

NEXT MEETING:
March 18
Joel Richter, President
Friends of the Railroad,
Victor, New York



Hard to believe in just a few short weeks the winter snows will melt and we will be hosting our first public event of 2021. PHOTO BY OTTO M. VONDRAK

Out Like a Lamb

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It was around this time last year that we were preparing for a spring opening, only to have all of our plans fall apart as global pandemic restrictions set in. Everything came to a standstill as we waited for conditions to improve, not knowing when we might open our doors again.

A year later, we are cautiously optimistic about the season ahead. Your board of trustees has approved a new schedule of events for 2021 that we hope will draw in visitors and bring much needed revenue back into our organization. As vaccine doses become more widely available, we look forward to restrictions on large gatherings being gradually reduced as we head into the summer months. While I hesitate to use the word “normal,” at least we can start approaching something that looks like it. As always, we’ll need your help to make this season a success.

Museum volunteers have been working behind the scenes on many projects to advance our museum’s mission, from infrastructure to restoration to development. We are exploring grant opportunities for our museum’s future growth, we are completing long-term equipment projects, and we are improving our museum grounds and facilities. Would you like to get involved?

While I’m looking forward to this coming season, it won’t be without its own special challenges. I feel like in every issue I ask (nearly beg) for help and involvement, but in this year it’s more crucial than ever. Please consider contributing a few hours.

Your ideas for our museum’s future are welcome. Please email me at ovondrak@yahoo.com or call me at (585) 820-2341.

—Otto M. Vondrak, Museum President



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2021 R&GV Museum Schedule

Subject to change or cancellation as conditions require.

REVISED March 5, 2021

March 13 – Virtual Safety and Rules Class

March 20 – Yard Switching and General Museum Clean Up

March 27 – Yard Switching and General Museum Clean Up

April 3 – Easter Bunny Train Rides

April 5-May 19 - Spring Maintenance Work Window

May 22-23 – Vintage Train Rides

June 12 – Trains and Trolleys at Twilight I

June 19-20 –Princess & Superhero Train Rides

July 10 – Trains and Trolleys at Twilight II

July 17-18 – Black Diamond Train Rides

July 17 - Night Photo Session with LV 211, LV boxcar, and LV Caboose

August 14 – Trains and Trolleys at Twilight III

August 21-22 – Classic Cars and Train Rides

August 21 – Night Photo Session with RG&E 1941 and PRR Hopper

September 18-19 – Salute to Veterans Train Rides

October 9-10 – Pumpkin Patch Train Rides

October 15 – 50th Anniversary Depot Dedication/Museum Banquet

October 16-17 – Pumpkin Patch Train Rides

October 23-24 – Pumpkin Patch Train Rides

October 30-31 – Pumpkin Patch Train Rides

December 4 - 80th Anniversary of *Empire State Express* (TBA)

December 11-12 – Santa Trains to the North Pole

December 18-19 – Santa Trains to the North Pole



When they heard West Shore Brewing made a beer honoring Lehigh Valley “Hammerhead” 211, they drove up from the Genesee Valley Transportation offices in Scranton, Pa., to bring some back for their co-workers! Thanks to everyone who supported our pop-up beer sale on February 13, and thanks to West Shore brewer Josh Dziomba (FAR RIGHT) for honoring our museum with his tribute in beer!

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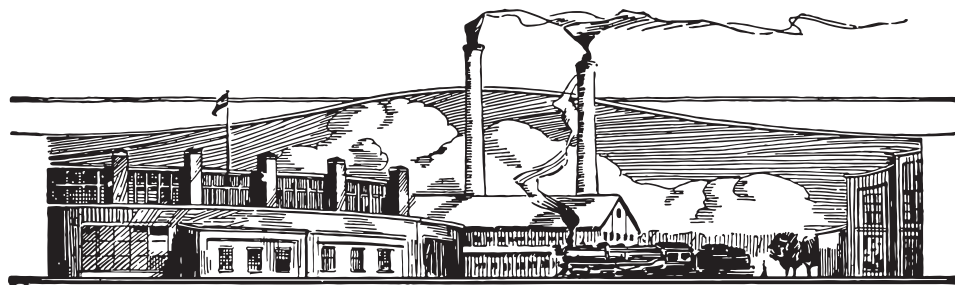
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SHOP — NOTES



The first two bays on the west side of the Restoration Shop have been cleared out, and dirt has been leveled. Spallina Materials used their slinger truck to deliver a load of stone on March 9. After the stone was compacted, the mason arrived to build his forms. We expect to have concrete poured before the end of the month, gaining new work space for volunteers!

UPCOMING •VIRTUAL• MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Until further notice, meetings will be held virtually via Zoom. Look for an invite in your email as we approach the meeting date. Meetings open at 7:00pm, with business meeting starting at 7:30.

On March 18, Joel Richter, president of the Friends of the Railroad will present about his group's preservation activities and plans for the future. The group was founded in 2008 dedicated to the preservation of Victor's local railroad history, people, and equipment.

On April 15, Bob Zenk and remote member Chris Hauf will present the story of Southern Pacific 9010, the world's last surviving 1964-built Krauss-Maffei diesel hydraulic locomotive currently under restoration at Niles Canyon Railway in California.

We don't have a program yet for our May 20 meeting. If conditions permit, we will host in-person meetings at Industry Depot for June 17, July 15, and August 19.

We are currently seeking programs for future meetings, of just about any relevant railroad-related topic. Please contact Otto Vondrak at ovondrak@yahoo.com to reserve your presentation slot. Thanks also to member David Drury for helping secure program presenters.

WEST SHORE BREWING DEBUTS 'HAMMERHEAD' IPA

The public debut of West Shore Brewing Hammerhead IPA at the museum on February 13 was a huge success. The beer is a New England Style India Pale Ale honoring our own Lehigh Valley high-hood Alco RS-3 211, affectionately known as the "Hammerhead" by railfans. A portion of the sales were donated to the museum by the brewery.

Did you miss the special "pop-up" sale event? You can pick up Hammerhead IPA at the brewery tasting room in Clarence, N.Y., and also at Buffalo-area beer stores. The brewery owners are railfans and would love to meet you! —O.M.V.

LEHIGH VALLEY CABOOSE 95100 RESTORATION UPDATE

The main air reservoir was re-assembled and temporarily mounted to the underbody brackets by Sam Rosenberg and Chuck Whalen. Unfortunately, these brackets were slightly crushed when the car was sent to the scrap yard and placed on the ground off its trucks. Bill Marcotte will help fashion shims so the air reservoir will be level and true once again.

A major milestone was achieved on February 26 when Joe Nugent delivered the remaining three caboose steps fabricated by PKG Equipment. Bill Marcotte will do the finish welds, and then the steps will be prepped for paint and installation.

All exterior windows have been fitted with automotive safety glass and installed in the window frames. The sliding windows in the cupola were giving us a little trouble, so we may need to come back and fine-tune that feature before the caboose is placed in service.

—Sam Rosenberg, Project Mgr.

RIGHT: Justin Carmona trims boards that will be installed as part of the new subfloor at the south end of Erie Railroad caboose C254.

BELOW: Bill Marcotte and Sam Rosenberg discuss the best way to shim and level the main air reservoir tank under Lehigh Valley caboose 95100. The brackets were crushed when the body was set down on the ground at the scrap yard.

BELOW RIGHT: John Redden takes advantage of a quiet Tuesday morning to do some work to the motorman's controls on Rochester Subway Car 60, inspecting the lines that feed compressed air to the door controls.

BOTTOM: Charlie Marks nails wainscot panels to the wall that separates the Gift Shop from the office and crew lounge. Once trim is added, they will be stained a dark brown color to blend in with the woodwork in the depot. The panels will also help protect the wall from the gift shop carts bumping into it.



WORK RESUMES ON ROCHESTER GAS & ELECTRIC No. 8

Rochester Gas & Electric 8 is a General Electric 110-ton diesel switcher built in 1967. It was the demonstrator unit that toured the country in search of potential customers. It was later assigned to the GE plant in Pittsfield, Mass. After serving for many years, it was acquired by Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum in Lenox, Mass., in 1988, where it received its current paint job. Sold to RG&E in 1991, it worked at Russell Station in Charlotte until the plant was shut down in 2007. The locomotive was donated to our museum in 2008. Arriving in fully operating condition, it quickly became clear there were mechanical issues to address. Years of shuttling coal hoppers had taken its toll on the engine.



A 2010 NRHS grant previously funded the fabrication of new tanks for the main air reservoirs, which were installed by Mike Walsh in 2012. With the cab completely stripped down, Bill Marcotte is welding in steel patches to replace areas of the body that rotted out from rust where coal dust held in moisture for years. Rob Burz is completing the installation of an upgraded (and much safer) hand brake. Portions of the diesel engine are being inspected and repaired by Bob Ziegler. This is just the beginning of the reassembly process.

The repair of RG&E 8 has been designated as a Priority Project by the Board of Trustees. If you are interested in contributing to this or other motive power projects, please contact me.

—Joe Nugent, Mechanical Supt.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

We are making a lot of good progress on many fronts. On February 26, we began installation of wainscot paneling in the Gift Shop (North Waiting Room), to make the divider wall blend in better with its surroundings (and also protect it from damage from the display racks being moved). Otto Vondrak is in the process of installing a second bank of track lighting as well.

Rob Burz completed the installation of an electric heater in the bathroom in the Gift Shop. This clears the way for our contractor to come in and install a new peri-

od-appropriate tile floor. Once the new floor is in place, the toilet and other fixtures can be hooked up. This bathroom will also be equipped with a baby changing station for the convenience of our visitors. We hope to have it up and running in time for our May event.

Charlie Marks built two new benches for our waiting area, and is also replacing rotten planks on our picnic tables.

Up in the Restoration Shop, we were able to get the first two bays on the west side of Track 7 cleared out pretty quickly. Scott Gleason and Jeremy Tuke helped dig a trench under Track 7 for electrical conduits. The conduits were installed on February 15, and the trench was backfilled with stone. Once that was complete, dirt was leveled out in preparation for a delivery of stone on March 9. Once the stone is compacted and leveled, the mason will come in to build his forms. We expect concrete to be poured before the end of the month!

Once the concrete is poured and cured, we will be moving the woodworking tools back to the west side. We will be installing better lighting as well. If you have opinions or suggestions on how the woodworking area can be arranged, please contact me.

We are also working on a number of improvements all around the museum, contact me if you'd like to get involved.

—Charlie Marks,
Buildings & Grounds Supt.

2021 R&GV Priority Projects

The following priority projects have been approved by the Board of Trustees, effective December 3, 2020. Until completed, these projects will be prioritized for funds and resources as required. To contribute, please contact the project manager.

1. **Complete Repairs to RG&E 8**
TARGET: DECEMBER 2022
—Joe Nugent, Mgr.
2. **Complete Caboose LV 95100**
TARGET: SEPTEMBER 2021
—Sam Rosenberg, Mgr.
3. **Complete Caboose Erie C254**
TARGET: JUNE 2021
—Justin Carmona, Mgr.
4. **Shop West Side Concrete Floor**
TARGET: AUGUST 2021
—Charlie Marks, Mgr.
5. **Upper Yard Drainage and Slope**
TARGET: SEPTEMBER 2021
—Scott Gleason, Mgr.
6. **Depot Repairs/Improvements**
TARGET: OCTOBER 2021
—Charlie Marks, Mgr.

MUSEUM CLEAN-UP DAY SAT. MARCH 27

Help get your museum ready to host our first visitors of 2021! Help unpack exhibits, place outdoor furniture and fixtures, sweep out our trains, and put our best foot forward!

9:00AM - 2:00 PM

LUNCH PROVIDED IF YOU R.S.V.P.



ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

A 501c3 non-profit educational organization. Write for free brochure or visit rgvrrm.org



Gone, But Not Forgotten

Charles Canfield Robinson (1932-2020)



PHOTO COURTESY NYMT

Long-time museum member and volunteer Charlie Robinson passed away on December 21 at age 88 from complications due to COVID infection. Born in 1932 in East Orange, New Jersey, his family later moved to Baytown, Texas. He graduated from Miami University of Ohio and received his PhD in Electrical Engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He later came to Rochester to work for Xerox Corp., where he received several patents. A life-long traction enthusiast, historian, and modeler, he was a member of both RGVRM and New York Museum of Transportation. Charlie was instrumental in saving the body of Northern Texas Traction 409 when the Spaghetti Warehouse restaurant downtown closed in 1997. In 2000, the Central Electric Railfans Association published his book on the Houston North Shore (co-authored with Paul DeVerter) about an electric interurban line that served his hometown in Texas, and was later acquired by the Missouri Pacific as a freight line. Our museum library got a huge boost from Charlie when it was located in Webster, as he put in countless hours helping to catalog materials and make them available to our members. He was also involved when the library was relocated to the 40&8 Club downtown. In 2001, Charlie trained the first class of trolley motormen at NYMT, drawing upon his years of experience operating trolleys at the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine. When regular trolley operations began in 2006, Charlie remained a qualified motorman and conductor through 2016. His countless contributions and his friendship and good humor will be missed. —O.M.V.

RIGHT: Tim Gifford recently gave the forklift a complete tune-up to make it more reliable to operate. This essential piece of equipment is approaching 60 years of continuous service! Tim is currently making a repair to the steering.



MARCH 13 VIRTUAL ANNUAL RULES CLASS

Our 2021 Annual Rules Class will take place **Saturday, March 13, 2021**, taught virtually via Zoom. The class begins at 8:00 a.m., and if you expect to take all three parts, plan on staying until at least 4:00 p.m. to complete your tests. **Safety Rules are for ALL museum volunteers**, while Operating and Air Brakes are required for all train crew volunteers.

PART ONE: SAFETY – Strongly suggested for ALL VOLUNTEERS, regardless if you are in train service or not. Covers basic safety rules, radio rules, and customer service.

PART TWO: OPERATING – The second part of the class is devoted to rules of train operation. This second part is required for anyone interested in volunteering for train service (car host, brakeman, conductor, or engineer).

PART THREE: AIR BRAKES – The

third part of the class is devoted to air brakes and train handling. This part is required for anyone interested in volunteering as a conductor or engineer.

Have your Rulebook and Timetable so you can refer to it during class. If you don't have one, these books will be issued to you either as PDF files or hard copy upon request. You must RSVP to Frank Gough at fmgough34@gmail.com by March 10.

—Frank Gough, Operations Supt.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership cards have been mailed to everyone who renewed by January. We encourage you to send in your renewal for 2021 as soon as possible. Please join me in welcoming these new members to the museum!

Joel and Cheyrl Richter Family, Victor Sue Baker, Henrietta

—Sam Rosenberg, Membership Chair

NICK TAHOV'S FOR SALE?

In the September 2020 issue of THE SEMAPHORE, we included a brief history of the old Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh terminal on Main Street which has been home to Nick Tahou Hots since about 1963. The family connection goes deeper than that, when the first members of the Tahou family sold hot dogs out of a cart to passengers waiting for trains as early as 1918.

On March 3, local media reported Alex Tahou was putting both the building and the business up for sale. One of the reasons given for the sudden sale is the dramatic decrease in foot traffic since pandemic restrictions began a year ago. The asking price for the 8,000 sq. ft. structure (portions of which date to 1877) is \$975,000. Should our museum consider opening a satellite location downtown? —O.M.V.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TRAIN?

What's your favorite piece of equipment at the museum? Is it a locomotive? A freight car or a caboose? Maybe it's one of our passenger cars? Tell us about your favorite! Is it something our visitors would also enjoy? Maybe it's buried deep in the back awaiting a plan for restoration? Perhaps you have some nuggets of information about its history or its life at the museum. Please share your stories with us! Contact editor Otto Vondrak by email at ovondrak@yahoo.com.

SAFETY FIRST

COVID-19 remains a risk. 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 ANYTIME ONLINE:

FACEBOOK.COM/RGVRM
FLICKR.COM/RGVRM



TRAIN RIDES

Hop on board our Easter Bunny Train Rides! Enjoy a mile-and-a-half round-trip **train ride** through our museum grounds and tour New York's largest collection of historic trains. Children will take part in an **Easter egg hunt** and then visit with the **Easter Bunny** for photos. Snacks available for purchase. **This event is fun for all ages!**

**Trains depart every half-hour
from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

ADVANCE TICKETS REQUIRED - PURCHASE ONLINE



RochesterTrainRides.com

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM
282 RUSH SCOTTSVILLE ROAD (ROUTE 251), RUSH, N.Y.

Farmer Battles Rail Siding Cut

Tilting against the Pennsylvania Railroad, a Scottsville farmer, Henry Cringer, staged a lone battle at a Public Service Commission hearing in the Courthouse yesterday on the railroad's request to abandon its freight siding at Severance, two miles north of Scottsville.

Cringer takes his farm produce to the siding for shipment and said other farmers would be inconvenienced if they had to haul their goods to distant trucking centers or other railroads. He said

he is the only farmer in the neighborhood who has a truck, others use horse-drawn wagons.

J.A. Goman, supervising agent and division operator of the railroad, testified before PSC Examiner Victor M. Parshall that the company could no longer operate the siding at a profit because of decreased business. Cringer declared seven or more carloads of farm goods are shipped from the siding annually.

—Democrat & Chronicle, March 1, 1941



THE **SEMAPHORE**

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

P.O. BOX 23326

ROCHESTER, NY 14692-3326



NEXT MEETING:

Mar. 18, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING via ZOOM

PLAN AHEAD:

Apr. 15, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING via ZOOM

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Pennsylvania Railroad 8445 idles at Renovo, Pa., on January 13, 1967. The unique high-hood RS-3 model was the only one of its kind ordered by Pennsy, with a steam generator for passenger service and dynamic brakes to handle mountain grades. This unit would be traded to subsidiary Lehigh Valley in 1970 and become LV 211. BILL VOLKMER PHOTO, LLOYD TRANSPORTATION LIBRARY, USED WITH PERMISSION