

Michigan Central Station – Reopens After Major Restoration

Text and photos courtesy of ALEX MAYES and TERESA RENNER, Potomac Chapter, NRHS

By the beginning of the 20th century, U.S. railroads had firmly established that they were a dependable and efficient way to transport passengers and freight. The nation's earliest railroads were built in the 1820s and 1830s, mainly in New England and the mid-Atlantic region. Through the following years, railroads expanded significantly and by 1850 an extensive railroad network had been developed in the eastern states and Midwest. This expansion continued rapidly, and by 1916, there were more than 254,000 miles of track in service, which was the highest ever in the U.S. Before the railroads, transportation between major cities was challenging, as the few roads were dirt and became muddy when it rained. The railroads established passenger service at their beginnings and by 1910 there were over 80,000 passenger stations, mostly small wooden buildings. With the demand for passenger service increasing in the latter part of the 1800s to the early 1900s, several massive masonry stations were built in major cities to accommodate this growth. In New York City, the New York Central built Grand Central Terminal in 1913. The Pennsylvania Railroad built their station in 1910. Boston's South Station was completed in 1899. Chicago's Union Station opened in 1881.

During this period Detroit became a major industrial city and center for commerce and global trade due to its location in the Great Lakes Region with access to waterways, the Erie Canal and a half-dozen railroads. In 1884 a new passenger station built by the Michigan Central Railroad opened at Third and Jefferson Street. *(Continued on page 3.)*



Photo courtesy of Alex Mayes

MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILROAD – This is a United States \$1,000 mortgage bond issued to the Michigan Central Railroad.

Table of Contents.

Michigan Central Station – Reopens After Major Restoration.....	1
Announcements	2
2025 NRHS Spring Conference - May 1-3, Johnson City, Tennessee.....	2
2025 NRHS Annual Convention – July 12-17, 2025. Lansing, Michigan.	2
Submission Deadlines for NRHS News	2
About the NRHS News	2
Michigan Central Station – Reopens After Major Restoration.....	3
Reminder – Spring Conference – Johnson City, Tennessee, May 1-3, 2025.....	6
Extra Excursion – Spring Conference, Johnson City, May 1, 2025.....	7
NRHS 2025 Convention – Advance Information	8
John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust Grant Awarded to DCNRHS	9
Potomac Chapter Retirement Lunch for Clay Moritz.....	12
Auto Train Southbound – January 2025.....	14
Auto Train Northbound – April 2025.....	16
Chapter Events & Activities.....	19
Your Easter Bunny Express Ride Is Waiting!	19
PicnicRail’ 25	20
Harris Tower Needs Your Help, Please!	21

Announcements**2025 NRHS Spring Conference - May 1-3, Johnson City, Tennessee.**

Sponsored by the George L. Carter Chapter.

- **Thursday**, registration and opening reception at Johnson City Railroad Experience; **Friday**, tour of Knoxville Locomotive Works and excursions on Three Rivers Rambler Train and Star of Knoxville riverboat; **Saturday**, NRHS business meetings and evening railroad heritage food & beverage walking tour.
- The fee is \$170 per person for the full conference, or \$30 for the Saturday meetings only. To register, login to your NRHS membership portal at secure.nrhs.com.
- **Lodging** - Carnegie Hotel, 866-757-8277. Mention “NRHS meeting” for group rate (May 1, \$149, May 2, 3, \$199 per night + taxes), by April 1.
- Up-to-date info at www.nrhs.com and on pg. 6 of this issue.

2025 NRHS Annual Convention – July 12-17, 2025. Lansing, Michigan.

Sponsored by the NRHS with the help of our members. More details on page 8 of this issue.

Submission Deadlines for NRHS News

- May 8th, 2025, deadline – **May 2025** issue (online PDF)
- May 15th, 2025, deadline – **June 2025** issue (mailed issue)

About the NRHS News

NRHS News is published nine times a year by the National Railway Historical Society. Six full-color issues are published usually in even-numbered months. The three remaining issues are printed in black-and-white and mailed to members across the year. Issues are available (pdf file) online at <https://admin.nrhs.com/NRHSNews/>
 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

Michigan Central Station – Reopens After Major Restoration

(Continued from page 1.)

With the rise in Detroit's growth, this station could not meet the demand for passenger service and leaders decided to replace it with a much larger and grandiose station for the Michigan Central Railroad in Detroit's Corktown neighborhood. This location was also chosen since a nearby tunnel to Canada which ran under the Detroit River had been completed in 1906.



Photo courtesy of Teresa Renner

MICHIGAN CENTRAL STATION – Original construction began in 1910 and the station was dedicated in 1914. This is the front of the newly restored station, facing Michigan Avenue. Currently, only the first story has been restored. Restoration of the upper floors is in the planning stage.

After permits were obtained, construction of the station began on May 16, 1910. The steel framework of the building was in place in December 1912.

On December 26, 1913 the older station caught fire, forcing the still unfinished station into early service. Passenger trains began arriving and departing the new station just hours after the fire.

The new Michigan Central Railroad station was formally dedicated on January 4, 1914. The Beaux-Arts style architecture was designed by architects who had previously worked together on Grand Central Terminal in New York, and it was the tallest rail station in the world at the time of its construction.



Photo courtesy of Alex Mayes

PASSENGERS LINED UP AT TICKET WINDOWS IN THE 1940s. - The signs seen above the windows with the named trains are very intriguing. One of many vintage photos displayed in the Poster Vault located in the ticket office at the MSC.

The station building consists of a large passenger train depot, an office tower with thirteen stories, two mezzanine levels, and a roof height of 230 feet. Amenities for travelers included restaurants, a barbershop, newsstands and other establishments. At its peak, 200 passenger trains arrived and departed the station daily.

Throughout the first five decades, the station remained busy. However, by the 1960s rail travel began declining due to a growing trend in automobile usage. In 1960 the New York Central ended its direct service between Detroit and Toledo, and in 1964 discontinued its trains north to Bay City. The B&O relocated its trains to the Fort Street Union Depot in 1963. The pooled NYC/Central Pacific trains were discontinued, and Canadian Pacific trains to Windsor were ended in 1967.

When Amtrak was created in 1971, trains were boarded from the platforms. The main waiting room and its entrance were reopened in 1975. In 1978 Amtrak started a \$1.25 million renovation project which was not completed. Six years later, the building was sold for a transportation center project that never materialized. On January 6, 1988, the last Amtrak train departed the station after owners decided to close the facility.

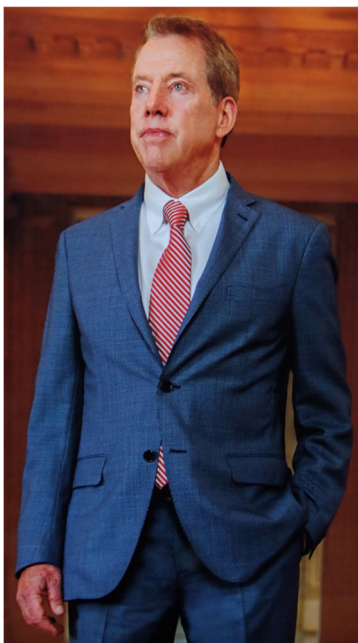
For the following 36 years the abandoned station quickly fell prey to pillagers, thieves, graffiti vandals and other destructive individuals which caused significant damage to the station's interior. Its most cherished features were yanked out, including chandeliers, copper piping, decorative balcony railings, elevator ornaments, and even the large clock which was mounted above the ticket windows.

Over the years several ideas were proposed regarding what to do with the old station. City building inspectors recommended as early as 1994 that the building be demolished. In 2001 a proposal to make the station an international trade and customs center was introduced, and in 2003, then-mayor Kwame Kilpatrick pushed to have the building become the new police headquarters. None of these ideas panned out.

In May 2018 the Ford Motor Company purchased the building for redevelopment into a mixed-use facility and cornerstone of the company's new Corktown Campus. The building is planned to hold both Ford offices and offices of suppliers and partner companies. The first-floor concourse would reopen to the public with restaurants and retail. Housing will be created on the top floors. At this time, Ford has spent \$900 million on this project. The renovation work has included

1. Extensive repairs to damaged walls, floors and ceilings
2. Restoration of 1,300 square feet of terra cotta cornice
3. 102,000 square feet of windows replaced or restored
4. 4,200 new light fixtures were installed, including re-creations of three massive chandeliers in the Waiting Room and Grand Hall
5. Restoration of the building's iconic Waiting Room and Grand Hall, which required the equivalent of 8.7 miles of grout used on the 29,000 Guastavino ceiling tiles alone
6. 3.5 million gallons of water were pumped from its basement
7. 3,990 cubic yards of debris were hauled out of the building.

At this time, only the first floor has been restored.



One of the chief backers of this huge project is Bill Ford (see photo left) Ford's executive chairman and great-grandson of the founder of Ford Motor Company, Henry Ford. Ford Motor Company and Michigan Central hosted the **Michigan Central OPEN** event June 6-16, 2024 to celebrate the historic reopening of the station. The station was open to the general public those days; it is now open on Fridays and Saturdays. Although Teresa and I did not have the required advance reservations for a tour, after we talked to security staff we were allowed into the station on June 13th.

Reminder – Spring Conference – Johnson City, Tennessee, May 1-3, 2025

By NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, www.nrhs.com

The Spring 2025 NRHS Conference takes place in Johnson City, Tennessee.

The George L. Carter Chapter, our host, has arranged a full weekend, including a tour of *Knoxville Locomotive Works* and excursions on the *Three Rivers Rambler Train* and *Star of Knoxville* riverboat. And of course, NRHS meetings!



THREE RIVERS RAMBLER – Enjoy your ride during the 2025 NRHS Spring Conference!

Conference timetable:

Registration welcome center **opens Thursday, May 1, 4:00 pm**, at the Carnegie Hotel in Johnson City. Join us for a welcome reception at the *Johnson City Railroad Experience*.

Friday, May 2: Our deluxe chartered motor coach departs Johnson City at 8:00 am for Knoxville. First stop is an hour-long tour of *Knoxville Locomotive Works*. Next, the motor coach whisks us across town where we board the *Three Rivers Rambler*. 3RR advises our train is expected to be steam powered. At Volunteer Landing, we detrain and board the *Star of Knoxville* riverboat, with luncheon served. The buses are expected to arrive back at Conference Hotel at 5:40 PM.

NRHS Fund meeting: At the hotel, 8:00 pm.

Saturday, May 3: *Advisory Council* and *Board of Directors* meetings. In the evening, join us for a railroad heritage food and beverage walking tour of Johnson City, viewing historic railroad buildings that have been repurposed into dining and entertainment venues.

Conference Registration

The Conference fee is \$170 for the full weekend, or \$30 for members who wish to attend the Saturday meetings in person only. To register, login to your NRHS membership portal at secure.nrhs.com.

Registration is now open and closes when the event sells out. The links above are valid for your NRHS membership account only.

Conference Hotel and Transportation

Tri-Cities Airport, about sixteen miles from downtown Johnson City, is served by Delta Air Lines and American Airlines. Rental cars are available, and Uber and Lyft operate there.

Conference headquarters is the **Carnegie Hotel**, 1216 W. State of Franklin Road, Johnson City. Our group rate is \$149 for Thursday night, and \$199 per night Friday and Saturday, plus taxes. Call the hotel to reserve, 423-979-6400.

Full conference information is available on the NRHS site at <https://nrhs.com/news/2025-spring-conference/>. We are looking forward to seeing you! Cordially, George L. Carter Chapter and the NRHS Conference Team.

Extra Excursion – Spring Conference, Johnson City, May 1, 2025

By NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, www.nrhs.com



EXTRA EXCURSION!



May, 1st 2025

Ride the Original ET&WNC Route to famous Pardee Point!

On May 1st at 2:00 PM our friends at Doe River Gorge Ministries is offering a special excursion for NRHS Meeting Attendees!

Meet at:
Doe River Gorge Ministries
220 Doe River Gorge Rd, Hampton, TN
37658

\$10 per person payable by cash at the event.

Guests will get the authentic Appalachian narrow-gauge experience as they ride the historic ET&WNC RR mainline to Pardee Point, which is one of the most beautiful spots in Tennessee. There will also be some time to check out their historic rolling stock that they have converted into camp infrastructure. In December of 2025 DRGM will be launching their Christmas Train which will mark the return of steam narrow-gauge railroading to the TN Highlands!

To attend, click the link and fill out the form.

CLICK HERE



NRHS 2025 Convention – Advance Information

By ERIC FOGG AND MIKE YUHAS, Convention Chairs



We're excited to share preliminary information about the 2025 NRHS convention in Lansing, Michigan:

- Saturday, July 12: Opening reception, featuring a compelling speaker discussing a relevant railroad topic. Hors d'oeuvres, beer/wine.
- Sunday, July 13: Diesel-powered excursion over Great Lakes Central, operated by Steam Railroading Institute, between Clare and Owosso.
- Monday, July 14: Steam-powered excursion operated by Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society from Coldwater, Mich., to Ray, Ind., on Indiana Northeastern.
- Tuesday, July 15: A three-for in Elkhart, Ind.: visit to the National New York Central Museum; tour of Norfolk Southern's Elkhart Yard; tour of the Adams-Westlake factory.
- Wednesday, July 16: Visit to Greenfield Village including a screening of the giant screen movie "Train Time," and then a tour of the restored Michigan Central depot in Detroit.
- Thursday, July 17: NRHS business meetings!
- *All events are subject to change.*

Watch your email for registration and hotel information. We look forward to welcoming you to the NRHS Michigan-Indiana Rail Adventure!

Cordially,
Eric Fogg, Mike Yuhas
Convention Chairs

John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust Grant Awarded to DCNRHS

Expanding the Public Appreciation of Railroads and their History through Preservation and Education

April 15, 2025

JOHN H. EMERY RAIL HERITAGE TRUST GRANT AWARDED TO DCNRHS FOR DOVER HARBOR DINING IN PULLMAN COMFORT PROJECT

Washington, DC: DCNRHS is pleased to announce that it is the recipient of a 2025 grant from the John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust. The \$8,800.00 award will help fund work on the historic Pullman rail car, DOVER HARBOR, to rebuild and reupholster the banquette seats in the car's lounge.

The Pullman Company was principally concerned with providing excellent accommodation for their passengers. Dover Harbor's banquette tables provide for the essential rail travel experience of dining while enroute. As part of a Dover Harbor trip, passengers are served chef-prepared meals, seated at the three, four-seat tables.



Photo courtesy of Kevin J. Tankersley

DOVER HARBOR BANQUETTE TABLE AND SEATS – *Table is set for dinner.*

The cushioned seats and backs for these tables were rehabilitated and reupholstered in the mid-1980's during the original refurbishment of the car. They have seen many passenger-miles service in trips and charters since and now need rebuilding/reupholstery.

Recent historical research, including the acquisition of an authentic original Pullman upholstery fabric sample, will guide this project to bring these seats to a closer interpretation and more comfortable condition.



Photo courtesy of NRHS Washington D.C. Chapter (DCNRHS)

DOVER HARBOR CAR – Relax in the 24 seat lounge.



Photo courtesy of NRHS D.C. Chapter

DOVER HARBOR CAR – Read, play games, socialize.

As part of the process, the seat frames will be assessed and repaired/refinished as necessary. The estimated cost for this project is \$17,900.00; tax-deductible contributions in support of this project may be made to DCNRHS and will be gratefully accepted. This work will be conducted this year as operations permit, in addition to regular ongoing maintenance of the car.

The John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust was created by Mr. John Emery, a native of Chicago, to support Mr. Emery's interest in passenger trains of the 1920's to 1950's. Grants are awarded each year for projects that emphasize and support the preservation and restoration of operating passenger rail equipment from the "Golden Age" of U.S.

Expanding the Public Appreciation of Railroads and their History through Preservation and Education rail service. For more information on the Emery Rail Heritage Trust and Mr. Emery, please see their website at <https://emeryrailheritagetrust.org/WP/>.

About Dover Harbor

Dover Harbor is a classic heavyweight Pullman built railroad passenger car that has a 24-seat lounge, a buffet (kitchen), and six double-bedrooms. Built in 1923, it was once part of a fleet of over 8,800 Pullman cars. The car was operated by the Pullman Company in first class service on name trains of the Pennsylvania and York New Central Railroads across the Northeastern United States. Today, Dover Harbor is the last Pullman built heavyweight revenue car in its original configuration traveling the mainlines of America.



Photo courtesy of Kevin J. Tankersley

DOVER HARBOR PULLMAN CAR – This Pullman car was built in 1923.

The car, which has been operated by DCNRHS in public trips and in charter service since 1982, is certified for operation up to 110 mph anywhere in the Amtrak System.

Dover Harbor is lovingly maintained by the volunteer members of DCNRHS who operate it to give the public an opportunity to experience First-Class mainline rail travel from the golden age of railroading. Trip revenue goes back into the car to keep it running. More information about Dover Harbor is available at www.doverharbor.com.

About DCNRHS

The National Railway Historical Society, Washington, D.C. Chapter, Inc. or DCNRHS is a not-for-profit 501c(3) educational organization. Chartered in the District of Columbia in 1944, DCNRHS' mission is to "Expand the public appreciation of railroads and their history through preservation and education." More information about DCNRHS, including our trips, activities, railcars, projects, and community service efforts, is available at www.dcnrhs.org.

Contact Information

To learn more about this project or our organization, please contact us:

www.dcnrhs.org

202-627-2978 or info@dcnrhs.org

DCNRHS

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Press Release POC: Kevin J. Tankersley, Project Manager

Potomac Chapter Retirement Lunch for Clay Moritz

By **BILL HOLDSWORTH**, Potomac Chapter, NRHS

Twenty-seven people attended the Potomac Chapter's retirement lunch for Clay Moritz at the National Capital Trolley Museum April 19 in Colesville, MD. The event celebrated Clay's 35-year tenure as editor of the chapter's monthly newsletter.



LET'S RAISE A CHEER FOR CLAY! – Newsletter editor is a big job to do for thirty-five years!



CLAY MORITZ RETIREMENT SMORGASBORD – Friends and guests join Clay in celebrating his retirement as editor for Potomac Chapter's newsletter. Sandwiches, salads, chips and desserts were enjoyed by all.

Potomac Chapter members received royal treatment from museum director Eric Madison and museum volunteers. The group had a charter ride on former D.C. Transit PCC car No. 1101



BOARDING PCC NO. 1101 - Chapter members and guests pose for a group photo. Clay is on far right and his wife Diane is to his right.



PCC NO. 1101 - Chapter members and guests enjoying a ride.

That car was among the first batch of PCC cars to enter service in Washington, D.C. in 1937.



TURNING ON THE LOOP – At the end of the line at Fish Hook Loop those who wanted to take photos of our PCC turning on the loop disembarked and formed a photo line.

No. 1101 operated until the end of streetcar service January 28, 1962. A quick straw poll of the Potomac Chapter riders revealed six of them, including Clay, had ridden operational D.C. streetcars prior to that sad day in 1962.

Auto Train Southbound – January 2025

By *WALTER E. ZULLING, New York Chapter, NRHS*

I've lost track of how many trips I've made on the Auto-Train. It must be at least 25, including one on the original pre-Amtrak train. This report covers the most recent that turned out to be one of the very best.

We were late going south this year. I didn't get to leave until January 28 and my wife Suzanne flew down on the 30th. I left Ossining at 6:55 am to allow plenty of time to provide for possible traffic problems. I followed my usual route: NY9 to Gov. Mario Cuomo Bridge, thence I-287 to NJ Route 202 near Raritan, on to NJ 29 at Lambertville, south to I-295/I-95, across the Delaware and on south to the Baltimore-Washington Pkwy to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge over the Potomac and I-95 south to the Auto-Train terminal in Lorton, VA.

Upon arrival at 1:15 pm, I noted that the station was rather full. Although the AT had run late recently, it had arrived early and was being serviced. Upon checking in, I was told that the 5 and 7 pm sittings in the dining car were full. My choice was room service at 4:30 or 6:30 or the dining car at 9 pm. That's rather late for dinner but I selected it because I much prefer the diner. Boarding would start at 2:30 so I filled in some of the time by walking along the train to note the consist. Details will be at the end of this report; for now it will suffice to say there were four coaches, a diner-lounge, nine sleepers, a diner and lounge car. These were followed by the auto carrying cars. After departure, the conductor announced that 440 passengers and 168 vehicles were on board. He added that it was the longest passenger train in the world with 44 cars.

At 3:26, the train moved about a quarter mile south to the location where the auto carrier cars would be switched on to the back of the train. After the necessary brake test, we departed Lorton at 3:55 (scheduled time 4:00). Prior to departure our car attendant, Brian, made a full announcement about the train, the schedule and the services available. Once we were underway the conductor came on the PA with another announcement containing many details of the train and the area through which we were be traveling. I should note here that Brian was "top notch", one of the best car attendants I've ever had anywhere!

Around 4:30, I set my reading aside and went to the lounge car which was four cars behind my car. I reached it after passing through two more sleepers and the dining car. Upon arrival I noted that the front four tables were set up for dinner for overflow from the adjacent diner. But now it was time for a pre-dinner drink so I asked the young bartender for a Bloody Mary. He smiled and said "fine but you'll have to help me make it. Do we use gin or vodka? I'm new and still learning." So, I advised him of the ingredients and how to proceed—we both got a laugh out of it. I was tempted to mention that he is being "trained" in the traditional railroad way—on the job!

Soon 5 pm came and the dining car Steward made the first call. When he walked into the lounge car, a couple asked him if they could eat now instead of their scheduled 9 pm. He checked and found two seats for them just as more people arrived from the other car. I figured I would have to wait for the 9 pm hour but asked if he had room for one more. "No,

sorry” but a minute later he came back and advised that he had a seat for me, something I very much appreciated.

My dinner companions were a couple from around Baltimore and a self-described “disguised priest” who was enroute to Florida on a fundraising task. The menu indicated choices of Flat Iron Steak, Pasta Primavera, Roast Chicken or Atlantic Salmon. I elected the flat iron steak which came with mashed potatoes and string beans. The steak was tender and delicious. Also included were a pre-dinner salad and several dessert choices including my selection of vanilla ice cream with chocolate topping. Each person had a choice of several wines or beers. The four of us had some interesting conversation until it was politely suggested we move to the lounge car to enable preparation for the 7 pm sitting.

After retiring to my room, I caught up on some reading until the attendant came to make up the bed. I did more reading in bed while the train ran at speed (70 mph max) and whistled through the night for grade crossings.

I slept quite well, woke up at 6:50 am and soon washed up and got dressed. Earlier I had been reminded of one inconvenience of the Superliner roomettes—no in-room toilet. As per the “Good morning” announcement, there were two ways to obtain breakfast. First, one could go to the lounge car and obtain cereal and various other items to enjoy in your room. The alternative, which I used, was to be served breakfast in the dining car. After a wait of three minutes I was seated with a couple from Erie, PA. and a lady from the DC area. Three items were on the menu: Continental Breakfast, Spinach artichoke quiche or an egg white breakfast sandwich. I chose the quiche which sounded good and it was. Naturally this was accompanied by my usual morning cup of coffee and I took a banana and wrapped crumb cake back to the room for later consumption.

Fortunately, the train ran on schedule throughout the night so we were anticipating an on-time arrival at Sanford. In addition to the 3:55 departure time from Lorton, the only schedule notes I made were:

Emporia	7:05 pm
Rocky Mt.	8:02 pm
Wilson	8:21 pm
Sanford	8:50-9:11 am
(outside terminal awaiting 2 Sunrail trains to pass. SunRail dispatches this segment of the line.	
Sanford	9:22 (8:59) –
arrival at AT Terminal.	

My auto came off at 10:15 and I soon drove off for the 244 mile trip to Hallandale Beach where I arrived at 3:05 pm. The drive was fast with a 35-minute lunch stop at Ft. Pierce. Well, it was fast until close to West Palm Beach where traffic was encountered. As I mentioned, this was one of the best Auto-

Train trips I've ever experienced. The crew was friendly and energetic and my car attendant was outstanding. The consist is listed below.

(WEZ, Hallandale Beach, FL. February 1, 2025)

Consist Amtrak #53 Jan. 28-29, 2025

Engines: 821 & 835 (P40)

Cars: Coaches 34132, 34131, 34119, 34127

Diner-Lounge 37006 (coach section)

32108 – Sleeper

32118 - Sleeper (my car)

32116 - Sleeper *West Virginia*

32504 – Sleeper *Palm Bay* –10 Bedrooms upstairs

38053 – Diner

33100 – Lounge (4 tables used for dinner service)

32500 – Sleeper –10 Bedrooms upstairs

32107 – Sleeper

32105 - Sleeper

32073 – Sleeper

32113 – Sleeper

- Auto carrier cars.

Auto Train Northbound – April 2025

By WALTER E. ZULLIG., *New York Chapter, NRHS*

We started planning the northbound journey after we had been in South Florida for about two months. A phone call to Amtrak provided information as to what days sleeping car space was available and we elected to make the trip on April 14 - 15, 2025. Our auto was loaded the previous afternoon so we were off to an early departure on Monday, April 14th. We left Hallandale Beach at 8:25 am and reached the Auto-Train station in Sanford at 1:05 pm after a 240 mile drive with a 25 minute lunch stop

One of our objectives was to reach Sanford in time to get reservations for the first (5 pm) or second (7 pm) dinner sittings in the dining car as we find the third (9 pm) to be too late for us. Upon arrival the waiting room was rather full of passengers and we noted that one ticket window had a sign that only the 9 pm seating was open while the other indicated that both 7 and 9 had openings. Despite being at the window with the “only 9 pm” sign, we received reservations for the 7 pm sitting with no trouble. Having resolved that potential problem, Suzanne took a seat in the waiting room while I went outside to walk the train and record the consist. Because of the shorter platform length at Sanford, the train is loaded on two tracks. The locomotives and sleeper section are on the main station track while the coach diner [Cross-Country Café] and the four coaches are on a stub-end track at the south end of the station. Once all had boarded, the train was “closed” and a switch engine moved the coach section to the rear of the sleeper section and all the auto carriers are added behind them. The passenger car consist, details of which are shown below, was 9 (count ‘em!) sleepers, 4 coaches, 1 lounge car, 1 dining car and 1 Cross-Country Café. With the addition

of the auto carrier cars, there is no doubt this is the longest passenger train in the nation and possibly the world.

Having recorded the consist, I rejoined Suzanne in the waiting room. About then we noticed people walking out to the train so we did likewise, located our sleeper and settled in. As things turned out, our car was the last sleeper on the train so we had to walk through three other cars to reach the diner.

Accordingly, I visited the Cross-Country Café right behind our car for my traditional pre-departure Bloody Mary. The attendant was having trouble with his credit card machine so I suggested he call the station for a replacement but he did get it to work.

At 3:30 the switch engines began putting the train together. Once that was accomplished and the brake test completed, we departed Sanford at 3:54.

(4:00). Slow running at first with the heavy train but once on the main line we picked up good speed while running past endless trees. Soon the conductor made the traditional announcement: 468 passengers were on board along with 291 automobiles and 1 motorcycle. I didn't get the breakdown of coach vs. sleeper passengers but if not sold out, the train was very close to that. Here are some schedule notes:

Lv.	Sanford	3:54 (4:00) pm	
	DeLand	4:24	
Ps.	Palatka	5:13.	
Ps.	JAX	6:20	around the "Big Curve"
Ps.	Folkston GA	7:05	several "folks" outside taking pictures of the train
Ps.	Savannah	9:05	
Ps.	Fredericksburg, VA.	7:40 am	
Ps.	Quantico	8:02	on April 15
			overtook VRE train at the station
Ar.	LORTON	8:34 (8:59)	25 minutes EARLY

About 6:45 we started on the long walk to the diner. While passing through the sleepers the "first call" was heard. The interior of the diner presented a nice appearance to the entering passengers. We were seated opposite a couple from Philadelphia who have a second home in Punta Gorda on Florida's west coast. They were friendly people and we enjoyed the conversation with them. The menu selections were Atlantic Salmon, Roast Chicken, Flat Iron Steak and two other entrees. I enjoyed the delicious Flat Iron Steak while Suzanne had the salmon. The 5 dessert choices were tempting but since I had to settle for one, it was vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce. Suzanne had the cheesecake. After saying "goodbye" to our new friends, we returned to our room about 8:30. The attendant came by to make up the beds around 9:30. We were ready after the drive and the wine I had with dinner so I soon climbed up the ladder and dropped off to sleep.

I awoke at 6:45 AM the following morning during an announcement that the train was running ahead of schedule “so please come to the diner as soon as you can.” After quickly washing and dressing I went to the diner where I would have breakfast and, when finished, would bring a “take out bag” back to Suzanne. The menu was choice of cereal, continental breakfast, a spinach artichoke quiche or an Egg White Breakfast Sandwich. Beverages were various juices, coffee, tea or milk. I had the breakfast sandwich with OJ and coffee. I took coffee, a crumb cake and banana back to the room for Suzanne along with a cake and second coffee for me. As during the previous evening, the diner’s wait staff was courteous and speedy. My tablemates were a couple from Bay Shore on Long Island who had been vacationing in Clearwater.

During the night I had slept well and do not recall being aware of any stops, even the one at Florence, SC, for train servicing and crew change. I’m sure we passed some freight trains but didn’t get delayed by them as we had reached Lorton 25 minutes early. Once there, the crews began taking the train apart and soon the “Priority” vehicles were getting called for pickup. I wasn’t keeping track of time but estimate that our auto’s number was called about 15-20 minutes after the last “Priority” car had been called. Once underway, we encountered no congestion on the route I use so we kept moving and made good time. Our one stop was for lunch at the rest and service area on I-95 in Delaware. I always used to like the Friendly’s on DE 896 on my route but it has been closed for three years. The building was standing when I passed it southbound but now has been razed for a new complex. We exited I-95 just across the Delaware River bridge and used NJ 29 to US 202 to I-287 on across the Gov. Mario M. Cuomo Bridge, thence NY 9 to the entrance to our complex. Whew! Quite a drive but I’m sure glad to have the Auto-Train so as to avoid driving the entire way!

CONSIST TRAIN #52 SFA-LOR April 14-15, 2025

Engines: 357 and 330 [Siemens ALC 42's]	32500 Sleeper Palm Bay
Cars: 32105 Sleeper	32075 Sleeper Connecticut
32110 Sleeper	32106 Sleeper Pennsylvania
32087 Sleeper	32101 Sleeper North Carolina [our car]
32116 Sleeper	37002 Cross-Country Café
32503 Sleeper	34118 Coach
33102 Lounge car	34131 Coach
38033 Dining car	34123 Coach
	34129 Coach

Followed by the auto carrier cars. All passenger cars were Superliners. The 2 sleepers with the “325” prefix have 10 bedrooms upstairs instead of the usual bedroom/roomette combo. (WEZ 4/22/2025)

Chapter Events & Activities

Your Easter Bunny Express Ride Is Waiting!

By Oregon Rail Heritage Center



OREGON RAIL
HERITAGE CENTER



EASTER BUNNY EXPRESS



Take a festive spring ride on April 19

The sun is shining, spring is in full bloom, and the Easter Bunny is hopping into town! Celebrate the start of the season by taking a delightful ride behind a steam locomotive.

On Saturday, April 19th, join us for a 45-minute ride along the Willamette River in Portland to Oaks Park and back. The historic Polson #2 will pull all three runs of the Easter Bunny Express departing from Oregon Rail Heritage Center at:



1:00 PM



2:30 PM



4:00 PM

Bring your family and friends for this enchanting springtime tradition. Don't wait! Get your tickets [today](#), and hop aboard for a festive adventure.

PicnicRail' 25

By Pottstown & Reading Chapter, NRHS

A fundraising event to sponsor a camper to the NRHS Railcamp East.
We invite all local chapters and societies to help with this effort.

PRESENT

PICNICRAIL' 25
SATURDAY JULY 26, 2025
1 P.M. UNTIL ?
MAIER'S GROVE BLANDON, PA

EVENING SHOW BY STEVE BARRY – RAILFAN CHIEF EDITOR

The hosting group and guests will have some of their fundraising items for sale during the afternoon prior to the show.

Arrive early and enjoy the action on the Norfolk Southern's busy East Penn Main, adjacent to the grove.

Included are snacks and beverages during the afternoon and a buffet meal with BBQ chicken served promptly at 5 PM.

The grove is located on Grove Drive in Blandon diagonally across from Stoney Creek Rentals (the old Agway), you've shot trains from here before now get out and enjoy the action along the East Penn under the grove's trees or in case of inclement weather we'll have a good time under the pavilion. (Picnic is rain or shine.)

Prices: Adults \$20.00

Children 3-12 \$10.00

Under 3 free, but let us know how many

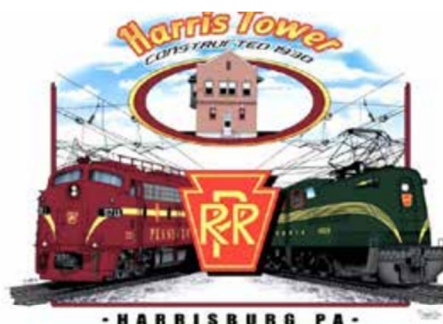
For tickets send SASE and check payable to: P&R Chapter NRHS

c/o Philip Reppert
17 Adele Ave
Blandon, Pa. 19510

Directions and a map will gladly be sent with the tickets (if requested) order deadline is July 12th , after that date we'll hold your tickets for pick-up at the grove.

Harris Tower Needs Your Help, Please!

By Harrisburg Chapter, NRHS



HARRIS TOWER NEEDS YOUR HELP!

We need to replace the roof on our 1929 Pennsylvania Railroad Harris Interlocking Tower Museum because leaks have developed in three of the four corners, greatly damaging the walls and ceiling. Inspection by three qualified bidders confirms that the leaks cannot

be repaired with patchwork. Rain, snow, ice, and wind threaten the crown jewel of our public outreach. Thousands of visitors have marveled at our interactive control of the mechanical and signaling technology of a century ago. ***We must preserve Harris Tower for future generations.***

Wind and water damage

Drone-camera views, followed by visual inspection from a ladder, shows that the current faux-slate shingle material lacks an "adhesion line." As a result, there is wind-induced buckling of the roofing material, and also evidence that the fasteners have begun to pull out of the roof decking. The vibration noise we hear inside on windy days is the faux slate "flapping." Currently available faux slate still lacks an adhesive line and would not be recommended for a new roof. For evidence of interior damage, see attached photos.

Cost to replace and repair

If you've had a home roof replaced, you know that it's crazy expensive. It will cost at least \$24,000 to replace our roof with GAF 50-year architectural shingles, repair existing damage, and prevent future damage. The NRHS Harrisburg Chapter Board of Directors is asking you to make a tax-deductible donation to help fund this work.

Matching gift challenge

An anonymous chapter member is challenging the rest of us to step up by matching each contribution, dollar for dollar, to a maximum of \$5,000. Your financial help is paramount in preserving Harris for the future.

Investing in the future

Our dedication to Harris Tower, backed by 30 years of volunteer time and money already spent toward restoration, demands that we take action to protect our investment. For questions about details of the structural damage, contact Bob Killoran at 717-919-8936 or Chapter President Mark Eyer at 717-574-1035.

Your part

Please consider the need, then use the form below to make your tax-deductible contribution. All donors will receive a written acknowledgement and will be recognized in the chapter newsletter. Thank you in advance for your commitment and generosity. To donate on-line, click or visit <https://harrisburgnrhs.square.site/> and check "Harris Tower Roof Repairs."

Harrisburg Chapter, National Railway Historical Society – a 501 (c) (3) non-profit educational organization

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation for a new roof and repairs at Harris Tower.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to **Harrisburg Chapter NRHS**, and mail to Dick Crow, Treasurer, 412 Ricky Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. Or visit <https://harrisburgnrhs.square.site/> and check "Harris Tower Roof Repairs."

5/3/2025 2:04 PM



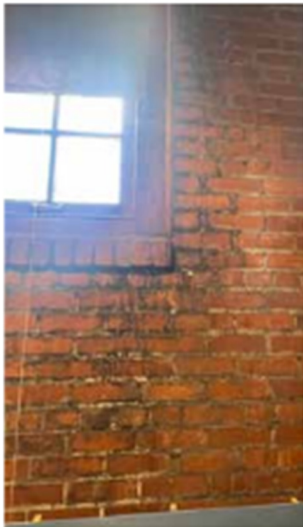
The main beam is cracked at the lower section due to stress from water, fatigue of the rafters, and weight, probably due to snow buildup. It is sagging by about 2 inches and will need to be bolstered to restore its structural integrity.



This attic view shows the stress in a rafter, the only one that's damaged so far. It's in the southeast corner, where most water is entering the property.



Water damage in a corner of the attic. The dark coloration of the brick shows where water has been penetrating from the roof line.



Above: Damage to walls in the tower's first floor, southeast end, near the diorama area, showing how water seepage has discolored the bricks.



Right: Buckled ceiling plaster above the second floor, the room most seen by visitors. Water seepage also has damaged the southeast-corner wooden window frame, which is OK for now but eventually will need to be repaired or replaced.

