



Volunteer Depot Guide Jim Moore holds the door open for visitors touring Industry Depot and our museum displays. We strive to provide an authentic experience for our visitors, what else can we do to make someone's visit special? PHOTO BY OTTO M. VONDRAK

Keeping it Real

INSIDE

Train Bulletin	2
Museum News	3
Picnic Aug. 17	5
Six Rochester Routes. . .	6
Museum Gear	7

"What is real?" That is a question that has plagued philosophers for many years.

As far as relating to our museum, we strive to provide an "authentic" experience for our visitors. That means train crews in acceptable "period" uniforms for freight service employees. It means keeping our facilities neat and clean and making a good first impression. Several visitors have commented favorably about the recent changes we have made, from less clutter in the depot, to expanded displays elsewhere. People are noticing our extra efforts.

Recently the New York Museum of Transportation (along with R&GVRRM) was named No. 16 in a list of "Top 20 Places to Take Kids in Greater Rochester" by Kids Out and About (see full listing at www.rochester.kidsoutandabout.com). Clearly that means we're doing something

right. More people are coming through the door, and we would like to keep that trend going as long as we can.

While the recognition is great, it is important that we remain focused on our goals. We published a list of priority projects earlier this year that your board of trustees will be reviewing. Look for an update in these pages on how we're doing.

Do you see areas we can improve? Is there something missing from our museum? What can we do to keep people engaged and encourage repeat visits? We depend on increased attendance to maintain the railroad and fund our projects. I'd like to hear from you by phone (716) 474-2833 or by email at mdow@rochester.rr.com.

—Mike Dow,
 Museum President



ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: WWW.RGVRRM.ORG

MUSEUM CONTACT INFO

MUSEUM PRESIDENT

Mike Dow

(716) 474-2833 mdow@rochester.rr.com

MUSEUM MANGER

David Scheiderich

(585) 301-1019 boblenon@gmail.com

MOTIVE POWER SUPERINTENDENT

Joe Nugent

(585) 944-1047 joe.r.nugent@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Sam Rosenberg

ALC0251@frontiernet.net



UPCOMING MUSEUM PROGRAMS MONTHLY MEETINGS

For the warm summer months, our monthly meetings have moved to Industry Depot, on Route 251 in Rush. After a brief business meeting at 7:30 p.m., stick around to enjoy a ride on the museum you help build and maintain! Also, bring a friend, our meetings are open to everyone. Please visit our web site at www.rgvrrm.org.

July 18, August 15, and September 19: We will be hosting our monthly meetings at Industry Depot, starting at 7:30 p.m.

—Harold Russell, Program Co-Chair

MOTIVE POWER DEPT.

RGV 1654: A bad battery was swapped out, though the system still will not hold a charge. We will need to purchase a new battery set to replace the ones that have served 1654 for the past nine years. This locomotive will remain our primary engine throughout the operating season.

USA 1843: This locomotive was fired up and used for our June membership meeting, as well as regular Sunday operations for our June 16 Railroad Day event. It remains on standby as our secondary locomotive for the season.

LV 211: Volunteer Bob Ziegler will be helping to repair/replace the faulty water pump that has so far kept this locomotive out of service this year.

RG&E 8: We are seeking a new project



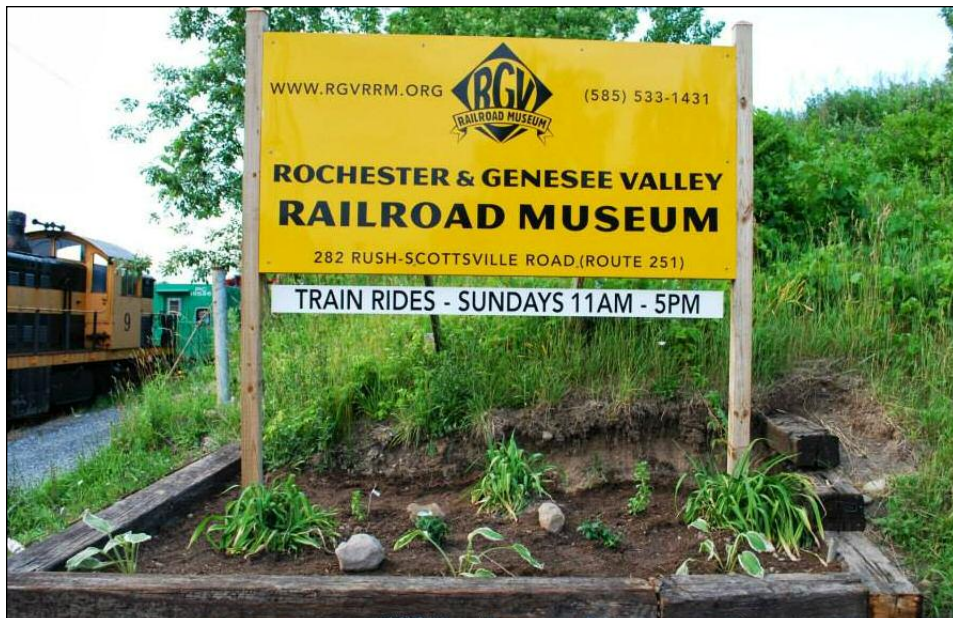
TOP: The Tuesday Night Track Gang poses for a photo before starting their evening work. Helping to keep our museum railroad in top condition, they always welcome new members. John Redden is the "gang leader," and you can find them at work Tuesday evenings at Industry Depot. **ABOVE:** Our Fairbanks-Morse diesel was the featured power for our June 21 Museum Meeting, with our special excursion train paused at Midway station. Our summer museum member meetings are hosted at Industry, starting at 7:30 p.m. Bring a friend and come enjoy a train ride! OTTO VONDRAK PHOTOS

manager to help move the repairs on this locomotive forward. It is our goal to complete repairs to the braking systems before the end of 2013 so that we may move this engine out of the shop if need be. If you'd like to help on this project or just learn more about what needs to be done, please contact Joe directly. At the end of the month, Chris Hauf visited from California and sanded the walls of the cab to get them

ready for primer and paint. Other cleanup work has been taking place throughout the month of June.

All other locomotives are stored out of service until further notice. Would you like to get involved helping to keep our historic fleet of diesel locomotives in good working order? Please contact me at joe.r.nugent@gmail.com.

—Joe Nugent, Motive Power Supt.



TOP LEFT: Rick Israelson prepares the tamping bar as Rand Warner drives a spike home in the Hill Block on June 18. **TOP RIGHT:** Jeremy Tuke added new plantings to the sign on Route 251, which now advertises the existence of train rides, thanks to Chris Hauf. **ABOVE LEFT:** The east side of our Lehigh Valley caboose had new steel welded on thanks to Bill Bollinger and Rob Burz. We are seeking donations to complete the riveting. Have you adopted your rivet yet? Visit rgvrrm.org/support. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Otto Vondrak rakes the dirt level in anticipation of topsoil delivery on June 18. Topsoil was spread the following day, and grass seed planted that weekend. By the first week of July, grass had begun to sprout.

NYMT GIFT SHOP NEEDS YOU

The NYMT needs your help to staff the gift shop, which can get quite busy between incoming visitors buying tickets and others looking to purchase souvenirs. It is the front door to our joint operation. What's more, it is located out of the elements, and kept cool and dry through the summer. Please email **Jim Dierks** at dierks66@frontiernet.net to help out.

GRASS GROWS AT INDUSTRY

The grass we planted north of Industry Depot has sprouted and growing (thanks in part to the healthy dose of rain we have

gotten so far this summer). Thanks to Jeremy Tuke, the lawn got its first mowing on July 2. Please avoid walking on the new grass as we continue to encourage its growth throughout the season. Installation of this new lawn will help absorb the storm run-off from the yard tracks, and help open up more of our land around the depot to recreational use in the future!

FLOWERS, TOO

Building on the large new museum sign installed last season, volunteer Jeremy Tuke continued the project to increase our "curb appeal." Last month he finished the

area off by installing an enclosure made from used ties, which was leveled off with topsoil. Jeremy then planted Hosta, Sedum, Myrtle and Day Lillies (all perennial plantings and groundcover) which was then topped off with hardwood mulch. The area was finished off with crushed gravel to help support the ties and fight erosion. Thanks to Dave Luca, Dale Hartnett and Scott Gleason for additional assistance.

2013 DEPOT GUIDES NEEDED

We still have a need for tour guides to open Industry Depot throughout July and August. You do not need to be an encyclo-



TOP LEFT: Volunteer Chris Hauf was visiting from California and sanded the interior of RG&E 8's cab on June 18. OTTO VONDRAK PHOTO **ABOVE RIGHT:** Boy Scout Troop 210 from Kirkville, N.Y., paid us a visit on June 29. The Scouts participated in many service projects, including raking debris from our tracks, preparing displays, and general clean up. **ABOVE:** Volunteer Ray Howard, also a Scout volunteer, helped several boys earn their Railroading merit badge. MARK DASHNAW PHOTOS

UPCOMING EVENTS

**JULY 20 - NYMT
TROLLEYS AND
CLASSIC CARS
AT TWILIGHT**

**AUGUST 17
MUSEUM PICNIC**

**AUGUST 18
DIESEL DAY 2013**

• **RGVRRM.ORG** •

pedia of railroad knowledge. All you need is a willingness to greet our visitors and help interpret the displays in and around Industry Depot. We especially need people to help conduct weekday tours for groups. For more details, or to schedule your day to volunteer, please contact Otto Vondrak at ovondrak@yahoo.com.

—Otto Vondrak

MUSEUM PICNIC PARTY AUG. 17

Your museum will be hosting a special clean-up day and evening picnic party on Saturday, August 17, at Industry Depot. Not only will we be preparing for our

annual Diesel Day event, but we will also celebrate all of our accomplishments from the past year. We will be offering standard cookout fare (hamburgs, hots, cold pop), you are welcome to bring a dish to pass. Train rides to follow, with a special surprise. Don't miss it! Please RSVP to Otto Vondrak at ovondrak@yahoo.com.

AUGUST ADIRONDACK ADVENTURE

Adirondack Scenic Railroad's Railfan Weekend is August 2-4, and includes a series of special events, train rides, night photo sessions, and more. Details and tickets available at www.adirondackrr.com.

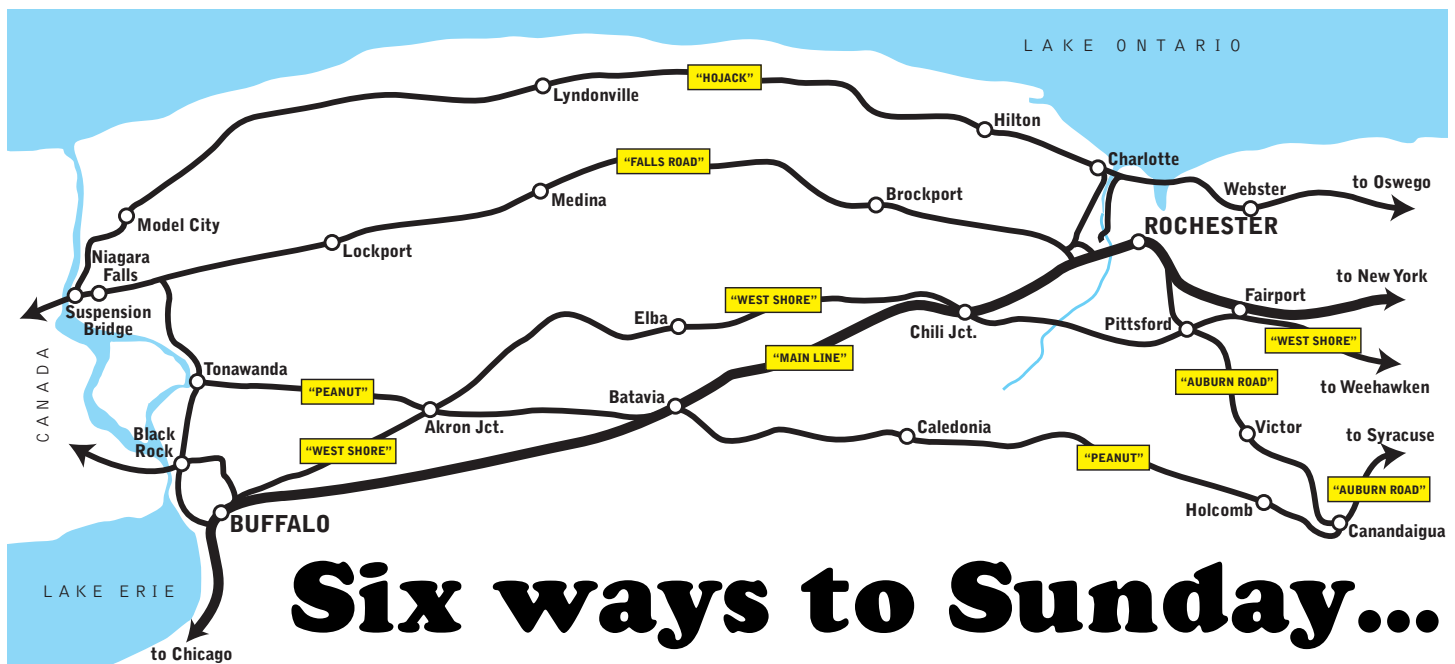
CONVENTIONS IN SEPTEMBER

The Erie Lackawanna Historical Society will be holding their annual convention in Buffalo on September 20-22. Visit www.erielackhs.org for details.

The Penn Central Railroad Historical Society is coming to Rochester for their annual convention September 26-28. Visit www.pccrrhs.org for details.

RGVRRM BOARD MEETING

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be Thursday, August 1. To get an item onto the agenda, contact Mike Dow at (716) 474-2833 or mdow@rochester.rr.com.



Six ways to Sunday...



The New York Central (NYC) railroad had the largest presence in western New York State, with no less than six different routes connecting the Rochester area with the gateways at Niagara Falls and Buffalo. Most were built as competing routes and were later acquired by NYC through the end of the nineteenth century.

The northernmost route stretching from Suspension Bridge to Charlotte to Oswego along Lake Ontario was known locally as the "Hojack," though the official name was the "Ontario Branch." The origin of the nickname seems to be lost to the passage of time. This was the main line of the Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg, which was acquired by the NYC in 1891. With little online traffic to support it, the line west of Webster was abandoned in 1979 by Conrail, while the Webster-Red Creek section became a part of the Ontario Midland Railroad.

The route between Rochester, Medina, and Suspension Bridge was known as the "Falls Road Branch," and was originally built as the Lockport & Niagara Falls Railroad. It was acquired by the NYC in 1853, and passed on to Penn Central and Conrail control. It was used as a through route for freight traveling to

Detroit and Chicago via Ontario until 1979. Conrail abandoned the last few miles between Brockport and Rochester in 1994 before selling the line to Genesee Valley Transportation in 1996, which operates it as the Falls Road Railroad, connecting with CSX at Lockport.

Built as the New York, West Shore & Buffalo, this railroad paralleled the NYC up the Hudson Valley and across upstate New York, competing for traffic at key locations. The line was acquired by the NYC in 1855 and reorganized as the West Shore Railroad. It was used primarily as a through freight route, though passenger service remained into 1959. The West Shore was abandoned east of Fairport in 1960 and west of Churchville in 1963. The remaining section provides a freight bypass of Rochester, and also provided interchange connections with the Lehigh Valley; Erie; B&O; and Pennsylvania railroads.

The NYC main line was made up of several different connecting railroads, including the Tonawanda Railroad, and a line that came to be known as the Direct Railway built between Rochester and Syracuse in the 1850s. In 1853 this route came under control of the NYC. It was eventually expanded to become part of the famous four-track main line connecting

New York and Chicago. Today the main line has been reduced to two tracks nearly throughout, and hosts CSX and Amtrak trains.

The "Peanut" line was built as the Canandaigua & Niagara Falls Railroad, acquired by NYC in 1858. The nickname came from a railroad executive who described it as a "Peanut-sized" railroad. In 1939, the section between Holcomb and Caledonia was abandoned. Conrail abandoned the line between Caledonia and Batavia in 1982. Except for a short stub in Caledonia, there is nearly nothing left today.

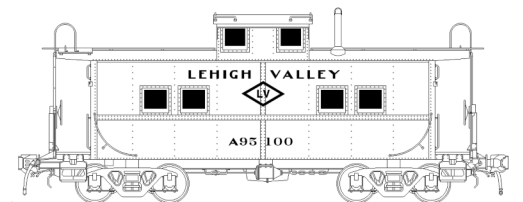
The Auburn Branch was more commonly known as the "Auburn Road," and was made up from the Auburn & Rochester and the Auburn & Syracuse railroads. The line between Pittsford and Victor was abandoned in 1960. In 1976, the section between Victor and Canandaigua was closed by Conrail. Service was cut back from Pittsford to Brighton in 1982. A small stub remains in operation today as the Brighton Industrial Track. Finger Lakes Railway has operated the line east of Canandaigua since 1995.

Note that the map at the top of the page does not show all stations, nor does it show any other competing railroads in the area.

—Otto M. Vondrak

Buy a rivet for our Lehigh Valley caboose

You can help us return a historic Lehigh Valley Railroad caboose to the rails! We have made great progress since rescuing this car from a local scrap yard in October 2011. We are trying to raise funds to help pay for continued restoration of the exterior bodywork as well as preparation for painting and finishing. **Your donation in any amount will help!**



DONATE TODAY! Visit www.rgvrrm.org/support

New Museum T Shirts

New museum T-shirts will soon be available for ordering for all museum volunteers. They are dark green with yellow graphics, and are approved for all operating crews and depot guides as part of our official “public” uniform. Short-sleeve are **\$15.00** each, Long-sleeve are **\$20.00** each. Please contact Otto Vondrak at ovondrak@yahoo.com to place your order.



FRONT



BACK

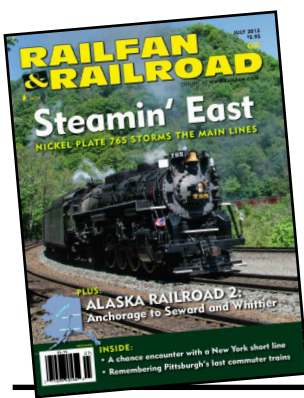
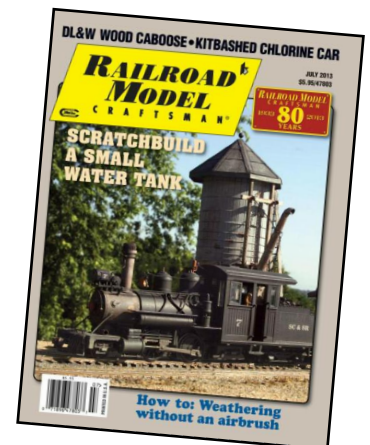
OFFICIAL MUSEUM NAMETAGS

Do you have your official museum volunteer nametag yet? They are yellow with black lettering, and pin conveniently to your shirt or hat. **Name tags are \$8.00 each.** Please provide the spelling of your name EXACTLY as you would like it to appear on the tag (consider using only your first initial if you have a very long last name). Please contact Otto Vondrak by email at ovondrak@yahoo.com to order.



ARTICLES OF LOCAL INTEREST

The July 2013 issue of **Railroad Model Craftsman** contains a detailed article by **Mike Del Vecchio** about the Lackawanna’s distinctive home-built center-cupola cabooses. These first twenty of these cars were built in 1914 at Keyser Shops near Scranton, Pa. Amongst those first cars was DL&W 619, which was later sold to the Genesee & Wyoming to become their No. 8. This would be the same car that is currently in the collection of our neighbors to the north, the New York Museum of Transportation. Detailed plans and a roster accompany the feature. Get it from your local hobby shop or purchase direct by visiting www.rrrmodelcraftsman.com.



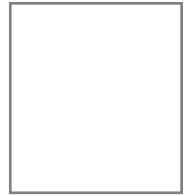
The July 2013 issue of **Railfan & Railroad** features a brief article about the Skaneateles Short Line, a five-mile railroad that connected to the New York Central “Auburn Road” (Auburn Branch) at Skaneateles Jct. (also known as “Hart Lot” or “Elbridge”). The article entitled “It Happened at Hart Lot” details an encounter with the SSL that resulted in a peculiar three-way meet with a Penn Central local and a hi-railer in the summer of 1968. With photos and text by Auburn native **Ken Hojnacki**, you can pick up a copy of the July issue of Railfan & Railroad from your local hobby shop or purchase direct from Carstens by visiting www.railfan.com.

MATERIALS SUBMISSIONS: We welcome your contributions to The Semaphore! Any materials related to the activities of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum, as well as the history of Rochester’s railroads are welcome for publication in THE SEMAPHORE. All written materials should be submitted as Microsoft Word or plain text documents, and all photographs as high-resolution JPEG files. Materials and inquiries should be emailed to the Editor at ovondrak@yahoo.com or call (585) 820-2341.



THE SEMAPHORE

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM
P.O. BOX 23326
ROCHESTER, NY 14692-3326



This Month's Meeting:

July 18

7:00 PM at Industry Depot
262 Rush-Scottsville Rd., Rush NY

Next Month's Meeting:

August 15

7:00 PM at Industry Depot
262 Rush-Scottsville Rd., Rush NY

— find us on Facebook: facebook.com/rgvrrm —



We celebrated Baseball Day at our two museums on Sunday, June 30 with a special visit from Spikes, the official mascot of the Rochester Red Wings! Spikes spent the morning greeting visitors and touring our two museums. Spikes has just stepped off the trolley at Midway and he's excited to board our train to Industry! It was a fun event that was well attended. Looking for local baseball schedules? You can visit the Rochester Red Wings web site at redwingsbaseball.com. PHOTO BY OTTO VONDRAK