



# The Semaphore

Newsletter of the Rochester NY Chapter, NRHS  
P.O. Box 664, Rochester, NY 14603; Published Monthly

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## Program for April 16:

### Pt II: More NYS Traction & Steam + Three Vintage Films

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

The program for April is "Part II: More NYS Traction & Steam." Charles Robinson and James Stewart will present some slides to finish the Greater Rochester Traction program started last month.

This will be followed with 3 reels of very good, interesting B&W and color 8mm film action from the Wallace Bradley collection donated to the Chapter. One reel covers the Jamestown, Westfield & Northwestern RR on the Chautauqua Lake Traction Route.

The second reel covers NYS Traction: a potpourri of traction from Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Schenectady, Albany and New York City.

The last reel is excellent vintage footage of New York Central mainline trains, mostly steam and early diesels, in summer and winter action.

This stuff is awesome! There is actual footage showing the Chapter's RG&E trackmobile in operation and our own Empire State Express passenger cars in a new operation on the NYC.

## Next Membership Participation Night is:

**May 21: Slide Night.** Select and bring your favorite railroad slides. Call Jack Matsik at 442-6269 for arrangements.

## Reminders

### Track Motor Car Training

**Classroom session: April 18.**

**Hands on Sessions: April 18, April 25 and May 2.**

Call Jeremy Tuke at 359-8944 to enroll or for further information.

**NRHS National Convention  
in Syracuse, July 6-12**

## Joint Museums Operations Start May 15 & 16

### Tidy-up Time!

Our 1998 Operating Season will commence the weekend of Sat/Sun, May 15/16.

A big part of the positive impression we want to make on our visitors involves our appearance. We all need to give our attention to at least the following exterior areas, as well as the interiors of our buildings, cars and other equipment:

- area immediately to east of Erie Stillwell,
- area along west side of B&O tool car,
- underneath Pine Falls,
- underneath Stillwell coach,
- parking lot to west of LA&L RR,
- parking lot to south of Rte 251,
- view as seen from track car coming down hill from Switch #6,
- around the Depot aprons,
- at south end of Pine Falls,
- NYC flat car deck,
- vicinity of Switch #6,
- along west side LA&L RR,
- just north of NYC flat car.

RW

### Daylight Savings Time = Tuesday Work Parties

Tuesday evening work parties start with the beginning of daylight saving time.

*See you all out there!*

### Trash Dumpster

We are now fortunate to have an on-site trash dumpster as part of our Museum support. Please use this dumpster to keep unwanted junk from accumulating – to spoil our general appearance.

We can put wood, metal, glass, paper, plastic and food in the dumpster. Also EMPTY paint cans, aerosols and oil cans.

We can NOT put liquids, toxics, paints, fuels, batteries or tires in the dumpster.

We will be increasing the frequency of pickup as we move from winter to spring to summer.

RW

### Painting Seminar: Apr 25

With the good weather almost (or already?) here, we will be gearing up to paint a number of our railroad and construction pieces of equipment.

The difference between a paint job that goes 5-10 years and one that only lasts 3-5 years could be what you'll be learning at the Bruning Paint Seminar on Saturday, April 25 at 10:00 AM in the Erie Stillwell car, rain or shine. Let's have a good turnout. Arranged by Lynn Heintz.

If we could paint one locomotive, one freight car, one passenger car and one piece of M.O.W. equipment each year, we would make a big dent in our backlog and really have a fine looking Museum.

Similarly, if we could paint one crane, one truck, one loader, and one other piece of construction equipment each year, we would be gaining in that area as well.

Presently identified paint projects for 1998 include Penn Central caboose exterior, B&O bay window caboose remaining exterior work, Erie Stillwell coach exterior, Burro crane, diesel air compressor and several cranes. The Pennsy RPO car is also showing considerable paint deterioration.

RW

### Operation Lifesaver

*Coordinator: Dave Hulings*

We look forward to Chapter participation for Operation Lifesaver at a number of events and shows this year.

We have handouts from State and National, and also special materials developed by the Chapter.

Chapter members will again be attending New York State sponsored training sessions.

We hope to present Operation Lifesaver info to area schools.

We are looking into several possibilities of a locomotive cab mock-up in conjunction with interactive video to give visitors a better feel for grade crossing safety hazards.

Our ticket trailer, used in conjunction with our excursion rides, will now also be available for use as an Operation Lifesaver focal point at special events.

RW

## Library Committee Report

by Charles Robinson

The Rochester Chapter's library is now beginning to look like a library thanks to the plentiful support of members interested in the library. Most all of the principal railroad and railfan periodicals have been sorted by year and filed in the appropriate magazine holders on the shelves in the back room of the library. We wish to thank Teresa Kellet, John Kernan, Dave Luca, Bob Miner, Steve Oagley, Don Shilling, Gale Smith, and John Stewart for their efforts on the behalf of this rather complete collection of rail magazines. This will provide easy access for those who wish to use the library to look up an item on some interesting rail line. The organization and disposition of the many magazine duplicates that remain is now in progress. The membership will be given first opportunity to acquire these duplicates (no fair giving them back to us). Chris Hauf has generously volunteered to make duplicate sets available over the Internet to other interested railfans. Finally the remaining duplicates will be sold in the gift shop.

Don Shilling has supplied the library with an interesting collection of wall rail scenes that adds to the attractiveness of the interior. Bill Limberg has contributed more of his efforts to make additional shelves for the library as there was a need for a few more in some of the cases. Dave Luca and Bob Miner continued to work on the heating system. It still needs a little more work. Now that the weather is warming up, that work can be done more easily. However the library and enthusiastic support has survived successfully the rigors of our relatively gentle winter. The squirrels that took up residence in the roof have been evicted from the premises by Bob Miner.

The library committee has met twice since our last report. Issues such as the arrangement of the library, the shelving of books by categories and title, the method of book circulation of selected books, and the availability of a computer for the library have been dealt with by the committee and for the most part resolved. A subcommittee made up of Dave Luca, Steve Oagley and Charles Robinson has been set up to govern the use of our archives of historical material.

That committee has started to deal with this complex issue.

The remaining books will be brought to the library once the duplicate magazines are removed and the weather reaches a comfortable temperature. The building will be air conditioned at reasonable level around 80F during the summer months to preserve the books.

Thanks to Chris Hauf, another large collection of magazines and books has been uncovered in the RPO and refrigerator cars on the hill. At some point, the library committee may request the moving of these cars to the depot for unloading. Does anyone have a truck that we could use for the trip to the library? We would like to remove this material and bring it to the library sometime late spring or early summer once the current books in NYMT are organized and placed.

Now the weather and the evening sun are becoming conducive to outside work, there will be a need for hammer and saw work to do the necessary repairs on the cabooses, block the squirrel hole, fix the remaining roof leak, put a better lock on the rear door, replace some rotted boards on the siding, fix the front steel deck and so forth. Also the interior lighting needs improvement. For those skilled in these pursuits please keep the library in mind. Work on the library is currently done on Monday evenings.

The biggest problem of the library chairman is too keep up with all the accomplishments of the library volunteers. I wish to thank them on behalf of the chapter members.

## Development Committee Reports

The Development Committee and especially Jeremy Tuke and Chris Hauf would like to thank those Chapter members who came out to help us at two local train shows: the Edgerton Train show in Rochester and the Genesee Society of Model Engineers' Great Batavia Train Show at Batavia Downs. We had great sales success in our Chapter store. We were able at Edgerton to have our Operation Lifesaver display set-up thanks to Dave Hulings, and even more important, we talked to lots of different people interested in our Chapter and visiting our Museum. Someday we will no longer be the best kept secret in museums in Rochester. At this time, we would also like to extend thanks to Chapter member Mike Pysczek and the Genesee Society of Model Engineers for the donation of our 2 tables at their Great Batavia Train Show.

CH

## Membership Report

by Chris Hauf, Chairman

### New members voted in this month

Carlton Duval, 8 Greenhouse Circle, Fairport, NY 14450 (716) 388-0496

David A. Falk, 12 Stonegate Lane, Pittsford, NY 14534 (716) 586-0101

Mary Gentzke, 26 Cambridge, Honeoye, NY 14471 (716) 229-4159

Carlos H. Mercado, Jr., 9 Hill Creek Road, Rochester, NY 14625-2104 (716) 381-6589

Don Wawrzyniak, 471 Cedarwood Terrace, Rochester, NY 14609 (716) 288-4133

### Change of address:

Baron Rightmeyer, 412 Ponfield Place, Ridgewood, NJ 07450

### Looking for new address for:

Robert J. Votry, 773 Stowell Dr., Apt. 4, Rochester, NY 14546-1835

Total Membership ..... 253

If your *Semaphore* came with a highlighted bar on your mailing label, this is the last issue of *The Semaphore* you will receive since your dues renewal was not received by us before April 1. However, it is not too late. Please forward your renewal to Chris Hauf ASAP, and we will reinstate your membership.

Last reminder: With the May *Semaphore*, we will be sending out a new Rochester Chapter roster. This year we will include email addresses and fax #'s if you want to have one listed. Please send or email your info to Chris Hauf (crhauf@frontiernet.net) before May 1.

## Last Call for Lanterns

R&GV RR Adlake lanterns - Reminder! Lantern orders MUST be received by May 1 to insure that your lantern will be included in our order. If you need an order form or information on the lanterns, please call Chris Hauf at 381-8583. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go toward the continued maintenance and restoration of our Industry Depot, the cornerstone of our R&GV RR Museum.

CH

## Store & Publicity Positions Open

Duncan Richards will 'retire' as Stores Manager in May.

Mike Byrne has vacated his position as Publicity Chairman. Among his back-room accomplishments were 25th Anniversary/ Ground Breaking media publicity and Fall Foliage Trip promotions.

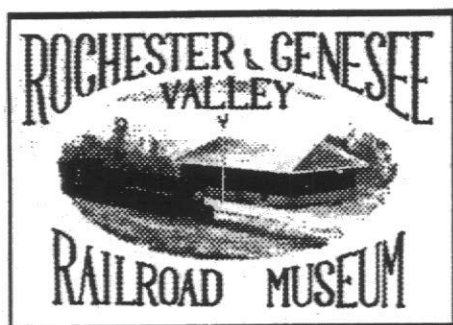
Call Dave Luca at 288-0318 to apply.

**May 30, 1998 !**

Chapter's Annual Banquet.

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Gerry Bertoldo



Rand Warner, Manager, 425-8587

## Operation Safety

Dave Hulings, who has taken recent Red Cross courses for certification, will be offering first aid and CPR training to our volunteers, track car operators and tour hosts.

Mike Byrne has procured a number of additional first aid kits to be deployed in our buildings, and on our track cars and trains.

Steve Huse has procured new fire extinguishers and they are now placed at strategic locations in buildings and trains.

We can all participate in identifying potential safety hazards and also in eliminating them.

Jeremy Tuke is providing track motor car operator training.

John Redden is providing train operation training.

Safety is everyone's job and our NUMBER ONE priority.

## Trolley Electrification

*Facilitator: Rand Warner*

**Overhead:** Scott Gleason will be heading up pole planting as soon as mud dries.

Charlie Lowe has 6 bracket arm assemblies ready to install and 6 more in work.

**Power:** Rand Warner is investigating many leads for diesel generators.

We are putting out a bid spec for a rectifier unit.

A local contractor has made offer of a 100kw, 480v, 3-phase diesel generator, on loan for checking out C-#130, P&W #161 and #168.

**Trolleys:** Our first operational trolleys will be the P&W cars #161 and #168 and snow sweeper #C-130 from NYMT.

Two more trolleys are under pursuit by NRHS/RGVRM.

**Trucks:** We have developed a fair data base of available trucks and resources for trucks, but we need everyone's help on this critical area.

A carbody without trucks is hardly a trolley. Please give us your inputs so that we can make the cars complete.

## New Restoration Building

Joe Scanlon has new specs out for quote to several area contractors.

Dave Luca, Bob Mader, Charles Harshbarger and others are laying out track plan options for the barn area.

Dan Waterstraat & Co. are clearing out materials for a new access road into the new barn areas.

Scott Gleason and Dan Waterstraat are studying manuals and cataloging materials for installation of Switch #8 and Siding #8 to reach the barn.

George Knab & Co. are chomping at the bit to get back into earth moving as soon as the mud dries up.

An expanded Building Committee will be meeting in April to review bids, discuss options, requirements, and schedules for phased improvements.

We hope to finish grading this spring so that we can let contracts this summer and have a building shell up by fall.

Keep those cards and letters coming!

## Communications, Signals, Power & Lines

*Supt. Neil Bellenger*

**Progress:** Signal relays are being relocated out of the Depot basement to avoid flooding.

We are looking for a metal signal bungalow to house the relays. Several leads are being followed up for a bungalow.

Spent power poles are being made available to use from two local utilities.

Spent cable reels are being made available to use for storing our wire inventory.

Trolley poles are placed at sites, ready for erection.

**Plans for 1998:** Erect next semaphore signal on mast at new base north of Switch #6.

Erect 14 more trolley poles to complete Phase I of twenty.

Begin hanging refurbished bracket arm assemblies on trolley poles.

Continue to acquire wire stringing tools.

## Keys, Locks & Lanterns

Jeremy Tuke is keeping us supplied with special keys and locks for our track switches. He is also maintaining and upgrading our lantern fleet for switch stands and railroad cars and locomotives.

Charles Harshbarger takes care of keys for our buildings, displays, railroad and construction equipment.

Talk to Jeremy or Charlie if you have need for their much appreciated services.

## Buildings & Grounds

*Supt. Dave Luca*

**Progress:** Basement drainage plumbing has been excavated out so we can see what we have to work with for improvements.

Bernie Cubitt has made and installed a beautiful sign on our RL&B trolley waiting room.

We are looking for another outbuilding suitable for location at Reid's Crossing. A concrete DL&W shed may do the trick.

We have started an escrow account to replace the Depot roof which is now, believe it or not, almost 20 years old since the last replacement.

**Plans for 1998:** Clear, grade, stone and roll the parking lot on the west side of LA&L RR.

Replace a couple more bad concrete slabs in apron in front of Depot.

Remove timber planking loading areas and replace with more crushed stone. Also expand the loading/stoned area another 25 to 50 feet north.

Clear, grade, stone and roll the parking lot on the south side of Rte 251.

Rehab and relocate the NYC RR crossing flagman's shanty.

## Track & Right-of-way

*Acting Supt. Rand Warner*

**Progress:** A number of intriguing track plans for our various quadrant areas are being contributed by Bob Mader, Charles Harshbarger, Mike Dow, Rand Warner and others. The plot thickens ...

A pile of ties has been staged by Dan Waterstraat for deployment by track car to needed areas.

George Knab has staged the high-rail boom/dump truck at NYMT to support track ballasting, signal placement, and culvert rehab.

**Plans for 1998:** Add ballast to thin areas north of Reid's Crossing.

Straighten kinks from Switch #6 to S-curves. Rehab Switches #5 and #6.

Install Switch #8 for new barn lead.

Install Switch #9 north of Reid's crossing for Siding #9.

Continue raising west rail, and elevating curves on main line.

Grind down rough rail joints.

Continue rehab of all switches at north end.

Extend guard rail at road crossing at entrance to NYMT.

Replace weak ties and switch timbers at north end.

Repair damaged culvert near Switch #6.



### Motive Power

Supt. John Redden

**Progress:** Ron Amberger will be foreman of the steam loco #12 project. He is currently directing removal of all items on the firebox in the cab area to permit inspection and rehab.

Dave Conrad has completed preliminary inspection of steam loco #12 and a detailed report is forthcoming. To date no show stoppers have been identified that would prevent us from getting the locomotive back into operation again. Dave has also appraised the locomotive for tax purposes.

Our Trackmobile fleet is getting attention from John Redden, Dick Bean, Norm Shaddick, Art Mummery and others.

One of the larger blue 5TM Trackmobiles is now running and the second is almost ready.

The yellow 3TM Trackmobile still has a ways to go but is also getting plenty of attention.

Saturday, March 20, we ran a good snow train operation with EKC #6 center cab diesel.

The exceptionally warm weather the following week permitted operation of the Army #1843 Fairbanks-Morse for switching moves.

**Plans:** Take down RG&E #1942 for needed repairs.

Fire up our Alco and EMD fleet as soon as weather permits using water in the radiators.

Put Trackmobiles into service as soon as each one is checked out.

### Tool Car & Shops

Supt. Charles Harshbarger

**Progress:** Layouts and lists are in process for interior and exterior requirements and details for new restoration building.

More new cabinets are now installed and functional in tool car.

**Plans for 1998:** Set up outdoor storage racks for pipe, steel shapes, etc.

Continue to get all specialized parts and tools deployed to those particular areas, i.e. locomotive parts, freight car parts, passenger car parts, M.O.W. equipment parts, signal parts, heavy equipment parts, track parts, etc.

Set up improved facilities for storage and disposal of fuels, lubricants, paints, preservatives, etc.

### Passenger Equipment

Supt. Bob Miner

**Progress:** Interior work in Pine Falls is progressing by Gale Smith.

Window frame and interior work on Erie Stillwell coach by Chuck Whalen and Bernie Cubitt is continuing.

**Plans for 1998:** Rehab roof of DL&W MU car.

Paint roof of B&O tool car

Close up leaks in Pine Falls.

Reassemble 6-wheel truck donated from Lackawanna #98.

Paint Erie Stillwell coach exterior.

Rehab/repaint PRR RPO car exterior.

### Visitor Operations

Supt. Don Shilling

**Progress:** Plans are underway for new expanded display in Depot featuring Erie Railroad materials.

Yard layout of visitor displays is being formulated in conjunction with Operations Group.

Personnel are being recruited for 1998 Operating Season.

Visitor Operations training materials are being updated.

**Plans for 1998:** Repaint steps and other artifacts as necessary.

Set up new display in Depot south waiting room.

Set up expanded display in MDT and/or FGEX reefers.

Add changes to displays in DL&W baggage car.

Improve signage and set up signs advising hours of operation and times of rides.

### Train Operations

Supt. John Redden

**Progress:** Track motor car training classes are being conducted by Jeremy Tuke prior to season opening.

Personnel are being recruited and scheduled for 1998 operating season.

Train personnel are continuing practice by participation in switching activities.

**Plans for 1998:** Offer additional classroom and hands-on training for track car operators and train crew personnel.

Keep up with latest operating changes as impacted by rail industry, insurance and government.

### Freight Equipment

Supt. Chris Hauf

**Progress:** Interior work on P-C transfer caboose is essentially complete.

Window replacement work continues on several cabooses.

Plans are firming up for relocation of Pennsy N5c caboose to our Museum.

**Plans for 1998:** Paint exterior of P-C caboose.

Complete exterior painting of B&O bay window caboose.

Rehab west side of FGEX wood bodied reefer.

Rehab east side of MDT steel bodied reefer.

### Maintenance-of-way Equipment

Supt. Norm Shaddick

**Progress:** Track motor cars are being fired up again as weather permits.

Jackson tamper has been fired up and relocated.

Burro crane has been relocated temporarily to Depot yard area. Dick Bean has restored doors and primed side panels for painting.

Dave Luca is working on hydraulic cylinders for tamper.

Ford Hi-Rail Boom/Dump truck is going into service on the line now.

**Plans for 1998:** Acquire tie-inserter/remover capability.

Rehab/replace prime-mover in Burro crane with gas or diesel.

Rehab Burro crane and put into active service.

Acquire enclosed space to work on MOW equipment.

### Engineering

Supt. Jim Johnson

**Progress:** More new cabinets are installed and functional in Depot engineering office area.

Reference books and reference drawings continue to be catalogued as donated and acquired.

Computerized CAD drafting system continues to take shape for RGVRM and NYMT areas.

New mail slots have been made for pigeon hole box at Depot office area.

**Plans for 1998:** Inventory, identify and store specialized instruments such as: surveying and electrical instruments, etc.

Complete upgrading of mail box system at Depot to provide mail slots and names all currently active volunteers.

Complete CAD drafting system for all critical drawing for RGVRM and NYMT.

Identify critically needed instruments that we don't currently own or have access to.

## Construction & Equipment

*Supt. Joe Scanlon*

**Progress:** Dial-A-Mix unit from Cement mixer has been sold and prepared for pick up.

Huber Wabco grader is running and ready for grading work.

Cummins and Detroit diesel engines have been obtained from government surplus.

Work continues to put the 'new' Lorain crawler crane into active service. The hour meter is now up to almost 20 hours!!

Additional spare parts and crane rigging have been donated and picked up.

**Plans for 1998:** Complete grading for new building site and prepare for building construction phase.

Complete excavation and grading for Track #8 to new restoration building.

Complete excavation and grading for new access road to new building site.

Complete grading, stoning and rolling of parking lot west of LA&L RR.

Complete grading, stoning and rolling of parking lot south of Rte 251.

Extend crushed stone walkways and boarding areas northward at Depot.

Use proceeds from sale of Dial-A-Mix unit to support repainting of construction equipment.

Acquire enclosed space to work on heavy equipment

## Thanks to

George Knab for two barrels of chassis grease.

Rand Warner for a dozen heavy clasp lock sets.

Jim Dierks for logging info for lineside industries.

Lynn Heintz for assortment of galvanized angle braces.

*And the numerous unnamed individuals who have contributed time, monies or financial assistance.*

## Wanted

- Air or electric operated cantilever jacks for passenger cars.
- Rectifier unit of 1000 amps capacity at 600v dc for trolleys.
- Boiler tubes, new, 2 inch for steam loco #12.
- Steam tools for boiler work - to remove and install tubes.
- Trolley trucks, std. gauge, with or without motors: 4-wheel, city type, 8-wheel, city type, 8-wheel interurban type.

## Cottage Industry

Many of our Museum volunteers are taking work home these days:

Jeremy Tuke is rehabbing accessories for Steam Loco #12, as well as lights and lanterns for our cars and yards.

Dick Bean has rebuilt our John Deere tractor-mower, our snow blower, numerous parts for our Burro crane, and is now getting into our trackmobiles.

George Knab has been rebuilding assorted parts for our cranes.

Joe Scanlon, Art Mummery and George Knab have rehabbed a D-2 bulldozer at Joe's barn.

Dick Holbert takes our radios home for calibration and service.

Bernie Cubitt has built 40-odd windows for the Stillwell coach.

Bill Limburg and Bob Mader have made caboose windows.

Dave Behnke has made sheet metal parts for the Stillwell coach and other equipment.

Gale Smith is rehabbing light fixtures for the Pine Falls.

John Redden has worked on fuel system components for Burro crane and Trackmobiles.

Neil Bellenger is making new mile posts for our right-of-way.

Dan Waterstraat has made donation boxes and display signs.

Chris Hauf has made many photographic exhibits.

Don Shilling has made a diorama of our restoration barn and many display exhibits.

## Chapter Rail Tours

A few spaces remain for the two 1998 Chapter sponsored rail trips.

#1: Thanksgiving Weekend in New York City, Nov. 25-28. Estimated price: \$450-\$475 per person double occupancy.

#2: "Mansions in the Autumn" - Fall Foliage Trip of 4 days in the New England area; Oct 16-19. Price range: \$450 to \$632.

For more information, call James East at 716-377-5389. E-mail: [castrain@frontiernet.net](mailto:castrain@frontiernet.net). Address: 35 Cambridge Court, Fairport, NY 14450-9174.

## For sale

- Landscape ties, \$6.00 each at our lot.
- 250 gallon outdoor fuel storage tanks
- Tow motor 6000# fork lift, propane powered.

## Amtrak Passenger Rail Report

*by James East*

The latest information from the Internet as well as information I have received shows progress in passenger rail service in the US but not in our area of western New York. The 2.3 billion dollar government subsidy for passenger rail equipment over the next 5 years is being used in the various areas of the US. The state of California has received 100 million dollars from this fund for new equipment. The state of Washington has received funds for Talgo type trains to be used between Vancouver B.C. and Portland Oregon. The state of Michigan has received funds for their high speed rail program. An additional train has been added between Albany NY and New York City. Here in western New York state we received a train schedule change but no new service or equipment. I have written Amtrak as well as contacting my local NYS assemblyman of my concerns feeling we in western NYS supported the 2.3 billion subsidy from the federal government in the fall of 1997 and when are we going to see some positive changes in equipment and service?

After talking with a representative from the Empire State Rail Passengers Assoc., he informed me that one of the reasons we may not have received more in western NYS is because NYS has supported passenger rail so poorly in the past. The states of California, Oregon, Washington, Texas, Michigan and North Carolina have supported passenger rail with millions of dollars in state funds in the past compared with NYS and this may be why. The Empire Corridor of which we are a part in Rochester is one of the fastest growing parts of Amtrak.

Congress today is working on the federal transportation budget. The Senate version allows states to use some of this 2.31 billion dollars for passenger rail if they elect to do so. The House version does not allow this. The New York State transportation budget is now being discussed in Albany and we are hopeful that more money will be allotted for passenger rail in New York State. The intent of the 2.3 billion federal subsidy for Amtrak was to purchase badly needed equipment. There is also talk in Congress about reducing Amtrak's operations budget thus causing Amtrak to use some of this equipment dollars just to operate. Increases in highways and airports subsidies have been approved as usual.

On the positive side, the new equipment being purchased by the State of California

*(Continued on Page 6)*

**Amtrak Report** (Cont'd from Pg 5)

will be manufactured in Hornell NY. The state of New York has just given 20 million dollar contract to a Schenectady NY firm to rebuild 2 turboliner trains.

**WHAT CAN WE DO**

Write your state assemblymen and congressmen as well as the governor asking for more funding for passenger rail and Amtrak in New York State. Write your US Senators and House Representatives asking for continued support of Amtrak and passenger rail service. Budget discussions in both New York State and the US Congress on this subject are going on now so it is important you write immediately.

**Address of some Senators  
and Representatives**

Rep. Louise Slaughter  
2347 Rayburn House Office Bldg  
Washington DC 20515

Senator Alfonse D'Amato  
304 Federal Bldg  
Rochester NY 14614

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan  
28 Church St.  
Buffalo, NY

**A Video Review****MOUNT RAINIER SCENIC'S  
GEARED LOCOMOTIVES**

A Videotape from Pentrex

Reviewed by Bill Heron

If, like me, you are fond of geared steam locomotives, this is a tape you won't want to miss. The Mount Rainier Scenic Railroad, an arm of the Western Washington Forest Industries Museum, operates on twelve miles of the Tacoma Eastern's trackage. All three major brands of geared steam locomotives, Shay, Heisler and Climax, are in service and this tape shows the trio to very good advantage.

The tape begins with introductions to MRSR's equipment roster. Included are Heisler #91, a 90 ton, three truck "West Coast Special" built in 1930, said to be capable of 25 mph operation. Next is #11 a 90 ton, three truck Pacific Coast Shay built in 1929. There is a good bit of similarity between #11 and Western Maryland #6, which is in operation at Cass. The third member of the geared trio is #10, a three truck Climax built in the late twenties and said to be the second to last Climax ever constructed.

Three other MRSR locomotives that deserve mention are #42, an Alco S1 built in 1941, a Northern Pacific F9, restored to its original NP freight livery and #17, a very interesting 2-8-2T Minaret Mikado rod engine.

Once the cast of characters has been introduced the tape continues with extensive coverage of a special "Railfans' Day" triple header featuring all three of the geared locomotives. Plenty of detailed coverage is provided so that those not too sure as to the technical differences among the three brands can observe and understand the three different approaches to transferring steam pressure to driving force at the wheels.

Next the trio is split and each locomotive powers a special train, two of the freight variety and the third a work train including a Jordan spreader. The purpose here is to give the fans some interesting subjects for their cameras. During this operation, #17 is the power for the passenger consist and shows herself just as capable as her geared sisters in handling the MRSR's ruling grade of 2.8%.

Finally the triple headed passenger train is reassembled and continues in service over the MRSR's very scenic route, which starts at its low end in farming country and climbs up into the forest. At some points along the way Mt. Rainier itself is visible, towering over the landscape. This scene, of course, requires clear weather conditions, a commodity often in short supply in that area.

I have found Pentrex tapes usually include high quality photography, interesting shots and a good supply of facts. This tape is no exception. The one thing I wish could be added would be to run a performance comparison among the Shay, Heisler and Climax, rather like what the car magazines do. Perhaps a sequel?

**Listen For A Lonesome  
Whistle**

by V. A. Parmenter

(A true story straight from the lips of Mike Burke, Stationmaster at Corinth, New York on the Adirondack Branch of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad, as told to us as we sat on the porch steps of Mike and Minne Burke's home in Morristown, New York on the St. Lawrence River. Mike was Dad's boss when Dad worked for the D&H before I was born.)

Mike Burke was Station Master at Corinth, New York when President McKinley was shot in Buffalo at the Pan-American Exposition. Vice President Teddy Roosevelt

was at the upper clubhouse of the Tahawus Club, having climbed Mt. Marcy earlier on September 13, 1901, according to the excellent book by Jim Shaughnessy on the *Delaware & Hudson Railroad*. President McKinley had been shot by an anarchist, Leon Czolgosz on September 6th, five days earlier than the date Teddy Roosevelt went back to his beloved Adirondack Mountains, thinking that the President was recovering. Roosevelt had left the train at North Creek, then the northernmost station on the Adirondack Branch and had traveled the forty miles to the Tahawus Club, ten miles from the nearest telephone, by a buckboard wagon. From there, he pushed even deeper into the woods, setting up camp at Lake Colden. On that same night in Washington, the President suffered a relapse.

"An urgent message clicked over the wires to North Creek, to be delivered by any means possible. A rudimentary telephone line got it part way, a galloping horseman the rest.

"Roosevelt's secretary, Will Loeb, had been left in Albany, and he immediately notified Delaware & Hudson officials of the emergency. A special train was made up and rushed to Saratoga Springs and on to North Creek, under the personal charge Superintendent C. D. Hammond, to be placed at the Vice-President's disposal. Everything was cleared, and the special rolled into North Creek before noon - two hours and fifteen minutes out of Albany over ninety-eight miles, most of it wavy, crooked single track. The crew hurriedly turned, coaled and watered - and waited.

"Steam feathered from the pop valves, the engineer oiled and checked around a dozen times while the tallowpot skipped innumerable stones on the Hudson River across from the station. The regular afternoon train pulled in, shifted around and chuffed off again, down the valley for Saratoga Springs. The shadow of Gore Mountain lengthened across the valley, and finally night settled down over the upper Hudson.

"Roosevelt had received the message high on the slopes of Mt. Marcy shortly after lunch, and made a leisurely descent to the Tahawus clubhouse, arriving at dusk. Since no further news was waiting there, he decided to spend the night and leave for the railroad in the morning.

"In the North Creek station, the crew idled away the hours while the Super dozed fitfully with one ear open for the sounder. The operator sharpened his pencils and laid

(Continued on Page 7)



## Lonesome Whistle (Cont'd from Pg 6)

them beside a fresh pad. Wisps of fog rose up over the dark, panting hulk of the waiting Mogul. At ten o'clock the sounder chattered into life and the op's flashing pencil spelled out the message, "The President is dying?" The telephone repeated the message at the end of the wire, and once again the horseman galloped his lonely way through the blackness of the night.

"At eleven o'clock Roosevelt climbed into the buckboard and his host, swinging the team into the woods road, lashed the horses into a reckless run. The mountain roads, never good, were soft and treacherous from the fall rains. The 40-mile drive, lighted up by a flickering lantern, was made in three relays that had been arranged by a local stage company.

"Dawn was tinging the eastern sky when at 5:30 A.M. (Standard Time) the mud-caked buckboard lurched into North Creek's main street. Word had passed, and an anxious knot of citizens had gathered at the station. With the first rattle of the speeding wagon, the weary train crew, who had been called nearly 24 hours earlier, climbed to their positions. Engineer George Hydorn checked his pressure and leaned out for the signal.

"Roosevelt went from wagon to car steps in almost one leap. Hammond handed him a telegram and waved the highball in virtually a single motion. Hydorn cracked the throttle and got a wheel under the Mogul, fast moving exhausts echoed up and down the valley along with the two sharp whistle blasts.

"In the coach Roosevelt ripped open the telegram. President McKinley was dead! Somewhere on the side of the Boreas River, in the dark of the Adirondack night, clinging to a careening wagon, Theodore Roosevelt had become the 26th President of the United States"

(There is a cast metal plaque on a large boulder at the side of the road (Route 28N) near Aiden Lair which, supposedly, is the exact place where Theodore Roosevelt was at the instant of President McKinley's death. *Another footnote:* There was a limitation on how large a steam locomotive could be allowed to traverse the old Adirondack Branch, partly because the weight might be too great to cross the many bridges on this route and, also, the old depot for the Adirondack Railway in Saratoga Springs had a cut-stone wall near the rails which limited the size of the locomotives operating on this branch.)

At all the stations along the line the code



Railroad station at Corinth, NY at time of Mr. Burke's story. From picture postcard reproduction by Victor Parmenter.

had been sent up one day followed by the message the following day. So all Delaware & Hudson personnel had been alerted to the passage of the train bearing the new President. Mike's orders from the railroad company were to watch out for the train and to render any assistance necessary. Mike's quarters at that time were upstairs over the old freight station. (The new station had not yet been built). He and his wife, Minnie, were sitting up having a cup of tea and straining to hear the whistle from up the line near Hadley. Mike was dozing off (they had been up all night) and Minnie was about to make him another hot cup of tea when, in the far distance, the mournful wail of a steam train could be heard. Mike rushed down the stairs to the platform but the train had already whistled through Corinth and stopped about a mile down the track at Hanfields where the water tank was located. (This was a railroad location where the switching yards for International paper Company were usually filled with spare cars for the paper mill. The mill at Palmer Falls on the Hudson, once the largest paper mill in the world, was about three miles away on a company spur.) While the engine was taking on water, Mike was making steady progress toward the rear of the train. The last car was an observation Pullman and at about the time Mike recognized it, someone shouted "Halt". Mike stopped on the tracks and then started toward the train again. By this time he could see that there were several men on the platform with submachine guns. Again, he was instructed to "Halt" in a commanding voice. He halted again and he was asked what he wanted. Mike told them that he was Station Master at Corinth and that the company had instructed him to render any assistance the train needed. The reply from

the Secret Service men was, "We don't need anything! Just turn around and go back where you came from!" So Mike, desiring to stay alive, did as he was told and returned to the station.

\* The material in quotes excerpted from Jim Shaughnessy's excellent history of the *Delaware & Hudson Railroad* Used by permission.



## Editor's Corner

Vic Parmenter submitted this article way back in 1997. My humble apologies to him, and the readers, for the tardiness in seeing it in print! Just had to find space, which you see was done by subtle (really?) changes in reducing type sizes and other little gimmicks.

*The Golden Spike*, newsletter of the Promontory Chapter, featured an article on **Operation Lifesaver**. Included was a quiz. This information may already be contained in current information that we have available for our visitors. If not, it should be. Space restraints prevent including the quiz with this issue, will plan to include in the next one.

Copy for several interviews is on hand, but accompanying photos are not.

Also, Bill Heron continues to furnish his interesting reviews on videos, trips and books.

I want to thank my assembly of proof-readers. Ira Cohen is the principal, followed by Rand Warner, various members of the Board of Directors who get tapped, and Janet Dittmer. Amazing, what the 'spell checker' lets pass, as well as my eyes after seeing the copy so many times.

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.

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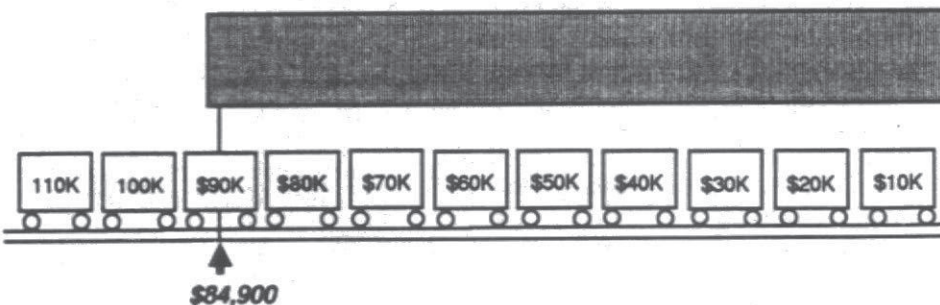
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