

THE SEMAPHORE

The Newsletter of
**ROCHESTER CHAPTER - NATIONAL RAILWAY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
Vol. XXXI No. 5

January 1990

PROGRAM NOTES

By: Ron Amberger

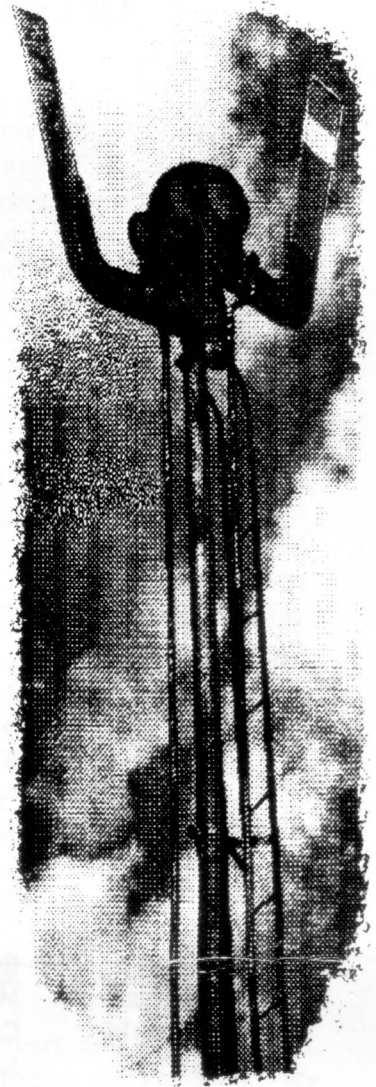
Our program on January 18th at the 40&8 Club will come from my own slide library and will feature photographs from my travels in Europe, Asia and South America. The program will be a general coverage of many different lines in many countries and will include steam, diesel and electric main line operations, narrow gage lines, subways and trams. I guess the purpose is to show the great variety of rail equipment running outside of North America. There will be a number of photographs from England featuring both diesel and electric main line trains as well as a few of the steam locomotive museum operations. Other countries featured will be the German Democratic Republic, Poland, China, Peru, Ecuador, and Columbia. I will put together a special tray of slides on narrow gage lines in all of these countries. There is a lot of interesting railroading beyond our borders. I hope that this program will introduce these lines to those who may be unfamiliar with them, and also serve as a remembrance for those who may have visited these same places.

If you would be interested in doing a program, please contact me at the meeting or by mail or phone to discuss your ideas. If you know of someone from outside the chapter who may be able to do a program, please give me the particulars.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE CALL FOR PHOTOGRAPHS

It is time to start planning for the 1991 Calendar which will go to press in May. Once again, we are looking for good quality black and white photographs of local interest. These may be historic photos or scenes of contemporary railroading. The geographic area covered by our calendar is New York state west of a line between Oswego and Binghamton (including Syracuse area). If you have a negative, but no print, we will make a print. Prints should be 8 x 10 size or larger. We will return submitted material as soon as the printer is finished with the prints.

We are also contemplating a new edition of "When Rochester Rode by Rail". Those who have seen this book will recall that it was a modest size book featuring photographs of passenger train service in Rochester. We are now looking for photographs that relate to this topic. These should all be pre-Amtrak.



OPERATION LIFESAVER TRAIN IN ROCHESTER

By Dave Shields

An Operation Lifesaver Train operated over Conrail's Chicago-Albany mainline on Tuesday, December 12, 1989 from Pixley Road in Gates to Sanford Road in Churchville. This Operation Lifesaver Train was part of the "Officer on the Train" program which was sponsored by New York Operation Lifesaver, Inc., Conrail, New York State Police, Monroe County Sheriff, Gates Police and the Conrail Police Departments. The "Officer on the Train" Program has police officers on the train in radio communications with police officers at each railroad crossing. They watch for grade crossing violations and ticket all offenders. On this day, two offenders were issued tickets, one at King Road and the other at Westside Drive. Reporters from the local news media were also onboard the train in order to bring the railroad grade crossing safety message to the community.

Operation Lifesaver, Inc., is a national program designed to help prevent crashes, injuries and fatalities at railroad crossings. The program involves engineering, education and enforcement. New York State joined the Operation Lifesaver Program in 1982. One of the program's goals is to remind the public that the stopping distance for a train is much longer than that of a motor vehicle. Frank Marshall, Conrail's Assistant Director of Field Safety was instrumental in bringing the train to town.

The train, referred to by Conrail as Special 320, consisted of two B23-7 locomotives, numbers 1913 and 1928, and was operated by Tom Ferris. The police officers and the news media boarded the train at Pixley Road in Gates. There were 2 runs for the train due to the number of people involved. The people in attendance were:

Frank Marshall	Asst. Dir. Field Safety	Conrail-Philadelphia
Seth Corwin	Coordinator	N.Y.S. Operation Lifesaver Comm.
Charles Alonge, Jr.	Representative	N.Y.S. Governor's Traffic Safety Comm.
R.L. Hildebrand	Manager-Special Projects-Police	Conrail-Philadelphia
J. Lewandowski	Captain of Police	Conrail-Buffalo
J.A. Stolarczyk	Safety Coordinator	Conrail-Albany Div.
Sgt. Paul Sucher	Public Info. Officer	N.Y.S. Police
John Babbitt	Trainmaster	Conrail-Rochester
Tom Ferris	Engineer	Conrail-Rochester
Robin Taylor	News Reporter	WRCO-TV8
Vanessa Tyler	News Reporter	WHEC-TV10
Warren White	News Reporter	WOKR-TV13
Michael Zeigler	News Reporter	Democrat & Chronicle
Michael Russo	News Reporter	Gates-Chili News

Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain the names of everyone in attendance which also included other Conrail people, New York State Police, Monroe County Sheriff, Gates Police and GRC-Channel 5.

The "Officer on the Train" Program in Rochester was a success through its enforcement and education of the community. The program received widespread publicity in the local news media. It was on the 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. news on WOKR-TV13 and the 6 p.m. news on WROC-TV8 and WHEC-TV10 that evening along with front page coverage in the Democrat and Chronicle the next day, Wednesday, December 13, 1989. The weekly newspaper, the Gates-Chili news, carried the story in its December 20, 1989 issue on page 3.

The "Officer on the Train" Program solidified the message of the Operation Lifesaver Program. **WHEN IT'S A TIE AT THE RAILROAD CROSSING, YOU LOSE!** Tell all your friends.

A LOOK BACK OVER THE YEAR

By Mike Byrne - Publicity Chairman

As the recently appointed Chairman of the Ad-hoc Publicity Committee, I felt a bit of excitement and power. Imagine me, Mike Byrne, able to contact thousands of people through the media and able to tell them about our great rail excursions and rail museum. How hard can that possibly be, I figured. I knew I only had to make a few calls, place a few ads and people would come out of the woodwork to ride our trains. Wrong!!! My first publicity experience was the ill fated Watertown excursion, we placed our ads, but relied too heavily on the Rail Fans to support our trips and as a result were unable to run the trip. I realize there were other problems associated with the trip, but we just couldn't get enough people out to ride.

As the newness of the job wore off and the sleepless nights began to set in and the reality of who was actually interested in trains was realized, the Chapter decided to take on a new focus for train trips. The trip committee and I decided to develop some marketing and publicity schemes for the rest of 1989. I would like to share those with you so you can see that some failures are actually a form of tuition, tuition in the school of life.

Dave Shields was the publicity chairman for the first few months of 1989 and he and Dick Tickner had already established the publicity for the Rochester and Genesee Valley Railway Museum, so I put that off my active list. My first real challenge came one week before the 4th of July when Bob Miner asked me to get some publicity ready for the LA&L summer trips. I asked Bob when the trips were and he said "next week". I dropped the phone and immediately began my first assault on the press. After careful training by Dave Shields, I began to send out press notices, the first weekend came and the only info in the press was from the ads that were placed in the Avon Pennysaver. We ended up with a depressing weekend and only 45 people showed. I called Channel 10 and convinced them that they could get some great video and an exclusive report the following weekend. They showed up and the rest is history as we sold out the rest of the trips (thank God!!!). We ended up with over 2,000 people carried on those trains.

We learned from that trip that better preplanning was needed and more advertising was important. We swore that we would never have empty trains again and with that thought I went to work. We began to plan the Fall Foliage trips 6 weeks prior to the first trip. We sent info to our mailing list, we advertised in the Webster, Ontario, and Sodus Pennysaver, I had information placed in the Sunday Travel section, Fall Foliage sections, and calendar section of the Thursday and Sunday Gannett Newspapers. Not to leave a stone unturned, I contacted Newspapers in Syracuse, Oswego, and the Finger Lakes. I wanted everyone to know we were running train trips. We had decided to sell tickets at the train and through the mail, unfortunately I didn't do a very good job of getting that information across to everyone who saw the ad's. We were able to deal with the crowds of the first 2 weeks, but as the leaves turned, the sales increased dramatically and as a result trips were selling out long before departure. We had upset a number of people as a result of our unclear information in the ads and as a result an important lesson was learned and that mistake won't happen again.

Overall, the fall trips were a huge success. We took almost 4,000 people on those trips and only got a few complaints. We learned some very important lessons about communications and dealing with the public and will go on from there.

Did we have a good 1989? You tell me, I truly believe it was a stellar year for the Rochester Chapter-NRHS. What will the 1990's bring our Chapter? Only you can answer that. We are currently planning on operating a charter train on the Ontario Midland RR. The NRHS has joined the Rochester Visitors and Convention Bureau. We have access to hundreds of groups coming to Rochester for meetings, I'm currently in contact with over 20 of them for the time period of May through October of 1990. Who knows, maybe 1 or 2 of them may want to charter our train! We also now have access to numerous Rochester-based companies who may want to plan trips or

become involved in our museum. I am currently writing letters to encourage these groups to join us.

Let us not forget the Rochester and Genesee Valley RR Museum. The Visitors and Convention Bureau has a publication that is aimed at tour bus companies that look for stops in the upstate NY area. Imagine what we could offer these groups if our museum was completed and tour buses were lining up to see our collection. It can happen, but only if we complete the tasks we have set forth. If we all work together either physically, or financially, we can create a Chapter and Museum that will attract tourists from the region.

If you would like information on any activity or committee, please contact me or any Chapter officers. I personally can use people willing to make copies and pass out fliers among their friends and coworkers. Something as simple as that makes a significant contribution to our publicity effort. I hope to hear from you, have a great 1990.

Mike Byrne
Publicity Chairman
225-5659

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM STORE

-Operation Supt. Tom Bauman - 458-4289

The Chapter Store will be attending the 4th Annual Model Train Show and Swap Meet on Sunday, February 4 beginning at 10:00 a.m. The show, located in the Edgerton Park Stardust Ballroom, is sponsored by the Rochester Model Railroad Club and the Edgerton Model Train Group.

New books available at the December meeting:

Otto Perry: Master RR Photographer (Older B&W) .	\$30.00
Steam, Steel and Stars (New Night Shots)	\$35.00
Train Wrecks (Pictorial)	\$11.95
Cabooses of the NH & NYC	\$14.95
The Alaska RR (Beautiful Scenery!)	\$40.00
Guilford: Five Years of Change (1984-1988)	\$30.00
The Art of Railroading (1880's Railroad Manual)	\$6.95
Bridge Line Blues (D&H)	\$42.00
New England Alcos in Twilight	\$8.00

NOTE: A 20% discount on all books for members of the Rochester Chapter.

I'm in the process of rebuilding the store's inventory. If you have a favorite railroad or section of the country (other than the Northeastern railroads), please let me know. If you have a particular book that you'd like me to order, let me know that too!

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY MUSEUM WORK PROGRESS REPORT

-Chmn. Rand Warner - 248-8889

Happy New Year and Happy New Decade of the 1990's

- A very happy, prosperous and productive new year to you all, to our Chapter, and to our Museum.

Organization

- Our best wishes to John Myers who has accepted the position of Supt. of Freight Equipment. Our thanks go to Dave Luca who carried this job for several years in both official and acting capacities.

Special Note

- Our sympathy is extended to Bill Gordon in the recent loss of his brother, Robert Gordon, age 85, living in California.

Outreach

- Rand Warner and Ted Strang of NYMT are meeting with the Oatka Residence Center Staff to finalize a student program that will benefit the students and our Museums.
 - Mike Byrne is already out hustling business for the 1990 excursion and charter train season with new promotional literature.
- *****

TRACK & RIGHT OF WAY

-Supt. Bill Reid - 589-4880

Priorities

- Completion of trackage between our Depot and the New York Museum of Transportation.

Progress for December

- Survey stakes located on R.O.W. going north from NRHS end of track to NYMT end of track by Charles Harshbarger.
- Tree limbs removed along R.O.W. by Dick Holbert.
- Chevy Hi-Rail restocked with track bolts, etc. by Charlie Harshbarger.
- Spike maul broken handles replaced by Charlie Harshbarger.
- Appraisals completed for turntable and sand tower with help of Harold Crouch, Bob Cowan and Rand Warner.

Plans for January/February

- Continue work on drainage ditches and culverts as weather permits.
 - Sort ties and switch timbers, weather permitting.
 - Continue survey staking, weather permitting.
 - Continue clearing R.O.W. going north, weather permitting.
 - Investigate further options for donation, loading and transportation of good, clean, stone ballast.
- *****

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

-Supt. Dave Luca - 288-0318

Priorities

- Replace Depot foundation sills.
- Upgrade drainage on Museum grounds to prevent damage to Depot in the future.
- Develop long range restoration plans for all of our museum grounds.

Progress for December

- Depot cleaned and swept by Rand Warner and John Redden in preparation for Year End Party.
- Plumbing drained and heat tapes installed in Depot basement by Norm Shaddick.
- All trash barrels and wastebaskets emptied and another dumpster requested by Rand Warner.
- Walks, aprons and parking areas shoveled and plowed by Charlie Harshbarger, John Redden, Jeff Carpenter and Dick Holbert - using Chapter backhoe.
- Firewood split and stacked by Norm Shaddick.
- Depot agents room drawers organized and labeled by Charlie Harshbarger.
- Fence along east neighbors property worked on by Steve Huse.
- Letter to Niagara Mohawk re: power for tool barn drafted by Dave Shields.

Plans for January/February

- Bring in another dumpster for trash removal.
- Continue rebuild of Depot south end foundation areas, weather permitting.
- Continue changeover of Depot wiring system for new 200 Amp box.
- Complete remaining plumbing work in basement and install shower module.

FREIGHT EQUIPMENT

-Supt. John Myers

Priorities

- Relocate pennsy hopper.
- Acquire 40' boxer car.

Progress for December

- North end of NYC Caboose with new siding prime painted by John Myers and Bill Reid.
- Flasher lights on Erie Caboose made operational by Dave Luca and Neil Bellenger.

Plans for January/February

- Install rebuilt steps on north end of NYC Caboose.
- Install railings and ladder on north end of NYC Caboose.
- Install type A/B/C fire extinguishers in all cabooses.
- Install wood plank shelving on metal brackets in Erie Milk Car.

MOTIVE POWER

-Supt. John Redden - 594-2227

Priorities

- Winterize and protect engines.
- Restore/repaint LV-211.
- Acquire steam loco.

Progress for December

- Batteries charged on LV#211, EK#6 and NKP#79 by Dick Holbert, John Redden and Norm Shaddick. Battery water checked.
- EK#6 block heater checked out by Norm Shaddick.
- Information on 4-6-2 and 2-8-4 steam locos requested by Rand Warner and other contacts made.
- Cab wiring work performed by Dick Holbert and control relays installed.
- Conduit installed in NKP#79 by John and Gene Redden.

- LA&L battery set moved indoors and put on charger.
- Fuel filter changed (again!!) on EK#6 by Norm Shaddick.

Plans for January/February

- Check antifreeze protection on EK#6.
- Get diesel loco fuel tanks topped off/refilled.
- Start up EK#6 when block is above +40°Fahrenheit.
- Get lube oil sample on EK#6 analyzed to determine if any antifreeze contamination.
- Complete wiring work on EK#6 and NKP#79.
- Finish pre-lube pump.
- Periodic check-out of batteries to protect from freezing.
- Install fire extinguisher in each locomotive cab.

PASSENGER EQUIPMENT

-Supt. Robert Miner - 671-3589

Priorities

- Maintain NYC Passenger Car for operation.
- Refurbish sheet metal on PINE FALLS and Erie Stillwell.
- Expand and/or upgrade trainset rolling stock.

Progress for December

- Interior painting on DL&W baggage car continued by Jeff Carpenter. Now about 3/4 done on interior walls and ceiling.
- PINE FALLS outfitted for cooking and serving up to 12 people at a time by Cal Bulman and Rand and Marge Warner.

- KeroSun car heaters checked out by Norm Shaddick and igniters and batteries replaced in preparation for Year End Party.
- New York Central chairs picked up and delivered by Bob Cowan, Lynn Heintz and Rand Warner.
- All lamp globes/fixtures cleaned and washed and bad bulbs replaced in PINE FALLS by Mike Dow.
- Passenger equipment leads investigated by Rand Warner.

Plans for January/February

- Follow up leads for available passenger equipment - baggage, coach, RDC, etc.
- Check the Erie Stillwell car to determine if it can be used for passenger runs between the museums.
- Finish cleaning up the Erie Stillwell car.
- Complete AC power pig tails terminations on north and south ends of PINE FALLS.
- Run in water supply line to kitchen of PINE FALLS.
- Install type A/B/C fire extinguishers in all passenger cars.

M.O.W. EQUIPMENT

- Supt. Norm Shaddick - 865-2773

Progress for December

- Battery charged on Jackson Tamper by Norm Shaddick.
- Chevy Hi-Rail used by Jeff Carpenter.

Plans for January/February

- Complete two wheel trailer dump car for use with Chevy Hi-Rail and LVRR push car in track construction. Add side boards and pockets for side stakes.

SIGNALS & COMMUNICATIONS

- Supt. Neil Bellenger - 359-9985

Progress for December

- Bob Miner is negotiating on more two-way radios.
- Circuit components and relays removed from signal boxes on NYMT R.O.W. by Mike Dow, Rand Warner and John Redden.
- Signal equipment being relocated/consolidated in Erie Milk car by Mike Dow and John Redden.
- Signal layouts (proposed) sketched up by Lynn Heintz and Mike Dow.
- Walkie talkie radio charger checked by Dick Holbert.
- Signal relays and signal lanterns checked, cleaned and painted by Mike Dow.

Plans for January/February

- Determine critical missing items or repair of items needed to support plans/priorities above.
- Continue consolidation and inventory efforts.
- Arrange for power service connection to tool barn.
- Review signal installation proposals.

CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

- Supt. Steve Huse - 381-1012

Progress for December

- Road grader wiring inspected by Dick Holbert.

- Starter relay installed in backhoe tractor by Dick Holbert.
- Antifreeze checked on all equipment by Steve Huse.
- Boom truck alternatives investigated by Allan Francis and Rand Warner.
- Recap tires 9.00 x 20 obtained by Steve Huse by barter.
- Euclid loader winterized by Steve Huse - kerosene mixed in fuel tank for winter operation.
- Fuel conditioner/stabilizer put in gas and diesel fuel tanks.
- Euclid and backhoe tires pumped up by Steve Huse.
- Letters sent out to 30 companies by Joe Scanlon to solicit donations of equipment, supplies, tools and services.
- Padlocks oiled and weater protected by Steve Huse.

Plans for January/February

- Get diesel fuel tanks refilled.

★ ★ ★ WANTED ★ ★ ★

- Keg of track bolts for 80 lb. Dudley rail joints.
- Medium size type A/B/C fire extinguishers.
- Heavy duty stepladders - 4', 6', 8' and 10'.
- Porta Potti for use in Depot during winter season.
- Another battery charger good for 32 or 64 volts.
- Trickle chargers or solar chargers for 32/64V dc for passenger car batteries.

- Cleanup set for each passenger car at Museum - broom, dustpan, mop, bucket, etc.
- 60 lb. air hammer for driving track spikes.
- Specially machined bit for jackhammer for driving spikes.
- 30 Wt oil for gas and diesel engines, also anti-freeze and hydraulic fluid.
- Hydraulic fluid, anti-freeze, gas and diesel crank case oil, 90 wt transmission fluid.
- Returnable cans and bottles for the Steam Locomotive Preservation Fund - or better yet, Cash!
- Broom and dustpans for each building.
- Red/orange safety cones.
- Survey stakes.
- Good leads on local regional steam, diesel or electric motive power, trolleys or interurbans, RDC cars.
- Alligator clips, battery clips, battery jumpers.
- Mop wringer.
- Treated hardwood timbering and decking for NYC Flat Car.
- First aid kit to carry on Chevy Hi-Rail.
- Air compressor 100-200 CFM.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Thanks to Bob Welch for Pennsy RR System Map for library.
- Thanks to Harold Crouch for appraisal work.
- Thanks to John Redden for getting sandblast/painting quotations.
- Thanks to Mike Dow for leads on diesel generator sets.

- Thanks to Dan Cosgrove & Co. for offer to donate almost new Kerosun heater.
- Thanks to Lynn Heintz for donation of NYC arm chairs for coach rest rooms and framed print of NYC Empire State Express.
- Thanks to Bill Reid and Steve Huse for gas for dump truck.
- Thanks to Lynn Heintz for donation of signaling batteries.

CHANGE OF TRUSTEE'S MEETING NOTICE!!!

The next regular Trustee's Meeting of the Rochester Chapter-NRHS to be held on February 1, 1990 will take place at the Depot restaurant in Pittsford, NY, starting with dinner at 6 p.m. An insurance presentation and discussion will take place after dinner with the business meeting to follow. Those wishing a spot on the Trustee's meeting agenda, please note this change and make the necessary arrangements.

HISTORIAN NOTES

-by Keith Blackall

Thanks to Rand Warner for donation of loose leaf note books and a cassette recorder for the Historian's use. Thanks also to Mike Byrne for copies of the Chapter's Calendars to be included in the Archives.

Beginning with this issue and continuing in future issues of The Semaphore, we are presenting an article on the Erie Railroad written by Chapter Member Ted Jackson. We are delighted to have him share his memories of the Erie with us. Thanks Ted!

ERIE RAILROAD Rochester Division, 1938-1942

By Ted Jackson

INTRODUCTION

I have been asked to recount some of my recollections of the Rochester Division of the Erie Railroad in the late 1930's and early 1940's. At the time I joined the NRHS, it never seemed as though, at some time in the future, I might be one of these "vintage" members, but I guess the time has come. These notes will deal mainly with the years 1938-1941.

In 1938, the Erie had just gone into receivership. This was not the first time but this is the one that effectively got the job done and put the Erie on a firm enough footing that by 1942 it was able to pay its first dividend on common stock since the Fisk-Gould days in 1870. This reorganization was not only financial, but physical as well and had a pronounced effect on operations with the Rochester Division.

In 1938, the Rochester Division consisted of four branches fanning out from Avon. These branches led to Corning with a connection to the main line, Mount Morris connecting with the Dansville and Mount Morris, Attica connecting with the Buffalo Division and Rochester, ending at the terminal on Court Street. This is now a parking lot directly across from where the War Memorial now stands. The Corning and Attica branches comprised what was originally the Buffalo, New York and Erie which was constructed in the early 1850's. The Rochester branch began life as the Genesee Valley Railroad, which still existed as a corporate entity by 1938. The Mount Morris branch was part of a line which originally went to Dansville and was to continue to Burns on the main line. This extension was never built and in 1891, the Erie relinquished its control of the portion between Dansville and Mount Morris which became the D&M at that point. An additional spur existed from Conesus Lake Junction to Lakeville. Another branch, between Bath and Hammondsport, was leased from the railroad of that name. This lease was given up in 1935 after some severe flooding and became the present B&H. About all that now remains of the 1938 trackage is the LA&L from Lakeville to Avon and Conrail from Avon to Mortimer plus a little trackage from the Attica branch.

The nerve center of the operations was Avon. A roundhouse was located there as well as some shop facilities. The dispatcher was located there also.

FREIGHT OPERATIONS

By 1938, freight service on the Rochester Division consisted of daily except Sunday time freights between Corning and Avon and between Attica and Rochester. All branches had way freights although not all of them ran every day. There was an additional turn from Avon to Lakeville three days a week to get a milk car for the Corning milk train plus whatever else may have been required. The Corning-Avon way freight ran southbound. I believe, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and northbound the other three days. In 1938, it was suspended entirely for awhile, the time freight doing all the local work as well. The other way freights were generally one day turns. Power for all of the way freights was furnished by H-21a 2-8-0's.

The time freight from Attica (actually a Buffalo train) was handled by a 2-8-2. The time freight from Corning was handled by a K-1 4-6-2. I never understood the reasoning for this assignment. The K-1's were superb engines for local passenger and commuter trains and were the last steam engines in use on the Erie in 1954-5 even though they were nearly 50 years old by that time. However, they had only 30,000 pounds of tractive force. The K-4's which were originally designed for fast freights packed 45,000, but that is the way it was. The freights from Corning and Attica arrived in Avon early in the morning with the Attica train continuing into Rochester after some switching. After that, the way freights got into the act. In the evening, the procedure would be reversed.

PASSENGER OPERATIONS

Passenger service on these lines was more varied. Even in the 1890's, the Attica Branch only had three trains each way and was down to two by World War I. McKeen motor cars were used for awhile in this service and later, a Brill 4000-series gas-electric. By the late 1920's, service had been cut to a single mixed train turn and the depression ended that.

The Corning branch had five trains each way in the 1890's, one of them apparently a mixed because it took nine hours between Avon and Corning. With the exception of that, the others all continued into Rochester. One carried a through Pullman to or from Jersey City and stopped only at Bath, Wayland, Livonia and Avon. Although the rest were locals, they all carried parlor cars. After the turn of the century, the mixed trains were gone as was the Pullman. By the end of World War I, service was down to two trains each way and the depression cut that to one. More about that train later. Even after service was discontinued between Avon and Rochester in 1941, the Avon-Corning run continued until 1946. There was also service between Lakeville and Conesus Lake Junction, as many as five trains each way before World War I, some of which were through trains to Rochester. These trains connected with steamboats on Conesus Lake. This service ended in the mid-1920's. (The Lehigh Valley furnished similar service connecting with boats on Hemlock Lake until it became a reservoir.)

Probably the most interesting was the Mt. Morris branch. Service was minimal until 1907 when it as well as the Rochester branch was electrified. By World War I, 10 or 11 trains were running each way between Mt. Morris and Rochester and the Rochester branch was handling a total of 14 each way including the Corning trains. Electric trains were generally one or two car trains but could handle more if the occasion demanded. For awhile one of the Mt. Morris trains was still steam as were, of course, the Corning trains between Avon and Rochester.

An interesting feature of this service was that the electric trains stopped not only at Geneseo, Avon, Golah, Industry, West Henrietta and Mortimer but, on signal, at 24 additional locations which were all of the highway crossing en route. This included one by the Elmwood Avenue bridge called "South Park" and two additional stations in Avon. The names of these stations were generally the same as the name of the road on which they were located (i.e. Westfall, Crittenden, Baileys, Fenners, Brooks, etc.). These "stations" were generally in the form of converted box cars. One of these, Houstons, had a passing track and a tower to facilitate operations on single track and a number of meets were scheduled there. By 1929, there were still eight trains in each direction.

In addition to these operations, the Erie Station was also used by the Buffalo, Lockport and Rochester and the Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern until the subway was built. These trains came in off Court Street to the right of the depot. According to my mother, who was a frequent traveller on the Erie, these interurbans frequently had difficulty with the sharp curve on and off of Court Street. Derailments and the resulting traffic tie-ups were not unknown.

The catenary came down in 1934 and the trolleys were replaced with some Brill gas-electrics (4050, 4051, 4052, 4070, 4071, 4072). By that time, there were only five trains left in each direction in addition to an early morning turn between Rochester and Avon.

From a 1933 dispatcher's train sheet, one finds that the crew that handled this early morning turn which got them back into Avon at 8 a.m., then took the Mt. Morris way freight and after that the Lakeville run which got them back into Avon by noon. My memory of this service begins with 1938, by coincidence, the same service that is now on the trainboard outside the Oatka Depot. Fourteen trains a day wasn't all that shabby in 1938.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE SEMAPHORE)

ROCHESTER CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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THE SEMAPHORE

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ROCHESTER CHAPTER*

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SEMAPHORE DEADLINE:

Deadline for the February issue is January 27.
Please send your articles to Dave Luca at 983 Winton Rd., N., Rochester, NY 14609.

CHAPTER MEETING:

January 18, 1990 - 8:00 p.m.
40&8 Club
933 University Avenue
Rochester, NY.

