

**NEXT MEETING:**  
**Aug. 20**  
**INDUSTRY DEPOT**  
*Enjoy rides on our  
museum railroad*



Restrictions due to COVID-19 saw the museum closed to the public for most of this year. Enthusiastic museum volunteers welcomed our first visitors of 2020 at our Five Dollar Day Open House on July 25! Details on future events can be found on page 6. PHOTO BY OTTO M. VONDRAK

# Welcome Back

## **INSIDE**

Health/Safety Plan . . .	2
Depot Bathroom . . . . .	3
Stillwell Coach . . . . .	4
Public Events . . . . .	6

Here we are, sailing into the end of the summer season, and instead of welcoming hordes of visitors and racking up record attendance, our trains sit mostly idle, with no indication of when we might start regular operations again. This is not the scenario anyone could have imagined coming into 2020.

It has not been all bad news this year, however. Taking all precautions, volunteers have returned to the museum to work on various restoration and maintenance tasks. One of our great accomplishments has been the release of BR&P 280 from the Restoration Shop. The group working on Lehigh Valley 95100 are making great progress, preparing for a coat of paint later this month. Our Tuesday Night Track Gang has been working feverishly to complete the rebuilding of Switch 3 and the yard

lead. Repairs are being made to our Jackson Tamper, as well as former Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Alco RS-1 no. 20. Not to be forgotten are the efforts to restore our depot bathrooms, the first of which “opened for business” on July 24! Repairs are also being made to the floor of the south waiting room, as well as our exterior doors.

Your museum is also taking its first tentative steps towards hosting public events and train rides again. We started with our Five Dollar Day Open House in July, and hopefully we can build on that with our event coming up on August 23.

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

—Otto M. Vondrak, Museum President



[www.rgvrrm.org](http://www.rgvrrm.org)

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## R&GVRRM HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN

The first priority of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum is the safety of its visitors, volunteers, and members. Our museum is facing a monumental challenge as we prepare to re-open this summer. We are doing everything we can to keep you safe during your visit, but we can't do it alone. Before you visit, please review the following Visitor Responsibilities that follow the latest guidance from New York State and the Centers for Disease Control. *Guests of the museum are invitees to private property, and therefore are required to follow our policies for entry.*

### Museum Health and Safety Plan

- All handrails and exhibit surfaces are cleaned multiple times throughout the day by museum volunteers.
- Hand sanitizer stations are available throughout the museum grounds.
- Cashless transactions are strongly encouraged for any purchases made at the museum.
- Social distancing will be enforced on all train rides and in all exhibit areas.
- All staff interacting with the public are required to wear proper PPE.

### COVID-19 Visitor Responsibilities

- Please purchase your tickets in advance and either print them out or display on your phone for entry.
- Masks covering the nose and mouth are required for all visitors age 2 and up. Masks may be removed if you are seated to eat or drink.
- Please maintain a safe social distance of 6' from visitors.
- Please use the hand sanitizing stations conveniently located throughout the museum grounds.
- Please stay home if you are sick, prone to infection, or in a "high-risk" category.

**We look forward to your visit and  
we thank you for your support!**



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## UPCOMING MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Meetings return to Industry Depot! Following the latest guidance and restrictions, **monthly meetings at the depot will be restricted to museum members only** until regulations are relaxed by the state. Our next meeting will be Thursday, **August 20**, at 7:00 p.m. Face coverings will be required for entry to the museum grounds, and members must maintain safe social distance from one another. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## DEPOT BATHROOM RESTORATION UPDATE

For the first time in more than a decade, Industry Depot once again has a **functioning bathroom!** The former men's restroom in the South Waiting Room was reactivated on July 25, much to the delight and comfort of our visitors and members alike. Leading the charge have been volunteer Charlie Marks (Buildings & Grounds Supt.) and trustee Rob Burz, along with



Volunteer Charlie Marks hangs the rebuilt exterior door to the South Waiting Room on the east side of the depot on August 15. Charlie took the door home to rebuild in his workshop to repair some rot and get it squared up again. Next he will tackle the west door to the North Waiting Room.

Jeremy Tuke, Dave Peet, Jim Johnson, and the valuable contributions of plumber Bob Meister. The majority of the work was funded by a generous \$10,000 donation from the Davenport Hatch Foundation, which will also be applied to the restoration of the former women's bathroom in the North Waiting Room. A large part of the project was installing a new water heater and water softener system, a new grinder pump donated in part by Liberty Pumps, and the directional bore leading to the sewer main that was supervised by trustee Dave Shields.

Please do your part to help keep our restrooms clean and presentable for visitors.

## INDUSTRY SWITCH LEAD

The Tuesday Night Track Gang ("TNT Gang") has been busy wrapping up repairs to Switch 3 and the yard lead at Industry. The switch has been completely rebuilt, and new ties have been inserted into the lead to keep it in gauge. This will help maintain our important connection to the LA&L and the outside world.

In the Hill Block, the old movable-point derail was completely removed, with its switch stand set aside for future use. The point rail was found to be in very good condition, and was used in the rebuilding of Switch 3.

Thanks also to Gregory Lund and Luke Irvine for joining our regular crew!

—David Kehrler, Track & ROW Supt.

## LEHIGH VALLEY BOXCAR

Besides a great-looking addition to our freight yard, our Lehigh Valley boxcar will also be used for storage of seasonal items used for our public events throughout the year. Otto Vondrak and Jeremy Tuke assembled some built-in storage shelves in the northeast corner of the car on August 11. Soon those shelves were filled with bins of Christmas, Easter, and Halloween decorations.

Built in July 1947, LV 62300 was retired in 1976 and used for storage in Manchester, N.Y. Later privately owned by Don Brown and restored by Bernie Beikirch, the boxcar was purchased by Genesee Valley Transportation and donated to our museum in September 2019.

## LEHIGH VALLEY CABOOSE 95100 RESTORATION UPDATE

In the last issue, we mistakenly wrote that the original steps for LV 95100 were sold by the previous owner to Bernie Beikirch to aid in the restoration of his caboose LV 95037 in Victor. It turns out the 95100 steps were stolen, and the parts that were purchased made up the short end ladders. Bernie purchased steel stock and donated grab irons so new end ladders could be fabricated by volunteer Bill Marcotte and installed on both of our cabooses.

A while ago, volunteer Joe Nugent measured the steps on Bernie's caboose and made up CAD drawings so replicas could



LEHIGH VALLEY  
95100

**RIGHT:** Charles Bell applies body filler to the exterior of LV 95100 to help hide a welding seam on August 1. The filler will be sanded smooth and primed prior to painting.

**BELOW:** Joe Nugent poses with the first fabricated caboose step received from PKG Equipment on August 15. Joe made the measurements and CAD drawings the replacement steps were made from.

**BELOW RIGHT :** Sam Rosenberg, Justin Micillo, and Chuck Whalen working on LV 95100 in its new home at the north end of the shop on track 7 on July 18.



be fabricated for our car when the time was right. As our caboose project is ready to move into the next phase of restoration, we received a quote from PKG Equipment in Rochester to fabricate new steps. Along with some private donors, the cost of fabrication was covered by a generous donation from the Steimer family. The first step was delivered on August 15, and was test fit to the body. We look forward to taking delivery of the next three steps before the end of the month.

Volunteer Charles Bell has been preparing the exterior for a fresh coat of primer, including applying body filler to hide the seam where new steel was welded in. Working with Sam Rosenberg, Chuck Whalen, and Bill Marcotte, the goal is to apply primer by mid-September, and possi-

bly the first finish coat of red paint.

Donations in any amount can be made to this project at [rgvrrm.org/donate](http://rgvrrm.org/donate)

—Sam Rosenberg, Project Mgr.

### ERIE STILLWELL COACH PROJECT UPDATE

Project manager Charles Rothbart has been working with other volunteers to clear out the coach of stored materials and trash over the last few weeks. Working with third-year RIT student Jackson Glozer, most of the car has been cleared out. The remaining interior panels are also being removed so that a thorough inspection can be made of the roof interior and the car's frame and structure. The hundred year old masonite panels are damaged and will need to be replaced. A few of the arches retain

their decorative pressed glass, which will be carefully removed and placed in safe storage until needed. As more of the car is cleaned out and old panels are removed, it has been discovered that the car will need much more than just a set of new window sashes to be made roadworthy.

Plywood and painting supplies have been purchased and delivered to the museum so that new plugs can be inserted into the window frames to help keep the weather out while repairs continue inside the car.

Once numbering in the hundreds, there are now less than a dozen surviving Stillwell coaches, including ours! If you are interested in helping out on this significant preservation project, please contact project manager Charles Rothbart via email at [chrothbart@gmail.com](mailto:chrothbart@gmail.com).





### BR&P CABOOSE 280

Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh caboose 280 made its public debut during our Five Dollar Day Open House on July 25. Thanks to Dave Luca and Peter Gores for making a last-minute repair to one of the bolsters before the car was placed in service. Otto Vondrak made up some period-appropriate mid-1930s calendars and pin-ups for ambiance. A few details are left to complete on this car, supervised by Jeremy Tuke. Bill Marcotte is welding a new smokejack chimney for the coal stove. Jeremy Tuke and Jesse Beeley continue interior painting. Rob Burz is fabricating new plumbing for the conductor's air brake valve (also called the "dump valve"). Joe Nugent cleaned and inspected the brake cylinder. David Monte Verde donated a kerosene wall sconce for

the interior. Now part of the active fleet, BR&P 280 is scheduled to offer its first-ever public trips at our event on August 23.

### SIGNAL 3S REPAIRED

Thanks to the combined effort of Mike Dow, Scott Gleason, and Jerry Tusch, the signal at 3S was repaired and placed back on its pedestal during the second week of August. You may recall this signal was struck down by a falling tree after a severe storm passed through on January 12. The signal was originally installed in September 2018, a companion to signal 3N installed October 2019. The tree struck the mast, snapping the base casting and damaging the signal mechanisms. Thanks to Mike Dow for making the repairs and maintaining our museum signal system. Look for additional installations along our museum right of way in coming months!

### INDUSTRY DEPOT BOARDING AREA IMPROVEMENTS

As we work to enhance our visitor experience, your museum is taking steps toward improving traffic flow and increasing our "curb appeal." The plan is to move the MDT reefer exhibit up to Track 6 in the Upper Yard. In its place, the Lackawanna baggage car will be shoved to the end of Track 3, right alongside the depot. By



**TOP LEFT:** Volunteer Peter Gores assisting with the bolster repair on BR&P 280 on July 18.

**LEFT:** The south end of BR&P 280 was jacked up to allow repairs to take place. Our concrete floor and inspection pit inside the Restoration Shop make repairs like this possible.



**BELOW LEFT:** Jackson Glozer and project manager Charles Rothbart remove damaged ceiling panels from the Erie Stillwell coach. The next step to stabilize the car will be adding temporary window plugs to keep the car weather-tight until the window frames are repaired.

**BELOW:** Charles Rothbart removes an air vent cover from the ceiling of the coach.





keeping the rest of Track 3 clear, we will have more room to board and disembark passengers. It will also improve sight lines for train crews, and also allow visitors to see the train they will be riding right from the parking lot. One of the steps taken was to replace some of the coarse crushed gravel with crusher fines. This material still allows drainage, but compacts tightly into a smoother walking surface. Look for additional improvements soon!

### JACKSON TAMPER

Tim Gifford and Scott Gleason completed the mechanical repairs to the diesel engine that powers our Jackson Tamper on August 18. Jim Johnson is inspecting the wiring and Dan Waterstraat is installing a new tachometer and gauges.

### FIVE-DOLLAR DAY OPEN HOUSE SUCCESS

Thanks to extraordinary effort by our volunteers, our Five Dollar Day Open House on July 25 was a huge success. As our first event open to the public, we were not sure what to expect. Based on the latest guidelines from the CDC and our state government, as well as recommended industry best practices from other railroad museums, we formulated a health and safety plan to help protect our volunteers and visitors alike. Capacity was reduced from 600 to 300 visitors for the day, with 25 tickets sold for each half-hour. Total attendance was right around 250, which isn't bad for an event with no moving trains! Our ticket desk and gift shop were both moved outside. Visitors enjoyed touring the exhibits

around Industry Depot, as well as the train of cabooses brought down for the event. Of course, the star of the show was the restored Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh caboose 280! We had many first-time visitors touring the museum who were excited to return for our first event with train rides. We also got great coverage in local media, including local newspapers, Spectrum Cable News, and a live interview on Fox/WHAM-13's "Good Day Rochester."

Overall reaction was positive from both visitors and volunteers. Using what we learned from our first public event in the age of COVID-19, we are taking our first tentative steps toward hosting our first train rides of the 2020 season. We thank you for your support during this most difficult time! —O.M.V.



## FIVE DOLLAR DAY OPEN HOUSE

**ABOVE:** Volunteer Mike Smith explains the function of the velocipede to some visitors. This vintage track inspection vehicle was lovingly restored by the late Bob Mader.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Volunteers pitched in to wipe down surfaces throughout the day. Dave Gwilt helped clean handrails and handholds on the Penn Central Caboose.

**RIGHT:** Visitors enjoyed exploring the exhibits on our museum grounds surrounding the depot.







**ABOVE:** Our Buildings & Grounds Supt. Charlie Marks observes the grinder pump in action as our first depot bathroom was put into service on July 24! A second bathroom will come online later this year.

**LEFT:** Justing Carmona, Jeff Davenport, Jerry Tusch, and Sam Rosenberg took part in a hands-on training session for conductors, led by Otto Vondrak, on July 18.

**BELOW LEFT:** Rochester Gas & Electric GE 45-ton 1941 was used for switching in the Upper Yard on August 1, with Motive Power Supt. Joe Nugent on the pilot as conductor, passing former Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Alco RS-1 no. 20.



## CLASSIC CARS AND TRAIN RIDES AUGUST 23

Your museum will be hosting its first public train rides of 2020 on Sunday, August 23. After discussions with the museum superintendents, it was decided to host a one-day event on Sunday to avoid conflict with the normal Saturday volunteer activities. This event will mark the debut of BR&P 280 in public excursion service on our museum railroad, which is very exciting for everyone involved.

Like our Open House, capacity for the day will be cut from 600 to 300, carrying roughly 25 visitors per train. The cabooses are being sold as premium private rides, while we are reducing the seating capacity in the open-air flatcar to keep everyone socially distanced. A number of classic cars

and antique automobiles will be on exhibit, as well as **Regional Transit Service's** restored 1956 GM Transit Bus! We are looking forward to hosting this event and bringing train rides back to the museum.

## SALUTE TO VETERANS TRAIN RIDES SEPTEMBER 19-20

We have tentatively scheduled our Salute to Veterans Train Rides for the weekend of September 19-20. Once again we will be working with the **Black Lions 2-28 Vietnam Living History Group** to provide exhibits of World War II and Vietnam equipment and encampments. Socially-distanced train rides will depart from Industry Depot every 30 minutes from 10:00am to 3:30pm. All veterans and active military ride free. See our web site for details! —O.M.V.

## ERIE CABOOSE C254 PROJECT LEADER WANTED

Erie Railroad caboose C254 was moved into the Restoration Shop on June 28 to receive some much needed attention. Built in 1946 at Erie's Dunmore Shops, this car joined the Conrail roster in 1976 as no. 19665, and was donated to our museum in 1991. This car underwent an extensive restoration between 1992 and 1994, and has served our museum faithfully for more than 25 years.

We are looking for a volunteer to help lead the repair and refurbishing of this car. Among the items to be addressed are window replacement and repair, body patches and paint touch-up, and other items related to safety and overall good appearance of the car. If you are interested in helping lead and coordinate this effort, please contact Otto Vondrak at [ovondrak@yahoo.com](mailto:ovondrak@yahoo.com)

## SAFETY FIRST

Coming out to the museum? Wear a face covering, keep reasonable distance whenever possible, wash your hands, and bring your own hand sanitizer if possible. If you're feeling sick, or you are in a "high-risk" category, please STAY HOME.

**VISIT US ONLINE**  
**FACEBOOK.COM/RGVRM**  
**FLICKR.COM/RGVRM**





THE **SEMAPHORE**

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

P.O. BOX 23326

ROCHESTER, NY 14692-3326



**PLAN AHEAD:**  
**August 20, 2020**

INDUSTRY DEPOT

**PLAN AHEAD:**  
**Sept. 17, 2020**  
933 UNIVERSITY AVE., ROCHESTER, N.Y.

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



U.S. Army Fairbanks-Morse H12-44 1843 is at the head-end of our display train that was part of our Five Dollar Day Open House on July 25. Three cars were open for touring, including Penn Central 18526; Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh 280; and New York Central 19877. OTTO M. VONDRAK PHOTO