and for our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Chapter in August.

Equipment is now being rearranged for the fall season, to permit locomotive access for projects, while not interfering with track car operations.

Thanks to all our faithful train crew, engine crew, and speeder crew volunteers.

The winter line up of rolling stock will be implemented following the end of our regular visitor season on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Train crew training classes will be resumed during the winter months of inclement weather.

**Jeremy Tuke can still use more track car operators for weekends or weekdays. Please give him a call (359-8944).**

## Motive Power

*Supt: John Redden, 388-9174*

RG&E #1941 is down for brake work over the winter.

EKC #6 is up as our mainstay summer and winter loco.

NKP #79 fuel system is to be scrubbed out for "bugs".

LV #211 has been operating but will soon be drained of water for winter.

Army #1843 Fairbanks will operate through the winter on days when it is warm enough to preheat the prime mover.

Two sources of locomotive batteries have been investigated. So far, one has yielded results. The center cab locos use smaller batteries while the three other locos use the larger size batteries.

## Electrification

*Facilitator: Rand Warner*

Scott Gleason is rounding up additional supplies, help and equipment to hang overhead wire.

Rand Warner is investigating several diesel generator sets from 100 kw to 500 kw.

We have on hand 24 new poles of which 6 have been erected to date. We are expecting at least another 24 used poles before year end.

Hopefully we will get some good dry weather in October for another day of pole setting with our line crew and auger truck.

Jim Dierks is investigating availability and delivery of metal poles, and has also picked up lots of good info and contacts from the recent ARM Convention in Maine.

We are in need of various types of trucks for single and double truck cars and are compiling an inventory listing of available trucks. Please call Rand Warner if you have any leads.

Contacts with other trolley museums and commercial operations are being developed into a support network.

## Buildings & Grounds

*Supt: Dave Luca, 288-0318*

Dick Bean is overhauling the Kohler engine on our John Deere tractor mower unit.

Dave Luca completed painting on the NYC watchman's shanty in time for our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Bernie Cubitt has the front of our Rochester, Lockport & Buffalo interurban waiting room painted, and is also retrofitting the proper window sash in place.

George Knab has brought in steel girders to set our NYC RR Flexi Flo office on for skid mount. And area is to be cleared opposite the NYC Flexi Van trailer to erect this shed. The shed will be used to provide the initial work area for our heavy equipment, etc.

## Communications, Signals & Power

*Supt: Neil Bellenger, 359-9985*

Signal relay cases have been placed on new concrete base poured near Switch #6. Final wiring and conduit is now in process.

Stone fill has been placed around the new semaphore base just north of Switch #6. Additional stone fill is to be placed at the relay cases.

Recommendations have been made for the new service hookup to Niagara Mohawk for both R&GVRM and NYMT.

Thanks to Jim Johnson, Neil Bellenger, Charlie Harshbarger, Mike Dow, Scott Gleason, Rand Warner and Dan Waterstraat.

We now own, have on site, and are operational with 3-kw, 4-kw, 6-kw, and 50-kw single-phase generator sets to support our various work project needs. Larger size three-phase diesel generators are in the works for tag power units and trolley overhead supply.

## Tool Car & Shop

*Supt: Charles Harshbarger, 266-8339*

Mail box area in Depot north room has been relocated.

Additional mail box slots and in baskets are being set up in office area.

Areas under railroad cars are being gradually cleaned out.

Storage containers have been procured from New York State Surplus program.

Storage areas on top of hill have been expanded and re-organized.

Most outdoor storage items are now palletized.

Thanks to Charlie Harshbarger, Jim Johnson, Dan Waterstraat, Scott Gleason and others.

## Maintenance-of-way

*Supt: Norm Shaddick, 865-2773*

Bob Mader, with help from Norm Shaddick and others, now has the replacement Cletrac engine installed and running in TC-2 motor car. He is now re-installing all the accessories and wiring. Next will be completion of 2-axle chain drive system. What a guy!

The Ford Hy-rail boom dump truck has been used by George Knab & Co. to pick up signal supplies, etc. along our right-of-way.

Dick Bean is continuing body work on parts and panels for the Burro Crane.

The new wooden snowplow will now negotiate our trackage, thanks to rework by John Redden & Co., and has had a maiden journey as far north as Reid's Crossing. Now for some real winter snow ....

TC-3 motor car has had a lot of attention from Norm Shaddick, Steve Huse and others recently on - you guessed it -- the starter (again). It also needs attention for rear seal on the prime mover.

TC-4 soldiers on, supporting our maintenance-of-way and signal department activities. Just keep the spare spark plugs handy!

Our Kershaw snow brush outfit needs some brake work attention and installation of replacement broom hoses before winter comes.

TC-2 motor car and trailer car #2 need paintwork attention.

## Track & Right-of-way

*Acting Supt: Rand Warner, 425-8586*

Dave Luca & Co. are continuing to relevel our trackage between Switch #6 and Scanlon's curve.

Mark Pappalardo & Co. are tamping ballast between Switch #6 and Reid's Crossing.

Rand Warner & Co. are continuing to reinforce curve areas with gage rods, and will also be installing heel blocks in some of the sharper curve areas at the north end.

John Redden & Co. have been replacing bad ties.

The line has been detail inspected end-to-end by Rand Warner and areas needing attention have been so marked.

An inventory of future track supply resources has been developed in support of future plans for trackage and route expansion.

## Construction & Equipment

*Supt: Joe Scanlon, 392-8841*

Art Mummery is working on engine for 20-ton P&H crane on rubber.

Bob Miner has repaired and replaced windows, and procured and installed locks on our P&H 35-ton crane on rubber.

We now have a D-2 Cat dozer on site thanks to Joe Scanlon, George Knab and Art Mummery.

The new Link Belt ditcher is getting lots of use by Scott Gleason.

The Austin Western yard crane has been used to relocate materials and equipment to the Industry switch rehab project.

As many as six pieces of heavy equipment have been in use simultaneously on the dirt moving project for the new restoration building: bulldozer, road roller, grader, dump trucks, backhoe shovel, excavator shovel.

Art Mummery has also been working on our Galion Chief road roller, as well as our other shovels, loaders, and trucks.

P&H 20-ton crane on rubber has been used to off-load 8'x8'x20' storage containers from Seneca Army Base.

## Engineering

*Supt: Jim Johnson, 467-1672*

Electrical schematics for power wiring at Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum and New York Museum of Transportation have been completed by Jim Johnson

Now we need a schematic for our Library facility at Webster.

Steve Oagley is joining our Engineering Staff, bringing his systems and industrial engineering expertise to our Museum.

Schematics of all our utilities, including electric, water, etc. are in work on a CAD (Computer Aided Drafting System), to cover all our infrastructure.

## Thanks To ...

**George Knab** for donations of rigging and loan of welder on rubber.

**Dan Waterstraat** for sponsoring new spark plugs for International dump truck.

**Scott Gleason** for coordinating the donation of Link Belt Roto Hoe ditcher.

**Dave Behnke** for more beautiful sheet metal parts.

**John Kernan** for donation of new work bench which is now set-up in Erie Stillwell coach.

**Art Mummery** for purchase of heavy equipment repair parts.

**Norm Shaddick** for lube oil.

**Jim Johnson** for yet more new office furniture.

**Charlie Harshbarger** for spearheading fund for purchase of new needle scaler for taking rust off railroad cars.

**Lynn Heintz** for donation of four chairs for Library, box of new heavy assorted U-bolts, assorted track parts, and antique cast iron stove parts.

**Joe Scanlon** for arranging delivery of assorted structural steel.

**Steven and Nancy Singley** for donation of Link Belt Roto Hoe ditcher.

**Jerry Leiderthiel** for info on rail operations opportunities.

**Rand Warner** for donation of railroad technical books, tools and supplies.

**Ted Strang** for appraisal assistance.

**Dave Shields** for power information regarding our trolley electrification program.

**Chris Hauf** for donation of rehab supplies for interior PC transfer caboose.

**Paul Saracen**, of LA&L, for relocating meter for crossing flasher relay box.

**Bob Mader** for offer to rebuild deck on our 2-wheel trailer over the winter.

**Dick Bean** for offer to rebuild the Kohler engine on our John Deere tractor mower this fall.

**Dan Waterstraat** for making wooden donation collection boxes for our exhibits.

**Scott Gleason** for investigating help for our trolley electrification.

**Lynn Heintz** for taking our old needle scaler gun for repairs.

**George Knab and Dave Knab** for donation and delivery of steel beams, wood poles and other items.

**Dave Lanni** for donation of more jack hammer bits, rigging materials, V-belts, and air compressor parts.

**Dick Wells** for piston and connecting rod removal hoist for Fairbanks diesel locomotives.

**Rand Warner** for heavy ammeters and voltmeters for trolley electrification.

**Bernie Cubitt** for supplies and windows for rehab of trolley waiting room.

**Charles Harshbarger** for fuel.

**Dick Holbert** for radio equipment, supplies, repairs, and calibration.

**Neil Bellenger** for mile marker materials.

**George Knab** for hardware for Hy-rail boom dump truck.

**Walter Morey** for track supplies and track gage and Cat generator.

**Wayne Morrison** for loan of Army truck.

**Tom Yattau & Ty Electric Corp.** for donation of 3-phase, 10-kw gas powered generator.

\* \* \* \* \*



## Wanted

- ☐ Skid steer loader, operational, for track work and yard cleanup.
- ☐ Bucket truck for trolley electrification project.
- ☐ Good relay ties and switch timbers for our new trackage to restoration barn, siding on west side of LA&L RR and siding at Reid's crossing.
- ☐ Ballast for new track construction.
- ☐ Copper cable #4-0 or larger for power wiring on trolley project.
- ☐ Dust pans and brooms for our various buildings and cars.
- ☐ Vacuum cleaner in good order for use on carpets at new library facility in Webster.
- ☐ Sponsors for diesel generator set for tag power unit and/or substation power for our trolley electrification project. Approximately \$5,000 will be needed for this effort.
- ☐ Heel blocks for 80-lb Dudley and 90-lb subway rail.
- ☐ Low profile track jack.

## For Sale

See or talk to Joe Scanlon, 392-8841

- Rome road grader
- Bay City shovel
- Towmotor fork lift
- Landscape ties
- Fuel storage tanks.

### LA&L Stockholders Met

The LAL RR held their annual meeting in Lakeville on August 25th. Highlights for 1996 were: after being in business for 34 years, the 10-mile short line serving Lakeville grew to a 65-mile regional railroad serving three counties. It has acquired two 660 HP Alco S-1 locomotives to work in Steuben County plus four 2,000 HP Alco C424M locomotives for backup power and expansion. Train speeds have increased as result of track rehabilitation efforts. They are actively developing new services and have planned or have under construction four new industrial sidings in the Northern Division.

The Chapter welcomes our new "neighbors" and anticipates future mutual benefits.

### An Interview

## Robert Mader



Bob Mader at work on his MaderMobile, adding 'deluxe' features.

Bob was born in Dansville, NY and spent his early years in Bath and Bushnell's Basin before moving to Rochester in 1946. He graduated from John Marshall High School in the Class of 1950.

He worked as a carpenter and cabinet maker (which makes his expertise valuable in our restoration efforts).

Bob's first interest in railroads when he was about four years old, watching cranes and shovel cleaning up railroad beds after a flood. His current interest is in "anything that moves" especially narrow gauge and steam.

He became a Chapter member in 1971, his only railroad organization attachment. His Chapter activities are directed at the maintenance of speeders and their operation, working on the TC-4 and miscellaneous construction equipment.

*Editor: Bob has written an interesting story about how he became a train 'buff'. It will appear in a future issue.*

*Bob was the recipient of the 25-year pin from the National Railway Historical Society, which was presented at the Chapter's September meeting. Bob noted that he was voted in at the same meeting that the vote to purchase the Depot was made.*

## A NYC 'GM' meets a NYS trooper

by R. D. Bean, retired Communications and Signaling Supervisor

During my tenure on the Central, I had many experiences with management ('The Brass'). One such incident had to do with the then General Manager of Lines East. He was much the Texan, given to wearing cowboy boots and cowboy hats and was almost a replica of LBJ. He did a lot of good things for the railroad but he was very hard to please.

One winter night, he was on his private car heading west on the Hudson River main line when the train stopped because of a derailment ahead, out in the boondocks. As he had the curiosity of a cat, he decided to investigate, so not bothering to dress, he put his robe on over his pajamas and wearing his cowboy hat and boots, proceeded to walk up in the snow to scene of the derailment.

While his clothing looked a little bizarre, he knew that no one would challenge him as he was after all, the General Manager, which philosophy held till he came afoul of a New York State trooper who naturally wondered where this nut in pajamas and boots and outrageous hat came from. In fact, it took a lot of persuading of the trooper by railroad officials that, yes, this is our esteemed General Manager -- at this time the General Manager had to control his wrath almost as much as the lower officials had to cover their glee at the predicament of their boss.

So he never did make the trip to the funny farm that he was certainly headed for had the trooper had his way. (D. Cosgrove)

### No 1998 Chapter Calendars

The Publications Committee has announced that there will be no 1998 Rochester Chapter Calendar. The decision was based on poor sales, which did not cover the costs of producing them.

## Trip Report

**SIERRA MADRE EXPRESS**

by Bill Heron

Perhaps you've seen ads in rail fan magazines for the "Sierra Madre Express", a rail journey featuring the Copper Canyon in northwest Mexico. Before you commit to take this tour, you might be interested in the following observations.

I arranged to take the Sierra Madre Express May 23-28. The trip starts at Tucson with a charter bus ride that usually goes to Nogales, just over the border in Mexico. In our case, the bus went further, to a little town called Magdalena, where we boarded the Sierra Madre Express cars, which were on a siding along the Pacific line of the Mexican railroad, (N de M).

We were supposed to travel southbound attached to an N de M passenger train bound for the town of San Blas where the Sierra Madre Express cars are transferred to the Chihuahua line. Because of a derailment ahead of us, we were put on an Aero California plane at Hermosillo from where we flew to Los Mochis on the Chihuahua line.

The Sierra Madre's special cars had to stay behind; therefore, we were put into a private car attached to the rear of a regular N de M passenger train. Our private car was old, shabby and dirty, but the air conditioning did work. Here began the good part of the trip from a rail fan's point of view. The Chihuahua line at Los Mochis is in the Sinaloa valley, an area where the soil is fertile and there is lots of water for irrigation. Three crops per year can be grown here in what has been called Mexico's "bread basket".

The line climbs steadily and there are many tunnels and many bridges. As the train climbs there is no irrigation and the landscape is a combination of the Sonora Desert plus mountains. At one point three levels of the rail line can be seen as it snakes its way up toward the Copper Canyon.

Finally, the Copper Canyon is reached at Divisadero, about 160 miles from San

Blas. Our tour was supposed to go on to Creel for additional sight-seeing, but the loss of time caused by the derailment resulted in cancellation of this segment. After a night at Divisadero, (two nights when there is no derailment), there is a night down the line at the remote village of Cerocahui, where a different view of the canyon is available after an hour's ride via school bus over very rough, dusty roads.

The return to Nogales is via the same route. By the time we were due to start the trip back the Sierra Madre's special cars finally had caught up with us.

So far I have tried to be factual. Get set now for some opinions.

- 1- The Copper Canyon is a destination not a trip. Somehow I had the idea that we'd travel in view of it for quite a while. You don't. You see it at Divisadero and again above Cerocahui and that's it.
- 2- The Sierra Madre brochure warns not to compare the Copper Canyon with the Grand Canyon, then the first thing tourists are told when they get there is that the Copper Canyon is "100 feet deeper than Grand Canyon". Whatever, while the view of the Copper Canyon is a rewarding experience, it lacks the dramatic impact of the Grand Canyon. One might call it a lack of charisma.
- 3- The train trip up and down the Chihuahua line is a great trip, probably not one of the world's greatest, but not to be dismissed lightly.
- 4- The food on the train and at the hotels included in the tour was highly satisfactory, and the dreaded "touristas" were avoided.
- 5- The Sierra Madre's consist includes an exUP dome/diner, beautifully restored and a joy to experience. Likewise the exNP observation car "Azizona" is a treat. It's good to see such equipment alive and well and still quite able to earn its keep.
- 6- The sleeping cars, however, leave much to be desired. They are converted crew dorms or baggage cars and are uncomfortable and cramped. When I saw the word "roomette" I envisioned a pleasant private space with a comfortable seat and a large window; not so.

There is no seat, just the bunk and the window is small and poorly located for viewing. In addition, the air conditioning in the sleepers was quite inadequate for the temperatures Mexico experiences even in May.

- 7- The rail trip on the Pacific line is a dreadful waste of time. The roadbed is wavy and rippling and traffic on paralleling highways, even double bottom semis roars past. That would be acceptable except for the fact that the view is mostly hot, dry, brown, dusty desert or squalid, dirty towns. And there is over 460 miles of this.
- 8- The entire operation of the Sierra Madre Express is subject to the whims and vagaries of N de M. For example, would it take Conrail 36 hours or more to unblock a twelve car derailment on a straight, level stretch with a road along side the railway?

Would I do this trip again? Definitely no. There has to be a better way to see the Copper Canyon and I think there is. I heard tales of other operators who go to the Copper Canyon more directly and with less time spent. If one could fly to Los Mochis and then take the Chihuahua division to Divisadero the good rail stuff as well as the canyon itself would be covered. One then could back track to Los Mochis or perhaps there is a way to go further northeast on the Chihuahua to reach another place with air service.

*Adios amigos.*

Video Review**California Western Railroad**

A Video Tape from Pentrex

Reviewed by William K. Heron

This tape was produced in 1991. By now some of the things that were true then may no longer be so. With that caveat in mind, let's go railroading.

The California Western is located in northern California. It is an east-west line, extending about forty miles from Fort Bragg, CA on the Pacific coast to Willits, CA just east of the coastal mountains. It was built as a logging line and its purpose was to bring logs west to Fort Bragg, CA for processing or shipment elsewhere by water. In 1991 it was owned by Kyle.

(Continued on Page 9)



**Video Review** (Continued from Page 8)

Perhaps the best known feature of the California Western is the "Skunk", a railcar operation utilizing equipment such as an ACF, 65 passenger car built in 1935 for the Salt Lake Garfield & Western Railway. This tape shows a typical "Skunk" round trip from Fort Bragg to Willits and back. The photography is excellent and there are good views of the exterior of the car, M-300, as well as interiors including the operators compartment.

About half way to Willits the climb over the coastal range begins. There are lots of curves including a horseshoe, some tunnels and grades as steep as 3.3%. At one point eight and a half miles of rail are needed to cover a linear distance of one and a half miles. All of this is well covered, including a map with more wiggles than a James Bond movie.

During the summer season, (at least in 1991), the rail cars are taken out of service and passenger cars are used. A beautiful red and black Baldwin built in 1924, #45, a 2-8-2 oil burner, powers trains to Northspur, where the heavy grades begin, and diesel engines power other trains. In 1991, A GP9, #64 and an RS11, #62 were used. At that time the California Western also operated a Baldwin RS12, built in 1955, mostly in yard service.

This tape includes an unusual bonus. There are some excellent shots inside the shop where the drivers of the 2-8-2 are being re-tired. In combination, the video coverage and the commentary would give anyone a good basic idea as to the process.

As well as covering regular passenger runs, the tape also shows a charter operation for which the 2-8-2 went all the way to Willits, helped by #62 both up and down the grade from Northspur to Willits. There are some great sights and sounds all along the way.

California Western's passenger car fleet, painted in an attractive red color with gold trim, includes Stillwell cars. They surely do look good from the outside; unfortunately no interior views are included.

This tape is a real gem. It has forced me to put a ride on the California Western high on my list of "things to do".

## National NRHS NEWS

**Insurance Agency Recommended**

The National has located an insurance agency whose premiums are available in a variety of packages and situations. The contact person is Mike Deeble of Hamman-Miller-Beachamp-Deeble, Inc. Mr. Deeble can be contacted at 800-272-4594, Fax 562-439-4453.

**Amtrak Provided Safety Course**

The *News* reports that the Lancaster Chapter, which runs a number of excursions, contacted Amtrak for a car to use in safety course training. The replay was "how about a whole train?"

Now with their excursions, which is about 18 or so cars, there is at least one Chapter member in each car serving as car host. These members have been trained by Amtrak personnel in safety as well as Amtrak policy to answer questions.

Upshot is that at the 125th Parkesburg Anniversary, Amtrak furnished a complete trainset positioned at the former Pennsy station.

**New Post Office Box for National**

The current Post Office Box number for correspondence addressed to the National Office is: P.O. Box 58547, Philadelphia, PA 19102-8547.

**Proposed chapters:** Three new chapters are in the development stage of which one is a proposed Internet Chapter which would meet and conduct business via computer.

Source: *NRHS News*, August 1997

**All the Live Long Day** ... is a recent video published by the Upper Catskill Community Council of the Arts, 248 Main St., Oneonta, NY 13820 selling for \$25pp. It's about the Delaware & Hudson Railroad showing scenes of steam in its heyday (in color) and the world's largest roundhouse in action.

**New River Train Excursions**

The C.P. Huntington Railway Historical Society, in conjunction with Amtrak, will host the New River Passenger Excursions on October 18, 19, 25 & 26.

This chapter has been sponsoring this trip through West Virginia's New River Gorge since 1966. Until recently, the train was powered by steamers. But you know that story.

An extra feature is travelling by private car, limited to 10 adults, which includes breakfast and dinner, for \$279 per.

For details, write the chapter at 1429 Chestnut Street, Kenova, WV 25530-1235

**Editor's Corner**

Several members have commented about the quality of pictures (poor) in

*The Semaphore*. Presently, most photos are scanned in with a B&W hand scanner. The computer printouts show lack of highlight detail, and worse, they are not sharp.

Chris Hauf has been working with me. He provided the scanned photo in the August issue and it showed good tonal range plus it was sharp. Last month, he had submitted scanned photos for the construction equipment. On a computer screen, it was like looking at the actual photos. However, on incorporating in the DTP program and outputting on a 300 dpi printer, they were way too dark; the hand scanner ones were used instead.

The photo on Page 4 this month was scanned by Tony Testa, who I know from the bird club I attend. It has fair tonal range but is sharp.

Now, it looks like I need to purchase a desktop scanner. Problem is not the cost, but finding a clear desktop to put it!

William Heron has several trip and video reports awaiting print. He is one of our travelling 'rail fans' gathering first-hand experience.

Dan Cosgrove is also feeding *The Semaphore* with informative articles about railroading.

**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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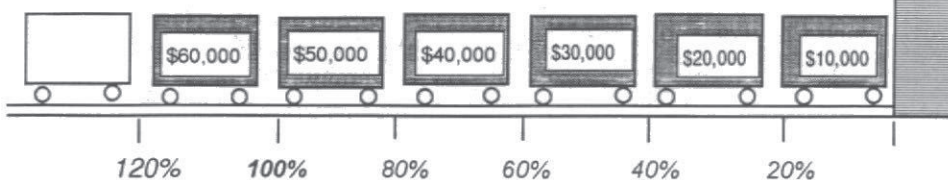
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<http://www.rochester.ny.us/railmuseum.html>

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: First Day of Each Month**

**The status of our Restoration Building Fund. *The engine is in the 'engine house'!*** This graphic is changed to represent the amount in the "Fund" as a percentage of the 'original' goal (one that was designed to 'pour the foundation'. Now to add the roof!



## The Semaphore

Rochester Chapter

National Railway Historical Society

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Chapter Meeting & Program:

**Susie Q ... & More**

by Darrel Rathbun

8:00 PM, Oct. 16, 1997

40 & 8 Club

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