

The Railroad of Thanksgiving

By John Cowgill, Washington DC Chapter NRHS

It is the day when people arrived at the New World. They had very little, and they had little to eat. They encountered a few Indians who taught them how to plow the land and to provide for themselves. They later had a huge feast. This was called the First Thanksgiving as they were thankful for the great feast.

Thanksgiving is a day that is set aside to be thankful for the things we have. When it comes to the railroad, we have many things we need to be thankful for.



We have the many track workers who look over and repair the tracks to keep the trains rolling. We have the engineers who operate the trains to and from their destinations hauling freight and passengers across the country. We have the mechanics and repair people who make sure everything is in working order. We have the porters and conductors who make the passengers feel comfortable as the trains roll on. We have the baggage handlers who make sure your luggage arrives at the station when you do.

For those who are traveling on Thanksgiving, think of those who are sacrificing their Thanksgiving so that you can get to yours. Their work will not be in vain on this very day.

So, let us take the time to be thankful to those who keep the trains running not only on Thanksgiving and but all year round. To everyone else, I wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving. May you have plenty, and may you thank the freight trains and crews that brought your meals to you.

[*Editor's Note: many thanks to John Cowgill for sharing his seasonal column with the NRHS News. Also, your editor sends very best wishes for wonderful holidays to each and everyone!]*

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Announcements

Heritage Grants 2024

- **Deadline: January 31, 2024**
- Application available on the NRHS web site at <https://nrhs.com/news/2024-heritage-grants-application-form-now-available/>

RailCamp 2024

- **Dates: RailCamp East, June 23 – 29 & RailCamp Northwest, August 4 – 11**
- The application will be available on the NRHS web page January 1st.
- Be sure to check for any changes that may be needed for the dates.

NRHS Convention & Conferences

- **2024 NRHS Annual Convention - Late summer 2024**

NRHS News Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Submit by</u>
February 2024 issue (online pdf)	January 20, 2024
March 2024 (mailed issue)	February 10, 2024

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 March, July and either September or November.

Valli Hoski, Harrisburg Chapter NRHS, Editor. Alex Mayes, Potomac Chapter NRHS, Content Assistant. Elizabeth Guenzler, Central Coast Chapter NRHS, Editorial Assistant. Eileen Weber, St. Louis Chapter NRHS, Editorial Assistant. Email submissions to News@nrhs.com or mail to NRHS News, c/o Valli Hoski, P.O. Box 234, York Springs, PA, 17372.

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. Membership dues should be mailed to NRHS - Membership, PO Box 31074, St. Louis, MO 63131-0074.

My First Christmas With Trains

By BOB GONGLESKI, Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley Chapter NRHS

My mother Dorothy (Selingo) Gongleski introduced me to trains at the age of 4 months. I'm now 72 years old, so I got a very early start with my love of trains. My grandparents lived in Plymouth, PA and I grew up in Swoyersville, PA.



*All photos courtesy of Bob Gongleski and family
HOW IT ALL BEGAN – Mother, son and trainset.*

In December, 1951 at my grandparents' house, my grandfather and uncle (John Sr and John Jr Selingo) set up a 3-level Lionel train display in their living room with up to 5 trains running on it. All the buildings were scratch built with scrap wood from my grandfather's place of employment.



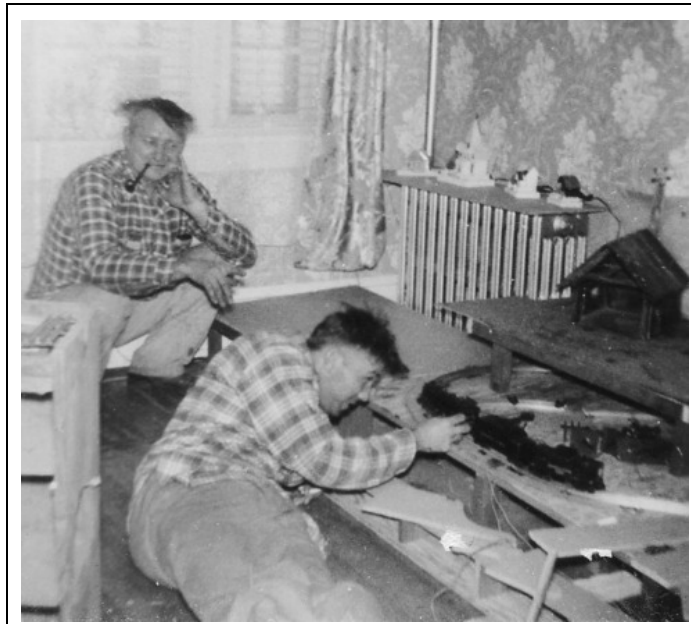
THREE-LEVEL TRAIN DISPLAY – A very detailed layout.

Buildings included both Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic churches. Each represented the two different religious backgrounds of my grandparents. The display would start construction right after Thanksgiving and would remain up through Russian New Year in mid-January.



THREE-LEVEL TRAIN DISPLAY - A new tradition that honored the background of both families.

You can see more of the display, including the 4-6-0 #257 and cars running on the 2nd level of the layout. Next to the Roman Catholic Church at the right of each photo is the only remaining house that I have from this display.



BUILDING THE DISPLAY – My grandfather and uncle (John Sr. and John J. Selingo) constructing the layout. The radiator in the background would be shut off and covered with paper and painted to depict a distant mountain using smaller scale buildings for perspective.

I still have my grandfather's first Lionel train – a 4-6-0 #257 with a 4 wheel tender, and a 607 and 608 Pullman passenger cars. In 1972, due to Hurricane Agnes in the Wilkes-Barre area of Pennsylvania, the train set was underwater for several days and the original set box and boxes were destroyed. I had the train cleaned and serviced, and it still runs to this day (2023).

Sumpter Valley RR Restoration – Heritage Grant

NRHS Helps Fund Archive and Library Building for Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration

Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc., “SVRR” was awarded a Heritage Grant in 2023 to assist with construction of their new archive and library building. The matching grant was targeted toward the HVAC system for the structure. The new 20’x40’ building at the organization’s McEwen, Oregon site is slated for completion in 2024.



All photos courtesy of J. B. Bane, SVRR Archivist
EXTERIOR OF FUTURE HOME OF SVRR ARCHIVE AND LIBRARY – Exterior of the 20 foot by 40 foot structure which will be the home of SVRR’s archive department and railroad library collection.



UNFINISHED INTERIOR OF THE STRUCTURE – The interior as shown has a smaller room in the rear which is for secure archival storage, while the larger space will house displays and the organization’s railroad library.

SVRR is best known for running steam and diesel excursion trains on five miles of the original Sumpter Valley Railway right of way. The organization also has a very active archive department focused on the Sumpter Valley Railway, associated lumber companies and Northeast Oregon logging and railroading in general.

Oregon Rail Heritage Center – *Holiday Express*

Start your holidays brightly with these scenes from the seasonal celebrations of the *Holiday Express*.

Many thanks to the Oregon Rail Heritage Center (ORHC) for sharing these lovely views of their *Holiday Express*. The NRHS Pacific Northwest Chapter is a partner organization of the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation and its members support ORHC projects.

For *Holiday Express* schedule and more about the ORHC, visit their web site at <https://orhf.org/train-rides/holiday-express/> . Events, programs and more about the Pacific Northwest Chapter may be found at <https://www.pnwc-nrhs.org/> .



All photos courtesy of Oregon Rail Heritage Center
LIGHTS ON FOR THE NIGHT TRAIN – Holiday lit locomotive leads
Holiday Express.



HOLIDAY FUN FOR ALL AGES – Delight, smiles and wonder for
kids and adults with trains of all sizes.



HOLIDAY DRESS-UP TIME – Perfect outfits!!



***WILL SANTA COME DOWN THE CHIMNEY?
– Watch out for the holiday tree!***

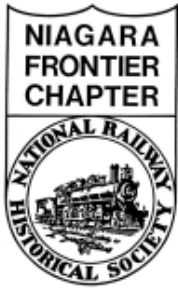


GO ROUND AND ROUND THE TREE WITH THE HOLIDAY EXPRESS!



HOLIDAY LOCOMOTIVES – From small to large, as far as you can see.

2024 Western NY Railroad Calendar – 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 S1 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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2024 Minnesota Railroad Calendar – Northstar Railway Historical Society Chapter

Minnesota Rail Calendar 2024 Order Form

The Northstar Railway Historical Society is pleased to announce the 2024 edition of the *Minnesota Rail Calendar*, continuing an over 30 year tradition.

Prices:

Minnesota residents - \$25.00 each.
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