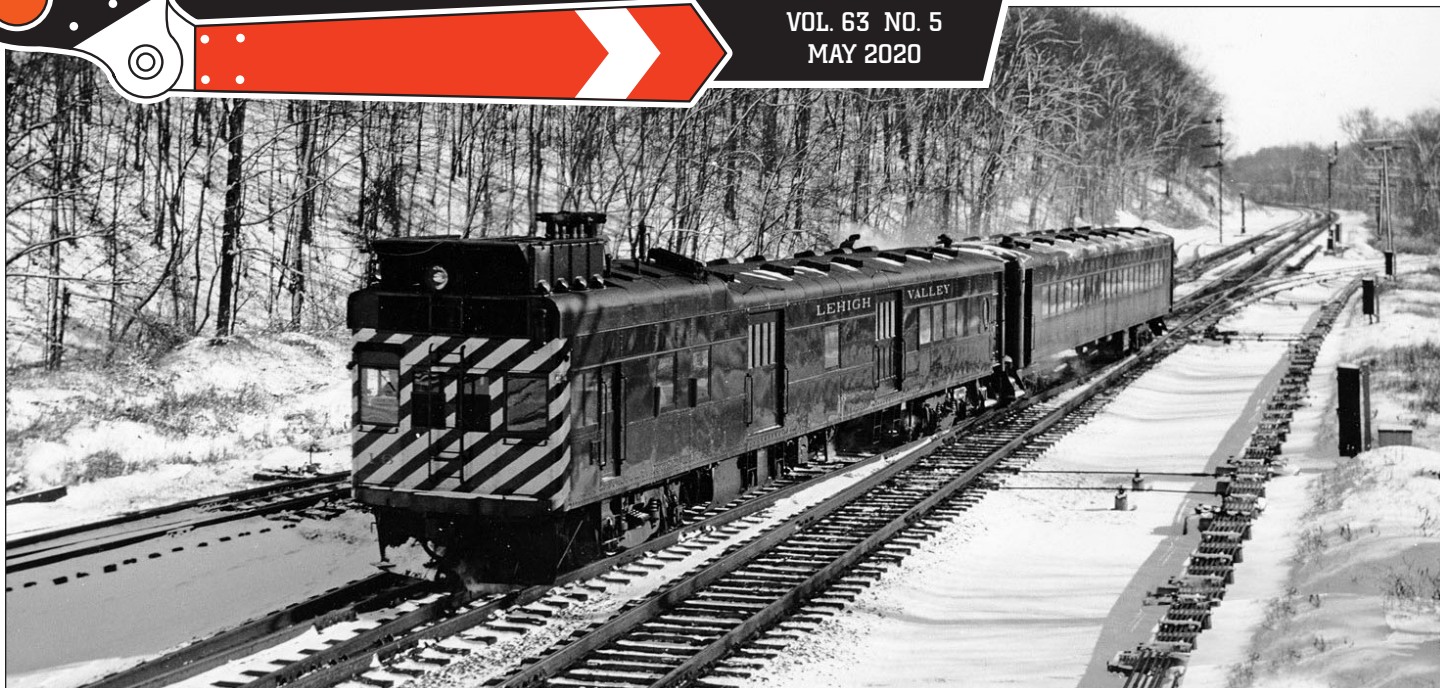


NEXT MEETING:
May 21
VIRTUAL MEETING
Check your email
for an invitation



A Lehigh Valley passenger train coming off the Hemlock Branch and arriving at Rochester Jct., sometime in the 1930s. This view looks east from inside the interlocking tower, with the station behind the photographer. The branch to Rochester also connected here. This self-propelled gas-electric motorcar is towing an unpowered coach trailer, common for branch lines without a lot of traffic. The last regular Hemlock Branch passenger service to Lima was discontinued on August 9, 1937. Photographer and date unknown. COURTESY ANTHRACITE RAILROADS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We Will Return

INSIDE

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As the calendar flips over to May, our museum remains closed to the public as we await guidance from our state and local governments on when it will be safe to reopen. It's very unusual for the museum campus to be devoid of regular activity at this time, but we must do everything we can to keep safe and reduce the rate of infection.

Museum volunteers have not been entirely idle during this time, however. Small individual project work has continued on a limited basis. The men's bathroom floor has received its first coat of varnish, and refurbished corner sinks have been delivered. Replacement end ladders have been fabricated and installed on the Lehigh Valley caboose. Additional details have been completed for the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh caboose, including a new heat shield for the stove, and replacement drip

awnings for the windows. Our Fairbanks-Morse diesel is being prepared for service.

On the equipment side, our new Shuttlewagon SX430 car mover was delivered at the end of April, acquired from RED Rochester at Kodak Park. Our two RG&E bucket trucks were sold, and a newer truck was acquired in its place. Repairs to our Jackson Tamper are continuing as well.

As soon as we receive clear guidance, we will announce our revised 2020 schedule of events at the museum. We have some challenges that lie ahead, but working together we can overcome anything.

We want to keep you all connected during this difficult time. Your ideas for future programs are welcome. Please email me at ovondrak@yahoo.com or call me at (585) 820-2341.

—Otto M. Vondrak,
Museum President



www.rgvrrm.org

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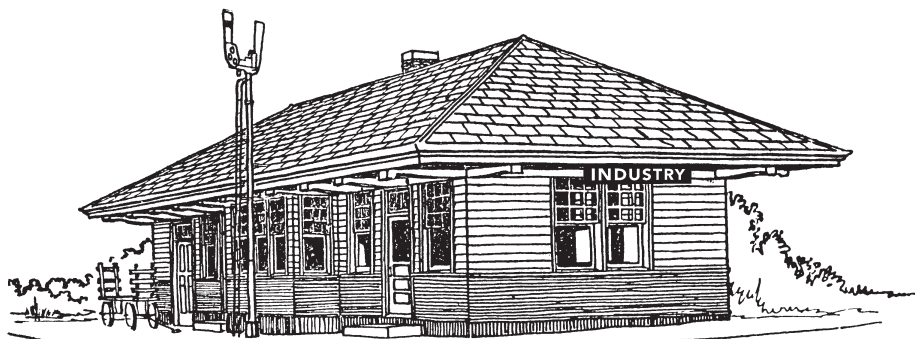
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Otto M. Vondrak

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Dave Peet

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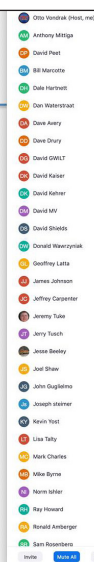
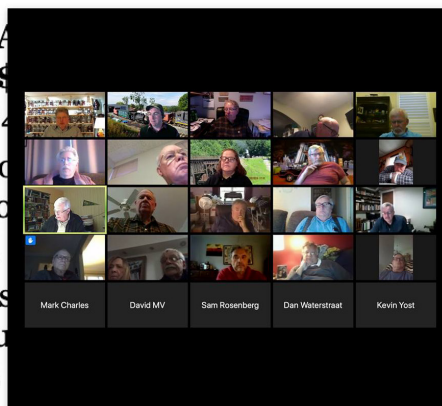
2020 SCHEDULE

The museum remains closed to the public through May 15, 2020. We will announce our new schedule as soon as conditions permit and restrictions are lifted.

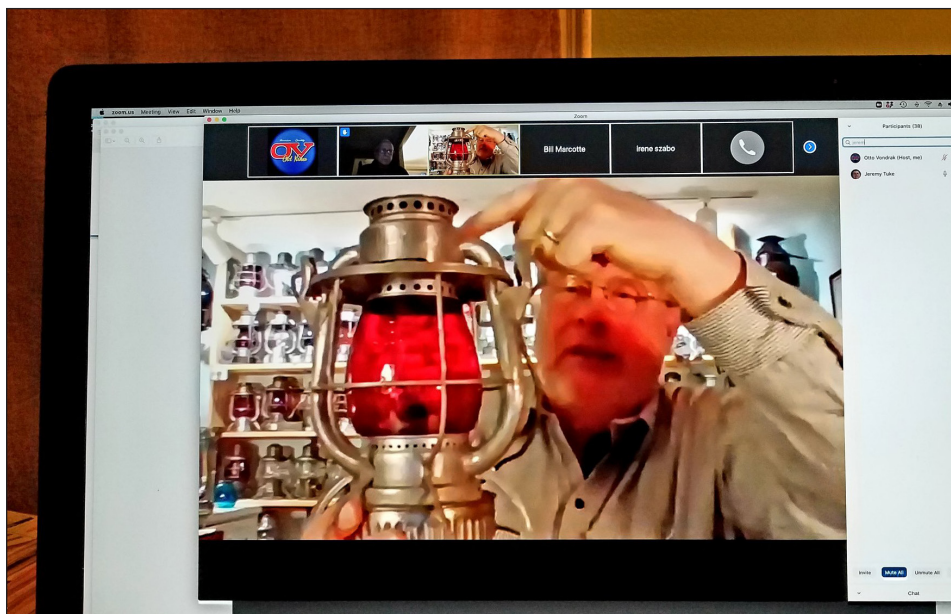


Treasurer's Report

- Total Current Assets (Investments) \$20,439 YTD, 2020 (down \$4,000)
- Current value of investments \$137,066 as of 4/15/20
- Income YTD as of 4/15/20 (does not include dividends)
- Expenses YTD as of 4/15/20



Our first "Virtual Meeting" was held on April 16 using the Zoom platform, attended by more than 50 members locally and around the country. Jeremy Tuke (BELOW) gave a brief introduction to collecting lanterns, followed by a slide show of museum restoration activities by Otto Vondrak.



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PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

VACANT

UPCOMING MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Due to restrictions on large gatherings, New York State's recent stay-at-home order, and the temporary closure of the 40&8 Club, our monthly meetings will move to virtual space. An email invitation will be sent to all members to join a special meeting on-line for **May 21!** Programs and presenters will be announced via email. Ideas for future programs would be welcome.

Your museum is seeking a new chairman for the Programs Committee. This person would coordinate with program presenters, and make sure audio-visual equipment is available and functioning for each meeting. If you are interested in volunteering, or would like to learn more, please contact Otto Vondrak at ovondrak@yahoo.com.

MUSEUM CAMPUS CLOSED TO PUBLIC UNTIL MAY 15

The first priority of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum is the safety



21 TONS OF FUN: Meet the newest addition to our Motive Power Dept., a 1998 Shuttlewagon SWX430, acquired from RED Rochester, operators of the power generating stations at Kodak Park. This versatile piece of equipment will be used in light duty around our shop.

of its visitors, volunteers, and members. Over the last few weeks, we have taken every precaution in accordance with state and local authorities. However, with new guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control to cancel or postpone in-person events and large gatherings of 50 people or more throughout the United States, **we have made the decision to close the museum to the public until May 15.** We will be canceling all public meetings and events in March and April in the interest of public health and safety.

Like you, we are anxiously awaiting instructions from our state government that will let us know when it is safe to reopen the museum to volunteers and to the public. We look forward to seeing you all again as soon as possible.

SHUTTLEWAGON SWX430

I'm pleased to announce the museum has acquired a 1998 Shuttlewagon SWX430 car mover from RED Rochester at Kodak Park. This rail vehicle, weighing in at 21 tons, will be used to shuffle cars around at our shop building. It is equipped with full size couplers and train air, and powered by a Cummins 6BTA 5.9 diesel, so it will be more than capable of moving our equipment safely and efficiently. This car mover was built in 1998, which should make it serviceable—and supportable—for many years to come. We will offer training to operators once the museum reopens.

—Joe Nugent, Motive Power Supt.

NEW SINKS FOR DEPOT BATHROOMS

As part of our bathroom restoration and rebuilding project, two corner sinks (one original, one replacement) were recently restored with new porcelain by Miracle Method Surface Refinishing of Rochester, and delivered in March. Rob Burz made additional repairs to the floor of the men's room, and Charlie Marks began putting down the first coat of floor finish. Thanks to the Davenport Hatch Foundation for funding this phase of construction, we look forward to reopening the bathrooms to the public later this year.

BUFFALO, ROCHESTER & PITTSBURGH CABOOSE 280 UPDATE

A new shield that will protect the interior wall from the heat put out by the stove pipe was fabricated by volunteer Bill Marcotte, following photographs of original installations in other cabooses. Bill is also fabricating small exterior awnings for the windows. Brake pipe fittings and new air pipes are being reconditioned and fabricated so the conductor's air valve can be re-installed near the cupola once again. —Jeremy Tuke

NEW END LADDERS FOR LEHIGH VALLEY 95100

Volunteer Bill Marcotte completed the installation of replica end ladders on April 30, using bar stock and grab irons donated by member Bernie Beikirch. These short end ladders were removed once Conrail

RIGHT: Sam Rosenberg pre-lubed and fired up our former U.S. Army H12-44 diesel on April 25, to get the engine ready for use later this season. This locomotive joined our fleet of historic trains in 1993, after enjoying a 40-year career working at the nearby Seneca Army Depot.

BELOW: Volunteer Bill Marcotte tightens the last bolt securing the grab irons to the ladder uprights on the south end of LV 95100 on May 2. These ladders were torched off by Conrail after 1976. As part of our restoration, we fabricated replicas using materials donated by member Bernie Beikirch.

BELOW RIGHT: Jeremy Tuke restored this New York Central "Resume Speed" sign donated to our museum by Devan Lawton. The sign was sandblasted and painted green. The lettering was made from stencils cut by member Chris Hauf, working from his new residence in California! JEREMY TUKE PHOTO



took ownership of the caboose, complying with new 1970s federal regulations designed to keep railroad employees off the roof of equipment where they could possibly fall and get seriously hurt.

—Sam Rosenberg, Project Mgr.

ON THIS DATE: PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD ACQUIRES LEHIGH VALLEY

The Interstate Commerce Commission authorized the Pennsylvania Railroad to acquire control of Lehigh Valley Railroad through stock ownership on May 17, 1962. The Pennsy wasted little time exuding its influence over its new subsidiary. On May 23, 1962, PRR President Allen J. Greenough was also elected President and Director of the LV. David C. Bevan, PRR

Vice President Finance, and William S. Renchard, PRR Vice President Sales, were named to the LV board in June 1962. The railroad continued to limp along, feeling the effects of the loss of anthracite coal traffic. After 1968, Lehigh Valley was kept on the books so that Penn Central could write off its losses against its own. On April 1, 1976, LV rolled off into the history books and became a part of Conrail.

Our museum is fortunate to have significant examples of LV rolling stock in our collection. Chief among them is Lehigh Valley RS-3m 211, built in 1953 as PRR 8445. It joined the LV roster in 1970, and was retired by Conrail in 1981. The engine joined our museum fleet in 1985, and was restored to LV colors in 1990. Caboose 95100 arrived in 2011, purchased with do-

nated funds and well on its way to being restored to its late-1970s appearance. And finally, 40-foot boxcar 62300 joined the fleet in 2019, thanks to a generous donation by Genesee Valley Transportation. We've got great plans for our LV fleet in 2021, and we look forward to your support! —O.M.V.

U.S. ARMY FAIRBANKS-MORSE 1843

Sam Rosenberg successfully pre-lubed and started up USA 1843 for the first time this season on April 25. Sam has also been working on tracing issues with the locomotive's electrical systems and battery voltage regulator for more reliable operation.

VISIT US ONLINE
FACEBOOK.COM/RGVRRM

“MEN OF ERIE”

In response to a query made on Facebook, **Mark O'Neill** provided these photos of his grandfather **Harold J. Spindler** who worked for the Erie Railroad in Rochester for many years. Spending a couple hours sleuthing online, I was able to paint a picture of Spindler's railroad career.

Harold J. Spindler began his career with the Erie Railroad as a stenographer at Mt. Jewett, Pa., in 1915, pausing only briefly to serve in World War I. The next mention of his railroad career came in April 1921 as Chief Clerk at Bradford, Pa., returning from an unspecified leave of absence (possibly related to his military service). He transferred to the Division Freight Agent's office in August 1922. By July 1925, he was Chief Clerk for the General Freight Agent at Buffalo, N.Y.

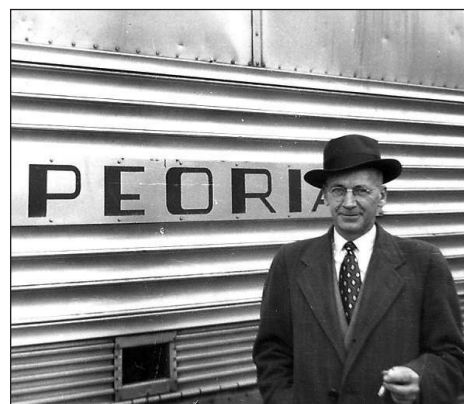
On March 19, 1927, Harold married Doris L. Willard. He was later named Commercial Agent for Buffalo in May 1929. In 1942 he made a move to Rochester as Commercial Agent, a position he kept for five years. He departed for Peoria, Ill., in August 1947 to take the position as General Agent there. Upon his return to Rochester in March 1951, he was promoted to Division Freight Agent, succeeding Hebert C. Well who transferred to Elmira. Harold himself later moved to Elmira to take on another promotion in February 1951. While in Elmira, he was a member of the Erie Traffic Committee, chairman of the Railroad Community Committee of the Southern Tier (founded in 1957 with representatives from area railroads), and was also a sought-after public speaker on topics relating to the railroad industry. On July 1, 1953, Mr. and Mrs. Spindler helped christen Erie Railroad tugboat *Elmira* with other railroad officials at the Bethlehem Steel shipbuilding yards at Staten Island.

By 1960, he was promoted to Division Sales Manager. After 46 years of service, Harold retired from Erie Lackawanna on June 30, 1961. Harold Spindler passed away on April 1, 1974. His grandson Mark O'Neill currently resides with his family in Connecticut, and we are grateful he was able to share these photos with us.

—Otto M. Vondrak



TOP: Division Freight Agent Harold J. Spindler is looking into the camera during an event at Erie's Exchange Street Yard in downtown Rochester, sometime in 1951 or 1952. The Rundel Library can be seen in the background behind caboose C246 (same class as our C254). **ABOVE:** Harold's wife Doris and daughter Joan. That caboose is only about five years old in this photo, all-welded construction built at Dunmore Shops. **RIGHT:** Harold served as General Freight Agent in Peoria, Ill, from 1947 through 1951, seen here posing with Rock Island observation car *Peoria* on the rear of the *Peoria Rocket*.



**BUFFALO
ROCHESTER
AND
PITTSBURGH
RY.**

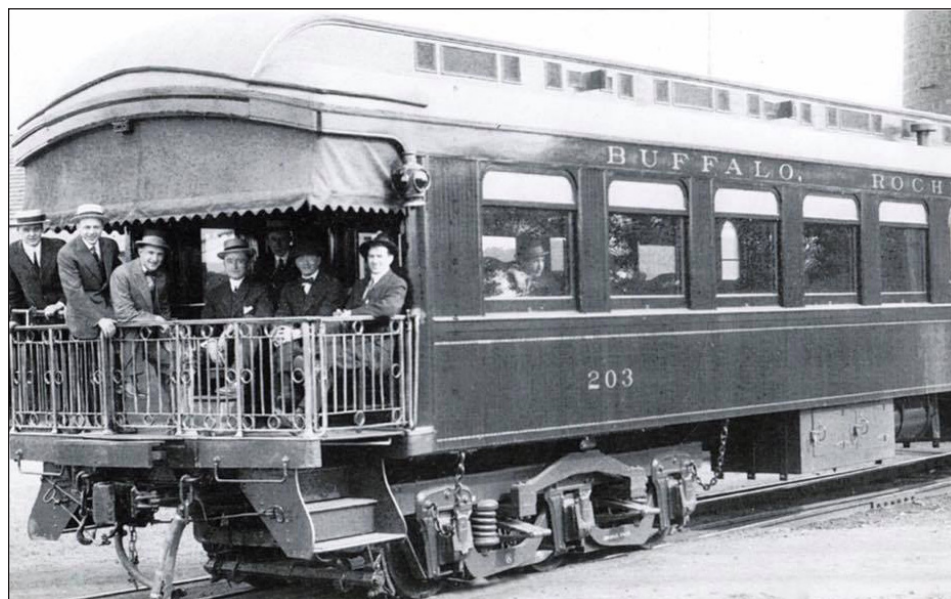
"SAFETY AND SERVICE"

BR&P's End of the Line

The year 2020 will mark the official debut of our restored Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway caboose 280. Built in 1923 and retired in 1974, it was the first piece of equipment to arrive at our museum campus at Industry. Aside from being the progenitor of our museum collection, the BR&P holds a special place in the hearts of our community of railroad enthusiasts and historians. It is said that the genesis of what would become the BR&P began in nearby Mumfords, when merchants Oliver Allen II, Donald McNaughton, and Rochester attorney D.D.S. Brown campaigned business leaders and government officials to back a new railroad project connecting Rochester with the coal fields of Pennsylvania. The resulting Rochester & State Line Railroad opened in 1874, and featured many prominent residents of Wheatland on its board.

By 1879, William Vanderbilt had acquired majority stock control of the R&SL, briefly placing the line under the New York Central's sphere of influence. As revenue declined, the company defaulted on its bonds, and the railroad was sold at foreclosure in 1881. The company was reorganized as the Rochester & Pittsburgh Railroad. Aggressive expansion in the Pennsylvania coalfields and the modernization of the physical plant and rolling stock stretched the new company to the limit. Foreclosed again in 1885, the new company emerged as the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway, financed by New York banker Adrian Iselin and his family.

Coal became the primary commodity carried by BR&P, in part influenced and



A smart party of gentlemen enjoy the view from the rear of Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway observation car 203 in this undated photo. SALAMANCA RAIL MUSEUM COLLECTION

facilitated by Rochester coal merchant Arthur G. Yates, partner in Bell, Lewis & Yates Coal Co. Yates was responsible for the construction of the coal dock at Charlotte in 1896, which accounted for a large portion of the railroad's exports. Yates Coal Co. was acquired by the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company the same year, sharing office space in the BR&P headquarters building on West Main Street in Rochester. When Iselin resigned as president of the railroad, Yates took his place. The railroad continued to expand its operations, including a carferry across from Charlotte across Lake Ontario to Coburg, Ontario.

While lucrative for many years, the domestic coal market was in turmoil in the period following World War I. In 1928, the Van Sweringen brothers acquired the majority of BR&P stock, and aligned the railroad with its holdings in the Chesapeake & Ohio, Nickel Plate Road, and Erie Railroad through their Alleghany Corporation.

In 1929, the Interstate Commerce Commission released a report recommending consolidation among the nation's railways to create new trunk systems and preserve competition. The report suggested that Baltimore & Ohio absorb the BR&P and neighboring Buffalo & Susquehanna, along with the Reading and Jersey Central, plus half-interests in the Monon; Detroit Toledo & Ironton; Detroit & Toledo Short Line; and Chicago & Alton.

At one time the B&O took a serious interest in creating a new trunk line connecting the Midwest with New York City. In 1930, the Van Sweringens sold their 85%

controlling interest in the BR&P to the B&O, in exchange for B&O's share of the Wheeling & Lake Erie. Application was made to the ICC for B&O to acquire the BR&P as well as Buffalo & Susquehanna, citing a savings from joint operation of more than \$300,000 a year, and consolidation of services and facilities with B&O would save upwards of \$400,000 a year. Approval from the ICC came on November 19, 1931. As a result, B&O was directed to acquire all remaining BR&P stock that was privately held. Stock was valued at \$100 a share, and more than 99% of the outstanding shares were now owned by the company. On January 1, 1932, the BR&P became the Buffalo-Rochester District of the B&O.

Coal once again became lucrative traffic for the former BR&P lines especially as the postwar economic boom took hold of the nation. Passenger traffic was another story, however. The Rochester Division hosted its last passenger train in 1953, while the Buffalo Division service lasted until 1955.

In 1960, Chesapeake & Ohio offered to acquire majority stock control of B&O, a transaction approved by the ICC in 1961 and actually took place in February 1963. When B&O was met with local opposition to its plan to expand and modernize the operations at Charlotte, the coal docks fell silent after the last boat was loaded on November 12, 1970.

In 1973, the C&O, B&O, and Western Maryland Railway joined forces as Chessie System—but the railroads did not merge. While the railroads continued to operate as separate companies, they were all unified

under common management and the modern Chessie image. Western Maryland was first to fall, taken over by B&O on May 1, 1983. On April 30, 1987, B&O itself faded into the history books when it was merged into C&O. This was all in preparation for merger with Seaboard System to create CSX Transportation on August 31, 1987. And what of the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company? The Iselin family retained control of the company and continued to grow long after the association with BR&P was severed. Consol Energy purchased R&P in 1998, including the lucrative Keystone and Helvetia mines in Pennsylvania.

As Chessie System prepared for the CSX merger, the railroads looked to shed marginal secondary lines. In fact, B&O made an application to the ICC in 1975 to abandon the BR&P between LeRoy and Machias in 1976, which was denied. In 1985, Genesee & Wyoming launched the Rochester & Southern to operate the former BR&P from Rochester to Salamanca, and in 1988 Buffalo & Pittsburgh was formed to operate from Buffalo, through Salamanca, to New Castle, Pa. (Pittsburgh). Unfortunately, R&S was severed as a through route when the segment from Silver Springs to Machias was abandoned in 1991. The line from Ashford Jct. to Buffalo was petitioned for abandonment by B&P in 1998, with all traffic shifted to the parallel Conrail line between Machias and Buffalo. The line from Orchard Park to West Valley was later abandoned and ripped out.

Perhaps you assumed, as many did, that the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway ended in 1932. As an operating entity, it ceased to be. But on paper, the

BR&P company survived to the present day. Old railroad names die hard. Because there were still shareholders with a minority interest in the company, the BR&P continued to exist. By 2013, there was in fact only one BR&P stockholder in addition to CSX, whose holdings amounted to just one share of common stock. Not just any shareholder, Walston Hill Brown was an investment banker who helped finance and organize the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Co. in 1881, and also took control of the Rochester & State Line Railroad with Adrian Iselin to form what would become the BR&P. Brown died in 1928 before he could cash in on the B&O's 1932 tender offer of \$100 per share. During the following years, all other outstanding stock was acquired by the B&O, leaving Brown's estate as the only minority owner.

After over two decades of maintaining the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh as a corporation, with its regulatory reporting requirements and related administrative costs, CSX Transportation finally decided to take action in an effort to relieve itself of this burden.

Under the Abandoned & Unclaimed Property Act in the state of Pennsylvania (where the BR&P had been incorporated), CSX was permitted to make payment to the state's Bureau of Unclaimed Property, in lieu of actually buying out the one share of BR&P stock owned by Brown.

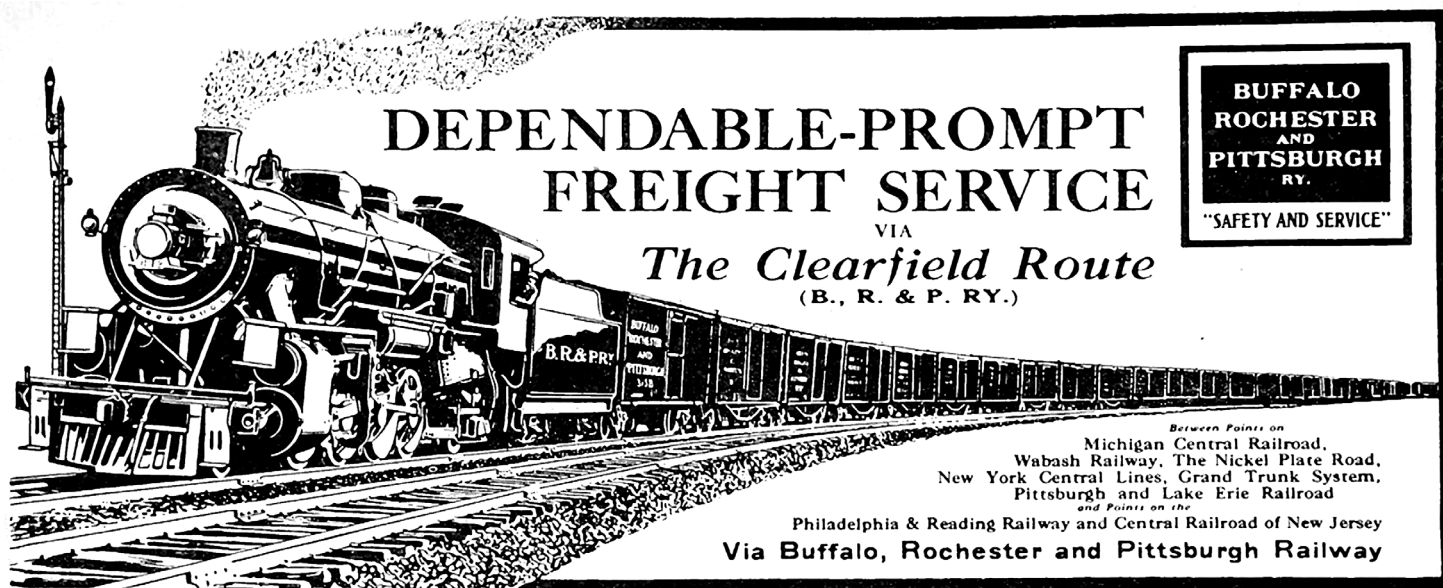
After an exhaustive search for the heirs or beneficiaries of the Brown estate, CSX determined that none could be located, and arranged for the State of Pennsylvania to receive payment for the outstanding share of BR&P stock.

As of May 7, 2013, one share of stock in the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway was valued at \$874. With this payment, CSX Transportation became the sole owner of the BR&P, and could finally absorb the company. On October 16, 2013, the directors of CSX Transportation approved the merger agreement. The directors of the BR&P approved the same agreement on October 28, and it was filed with the Surface Transportation Board on November 21, 2013. With no objections from the STB, the merger was authorized to take place on December 21, 2013. The route of "Safety and Service" was no more.

While the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway ran its last train at the end of 1931, and the corporation ceased to exist in 2013, rest assured the railroad's rich history will live on. The corporate records of the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Co. (which also includes a good portion of BR&P related material) are maintained at the library of Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Official B&O records from the Buffalo and Rochester divisions from 1920 through 1977 are maintained at Penn State University's library at University Park. A small number of records also reside with the B&O Museum in Baltimore.

Aside from the artifacts maintained by our museum and by numerous private collectors, our visitors will be able to enjoy a ride aboard restored BR&P caboose 280 later this year.

—Thanks to David Hamilton who wrote "End of the Line for the BR&P Railway," for Key, Lock & Lantern Issue #173, January-March 2014.



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Via Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railway

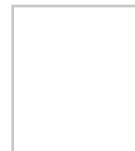


THE **SEMAPHORE**

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

P.O. BOX 23326

ROCHESTER, NY 14692-3326



PLAN AHEAD:
May 21, 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING

PLAN AHEAD:
June 18, 2020

TO BE ANNOUNCED

Find us on Facebook! [facebook.com/rgvrrm](https://www.facebook.com/rgvrrm)



Richard Martin photographed Lehigh Valley 211 leading a local freight past his family's farm in Batavia, NY., on June 24, 1971. The locomotive had only been on the LV roster for about a year in 1971. "I didn't know at the time how famous this engine would become," Richard said. PHOTO BY RICHARD MARTIN