

# NRHS News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OCTOBER 2023

## ***Iowa Traction*** - 2023 Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award Winner

*By William C. Vantuono*

The National Railway Historical Society, Railway Age and Railway Track & Structures presented Class III Iowa Traction Railway with the inaugural “Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award,” the intent of which is “to honor and recognize a North American common-carrier railroad for a historically significant preservation project.” Iowa Traction was one of five finalists; the award was presented in front of an audience of railroad industry professionals at the Railway Interchange trade show in Indianapolis, October 2, 2023. (Continued on p.3)

**NRHS**  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**RAILWAY AGE**

**RT&S**  
RAILWAY TRACK AND STRUCTURES



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID LASSEEN

**FIRST-PLACE WINNER** – Iowa Traction Railway Roadmaster Mike Rumeliote and former Iowa Traction Railway owner Dave Johnson accepted the award from NRHS representative Mike Yuhas, Railway Age Editor-in-Chief William C. Vantuono and Railway Track & Structures Editor-in-Chief David C. Lester.

# NRHS NEWS – OCTOBER 2023

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## ***Upcoming Deadlines for Submissions***

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Submit by</i>
November 2023 (online issue)	October 30, 2023
December 2023 (mailed issue)	November 15, 2023

## ***We Need Your Holiday Stories!***

**Have a holiday train set sitting dusty on the shelf? Has your American Flyer gone and flown away? Get those out along with your trusty camera!**

**Please share your memories, photos and fun moments of holiday trainsets, local winter rail specials and light up the December News. Send holiday happiness to the News at [News@NRHS.com](mailto:News@NRHS.com).**

## Iowa Traction - 2023 Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award Winner (continued)

*(Continued from p.1)*

Iowa Traction Railway, a subsidiary of Progressive Rail Inc., is the last functional interurban freight railroad in North America. Its rolling stock continues to function for its original purpose: moving freight to customers. All its interurban electric locomotives are more than 100 years old, and while not restored, are repaired and maintained in a manner consistent with their original construction.



***PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE YUHAS  
BALDWIN STEEPLCAB ON CALL – Iowa Traction 50, a Baldwin steeplecab  
built in 1920, rests between assignments at an agribusiness in Mason City, Iowa.***

Erection and maintenance of the overhead electrical distribution system is contemporary with the era of the rolling stock. Interchanging with Union Pacific and CPKC (Canadian Pacific Kansas City), this functional example of century-old technology continues to effectively and efficiently serve the needs of 21st century customers and shippers. Operating alongside public roads and through many locations visible to the public, the Iowa Traction provides an education in early 20th century electric railroading, providing many lessons to current generations.

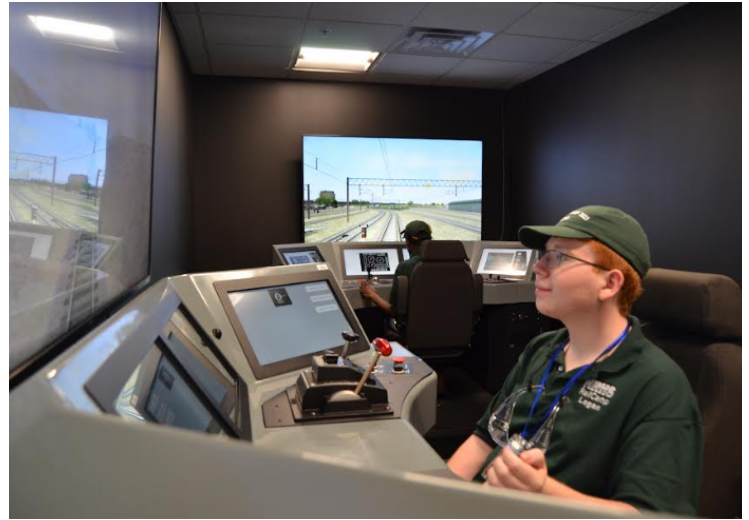
*The NRHS Preservation Award Committee is R. Victor Varney, Edward M. Berntsen, Tony White and Mike Yuhas.*



# RailCamp 2023 – East and Northwest

By BECKY GERSTUNG, Niagara Frontier Chapter NRHS

**RailCamp.** This unique opportunity has once again provided exceptional educational experiences for young rail enthusiasts. Both camps, RailCamp East and RailCamp Northwest, gave teenagers the “best week of my life”. This statement is the most heard summation of the week.



*PENN STATION, NYC - Campers get a look inside Penn Station, New York City where all the action is.*

*OPERATIONS SIMULATORS - Campers enjoy getting to use the Amtrak simulators.*

Both camps got off to rocky starts. We had to change the dates due to housing issues. All accepted campers had no problem with the new dates. Amtrak in the East changed our usual trip to Washington, D.C., and took campers to New York City. A great day was had by all.

Amtrak in the Northwest was closed on the day of our planned visit to celebrate Juneteenth. The last-minute schedule change worked and all of the other partners were on board.

Directors, Tony White for East and John Cox for Northwest, handled everything. Their experience and knowledge kept the programs on track and both RailCamp weeks were completed successfully. We cannot thank these dedicated volunteers enough for their time, patience and commitment to the program. It was nice to see past campers working and volunteering at the venues we visited. We even had a past camper serve as counselor.

Looking ahead to 2024 we have been invited back to all the venues. Our campers demonstrate an interest in all the programs whether it is class-room type instruction or hands on “work”. We receive compliments on their behavior. Due to schedule issues in 2023, we visited some new locations and have additional options for next year.





***DREAM OF BEING AN ENGINEER ? TRYING OUT SOME HANDS-ON “WORKING ON THE RAILROAD “ - Changing ties can be hard work at the Strasburg Rail Road.***

RailCamp is open to boys and girls, ages 14-18, entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade through graduating seniors. Financial assistance and scholarships are available. To sponsor a camper, please contact us at [railcampnrhs@yahoo.com](mailto:railcampnrhs@yahoo.com). This year we had sponsors from nine chapters and three other organizations. Campers came from 21 states.



***THE ENGINES MAKE IT HAPPEN - A close-up look at one of Amtrak's engines with explanation from Chris Jagodzinski, VP Operations.***

***NYC, HERE WE COME - Looking out the rear of the train from the theater car running on the Northeast Corridor headed for New York City.***

A final note. Whenever we present a program on RailCamp we hear, “I want to go.” or “when can I sign up.” These comments come from people who have aged out of the program we provide. If you have an interest in becoming a counselor, please let us know. We are always looking for responsible, capable adults (men and women) to continue making RailCamp the success that it has become.

## NRHS Anniversaries – 25 Years With Us in PA

*By VALLI HOSKI, Harrisburg Chapter NRHS and PATTI WEBB, Harrisburg Chapter NRHS*

On October 10, 2023, the Harrisburg Chapter recognized two members for their twenty-five years of membership with the NRHS. President Tony White joined the meeting and presented the two members with 25-year anniversary pins.



**PHOTO COURTESY OF VALLI HOSKI**  
**TWENTY-FIVE YEARS HONORED - (left to right) Tony White, NRHS President greeted and congratulated two members on their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NRHS membership. (left to right) Tony White, NRHS President; Patti Webb, NRHS Membership Chair; Charles Webb, Heritage Grants Chair; and William Jenkins, Harrisburg Chapter Member.**

Charles Webb, known for his leadership with the NRHS Heritage Grants Committee, and William Jenkins, long-standing member of the Harrisburg Chapter have the gratitude of both the Harrisburg Chapter and the NRHS organization for their support and assistance these many years.

## Ready for You - NRHS Membership Brochures

*By JON BAAKE, Washington DC Chapter NRHS*

If you are a member of a model railroad club, museum, historical society or other such type of operation and have a place for literature or brochures at your location, we would appreciate it if you would display NRHS Membership Brochures for your members and/or the general public.

Let us know how many you want and where to send them and we will get them out to you at no cost. By doing this we hope to increase awareness of the NRHS and membership in the society.

Requests should be sent to Jon Baake – [jbaake@outlook](mailto:jbaake@outlook).



# On the Rails at the 2023 NRHS RailCamp East

*By ROMAN CHAVEZ, Attendee RailCamp East 2023*

This past June, I had the privilege of attending RailCamp East. I first learned about the program in August of 2022, when I was flipping through an NRHS brochure I had obtained at the Shore Line Trolley Museum in East Haven, Connecticut. Amongst the contents of the brochure was a brief piece on RailCamp, which piqued my interest enough for me to consult the NRHS website for further information. After a bit of reading, I was hooked.

Having rarely left the confines of the New York metropolitan area, I had little exposure to the rail systems beyond the city's subway. This made RailCamp East a particularly exciting and unique opportunity.

With hands-on learning at the Amtrak Training Center, exploration of the vast collection of the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum, and a trip to the oldest shortline in the country, RailCamp offered me an unparalleled week-long opportunity to explore the workings of railroading in the northeast. A few weeks after submitting my application in March, I received word of my acceptance.

On the first day, we descended upon the Amtrak Training Center in Wilmington, Delaware, where we learned about the various aspects of operating the nation's passenger rail system. We received interactive lectures from various Amtrak employees about a wide variety of topics, including Amtrak's recruitment process, Locomotive Engineer training, the basics of signaling, and a presentation on railroading basics from the railroad's Vice President of Operations, Christopher Jagodzinski.



After the presentations, we received hands-on instruction in the topics we had been lectured on - first, exploring the cab of a new ALC-42 Charger and 2GS12B switcher #793; second, learning about authentic signaling control systems. Third, we saw the same simulators used to train new locomotive engineers.



The second day entailed a trip to Penn Station in New York City via the Northeast Corridor. We traveled aboard a passenger train with three unique cars in tow - two geometry cars (with an active crew on board) and the *American View* observation car. Having never taken Amtrak before, I was particularly excited for the trip. Once aboard, we were given the opportunity to explore the intricacies of the geometry cars and observe the crew at work. They were quite friendly and explained to us the nature of the operation.

After crossing into New Jersey, we were seated in the *American View* observation car - a privilege normally reserved for executives and politicians - and got a full view of the rails before us as the train flew up the NEC toward New York City. Christopher Jagodzinski also accompanied us for this leg of the journey, explaining (with incredible detail) the sights and workings of the line.

Once in New York, we were given tours of various aspects of the station. Although I had explored the transit hub dozens of times before, I had never really stopped to consider the underlying processes which go into operating the bustling station before my RailCamp experience. Aspects of the tour included a visit to Penn Station Central Control; a walk through the new Moynihan Train Hall; a demonstration of the K-9 dogs which patrol the station; and a walk through the plentiful sub-platform bays through which thousands of meals a day are transported to long-haul trains.

The following three days were spent in the heart of Pennsylvania Amish country, home to the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum and Strasburg Rail Road. Having visited only a handful of railroad museums in my entire life, this portion of the experience was my first time ever seeing large-scale preservation operations, including functioning steam locomotives, up close.

Our first trip to the area featured an exploration of the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum's vast collection of trains, many of which we campers were allowed to board for the purpose of viewing the cabs and engines of the locomotives. We are also granted the opportunity to explore the museum's preservation operations, learning about the incredible process undertaken to restore decades-old trains to their original state.

This experience in particular I found very interesting, as I had never really stopped to think about the sheer manpower needed - both physically and financially - to preserve and upkeep the trains of years gone by. It gave me a far greater appreciation for the individuals who devote time to preserving and disseminating the history of the trains which once moved our nation—a devoted group of people I now hope to join in their efforts.

The penultimate day of RailCamp East was spent in the yard of the Strasburg Rail Road, the oldest continuously operating railroad in the Western Hemisphere.



Activities included a tour of the shortline's main shop, coupling and uncoupling cars, banging out railroad ties (an undertaking which required far more precision than I had originally envisioned), views inside the cab of the Norfolk & Western 475 steam locomotive (famous for its appearance in *Thomas and the Magic Railway*), and realizing every young railfan's dream by operating a train. That day, I and the other campers got to assume the controls of both Strasburg 8618, an ex-New York Central diesel locomotive, and Cagney No. 3, a 15" gauge miniature steam locomotive.



On our final day, we took a round trip on the Strasburg Rail Road (my very first time aboard a steam locomotive), after which I and my fellow campers had the incredible privilege of riding in the cab of Canadian National 89, in which I got to witness up-close the operations of a steam locomotive for the first time in my life.

My week at RailCamp was one of the most enjoyable and informative experiences of my entire life. The activities I participated in and the instruction which I received opened my eyes to the vast railroad system of our nation, and the incredible expertise and knowledge that goes into operating it and preserving its history. I now feel a great appreciation for the countless individuals who keep the trains of the United States moving, for those who preserve their history, and for those who share the joy of trains with others. Now, it is my dream to join these hard-working individuals in their efforts to connect the people and goods of our nation.

# Notice Board - Items of Interest from Chapters

## *Susquehanna Valley Railway Historical Society 60th Anniversary*



### The Susquehanna Valley Railway Historical Society Celebration of our 60th Anniversary

commemorating  
**The Two Hundredth Anniversary**  
of the  
**Delaware & Hudson Company**

Saturday, October 28, 2023  
American Legion Post 1645, 177 Robinson Street, Binghamton, NY 13904

#### Event Lineup

**Daytime** 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

#### Program Presenters / 45-minute Presentations

- \* Sam Botts: *Along the Bridge Line*
- \* Kermit Geary, Jr.: *2022 - A Hot Steamy Year Railroading!*
- \* Robert Gongleski: *Along the Line of Lehigh Valley Railroad from New York to Niagara Falls - a post card view*
- \* Don Jilson: *Delaware & Hudson on the Southern Tier West of Binghamton*
- \* Tom Nemeth: *Erie - Lackawanna Delaware Division - Port Jervis to Binghamton*
- \* Roundtable Panel Discussion Session with Former Railroad Employees

#### Additional Daytime Highlights

- \* Exhibitors
- \* Vendors
- \* Buffet Luncheon w/Cash Bar

#### Evening Buffet Banquet 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.

- \* Social Hour w/Cash Bar
- \* Buffet Dinner
- \* Special Guest Speaker: Rudy Garbely - The Garbely Publishing Company: *From Concept to Bookshelf: The History of the Delaware & Hudson, from Research to Publication*

For more details and Guest Registration please email to: [svrhsarchives@yahoo.com](mailto:svrhsarchives@yahoo.com)

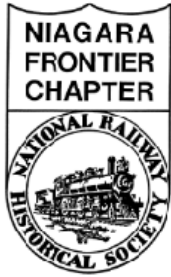
Please visit our web site: <http://trainweb.org/SVRHS/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/people/Susquehanna-Valley-Railway-Historical-Society/100064763796405/>



## 2024 Rail Calendar – Western New York Railroad

By The Niagara Frontier Chapter



# 2024 Western New York Railroad Calendar

52nd Edition

Another Fine Publication Of The Niagara Frontier Chapter - National Railway Historical Society

Outstanding Color And Black & White Photographs Are Featured In A Limited Edition Printing Of The Chapter's Annual Railroad Wall Calendar. This High Quality Publication, A Tradition Since 1972, Contains 12 Photographs of Steam, Diesel And Electric Railroad Action. All Scenes Were Recorded In And Around Western New York, Northwest Pennsylvania And Nearby Southern Ontario. The 2024 Photographs Were Carefully Selected From The Chapter Archives And From The Collections Of Chapter Members.

- **Canadian Pacific Railway** • SD-40-2 diesel #5945 leads a west bound freight train from Agincourt Yard for Sudbury in Toronto.
- **New York Central Railroad** • 4-6-4 class J-1b Hudson steam locomotive #5211 leads a passenger train at Hamburg, NY.
- **Niagara St. Catharines & Toronto Railway** • Interurban car #623 on the final rail enthusiast's charter.
- **Canadian National Railway** • 4-8-2 class U-1-f Mountain steam locomotive #6069 leads passenger train at Grimsby, Ontario.
- **International Railway Company** • Nearside Car #6014 is shown at the Terrace in downtown Buffalo, NY.
- **New York Central Railroad** • H12-44 diesel #8316 is shown at the Niagara Yard service track in Niagara Falls, NY.
- **New York & Lake Erie Railroad** • FPA2 diesel #6758 and 51 diesel #308 at Cherry Creek, NY depot, on a special railfan trip.
- **Norfolk & Western Railway** • C30-7 diesel #8024 and other locomotives at the Bison Yard service track in Sloan, NY.
- **Coudersport & Port Alleghany Railroad** • 4-4-0 steam locomotive #6 powered an excursion over the entire 33-mile line.
- **Pennsylvania Railroad** • RF16A diesel #2000 leads a A-B-A set of RF16A diesels southbound passing through Brocton, NY.
- **Ontario Central Railroad** • RS36 #86 is switching freight cars on former Lehigh Valley Railroad trackage, in Victor, NY.
- **Erie Railroad** • 4-6-2 class K5 Pacific type steam locomotive #2915 doubleheaded with train #1, the Erie Limited at Andover, NY.



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FEATURING NOSTALGIC SCENES  
IN AND AROUND WESTERN N.Y.



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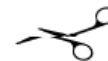
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# Heritage Grant Report – Water Tank Restoration, Como, Colorado

*By BOB BREWSTER, NRHS Heritage Grants Committee*

Bob Revis is the construction foreman building a water tank on the site of the 1937-1938 era water tank that serviced Colorado & Southern RR narrow gauge trains at Como, Colorado. Lauren is Bob's daughter. Como Open House was held 17 June 2023. Como Heritage Railroad campus has held an open house each month this past summer. Dates were July 15, August 19 (concert in roundhouse) and September 16, 2023.



***DENVER, SOUTH PARK & PACIFIC HISTORY SOCIETY WATER TANK IN COMO, COLORADO - Left to right, Kathy Brantigan, Bob Revis, and Lauren Revis on upper platform of newly constructed water tank.***

During the Open (Round)house, the roundhouse was open to the public. Volunteers from the South Park Rail Society gave short tours and our merchandise store was open. The Como Roundhouse is located at 441-463 Boreas Pass Road, Como, CO, just off US Highway 285. No admission charge.



# Heritage Grant Report – Danbury Railway Museum, Project Completion

By CHARLES WEBB, NRHS Heritage Grants Committee Chair and Stephen D. Gould, Danbury Railroad Museum

The Danbury Railway Museum has completed the exterior of a project that the NRHS helped to fund in 2020. They had previously reported the completion of the project that the NRHS specifically helped to fund but this report showcases the final project.

## DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM NRHS GRANT FOR MILL PLAIN STATION RESTORATION SECOND PROGRESS REPORT

As you know, the Danbury Railway Museum submitted a grant application to the National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) in January 2020. The application was for a \$5,000 grant (with one-for-one match) to partially offset a portion of the total cost of \$18,070 for construction of the canopy on the 1881 Mill Plain, CT railroad station, which had been relocated six miles to the Museum's rail yard. We were fortunate to receive the grant in June of 2020.

In early 2022, the First Progress Report on this project was issued. In May of 2023, we are proud to tell you where we are now. As we told you in 2022, the grant money was used to offset the cost of station canopy brackets, rafters, and hip rafters. We can tell you now that the canopy has been completely installed and the total building roof has been completed! Also, frieze boards and corner boards have been installed; and battens have been installed. Sills, window framing and casing also has been installed on the agent's bay as well as siding and battens.

Future exterior work will require existing window sashes be repaired and at least two will have to be built from scratch. Windows will need to be re-glazed and two doors must be repaired. The station had a wooden platform on all sides, which we are planning to add in the near future. We have one original "Mill Plain" station sign in our Museum collection, which we will use as a template to make additional signs for the station. Then on to the interior....

We have attached some photos showing the progress to date, especially the completed canopy and new roof.

Once again, we thank the NRHS for seeing the value in this restoration project and favoring us with your grant to help us pay the bills!

Project Manager Jeff Van Wagenen provided the updated information above and the attached photos.



Respectfully submitted by Stephen D. Gould, Secretary, Danbury Railway Museum,

SDG 5/23





***STATION ROOF AND BRACKETS INSTALLED AND ROOF COMPLETED - Grant money offset the cost of station canopy brackets, rafters and hip rafters.***



***DETAILING COMPLETED ON SIDES AND ON ROOF - Frieze boards, corner boards and battens are installed.***

***AGENT'S BAY REPAIRED - Sills, window have been installed for the agent's window as well as siding and battens.***



# Come Visit The Burleson Interurban Museum

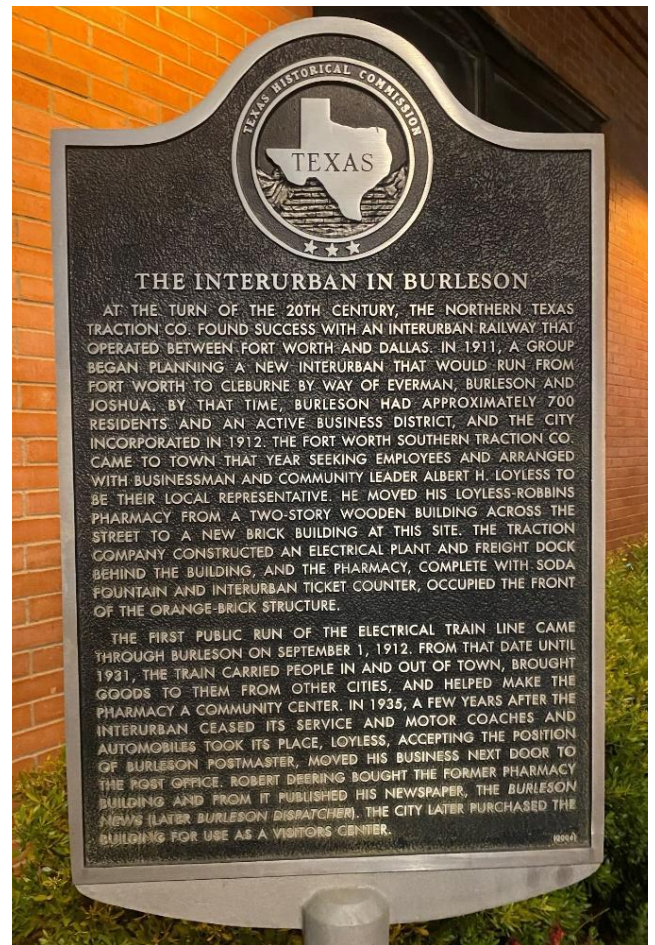
By WAYNE SMITH, President North Texas Chapter NRHS (Photos courtesy of Wayne Smith, unless otherwise noted)

The Chapter's May 2023 meeting was held at the Burleson Visitor's Center & Museum (Interurban Museum) in the former Interurban Depot. The staff was kind enough to allow us to hold our chapter meeting after hours. We held our business meeting in the Museum itself. There were 16 members and 4 hosts at the Interurban Museum.

Our hosts were Neal Jones, President of the Burleson Heritage Foundation; Gabby Garbarino, Volunteer Coordinator; Vivian Wright, a Board member; and "Conductor Bob", a tour guide. They were excellent hosts and we appreciate their hospitality. The friendly tour of the museum's artifacts was informative, comfortable and very much enjoyed by all.



*Burleson Visitor's Center & Museum (Interurban Museum).*



*Historical Marker tells the story of the Interurban in Burleson.*



**MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS PROVIDED A HISTORY LESSON ON THE INTERURBAN, DEPOT AND MUSEUM PIECES - *Vivian Wright is seen standing on the left and Gabby Garbarino is seen standing on the right in the white shirt.***



**PHOTO COURTESY OF ELDEN BAKER  
PRINTING PRESS USED FOR 'THE BURLESON NEWS'  
(LATER BURLESON DISPATCHER) – *After the Northern Texas Traction Co. and a pharmacy vacated the building, the printing press was used for the local paper.***





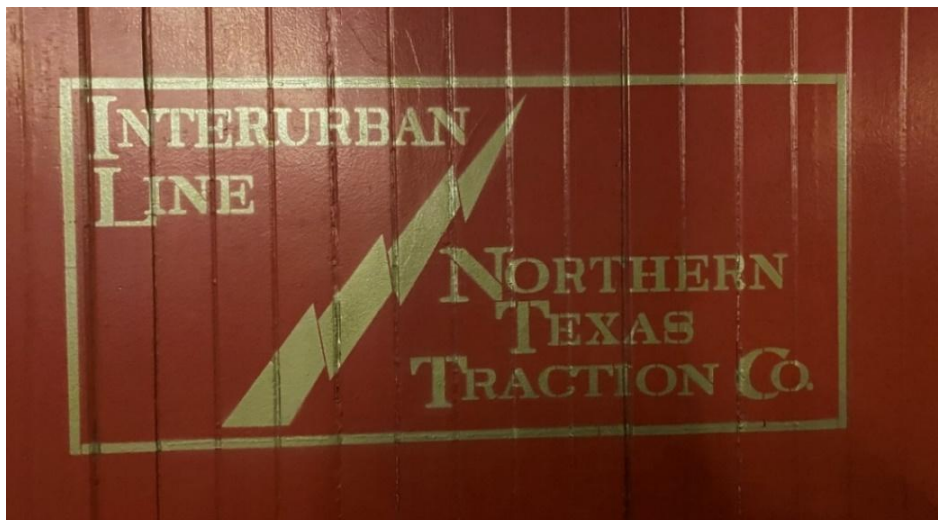
*CARGO CAR #330 – We enjoyed a tour of #330 which was a small museum in and of itself with memorabilia and railroadians from main line railroads.*



*PHOTO COURTESY OF ELDEN BAKER  
MOTORMAN'S VIEW - What the motorman sees inside #330.*



***RAIL CAR #330 – Built in 1903, #330 is the oldest remaining interurban car in Texas. It was placed beside the Burlison Visitors Center, the last remaining Interurban Station on the Fort Worth to Cleburne line, in 2010. Car #330 faithfully served the interurban station 3 times a day until the line closed.***



***FORT WORTH NORTHERN TEXAS TRACTION COMPANY – Connected Fort Worth, Burlison and Cleburne by rail.***



In 1918, the North Texas Traction Company ordered 4 special first class cars to be trailers for 4 of their regular cars between Fort Worth and Dallas. At the last minute they decided to order a fifth car which was to become Car #411.



*PARLOR CAR #411 – These 2 car sets ran on a high speed commuter trip between Fort Worth and Dallas for many years as an extra cost, no stop express service at a rather high ticket price (for the day) of \$1.80 each way.*

When the service was withdrawn about 1933, an individual purchased 3 of the cars and arranged them as a summer residence at Lake Worth. The rail cars were well cared for. When the family decided to sell them more than 15 years ago, the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (the “T”), purchased the #25 and #411 to restore. When the T decided to give Car #411 to someone who would undertake the restoration and be able to properly display the car to the public, Burleson was selected as the successful bidder.

On Jan. 19, 2012, the car was moved to Burleson where volunteers of the Burleson Heritage Foundation and the North Texas Historic Transportation group restored the car. Source: <https://www.burlesontx.com/1307/411-Parlor-Car>.





***PARLOR CAR #411 WAS BUILT BY THE ST. LOUIS CAR CO. IN ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI – The beautiful woodwork can be seen throughout the interior of the car.***



***PARLOR CAR #411 DRUMHEAD – No history was given regarding the drumhead seen in the photo above.***



***CAR #25 AND CAR #411 ARE RELATED - Car #411 is the trailer to Car #25, since these are two-car sets.***

Car #25 was built as a motorcar which meant that it carried passengers as well as a trailer car in the rear. You will find the interior of Car #25 a bit different than you would expect. Included inside was a kitchen with cooktop, refrigerator and cabinets. Car #25 was operated as a limited train without stops between Fort Worth and Dallas. Car #25 featured two types of padded wicker chairs. These were “first class” cars all the way.



# ***The Story Behind* - 2023 Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award**

By VALLI HOSKI, Harrisburg Chapter and MIKE YUHAS, Wisconsin Chapter

News of the new 'Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award' has spread throughout the NRHS community of members and friends. Details of the award are available on the NRHS website at nrhs.com. However, there is more to the story - How and why did the award come about? Who is involved? How is this award different from other NRHS initiatives and railroad industry efforts? Read on for the backstory.



**RAILWAY AGE**



## **Introduction**

The *National Railway Historical Society* (NRHS), *Railway Age* magazine and *Railway Track & Structures* (RT&S) magazine joined together to recognize and honor a North American common carrier railroad for a historically significant preservation project completed or put into operation within the last five years. NRHS members, *Railway Age* and RT&S readers are strong advocates for sharing the railroad industry's important history within North America. This award is intended to recognize the most outstanding example of historic preservation achieved within the railroad industry itself.

## **Why Another Award?**

Outstanding preservation is the why. When have you seen a railroading entity put money, time and people into a project to renovate, restore, operate and/or preserve a significant railroad artifact? Have you heard of these projects? Enjoyed the result of a fully restored steam or diesel locomotive? Recall the railroad or sponsoring organization that pays for and maintains an historic operating piece of equipment? See, hear, feel and enjoy finely preserved and restored artifacts? This award recognizes, honors and publicizes good preservation and sharing of railroad heritage by railroading organizations and commercial entities.

The partners for the "Outstanding Railroad Preservation" award are the NRHS, *Railway Age* magazine and *Railway Track & Structures* magazine. From the NRHS side, the award team includes members R. Victor Varney, Edward M. Berntsen, Tony White and Mike Yuhas. Other partners from the magazines include Bill Vantuono, Editor-in-Chief of *Railway Age*, and David C. Lester, Editor-in-Chief of *Railway Track & Structures*.

From concept to reality, the award was formulated within several months. Victor Varney wrote the formal pitch for *Railway Age*. With Bill Vantuono's assistance, Simmons Boardman approved the award partnership by late April. The "Outstanding Railroad Preservation" award has come to full fruition and was announced at the NRHS 2023 Spring Conference in Sparks, Nevada.

The award provides high value visibility for a railroad entity and publicizes the railroad's preservation efforts. It recognizes excellent work for preservation in railroading which is an industry with deep roots.

The award winner was announced and recognized at the *Railway Interchange* conference in October 2023. After its 2023 launch, the Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award will be an ongoing accolade.

For more information on this award, please contact Mike Yuhas at [myuhas@nrhs.com](mailto:myuhas@nrhs.com) and visit the NRHS site at <https://nrhs.com/outstanding-railroad-historic-preservation-award/>



# The Final Ride - Members, Friends, Railroaders

---

*By NRHS Members and Family*

---

*Note from President Tony White: Wonderful and memorable members of the NRHS have taken their final train ride and will meet all of us at the station sometime later. It is with great sadness that I and other members report on our friends.*

## **TOM BIERY**

*(Submitted by Bob Ernst, Overland Chapter NRHS)*

Tom was an accomplished rail photographer, book author, and had headed the Cumberland NRHS Chapter for some time. He had been a founding member of this chapter when it formed in 1977 to assist with the Chessie Steam Special. Tom and my father were colleagues at Kelly Springfield Tires in Cumberland, and at age 17, I found myself recruited to join the chapter and become a teenage car host on 2 Chessie Specials.

## **MIKE DEL VECCHIO**

*(Submitted by Richard J. King, Tri-State Railway Society)*

With profound sadness, I share with you that our dear friend, past President, fellow historian, photographer, railfan, experienced railroader, and all-around good man, Mike Del Vecchio, passed away in the evening hours of Thursday, August 31, 2023, after a long battle with cancer.

Tri-State has known the benefits of Mike's dedication, volunteerism, and leadership for decades. Mike became involved with Tri-State in the 1970s and has been an integral part of the organization ever since. Mike was Tri-State's longest serving President, leading the group for 26 years in total - from 1993 to 1996, 1999 to 2016, and 2018 to 2021. When not serving as President, Mike remained a member of the Board of Directors, where he served through this year.

Throughout his time with Tri-State, Mike always gave all of himself and asked very little, if anything, in return. Many projects have been blessed by his leadership and many preservation efforts have felt the impact of his stewardship. While many projects benefited from Mike's involvement, I believe the one he was most proud of was our 1948-built EMD F-3, "Lackawanna" No. 663. Mike always beamed with pride when talking about 663. As long as I've known him, he was 663's shepherd and his leadership has helped to keep it operable for all to enjoy. Often times, he'd reach into his own pocket to pay for expenses for 663, not for any praise, but for the good of the project. Mike's balanced view, sound judgment and even temperament also helped Tri-State to navigate the turbulence the group experienced after the 1988 NRHS Convention. In fact, it is quite possible that the group would not even exist today without Mike Del Vecchio.

The gravity of this loss is incalculable to Tri-State, and to me personally, though I take comfort in my cherished memories of Mike, as I'm sure all of you will too. Mike lived a full and very impactful life. In addition to his railroad interests, his many other interests, particularly music, all benefited from Mike's incredible optimism and persistent efforts to accomplish great things. His endless positivity and optimism, even into the last week of his life, can teach us all a great lesson. Mike was able to leave us saying, "I really have no regrets."

## **IMER NORRIS DEYERLE JR.** *(Submitted by Gayle Mckinley)*

Imer Norris Deyerle Jr. at the age of 69 from Lynchburg, VA passed away on Thursday, September 1, 2022 at Lynchburg General Hospital. He was a very active in the Blue Ridge Chapter and the Roanoke Chapters.

**JOHN WALTER HELMSTETTER** (Submitted by Clay Moritz, Washington DC Chapter NRHS)



John Walter Helmstetter, 81, of Cumberland, passed away on Tuesday, Aug. 15, 2023. John was a graduate of LaSalle High School and was a lifetime farmer. He was also a member of the Allegany County Farm Bureau and was a beekeeper for many years.

The Western Maryland Railway's well known "Helmstetter's Curve" traversed John's farm. Over the years, John was a friend to railfans near and far who came to see and photograph the Western Maryland's and the current Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's action at "Helmstetter's Curve."

**DONALD R. MAXWELL**

(Submitted by Al Weber, St. Louis Chapter NRHS)



Donald Donald R. Maxwell, 85, passed on to be with God in a better place on August 5, 2023. Don was from Buffalo, N.Y., where he was born in 1937 and moved to Ashland in 1978.

He transferred from the Buffalo, N.Y. plant of Allied Chemical to Ashland in 1978. He was an Ashland city commissioner from 2003-2006 and served on the Ashland board of zoning adjustment and Ashland, Boyd, and Greenup County airport board. He was of the Episcopal faith and was treasurer of Calvary Episcopal Church and a member of their vestry.

He was a past chairman of the board of the former Boyd-Greenup Chamber of Commerce where he served on their board for over ten years; a past member of the Foundation for the Tri-State Community, current board member of the Ashland-Ironton Habitat for Humanity, past director of the Boyd, Carter, and Lawrence County chapter of the American Red Cross, and past executive director of the Kentucky Highlands Museum. He was a member of the **Collis P. Huntington chapter** of the *National Railway Historical Society* where he also was their past president, executive and trip director, treasurer, and editor of their newsletter over the course of his thirty-three-plus years of membership. Don was a board member of the National Railway Historical Society based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

He also served as the past president or officer of the West Virginia chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers, board member of West Virginia Operation Lifesaver rail safety program.

Maxwell retired from AK Steel in 1992 after thirty years of combined service with the former Semet Solvay division of Allied Chemical and Armco/AK Steel.

Following his retirement, he was employed by the Railroad Historical Society, he worked for the city of Ashland and the Greater Ashland Beacon. He was involved with numerous railroad related organizations around the country and was a firm supporter of rail passenger service in the United States. Don attended the Univ. of Buffalo and Marshall University and served in the US Army Reserve from 1955 to 1963 when he was honorably discharged.



**STEVE MILLER***(Submitted by Stan Hunter ,Central Coast Chapter NRHS)*

Fellow mileage collector Steve Miller passed away on June 24, at the age of 76, after a brief illness. Born in Oakland, California, Steve was a long-time member of the La Mesa Model Railroad Club in San Diego, where he participated in many operating sessions and other club activities. Steve was a qualified Timetable and Train Order operator and dispatcher as well as a skilled modeler of 1950s-era railroading.

In the above photo, Steve is working the Caliente train order office at the La Mesa Model Railroad Club's Tehachapi exhibit, San Diego Model Railroad Museum. *(Photo courtesy of Mike Jarel.)*

He moved to Sacramento when he got a job with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), where he performed a large number of tasks related to rail and mass transit throughout California. His largest contribution was the management of the statewide connecting bus program for a number of years. "Steve's buses" brought many passengers to the state-supported Capitols, San Joaquins and Pacific Surfliners, augmenting those corridors and extended those services to many areas of California that did not have direct rail service. His legacy lives in the ongoing success of the California rail programs.

As an avid traveler, he rode trains and transit all over the world. Steve made huge contributions to the Central Coast Railway Club, the National Railway Historical Society and other organizations through participation in excursion planning and operations, bus services, writing and presentations. Many of the rare-mileage trips we have enjoyed were the product of teams of volunteers that included Steve and his expertise and enthusiasm for passenger trains. Steve was also an enthusiastic supporter of live music, baseball, history and public radio. He will be missed by many including his family and friends.

I'm sure Steve sends out a Giant "Thank You" to everyone, past and present, who made all the events in his life so meaningful.

**LOUIS A. ORLOWSKI***(Submitted by Gayle Mckinley)*

Louis A. Orłowski, age 75, passed away Wednesday, May 24, 2023 at UH Lake West Medical Center with his sister and family by his side. He was born March 21, 1948 in Cleveland, Ohio. He had a lifelong passion for photography and trains.

Survivors include his sister, Janet Hetman; niece, Jennifer Beal and nephew, Kenneth Hetman; great-nephews, Brandon and Sam, and great-niece, Rachel.

Preceding Louis in death are his parents, Louis J. and Rose Orłowski and his beloved dog, Josh.

**BILL SANDER***(Submitted by Thomas Gallagher)*

Champlain Valley Chapter, NRHS member Bill Sander passed last fall peacefully after a long illness. He was an active Chapter member for almost 40 years.

He was very active in the Vermont Antique Automobile Enthusiasts and the Champlain Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society having served terms as president of both organizations. Bill served as the National Representative for the Chapter, and generously hosted the annual Chapter picnic for a number of years.

Bill served many years as the Chair of the Lamoille County Democrats. Bill was honored to be a delegate to the 2012 Democratic Convention, & he was selected to be a member of the Electoral College for the Presidential Election of the same year. He was most proud of his work for over 30 years as a school board member for Lamoille Union High School & the Green Mountain Technical & Career Center. Bill served in this position for more than 30 years.

**RON VILE***(Submitted by Ed Post)*

Long time Central New York Chapter member Ron Vile passed away on June 7 in Alabama. Ron was the Chapter's National Representative to the NRHS for many years and was an excellent and outspoken representative at NRHS Conference meetings. For the last ten or so years he and his wife Donna lived in Alabama, but before that he resided in New York State and was known to all rail fans. He was an ardent train photographer, traveled to all parts of the country for his photos, and attended many of the national trains like the Streamliner Display and the Norfolk Southern Heritage Locomotive Display in North Carolina. Ron was a very active supporter of CNY Chapter events and activities.

**RICHARD H. WILSON***(Submitted by Mitchell E. Dakelman, Jersey Central Chapter NRHS)*

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that I announce the passing of our long time member, Richard H. Wilson. Rich, the only child to Frank and Gladys Wilson, was born May 1, 1948, and passed away, at age 75, on September 20, 2023.

Richard, whose father worked for the Central Railway of New Jersey, was an avid rail buff and U.S. history, collected hundreds of books. With the assistance of Bill McKelvey, his book collection was donated to a number of historical societies.

His photographic slides and movies went to the National Railway Historical Society. In 2021, I dismantled Rich's Lionel layout and purchased his collection which included a 1956 FM Trainmaster Jersey Central diesel in orange and blue paint.

Rich worked as a hearing officer for the New Jersey Division of Unemployment Services, retiring many years ago. He was treasurer for his church in Roselle, where he lived. He was a member of the Jersey Central Chapter of the NRHS where he served as President, also an active member of the Tri-State Chapter, CRNJ Historical Society, and the Railroadians.

## President's Note – Happy Autumn

By *TONY WHITE, President NRHS*

Happy fall to all. The difficult summer for a lot of us has now subsided into beautiful weather and leaves are starting to change colors. There are changes within the NRHS that I'd like to share.

The 2024 dues cycle will start on 10/2 with an email to all with emails. We had great success with the amount of dues payments that we received for the 2023 year. The Membership committee would really like for even more of you to renew your dues this way. We were happily surprised at how many people took advantage of the recurring dues payments. Those who did opt for this will not receive a renewal notice for 2024.

The Membership Committee examined every transaction and found a few errors. We actually credited those members who paid too much or more than once for 2023. New as of now is the option to include a modest service charge to your transaction that will cover service costs to the NRHS and allow the NRHS to utilize your dues to the fullest. With all of the rising costs around us, we are desperately trying to maintain our current dues structure. We provide much more now than we did when it was last increased. To jog your memory, the Bulletins are up to date. There are many more issues of the News, with Val, the editor producing extra issues this year.

For those who wish to mail in their dues, please wait for the invoice and mail the invoice along with your check to the St. Louis address. Please note any changes on the invoice to avoid guessing on our part.

The first batch of membership cards will be mailed on 12/4/23 to all whose dues are processed by the

Membership Committee by 11/20/2023. We will again use first class mailing to have better success in getting the card to you.

During the dues period many of you will also make a donation. The donations help fund The Heritage Grants Program, Film and Video Library, The Alco Historical Photo Library, The Historic Plaque Program and RailCamp. These are all restricted accounts and monies donated to any of these are only for the specific program. Many also donate to the General Fund. Monies donated here help with the overall functioning of the NRHS and the surplus helps the Heritage Grants Program reach a significant amount.

The NRHS has successfully had another year partnering with Trains Magazine to run and choose a winning photograph. The winner and runner-ups will be published in an upcoming issue of Trains Magazine. The NRHS has added a new partnership. This time it is with Railway Age and Railway Track & Structures to produce the first ever Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award. Many congratulations to Iowa Traction, the 2023 winner! Our goal is to make the NRHS more visible and recognized by the public and railroads as a serious contender in many aspects of railroading.

The NRHS is investigating establishing a Zoom or Webinar meetings platform for members to showcase their photography. More as this develops.

Thank you for reading and enjoy the changing season!

## Editor's Note – When is September in October?

By *VALLI HOSKI, Editor NRHS News and Member Harrisburg Chapter, NRHS*

When your editor says so!

Thanks to all the NRHS family for your patience and kind understanding with the recent change in the News schedule. After the August issue, the fall schedule was delayed due to the September passing of a family member. I am genuinely humbled by all the messages of care and concern from my NRHS family. My family and I truly appreciate your kindness.

**What's new with the News?** Enjoy a retrospective of the 2023 convention "The Florida Special" in the November News and its special photo features.

For December, please share your holiday railroading memories of 'way back when' or even just 'last year'. Please submit your story, photo(s) with caption(s) to [News@NRHS.com](mailto:News@NRHS.com).

Wishing you good health and safe travels, Val



# The Back Page: A RailCamper's View

By *ROMAN CHAVEZ, Attendee RailCamp East 2023*



*PHOTO COURTESY OF RAMON CHAVEZ*

***THIS EVOCATIVE VIEW ECHOES THE RAILCAMP EXPERIENCES OF 2023. Ramon Chavez captured the awe and prototype scale (12 inches to the foot) of these railcars and coaches at RailCamp in June 2023.***

## About the *NRHS News*

The *NRHS News* is published nine times a year by the National Railway Historical Society. A full-color issue is published each even-numbered month and is available as a pdf file on the NRHS web site. The three remaining issues are printed black-and-white and mailed to members in three odd-numbered months.

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The address for the Society is: National Railway Historical Society, Inc., 505 South Lenola Road, Suite 226, Moorestown, NJ 08057. Membership information changes should be sent to Patti Webb at [Membership@nrhs.com](mailto:Membership@nrhs.com). Membership dues should be mailed to NRHS - Membership, PO Box 31074, St. Louis, MO 63131-0074.

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