

NEXT MEETING:
April 15
Chris Hauf and Bob Zenk
"Restoring Krauss-Maffei
SP 9010 at Niles Canyon"



We kicked off our 2021 season with a visit from the Easter Bunny on April 3! Lots of hard work behind the scenes to prepare for this day made everything work smoothly as we hosted more than 300 visitors safely. See page 3 for details. PHOTO BY OTTO M. VONDRAK

Spring Into Action

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Taking every practical precaution and preparation, your museum began the 2021 public operating season with a successful Easter Bunny Train Rides event on April 3. Thanks to the hard work of so many volunteers, we safely hosted more than 300 visitors throughout the day. Following our established pandemic safety protocols, we made our visitors feel at ease. See page 2 for our full schedule of events. Speaking of schedules, stop by the depot to pick up one of our new full-color brochures!

Your museum will be working on several important projects this coming spring and summer that will transform how our museum looks and operates. Chief among them will be rebuilding the access road along Track 9 for improved drainage, as well as re-sloping the hillside and adding attracting landscaping. As we work with our new members establishing parklands

to the west, we will be consolidating and reorganizing our storage areas in the Construction Yard. We also hope to have some good news to share with you next month about one of our long-term locomotive restoration projects.

Our museum members and volunteers work hard to continuously improve and build upon the work of those who came before us. As we approach our 50th year at Industry, we'll be highlighting how much our museum has transformed and grown into the largest operating railroad museum in New York State. It has been a team effort, and everyone one of you are part of it.

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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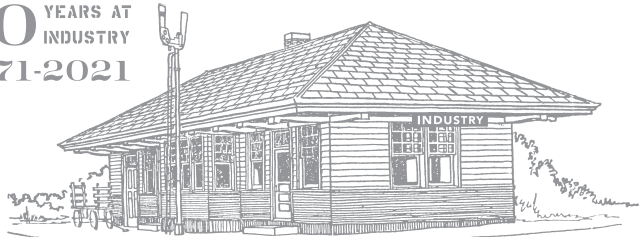
Otto M. Vondrak

PRINTING AND MAILING

Dave Peet

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50 YEARS AT
INDUSTRY
1971-2021



2021 EVENT SCHEDULE

Schedule subject to change without notice. For your safety, face coverings are required for entry and social distancing protocols are enforced. Reservations required, please visit our web site for details.

Easter Bunny Train Rides

April 3

Sippin' and Switching Train Rides

May 22-23

Princess & Superhero Train Rides

June 19-20

Black Diamond Train Rides

July 17-18

Classic Cars and Train Rides

August 21-22

Trolleys and Trains at Twilight

June 12 • July 10 • August 14

Salute to Veterans Train Rides

September 18-19

Pumpkin Patch Train Rides

October 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31

Santa Trains to the North Pole

December 10-11, 17-18

RESERVE YOUR TICKETS TODAY

RochesterTrainRides.com

Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

282 RUSH SCOTTSVILLE ROAD, RUSH, N.Y., 14543

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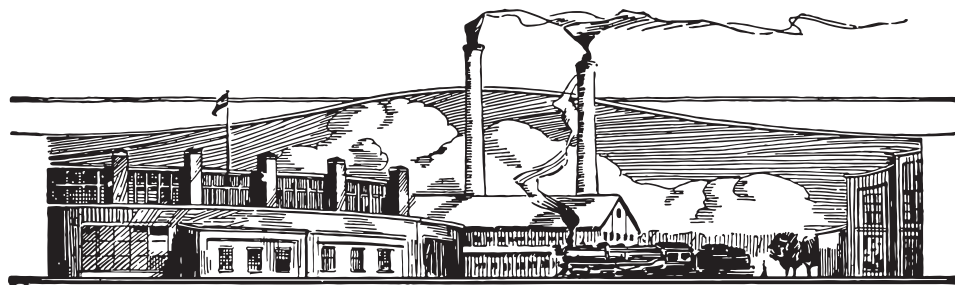
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PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

VACANT



SHOP — NOTES



Northbound train led by RG&E 1941 holds in the clear at Switch 6, while southbound train led by R&GV 54 heads down the Hill Block to Industry during a hands-on training and switching day on March 27. Events like these help give our volunteers valuable operating experience.

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 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.

SOLD-OUT SUCCESS EASTER BUNNY TRAIN RIDES

After months of preparation, your museum hosted its first public event on April 3. Our Easter Bunny Train Rides event was sold out, and we hosted more than 300 visitors safely throughout the day. Even at 50% capacity, business remained brisk as families joined us for a train ride to the Upper Yard to meet the Easter Bunny and take part in the Egg Hunt. The train consisted of RGV 54, the PC caboose, the Open-Air car, and BR&P caboose bringing up the rear. Thanks to all of our volunteers who helped make this day run so smoothly. —O.M.V.

SIPPIN' AND SWITCHING ON MAY 22-23

Normally we would be hosting our popular Rails & Ales beer tasting festival, but with restrictions on large gatherings remaining in place, we have to get creative this year. We'll be offering train rides throughout the day, but with a twist. We have invited several local craft breweries

to take part in a pop-up beer sale. Visitors will have the opportunity to purchase four-packs of local craft beer (to be consumed off-premises) from Heroes Brewing, West Shore Brewing, Roc Brewing, Brindle Haus, Stoneyard Brewing, Blue Toad Cider, and more. Tickets will be going on sale soon at RochesterTrainRides.com.

EMERY GRANT AWARD FOR ERIE STILLWELL COACH

On March 13, your museum was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust, which will be applied toward asbestos remediation. This is an important step toward repairing and restoring the Stillwell designed coach, which will turn 100 in 2026.

Competition was very tight this year, as the grant committee had more than 39 applications to consider totaling nearly \$1.3M, and only \$340,000 to award. The John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust was created by John Emery — a native of Chicago, and a lover of the classic passenger



Spring Cleaning

TOP LEFT: Jon Saulsgiver helped clean the windows at Industry Depot, making them shine and letting much needed light into the waiting room on March 27.

ABOVE: Jeff Davenport and Charles Rothbart guide the movement of a train onto Track 9 South behind the Restoration Shop to couple on to the Burro Crane to reposition it for display on March 27.

LEFT: Treasurer Dave Peet touches up bare spots on the new platform entrance constructed last year to give visitors access to the exhibits inside the Lackawanna baggage car at Industry Depot.

trains of America — as a way to support his interests in the passenger trains of the 1920s though the 1950s. The grants are awarded to projects that involve operating trains, not static exhibits.

Your museum was previously a recipient of an \$10,000 Emery Grant in 2019 to help pay for the truck swap and rebuild on our New York Central Railway Post Office, part of our *Empire State Express* excursion train set.

LEHIGH VALLEY CABOOSE 95100 RESTORATION UPDATE

Bill Marcotte has completed the finish welds on the new replica caboose steps fabricated by PKG Equipment. Rob Burz helped drill mounting holes, and we hope to have the new steps mounted by the end

of the month. Chuck Whalen has been busy re-assembling the interior. By the end of March, the heat shield that goes behind the oil stove was put back in place.

As the weather begins to warm up, we'll be applying a light skim coat of body filler to help smooth over some of the rust pitting that is evident throughout the exterior. This is the next step toward preparing the car for its finish coat later this summer.

—Sam Rosenberg, Project Mgr.

ROCHESTER GAS & ELECTRIC No. 8 REPAIR UPDATE

Rob Burz continues work on the installation of the new and improved handbrake for RG&E 8. Rob Ziegler is rebuilding the No. 1 engine heads in his home workshop. Once complete, reassembly of the engine

can begin. 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.

ERIE CABOOSE C254 REPAIR UPDATE

Finished plywood has been bought and ready to go up when the wall is done. Several of the final floor boards have been cut to fit. New all stringers have been bolted in place. Bill Marcotte has welded in the kick-plate replacement on the northeast stepwell. Charlie Marks will be assisting with the refurbishing and construction of new windows. We are preparing for our sand-blasting contractor to arrive mid-month to

prime and paint the roof of the car. We will also be performing a COTS inspection before the caboose returns to service for our June event. If you'd like to get involved at any step of the process, please contact me.

—Justin Carmona, Project Mgr.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Probably the biggest news has been the new concrete floor along the west side of the Restoration Shop, which was poured on March 16 by our friends at Millet Masonry & Construction. In addition, we finally filled the space between the rails on Track 9 from the door to the edge of the inspection pit. No more pallets and plywood to help us move carts and machines from one side to the other! Thanks to Scott Gleason, Jeremy Tuke, Peter Gores, and Jim Johnson for helping us move so quickly on this project. Throughout the summer, we'll be working to extend the concrete all the way down the west side of the shop.

Charlie Marks completed installation of the wainscot panels and trim in the Gift Shop (North Waiting Room), now awaiting staining to make it blend in with the rest of

the woodwork in the depot. Otto Vondrak installed a second bank of track lighting on March 30, adding some much needed illumination.

Work continues on the bathroom off the North Waiting Room, with a goal of having it ready for service by our May event. The toilet and hand dryer were installed on April 10. A baby changing station will also be installed in this room.

Our friends from J Crew Landscaping will be coming in to help repair and expand the lawn north of the depot. Jeremy Tuke and Otto Vondrak dropped timbers to be used to contain the lawn separate from the areas where we have stone ballast for drainage around the tracks. Hopefully this work will be completed before visitors arrive for our May event.

Work has also started expanding the Railfan Overlook area to accommodate the staircase into the MDT refrigerator car exhibit, now located at its new home on Track 6 behind EK 6. Additional brush will be cleared to open up more viewing areas.

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.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please join me in welcoming these new members to the museum!

James Hayes, Jr., Akron, N.Y.

Rick Auburn, Henrietta, N.Y.

—Sam Rosenberg, Membership Chair

RIGHT: The apprentices from Sheet Metal Workers Union Local 46 have returned to help reconstruct the curved roof at the south end of Car 60.

BELOW: Chuck Whalen has reinstalled the heat shield inside Lehigh Valley caboose 95100 that goes behind the oil stove on March 30.

BELOW RIGHT: Rob Burz is installing a new hand brake and linkage on Rochester Gas & Electric no. 8.





ABOVE: Stephanie Dempsey helped keep our Egg Hunt well stocked throughout the day.

RIGHT: Some of our Operating Dept. volunteers posed with the Easter Bunny just before the start of our April 3 event.

BELOW RIGHT: Jay Baycura traveled all the way from Potsdam, N.Y., to volunteer with us! A high school student with family in the area, he fit right in with our operations!



WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TRAIN?

What's your favorite piece of equipment at the museum? 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. 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**.

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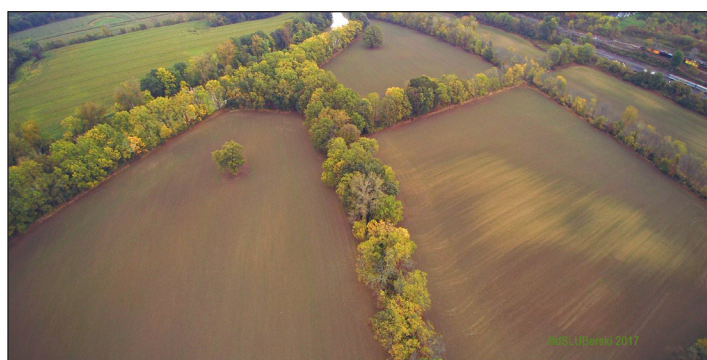


Rush Lands Usage and The Hundred Acre Park

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum trustees have worked to finalize land-use agreements for the land immediately to the west of our property, on the west side of the Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad. As the Town of Rush is working to develop the "Hundred Acres" tract that we were instrumental in getting conveyed from New York State to the town for public use in 2009, this is an important undertaking for the future of our organization. Part of our current parking lot and storage areas to the north and west of the railroad are actually part of the Hundred Acres plot. The West Siding that is home to our excursion train set is located on lands owned by the museum and LA&L and are not part of this endeavor.

On October 23, 2019, the Rush Town Board unanimously passed a resolution giving the **Rush Recreation and Park Association, Inc.**, responsibility to preserve the Hundred Acres and the Rush Riverside Refuge. This group is working to develop the lands for public uses including hiking trails, environmental plantings and other activities, and to manage the property in general. The RRPA is responsible for securing all funding for their activities, with the town providing support for grant applications.

The Town Supervisor directed that all interactions between our two organizations be run through the RRPA. To date, all of our interactions have been positive as the RRPA supports our museum and wishes to work together for mutual benefit. We are in the processing of finalizing a License Agreement with the town that will



serve to codify our relationship and define how the lands may be used. Part of this will involve our museum making a defined effort to reorganize and tidy up the area to the west of the railroad. These efforts include disposing of old ties, consolidating and eliminating storage trailers, and creating additional parking space.

In the past year, wide trails have been mowed by RRPA for passive recreational activities on the Hundred Acres. The eastern fields have been prepared for planting in the spring of 2021, with tree planting scheduled to take place later this year. RRPA volunteers will work to enhance the already existing beautiful and serene natural setting of the Hundred Acres, and we welcome their efforts to draw more visitors to the area and preserve our bucolic environment for others to enjoy as well.—*Jeremy Tuke, Trustee*

BR&P Warsaw Freight House Demolished Without Permit

The former Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh freight house in Warsaw, N.Y., was demolished on December 21, 2020. The large brick structure located on the corner of Main Street and Washington Street was built by the railroad in 1912, part of a program where the railroad expanded and improved station facilities up and down the line. “A group of Warsaw businessmen — the Warsaw Improvement Company — approached the BR&P in 1910 to run an industrial track into the village to serve its many industries at that time,” according to Gary Farmer, a former member of the Warsaw Historical Society. The railroad runs along a fill high above the town, and the freight house was served via a mile-long switchback branch off the main line, which also served other businesses in town.

Baltimore & Ohio acquired BR&P in 1932, and the freight house passed to private ownership sometime in the 1950s after service on the branch ended. The building was made eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. The structure had been used for storage for many decades, with the last owner placing the building up for sale in 2016.

The alarm was first sounded on Friday, December 19, when a backhoe was seen removing a portion of the loading dock around the perimeter of the building. Owner Rob Fontaine secured a demolition permit to level the historic structure to make way for the construction of new storage sheds. With mounting opposition from local residents, a stop-work order was secured. Ignoring the order, the freight house was demolished in the early morning hours of Monday, December 21. Under the cover of darkness, the only surviving BR&P brick freight house in New York State was reduced to rubble.

At a subsequent Warsaw Town Board meeting on January 13, 2021, Town Historian Sally Smith reported the freight house was demolished without prior notice to Zoning Officer Bob Martin, or the Joint Planning Board. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) was not notified regarding any hazardous materials removed from the site. The stop-work order was ignored by Fontaine.

Zoning Officer Martin replied that owner Fontaine was present at a virtual meeting with him and Code Enforcement Officer Alyssa Cutcliffe at the January 12 Planning Board Meeting. Cutcliffe indicated she is-



Despite community opposition and lack of a proper demolition permit, the former Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh freight house in Warsaw, N.Y., was demolished on December 21, 2020.

sued the demolition permit but had incorrect information as the property was zoned industrial, not commercial. The reason for demolition cited on the permit was, “vacant, hazard to the community.” According to the Warsaw Historical Society, the structure was never inspected by Cutcliffe. The structure was also not on the DEC’s list of contaminated sites. The freight house was structurally sound and posed no imminent danger to the property or its surroundings. In fact, the interior was very much original, looking not much different from the days it served the railroad. There appeared to be no valid reason for the hasty demolition. An approved site plan was requested of Fontaine by the town before work could continue on the steel storage sheds being constructed on the site, despite construction already beginning.

At the February 10 Town Board Meeting, Historian Smith revealed the results of her FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request for the demolition permit. Attending the Planning Board meeting on February 9, Smith reviewed the permit dated November 19, 2020, and indicated it was not signed. Code Enforcement Officer Cutcliffe indicated it was now signed. Because the freight house was eligible for the historic register and preservation, Smith noted that according to the Office of Parks and Recreation Historic Preservation handbook, a Type 1 State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) would require consulting with the Town Historian. Councilman Chris Lonneville asked if there was any consultation per local code with the Planning Board

on tearing the building down. Zoning Officer Martin answered no and continued that the purpose of the Public Hearing was for a site plan to be submitted by owner Rob Fontaine. There was no further discussion, and the minutes of the Planning Board are not available for review.

Despite not having a valid demolition permit, ignoring the town’s stop-work order, and without filing a valid site plan with the Planning Board, Rob Fontaine was able to demolish the historic freight house without any repercussions, and construct his new steel self-storage sheds fronting Main Street. No one has been able to answer on the record why the Historian’s office was cut out from this process, or why the Town disregarded its obligation for review of the demolition permit and failed to coordinate with DEC regarding construction within the Oatka Creek floodplain.

On February 11, The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) announced its opinion that a National Register eligible historic district located on South Main Street is viable, including the property that once included the BR&P freight house.

As historians and preservationists, we can only use these events as a cautionary tale and use them in our fight to preserve Rochester’s rich railroading heritage for future generations to enjoy and learn from. We must be even more vigilant to protect not only what we have but also safeguard for the future as well. It’s too late to save the BR&P freight house in Warsaw, but perhaps we can save other historic structures from similar fate.—*Otto M. Vondrak*



THE **SEMAPHORE**

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

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ROCHESTER, NY 14692-3326



NEXT MEETING:

April 15, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING via ZOOM

PLAN AHEAD:

May 20, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING via ZOOM

Find us on Facebook! facebook.com/rgvrrm



A visit to Lehigh Valley's Sayre Shops in July 1970 shows the newly arrived Alco RS-3 211 (former Pennsylvania Railroad 8445) getting its first coat of Cornell Red paint. This unique diesel locomotive has since been preserved by our museum. RICHARD J. ALLEN PHOTO, USED WITH PERMISSION