

NRHS News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2017

Double-header steam with 4501, 630 headlines convention schedule



Cover photos by Alex Mayes, Potomac Chapter NRHS
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'Music City' will host annual NRHS convention June 20-24

By JOHN GOODMAN, NRHS convention chairman

The tentative schedule for the 2017 National Railway Historical Society national convention has been announced. The event will be held June 20-24 in Nashville, Tenn.

The host hotel and convention headquarters will be the Nashville Airport Hotel. This hotel was formerly the Holiday

Inn/Airport before being sold recently to the Hilton chain. You can make your reservations by phoning 844-886-4136. Hotel officials are asking members to use the "Holiday Inn Airport" name when making reservations. Also, mention NRHS or "HistSoc" to get the Society's discounted room rate of \$129 per night. Reservations must be made by May 21.

NRHS members can begin picking up their convention tickets, information packets and credentials on Tuesday afternoon, June 20, when the registration room opens at the host hotel.

The Wednesday, June 21 schedule includes a trip to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum. Charter buses will depart the hotel after breakfast for Chattanooga, Tenn., where members will visit the museum’s depot/yard facility to board a special train with double-headed steam engines No. 4501 and No. 630. This train will head to Summerville, Ga., where members will watch the locomotives being wyed and serviced.

Passengers will have lunch in their diner en route to Summerville. There will also be a photo run-by at this point.

Due to time restraints here, passengers will re-board chartered buses and return directly to the hotel in Nashville.

(Note: This train is limited to only 160 passengers, and members should book early for this special train).

Two trip options are available for Thursday.

Option No. 1 – Members board chartered buses for a lunch trip on the “My Old Kentucky Dinner Train” operating from Bardstown, Ky., for a three-hour trip that includes a three-course lunch for each guest. Again, convention attendees leave the hotel after breakfast and travel in chartered buses for the trip to/from Bardstown, Ky. to ride this train.

Option No. 2 – Those choosing this option will board buses at the hotel for two different museums in Kentucky. The first stop will be the Historic Railpark and Museum at Bowling Green, Ky. While not an operating museum, it has a passenger train on site open for inspection by guests, plus a depot/museum with much to see.

The second stop will be at the Kentucky Railway Museum at New Haven, Ky. Members will board the special train (operated especially for the NRHS group) that will head to Boston, Ky. This diesel-powered train will operate 22 miles over their line, and will include a photo stop en route. Power will be the museum’s BL-2 and CF-7 locomotives.

A box lunch, served before departure, is included in this trip on this special train.

The Friday, June 23 schedule will include a day in the hotel

for the NRHS council and the board of directors meetings, and the annual membership meeting, to be held in the afternoon. Con-

vention organizers also hope to have a heritage tour that morning that will include a trip to the President Jackson Hermitage home before a lunch cruise on the General Jackson showboat.

The annual NRHS banquet will be held Friday evening at the hotel, with a cash bar prior to the banquet.

On Saturday, the NRHS will provide a special train over the Tennessee Central Museum line of the Nashville & Eastern Railroad. This special train will operate to Cookeville, Tenn., which is a 180-mile round trip from the boarding point near the host hotel. Convention officials will operate shuttle buses from the hotel to the depot boarding site.

The NRHS may also have at least one seminar at the hotel on Friday, in addition to the other events shown on the calendar for that day of the convention. This seminar is not as yet confirmed, however.

Prices for each event, as well as departure times for the trips, will be announced in the near future.

Be sure to visit the NRHS website at <www.nrhs.com> for the latest updates on convention events and ticket sales. Tickets will go on sale on March 1.

Nashville offers a wide variety of attractions for visitors, so those attending the convention may well want to arrive early and/or stay late to see some of what the town has to offer. Many travel services have listed “Music City” as one of the top places to visit in 2017.

Among the top sites are the home of the Grand Ole Opry, Ryman Auditorium, Country Music Hall of Fame and many more.

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ON THE COVER

CONVENTION DOUBLE-HEADER – Former Southern Railway steam locomotives No. 4501 (top photo) and No. 630 (bottom photo) will pull an NRHS excursion special from the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum (TVRM) in Chattanooga to Summerville, Ga., on Wednesday, June 21. The 2-8-2 No. 4501 is shown leading an excursion train north bound on the Southern main at Winston interlocking, three miles south of Culpeper, Va., at MP 67 on May 19, 1985. The lower photo shows 2-8-0 No. 630, assisted by GP40-2 No. 3052 and RP-E4C (slug) No. 716, pulling an excursion sponsored by the TVRM, in conjunction with Norfolk Southern Railway, as part of the 21st Century Steam Program on Sunday, March 17, 2013. The Roanoke-Lynchburg round trip excursion was over the Blue Ridge District. This photo was taken as the excursion train roared through Lowry, en route to Lynchburg.

Need to contact a board member? Here's the information you need

Occasionally, chapter officials and members need to contact an NRHS representative for assistance or information. It may be to ask a director to attend a special chapter meeting or help with applying for an NRHS Heritage Grant.

The contact information for members of the NRHS board, as well as presidential appointees, members of committees, and other NRHS officials, is included in the list below.

The list will also be posted at <www.nrhs.com>.

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The president's corner**Three chapters thanked for helping with fall NRHS conference**

By AL WEBER, NRHS President

Well, the holidays are over, and we are starting a new year. I am getting anxious for Spring to arrive but it is still a few months away.

Many chapters are having events. If your chapter is one of those, please get the information to <info@nrhs.com> so we can help you, or send it to <nrhsnews@charter.net> to get publicity in the *NRHS News*. After the event, be sure to submit articles and photos to the *News*.

Remember the NRHS has a FaceBook presence and many

followers, and we'll be glad to post information about your meetings and special events. You might just get more attendance at your event and perhaps even pick up a new member of two for your chapter. Send your events for Facebook to <nrhsnews@charter.net> and we'll post it for free,

Here at national, we are working on a very special *Bulletin* issue that will publish very important railroad historical photos. I will not hint with more information than that, but it will be very important to the railroad historians and, I hope, to NRHS members.



Photo by ROBERT C. REED, courtesy of the *Hickory Record*

AT NEWTON DEPOT – *Catawba County (N.C.) resident James Glenn has been a train enthusiast all of his life and is now the coordinator for Newton (N.C.) Historic Depot. Here, Glenn holds an old wooden style railroad crossing sign in the museum.*

Life-long railfan oversees operations at narrow gauge museum

By MARY CANROBERT, reprinted courtesy of *Hickory (N.C.) Record*

Twenty-three-year-old James Glenn arrived at Newton's South-eastern Narrow Gauge & Shortline Museum to unlock the front door and then sit down with me to talk about his job as museum coordinator.

He was wearing a Santa hat. That's James – always in the spirit of things.

In November when I visited the old depot that used to reside a half mile up the tracks toward Conover and had been bought, moved, and restored by the Newton Depot Authority in the late 1990s and early 2000s, James had on a train conductor's cap.

James accepted the job of coordinator – a word not too dissimilar from conductor – in August, a perfect position for someone as keen and knowledgeable about railroads as he is. "Oh, yeah!" he responded when I asked him if he's always been interested in trains. "I saw my first train when I was 6

months old. It's always been a hobby of mine."

Reminiscing about looking at trains with his Spruce Pine grandfather, Lloyd Glenn, James said, "I remember watching the train come toward us down the tracks, the engineer waving at us out the window. I loved watching the wheels and hearing the sounds, and how fast it would go.

"I had model trains all over my house," offered James, who has around 30 of his own models set up at the museum.

"One of my (priorities) as coordinator is getting the word out that this is a museum, not just an old depot," James said.

Inside the building at 1123 North Main Avenue is all manner of vintage railroad equipment: lanterns, tools, telephones, signs – even dining car dishes.

A stationmaster's desk from the Taylorsville depot sits in

front of a big picture window, facing the tracks, the desk's top strewn with the accouterments of the job.

Outside the depot is an array of refurbished train cars: A 1920s steam locomotive and fuel tender, an early 1900s log car, an 1870s boxcar, to name a few. Under a pavilion are five pieces. Others are being restored in various places in the Unifour. The museum's website, <www.newtondepot.com>, and its Facebook page at <<https://www.facebook.com/southeasternngsm/>> have loads of pictures and particulars.

Commenting about the museum's 1870s Carolina and North-western narrow gauge boxcar No. 401 that ran between Chester, S.C. and Lenoir, James said, "The cool thing is it would have run right back here." He pointed toward the now non-functioning tracks behind the depot.

James explained that Norfolk Southern Railway hadn't used the 1924-built depot since the late 1980s and that it was becoming a liability to the company in its location in a populated area. It was abandoned and no one was keeping track of it. "If no one had bought and moved the building, Norfolk Southern was going to tear it down," James shared. "A group of concerned citizens came together and formed the Newton Depot Authority, and within weeks prior to its demolition, they had it relocated to its current address."

"I was 5 years old at the time," said James. "I was actually there when it was being moved." His mom, Jan Glenn, had heard about the move and took James to watch. "It was the strangest thing in the world to see – a big train depot moving on the back of a truck through the railroad yard."

The depot, though renovated, looks much the way it did when first built. It has some original components, such as its windows and passenger doors. It was at one of those doors that a woman in her mid-90s stood one recent day for over half an hour, silently gazing toward the tracks. "Her son explained to me that her husband had come (into Newton) on a train right after World War II and had met her there with a wedding ring," said James. "They immediately went off and got married."

The depot is open to the public free of charge every Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. One of James's duties is to man the museum, which attracts all sorts of interested and interesting visitors.

"Every week you get stories," James pointed out. "A man with dementia came in and with incredible details started talking about riding trains from Lenoir to Charlotte. He picked up a model locomotive and vivid memories kicked in. He got a tear in his eye as he told me about riding to Charlotte each Christmas to see Santa during the 1940s.

"I love seeing the enthusiasm of the visitors," James said, "watching children's eyes light up when the model trains roll by and seeing older people get excited when they see artifacts they haven't seen in decades, such as lanterns and old phones."

James said three groups keep the museum rolling: the Newton Depot Authority, the operations committee for the NDA, and the Alexander Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. Besides public relations, James provides consistency and supervises all aspects of the gallery. "I'm kind of a point person," he offered.

He's also an excited person. "We've grown tremendously in the last year," James said. "We have some incredible events to look forward to in the coming year."

One will take place Jan. 31 at 7 p.m. at the museum. Free to the public, "An Evening of Tall Tales of the Rails" will feature music by Hobo Bill & Kristen and James.

Yes, James is a musician as well as a train museum conductor and coordinator. He sings, plays numerous instruments, and is part of the North Carolina-based band, Secondhand Still.

For the record, though he's busy as a fireman on a steam locomotive, not once during our interview did James lose his train of thought.

Sorry. I just had to.

Ronald Paul Ziel, 77, railroad historian, dies in Idaho on Dec. 15

Ronald Paul (Ron) Ziel, 77, a resident at the Good Samaritan Society in Idaho Falls, Idaho, died Thursday morning, Dec. 15 from natural causes.

Ziel was a member of the NRHS and a founding member of an NRHS chapter. He also helped Mike Eagleson write *Southern Steam Specials* (two editions) which had involvement with Graham Claytor (first edition) and Jim Bistline (second edition).

Ziel was born on July 17, 1939, in New York City before moving, at the age of 10, with his family to Melville, N.Y., located in suburban Long Island. He attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, where he received a bachelor's degree in art in 1961.

Ziel travelled around the world photographing passenger and freight trains in several countries and on every continent except Antarctica. His collection of black & white and color photos was massive, as he collected over 30,000 historical railroad photographs during his 50-year career. He wrote and published several successful books on trains with emphasis on steam powered railroads. A few of his books were so popular that they were even translated into German and sold throughout Europe.

Ziel later moved to Idaho to be closer to family members.

A funeral service was held Wednesday evening, Dec. 21 in the chapel of Eckersell Funeral Home in Rigby, Idaho.



PHOTO BY KEVIN GILLIAM

HOLIDAY STEAM TRIPS — *The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad in extreme western North Carolina brought ex-U.S. Army and Reader Railroad 2-8-0 No. 1702 out of storage for a few trips at the end of December. The 1702 returned to operation in July, but hadn't operated since early November. This photo was taken during the return leg of a Bryson City-to-Dillsboro turn on Dec. 30.*

31st annual Harrisburg Chapter railroad show and sale set for March 11

By SLOAN AUCHINCLOSS, Harrisburg Chapter NRHS

The 31st annual Railroad Show & Collectors Market, sponsored by the Harrisburg Chapter NRHS, will be held Saturday, March 11, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., in a new location, the First Church of God, 245 West High Street in Middletown, Pa. The event will feature model railroads, railroadiana, train layouts in several gauges, as well as movies. There will also be a test track.

Trolley historian Ken Springirth will present an illustrated talk entitled "Philadelphia Area Trolleys." His presentation will start at 11 a.m.

Since 1959, Springirth has been researching, photographing, and collecting information on railroad and trolley car lines in the United States and many foreign countries. He is the author of 32 books on trains and trolleys, including *Southeastern Pennsylvania Trolleys*, *Suburban Philadelphia Trolleys*, *Philadelphia Electrified Rail Lines*, *Pennsylvania's Trolley Heritage*, and *Trolleys of Pennsylvania*. He earned a B.S. degree in mechanical engineering from Drexel University in Philadelphia.

He is the son and grandson of trolley motormen who worked

in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. respectively.

A donation of \$5 will be requested at the door, with free admission for youngsters under age 12. Proceeds benefit the chapter's on-going preservation projects.

There will be a snack bar on the premises.

Harris Tower, the chapter's restored 1931 Pennsylvania Railroad interlocking tower, featuring the original electro-pneumatic levers now linked to a computer for simulated action, will be open for visitors as well. There is free admission to the tower, located at 637 Walnut Street in Harrisburg, Pa. This is an excellent Amtrak and Norfolk Southern viewing and photo site.

Harrisburg Chapter, one of over 135 chapters of the NRHS, is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to studying railroad history and preserving significant local railroad artifacts. Major projects include maintaining Pennsylvania's official electric locomotive (GG-1 No. 4859) and preserving and operating Harris Tower.

Restored wooded interurban trolley station now open at museum

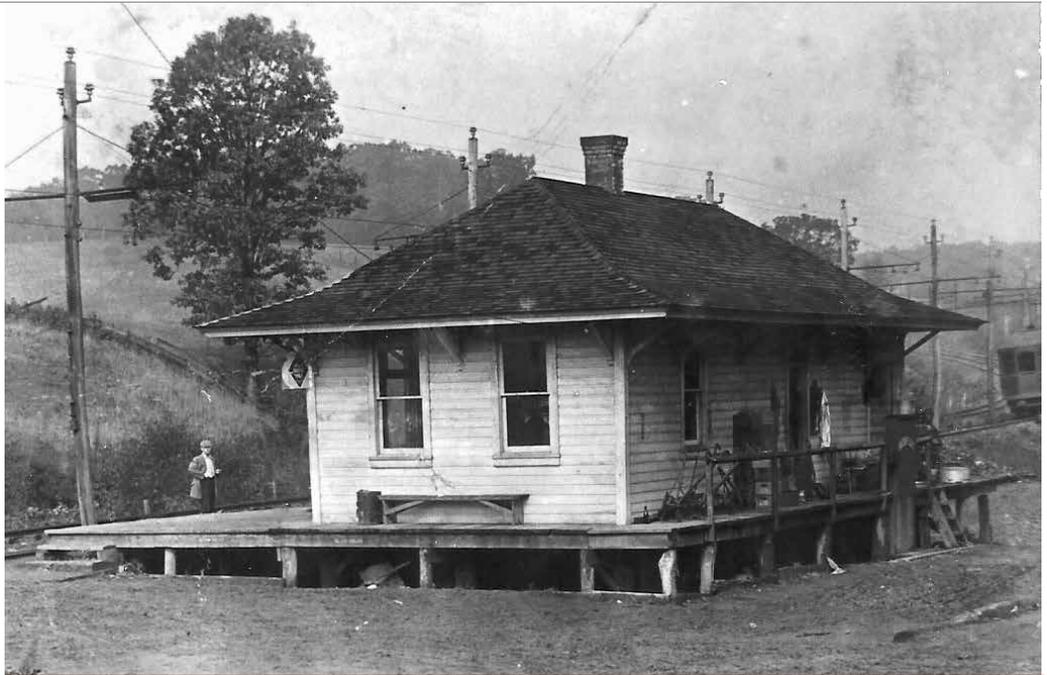
Article and photos courtesy of PENNSYLVANIA TROLLEY MUSEUM

(Editor's note: *Related article and photo on page 14 of this issue.*

WASHINGTON, PA. — A vintage 1908 wooden interurban trolley station that once served trolley passengers, and later postal and deli customers, was reopened to the public on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 1-2, 2016 at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum.

The station's interesting history is detailed, including the 23 years it was used as a freight/passenger station for the Harmony Route, its relocation to the middle of Wexford, and its 83 years of use as a post office, antique and craft shop and deli, in the restored building. Also detailed is its relocation and restoration to the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum.

Scott Becker, the museum's executive director said, "This building is remarkably well preserved and really helps to tell the fascinating story of interurban trolley service from Pittsburgh into the North Hills."



AT ORIGINAL LOCATION — The Wexford Station is shown at its original location, where it served as an interurban trolley station.

The museum is open to the public for the 2017 season beginning April 1. Hours are Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. April through December, and seven days a week June,



AT RIBBON CUTTING — Local dignitaries and members of the family that owned the station for many years were present for the ribbon cutting at the restored Wexford Station.

July and August. No tours or rides are offered on Mondays except for July 3 and Aug. 14.

Admission is \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors (62+), \$7 for children (ages 3-15). Admission includes scenic trolley rides, guided tours, trolley era film, exhibits, picnic area and Museum Store. Special event hours and admission prices, including extended tours, may differ.

Check the museum website at <patrolley.org> for more detailed information on tours and a listing of all the 2017 special events.

The museum also offers birthday and all occasion parties, in addition to the popular "Operator for an Hour" program.

Pennsylvania Trolley Museum is honored to receive a 2017 Institutional Award from the Pennsylvania Museums for the preservation, restoration and interpretation of the vintage 1908 Wexford Station. Each year, Institutional Awards recognize several outstanding and innovative projects that have provided an exemplary contribution to the museum, public history, or cultural tourism in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania Museums is a state-wide organization that creates and supports the museum community in the state through advocacy work, professional development programs, and information sharing.

STATION ON THE MOVE — *The Wexford Trolley station is shown in the top photo being lifted from its former foundation to be placed on a truck for the trip (middle photo) to its new foundation at home adjacent to the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum.*

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take I-79 to exit 41, Race Track Road, or take U.S. Route 19 to Race Track Road. After exiting, follow signs for approximately three miles to the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum.

For more information or questions, contact Scott Becker, executive director at 724-228-9256 or <sbecker@pa-trolley.org>.





PHOTO BY JIM McNUTT, *Observer Reporter/Washington County (Pa.) News*

AT DEDICATION – *Scott Becker, left, executive director of Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, talks with the Hackett family – Susan Buergi, Louise Hackett and Paul Hackett – who donated the Wexford trolley station to the museum after 80 years in the family, before ceremonies dedicating the station at the trolley museum recently.*

Dedication brings back memories for trolley station's former owners

By NATALIE REED MILLER, reprinted courtesy of Observer-Reporter

Stepping through the doors of the old Wexford Trolley Station recently transported Louise Brooker Hackett back to the structure's days as a post office, when her uncle, Al Brooker, sold candy bars as well as stamps.

"I could always get a Hershey's here," said Hackett from inside the 650-square-foot space, now located on the grounds of Pennsylvania Trolley Museum in Chartiers Township.

Hackett's family, the Brookers, owned the structure for more than 80 years, donating it to the museum in 2014. Built in 1908 for the Pittsburgh, Harmony, Butler and New Castle Railway, the building accommodated passengers and freight as a trolley station. When the station closed in 1931, station agent William P. Brooker, Hackett's grandfather, purchased and relocated it within Wexford, where it was used as a post office, antique shop and as the site of the popular Wexford Post Office Deli from 1983 to 2014.

Trudy Brooker Purvis, Hackett's sister, managed the building and arranged for it to be given to the museum. A ceremony opening the station to the public Friday was held in honor of Purvis, who died in 2014.

"I thought it was wonderful that it was donated so the community can get the benefit of it," Hackett said.

"The station is brimming with history," said Scott Becker, executive director of the museum.

Becker thanked the family for maintaining many original details.

"You never changed a thing. You didn't hack it up, and that's really important to us," he said. "A lot of things in this building are original. It's remarkable."

The interior features antique wooden, curved waiting bench-



PHOTO COURTESY OF PENNSYLVANIA TROLLEY MUSEUM

LIKE NEW – *The interior of the Wexford Trolley Station was restored to its original appearance.*

es, a crank telephone and a potbelly stove. Volunteers painted the exterior its original forest green with deep red trim.

“When you walk in, it looks like a trolley station,” said Becker, adding one day, it will be again.

Museum officials have plans to eventually extend an existing trolley line past the Wexford Station, allowing it to serve its original purpose.

Transporting the station from Wexford to Washington was a great feat, said Becker. Because it sat directly on the ground with no foundation, soil around the building was excavated and utility lines dug up. The sills, or base, of the structure were all replaced, as were the floor joists. The roof was cut in half and brought to the museum in sections. In June 2015, the building itself was trucked to the site, where it was placed on a foundation.

“Local contractors and a lot of volunteers helped. It’s really been a major project,” Becker

said. “And without the Brooker family, none of this would have happened. I look upon them as a key part of the equation.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF PENNSYLVANIA TROLLEY MUSEUM

STOVE – *A stove, as well as artwork showing the station as it appeared while in use, are a part of the decor in the restored station.*

Second annual New England Santa Express Special is success

By *STEVE CASEY, President, Railroad Museum of New England*

THOMASTON, Conn. — The second annual Connecticut Community Foundation and O&G *Santa Express Special* held Saturday, Nov. 26, was a tremendous success, according to Steve Casey, president of the Railroad Museum of New England.

“We treated more than 100 disadvantaged children and their families who would have otherwise never had the opportunity to enjoy a fabulous train ride with Santa, Mrs. Claus and all the elves,” said Casey. “We had a fantastic time, and all the smiles made the Thomaston Station glow.”

Families sang Christmas songs, and children danced with excitement on board historic train coaches on the way to pick up Santa and Mrs. Claus at his workshop on the Connecticut Community Foundation’s *Santa Express Special* on the Railroad Museum of New England’s (RMNE) Naugatuck Railroad. The RMNE started its busiest season for children and their families with a holiday sing-a-long at Thomaston Station.

Karen J. Senich, executive director, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury, expressed her gratitude for the event by saying, “We appreciate being included for the opportunity. Having taken my own child on the *Santa Express*, I know how exciting it can be for the children. This was a treat for everyone.”



TALKING TO SANTA — A young passenger on the *Santa Express Special* shares his wish list with Santa.



PHOTOS BY HEATHER STAMPP, COURTESY OF RAILROAD MUSEUM OF NEW ENGLAND

SPREADING CHEER — One of Santa’s elves entertains a group of young passengers on holiday train.

Olivia Jefferson, After School Program Coordinator for the Waterbury Youth Services, said that several of their students really enjoyed it.

Pam Vellucci, the Family Service Coordinator of Plymouth Head Start, said, "Thanks for the great experience for my Head Start families. One boy told me he went on the choo choo train and saw Santa. He was so animated talking about it.

"Another grandfather took his grandson. I'm not sure who had the better time. Start income guidelines are a family of four who can make a maximum of \$31,000. They cannot afford this wonderful experience that you and your grant supporters provided them. Again, thank you on behalf of my Head Start families. Merry Christmas."

The RMNE distributed tickets to children and their families by partnering with 10 social service agencies in the Waterbury and Litchfield Hills regions, including the Litchfield Hills Salvation Army, Mindscape Industries of Thomaston, Thomaston Social Services, Watertown Social Services, Waterbury Youth Service System, Boys & Girls Club Of Greater Waterbury, Waterbury Housing Authority, Wolcott Resource Center, Plymouth Head Start, and FISH/Friends in Service to Humanity.

The Connecticut Community Foundation has been helping people give back to their communities for more than 90 years. The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees and managed by a staff of experts in fund manage-



GROUP HUG – Santa shares a 'group hug' with four children on the Santa Express Special.

ment, philanthropy, estate planning, grant making and community issues.

NRHS Heritage Grant application packets are now available

By BOB KORNREICH, chairman of NRHS Historic Grants committee.

The 2017 NRHS Heritage Grants application package is now available.

Please note that there are three different files. All three files can be found and downloaded from the NRHS web site at <<http://nrhs.com/program/heritage-grants>>: 2017 Heritage Grants announcement; 2017 instructions; and 2017 application.

Grant applications must be submitted electronically to <grants@nrhs.com> no later than 5 p.m. PST (8 p.m. EST), Wednesday, March 1, 2017.

The NRHS Grants Committee will make 2017 grant recom-

mendations prior to the spring conference (March 30-April 1).

The NRHS Railway Heritage Grants Program provides financial support to projects that contribute to preservation of, and education about, railway history. This includes grants for stabilization and restoration of railroad equipment like steam locomotives and steam trains and diesel locomotives, as well as railway buildings and for the preservation and archiving of historical records and train pictures.

The largest number of grants have been for preservation of rail equipment, locomotives (both steam and diesel), passenger cars, freight cars, cabooses and electric streetcars, railway depots and towers and archival documents and photos.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LANCASTER CHAPTER NRHS

25-YEAR CERTIFICATES — Lancaster Chapter 25-year pin recipients Harold “Smoke” and Helen Shaak (front) are congratulated by (second row, left to right): NRHS Directors Charles Webb, Steve Barry and Tony White, and NRHS Vice President Joe Maloney.

Shaaks receive 25-year pins at annual Lancaster Chapter banquet

By TOM SHENK, Lancaster Chapter NRHS president

PARADISE, PA. — The members of the Lancaster Chapter NRHS held their annual banquet on Friday, Nov. 18 at the Historic Revere Tavern in Paradise, Pa.

Steve Barry, an NRHS Global Director, Wilmington Chapter NRHS president and *Railfan and Railroad* editor, presented the program. He shared some of his favorite photos from the year, including photos of the 2016 NRHS convention in Denver, Colo.

A highlight of the evening was District 2 Director Harold (Smoke) Shaak and his wife, Helen, receiving their NRHS 25-year pins, presented by NRHS Vice President Joe Maloney.

Joining in the evening celebration were NRHS District 1 Director and Western Connecticut Chapter President Tony White, and District 2 Director Charles Webb.

The Lancaster Chapter is a founding chapter of NRHS.

Convention trip guide to Colorado railroads still available from NRHS

By JOHN H. GOODMAN, NRHS convention chairman

The NRHS still has copies of *Colorado Railroads* from Kalmbach Publishing available for purchase. This is the trip guide that was used at the 2016 NRHS convention in Denver. Each convention registration packet included this item.

The booklet price is \$7.50 per copy, including postage. Please send your order to the official NRHS address, but please add

“Attn: Convention Committee” to your envelope: National Railway Historical Society, c/o John K Fiorilla, Esq., Capehart & Scatchard PA, P.O. Box 5016, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054.

When ordering, please include your name, contact information, the number of copies desired, order payment, and mailing or shipping address.

20 years ago: RegioSprinter made demonstration runs in U.S.

By *MATTHEW G. VUREK, Central Coast Chapter NRHS*

During the early 20th century when improved roads and automobiles began to reduce ridership on passenger trains operated on light-density branch lines, railroads turned to the self-propelled gasoline-electric car to reduce costs but maintain service.

In California, Southern Pacific, Northwestern Pacific, Western Pacific and Santa Fe all operated various “flavors” of self-propelled “doodlebugs,” some lasting into the 1940s. Short line California Western Railroad acquired the first of several such railcars in 1925. Two others, acquired in 1934 and 1963 respectively, remain in service today, albeit with diesel engines.

In 1949, the Budd Company introduced its self-propelled Rail Diesel Car (RDC) with two 275 horsepower diesel engines. Approximately 400 such cars were built until the end of production in 1962.

Budd claimed the RDC could reduce passenger train costs as much as 50 percent and marketed them with the slogan “RDC Brings Them Back To The Rails.” Santa Fe and Western Pacific each purchased a pair of RDCs, while Southern Pacific purchased one at regulatory gunpoint.

Only SP’s RDC lasted in service in the state after 1960, and it ended its career on the Northwestern Pacific in tri-weekly service between Eureka and Willits until April 30, 1971. In 1978, Budd attempted a comeback with the RDC design with the SPV-2000 (self-propelled vehicle designed to last until

the year 2000) but it was unsuccessful. None ever operated in California.

In 1995, Siemens introduced its “RegioSprinter,” a self-propelled 50-ton, 81-foot, low-floor diesel railcar for service on light-density passenger railroad lines in Germany where patronage and service frequency did not justify the cost of electrification. It has a powered single axle on each end and an unpowered four axle wheelset in the middle. The RegioSprinter is powered by two five-cylinder, 275 horsepower turbocharged M.A.N. diesel engines. Each end has an operator position.

Siemens loaned the RegioSprinter to Calgary Transit (CTrain) for five months in 1996. Its first revenue run was on April 12 when a shuttle service began on CP Rail track during morning and evening weekday rush hours between CTrain’s Anderson light rail station and 162nd Avenue Southwest in Shawnessy. Daily ridership reached 937 passengers on May 2.

Calgary Transit used the \$1.5 million dollar RegioSprinter to demonstrate the viability of extending light rail service five miles to Shawnessy. CP Rail crews operated the RegioSprinter, and no freight trains ran while it was on the track. The demonstration was successful, and the CTrain light rail extension eventually opened on June 28, 2004.

California was the RegioSprinter’s next stop where demonstration trips, under the guise of “alternative rail technology,”



PHOTO BY JAMIE MILLER

DURING AMERICAN TOUR — After leaving California, the Siemens RegioSprinter went on a tour around the United States. On Oct. 14, 1997, it was on display at the restored former Union Pacific depot in Boise, Idaho, the year Amtrak service ended to that city.



PHOTO BY GARY PERAZZO

AT SIEMENS PLANT – The RegioSprinter rests outside the Siemens assembly plant in Sacramento on Oct. 23, 1996. Due to its noncompliance with several American safety regulations, it had to travel between demonstration locations aboard a flatcar.

were made on various routes under the sponsorship of local transit agencies and Amtrak. After some preparation at the Siemens assembly plant in Sacramento, it made trips between the Nimbus Winery and Folsom on the former Southern Pacific Placerville Branch on Dec. 6, 1996.

Next was a tour of the Northwestern Pacific, although this was the only trackage it visited in the Bay Area, which was a former main line. The RegioSprinter ran between Healdsburg and Santa Rosa on Dec. 9 and between Santa Rosa and Novato the next day. On Dec. 11, it ran on the Napa Valley Railroad between Napa and Yountville, and the next day was on display in Napa.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority was the RegioSprinter's next host. On Dec. 16, the railcar ran on the former Western Pacific from 28th and Santa Clara streets in San Jose to the Union City BART station. The car was displayed at the former SP San Jose depot on Dec. 18 and 21. It made a round trip on the former SP Vasona Branch from San Jose to Campbell on Dec. 20. Neither trip was open to the public.

Santa Cruz County got its RegioSprinter run on Dec. 31

when it made public trips on the Santa Cruz, Big Trees & Pacific between Maple and Union streets in Santa Cruz. The former Southern Pacific Monterey Branch was next when the RegioSprinter ran public trips between Marina and Fort Ord on Jan. 5, 1997. Trips were also made that month on the former Santa Fe Escondido Branch, Metrolink's former Santa Fe Pasadena Subdivision, the former Santa Fe Redlands Branch and on short line Fillmore & Western. The RegioSprinter's United States tour eventually included visits to Arizona, Idaho, Texas, Florida, North Carolina and New Jersey.

Since the RegioSprinter did not meet American crashworthiness standards, it had to be hauled by rail between testing locations aboard a flatcar.

The RegioSprinter must have left something magical in its path during its California visit as the following routes it traversed now have (or will have or are planning) rail transit or passenger train service:

- Former Southern Pacific Vasona Branch San Jose to Campbell: Valley Transportation Authority Vasona Light Rail Extension (opened Oct. 1, 2005).

- Former Southern Pacific Placerville Branch Sacramento to Folsom: Sacramento RT Light Rail (extended to Folsom on Oct. 15, 2005).
- Former Western Pacific Fremont to San Jose: Bay Area Rapid Transit Warm Springs Extension (under construction).
- Northwestern Pacific Santa Rosa to Novato: Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) commuter trains (testing phase).
- Former Santa Fe Pasadena Subdivision: Los Angeles MTA Foothill Gold Line Light Rail (extended from Sierra Madre to Azusa on Sept. 23, 2015; under construction east to Montclair)
- Former Santa Fe Escondido Branch: North County Transit District Oceanside to Escondido Sprinter Light Rail (opened March 9, 2008; uses pairs of Siemens Desiro-class diesel railcars which are much larger than the RegioSprinter).
- Former Santa Fe Redlands Branch: Redlands Passenger Rail Project (under final design; similar to current Sprinter system).

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PHOTO BY MATTHEW G. VUREK

AT THE CONTROLS – *The operator’s position inside the Siemens RegioSprinter while on display on Track Two at the former Southern Pacific depot in San Jose on Dec. 21, 1996. This area is elevated from the rest of the otherwise “low floor” car and an identical position is on the opposite end. The interior also hosted a ticket machine.*



PHOTO BY MATTHEW G. VUREK

Its cab adorned with an Amtrak decal while on the former Southern Pacific Monterey Branch, the Siemens RegioSprinter putters eastbound through the former Fort Ord Army Base on Jan 5, 1997.



RESTORED TRESTLE – *The Kinsol trestle in British Columbia is now open to walkers, hikers and cyclists.*

Restored historic Kinsol Trestle is one of the largest in the world

Text and photos by DICK RAUB, reprinted with permission from The Trainmaster, newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Chapter NRHS

The Kinsol Trestle lies near Lake Shawingan just east of Mill Bay and Cobble Hill, British Columbia (Vancouver Island). This restored trestle is one of the largest in the world: 414 feet high and 1,444 feet long (longest in Canada).

The railroad traversed it on a 7 degree curve. Kinsol is a shortening of the name given to an ill-fated gold mine flamboyantly named King Solomon Mine. It lies approximately 60 kilometers (37.3 miles) north of Victoria, west of the Trans-Canada Highway.

The trestle is reached by an easy one kilometer (.6 mile) walk along the old railroad roadbed which is part of the Cowichan Valley Regional Trail.

Construction: The rail line was started in 1911 by the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway (CNoPR). It was built by local farmers and loggers, with investment funds from the Canadian Western Lumber Company, which was the largest lumber company in the world at that time.

The trestle was never completed by the CNoPR, and the line only reached Youbou before construction was terminated. The CNoPR was taken over by Canadian National Railways in 1918, and the trestle was completed in 1920 as part of the "Galloping Goose" rail line.

The line itself went from Victoria to Kissinger, further north on the island. The last train to cross the Kinsol was in 1979, and the trestle was abandoned one year later.

More information on the CNoPR can be found at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Northern_Pacific_Railway.

Preservation: CN's rail service on Vancouver Island was abandoned in the 1980s and the right-of-way given to the provincial Ministry of Transportation. The right-of-way has been incorporated into a recreational trail system affiliated with the Trans-Canada Trail network, and the Kinsol Trestle is now mainly a tourist destination.

Because of the deteriorated structure of the Kinsol Trestle, the bridge was not usable by walkers or bicyclists on the trail. As a result the trestle was in danger of being torn down because it posed an environmental concern and danger to the public.

This created some disagreement in the community as environmentalists wanted the creosote timber removed because they were an environmental hazard. Some community groups set out to raise money to preserve the trestle for its historical and tourism value, whereas others simply wanted to repair the break in the Trans-Canada Trail as quickly and cheaply as possible. Suggested was a suspension bridge.

At that point in time, crossing the Koksilah required an 8.5 km (5.3 mile) detour through difficult terrain.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) held a special meeting on June 7, 2007, to determine the fate of the Kinsol. During this meeting the CVRD board received presentations from a local firm that specializes in building conservation: MacDonald & Lawrence Timber Framing Ltd. The company proposed a conservation strategy that would see the bridge fully restored for pedestrian use as part of the Trans-Canada Trail network.

On Sept. 20, 2007, the CVRD voted to move ahead with a study concerning the feasibility of the Kinsol Trestle. Three firms had responded to the CVRD request for proposals for restoration, and the Vancouver firm Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited won the contract. Commonwealth has joined forces with Macdonald and Lawrence (M&L).

M&L is local in the sense it is established in Cobble Hill (a community close to Shawnigan Lake and the Kinsol), but is world-renowned and has built many unique structures in Great Britain, received a commendation from Queen Elizabeth for its work in restoring Windsor Castle following the disastrous fire, and is working to restore the British explorer Shackleton's shack in the Antarctic and other unique projects.

In November, 2007, Gordon Macdonald and his team completed a major inspection of the trestle, drilling hundreds of test holes. The final report shows that 80 percent of the major timbers are still sound and that it is entirely feasible to restore this magnificent structure. M&L's report comprised the major portion of Commonwealth's report presented to the CVRD on Jan. 23, 2008. The board members voted overwhelmingly to have Commonwealth proceed with Phase 2 of the study to provide a detailed plan of restoration, including an evaluation of costs.

This report was delivered in November, 2008. It was calculated that the rehabilitation of the trestle would cost \$5.7 million. This rehabilitation option met many of the CVRD's objectives for increasing recreation, tourism and economic opportunities. The rehabilitation work replaced unsound timbers, reinforced structural piers and built a new 614-foot walkway atop the structure for hikers, runners, cyclists and equestrians, as well as ensuring that the historic character-

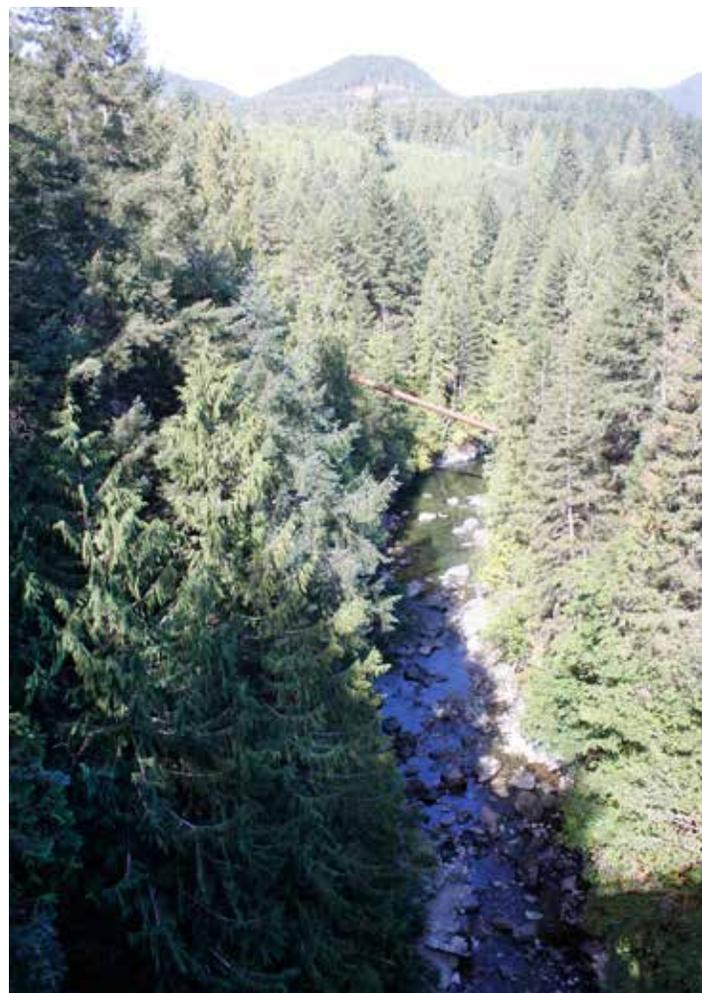
istics of this wonderful structure would be preserved for the community and tourists.

The cost to rehabilitate the trestle was a large sum, but beside completing the trail, the trestle remains one of the few accessible and visible reminders of the early mining and logging industries that are so much a part of the Cowichan Valley heritage. The increased tourism and recreation is expected to result in long-term economic and recreational benefits in the community.

Rehabilitation generated over 22 years of employment for the local population with direct and indirect work on the trestle, engineering and project management.

The provincial government recognized the rehabilitation of the trestle as a valuable commitment for the community, and committed \$4.1 million to the rehabilitation project. Another \$1.6 million was raised to reach the total cost of \$5.7 million.

Restoration has now been completed and the trestle is open to walkers, hikers, and bikers. Now, after a short walk from the trailhead parking lot, people can cross this historic structure. Hikers and bicyclists enjoy the historic restoration.



VIEW FROM WALKWAY on the Kinsol Trestle provides a scenic view of the Koksilah River.

Restored caboose to be a part of Chuckey (Tenn.) Depot Museum

By JOHN KIENER, reprinted with permission from Jonesborough (Tenn.) Herald and Tribune

There is an excitement down at the Spring Street Railroad yard in Jonesborough, Tenn. Members of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum (WVRHSM), and Watauga Valley Chapter NRHS, are preparing for the opening of the Chuckey Depot Museum. The site will not be just a “look and see” facility. Members are planning to host visitors and parties at the red caboose located adjacent to the depot.

“Many children have never seen a caboose,” Mike Tilley, the president of the WVRHSM, said. “The caboose will be open for people to visit after the first of the year. We plan to rent the caboose for birthday parties and other functions.”

“We are the largest railroad group in Tennessee. Most of our operations are in Jonesborough, but our mailing address is Johnson City,” he noted. Tilley, who worked for 40 years at the CSX railroad, was a station agent. He remembers in 1980 when the group was formed. “Thirty-five people showed up for our initial meeting. I am a charter member.”

The group, now composed of some 325 members, has signed an agreement to staff the Chuckey Depot Museum. Together with the Heritage Alliance of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia, the two groups are responsible for developing interpretive exhibits and providing the operating manpower to open the facility to the general public.

The governing agreement with the Town of Jonesborough contains language stating it

“...is intended to be perpetual with all parties working long term in partnership to develop and operate a successful rail-



ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MIKE TILLEY, PRESIDENT OF WATAUGA VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

BEFORE AND AFTER — Members of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum recently completed the restoration of this caboose, which was acquired in 2005. It's now located adjacent to the Chuckey depot.

road museum in Jonesborough.” Tilley is on the advisory group that is to provide on-going direction and management to the museum. The WVRHSM is charged with duties that include providing artifacts, materials and information used in the development of interpretive elements, their care and interpretation. The group will also be responsible for recruiting volunteers and will oversee their performance.

Also of importance will be historical research of the history of the railroad in Jonesborough since it was constructed in the early 1800s, and the development and impact of railroad lines in Tennessee’s oldest town. The railroad society, acting at the direction of the advisory group, will ensure that the museum is open to the public on a regular schedule.

“We will put pictures in the museum of depots from Bristol to Knoxville, many of which are now torn down,” Tilley said. “We are looking forward to working with the Heritage Alliance and the Town of Jonesborough.” He added, “I have been watching people take pictures of the depot. I think that we are going to be one of the best spots in Jonesborough.”

Currently, the WVRHSM gathers 60 or more of its members to assist railroad excursions, using equipment that is owned by the organization. An equipment roster includes a Clinchfield business car, *Crescent Harbor* sleeper/lounge, *Moultrie* lightweight dining car, and *Powhatan Arrow* and *St. Augustine* coaches. Other equipment includes a Clinchfield boxcar that serves as a work shop and a Chesapeake & Ohio caboose that serves as the Spring Street Yard office. A unique piece of equipment is a whistle machine that can be rented for a parade or a party. The self-contained trailer and hauler can reproduce the sounds of a number of historic whistles

from the steam locomotive era.

The Southern Railroad X450 caboose beside the Chuckey



PLACING THE CABOOSE – The restored Southern caboose is lowered onto its trucks adjacent to the Chuckey Depot, owned by the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum yard.



EXTENSION – Before the restored caboose could be placed next to the former Chuckey Depot, one of the lines at the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum yard had to be extended by building a wall and filling in with dirt and rock.

Depot was built in 1970 by the Garant Corporation in Spartanburg, S.C. It was in service on Southern, until 1990 when Norfolk Southern, which inherited the caboose, decided to retire it.

The caboose was donated to the Morristown Waste Treatment Center, which planned to use it as a classroom focusing on environmental issues. When the project was abandoned, the WVRHSM purchased the car in 2005.

The restoration of the caboose was completed this year and it moved from Spring Street to the Chuckey Depot, located on Second Street about 50 yards from the original Jonesborough depot that was torn down many years ago.

“The cost of obtaining a rail car is usually in the \$20,000 to \$30,000 range,” Tilley said. “We will spend \$100,000 or more repairing a passenger car in order to obtain Amtrak certification. The certification includes more than six-pages of requirements including insurance and manpower staffing before a car is permitted to travel on the nation’s rail system. Inspectors are sent to Jonesborough on a regular basis to evaluate the passenger vehicles owned by the WVRHSM.

“Our membership is made up of people from all walks of life,” Tilley said. “We have lawyers and other professionals along with men and women who have mechanical skills. Others enjoy working with persons who travel on our excursions.” The tax-exempt organization operates on an annual budget in excess of \$150,000. This revenue is generated by donations, excursion revenue, car leasing fees and membership dues.

Art Devoe from Jonesborough and Jack Maloney from Telford, Tenn., were assisting Tilley during a recent visit to the rail yard at 210 Spring Street. Devoe is the group’s mechanical officer while Maloney serves as its supply official. Maloney worked in the milling business for many years and is a charter member of the group.

One of the cars located at the site is the Clinchfield 100. Many railroad enthusiasts in the area are familiar with this “Santa Train Car.” It was used for many years on the annual trip from Elkhorn City, Ky., to Kingsport when Santa throws candy off the back on the train at numerous stops along the route.

The Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum holds membership meetings the fourth Monday of the month, excluding December, at the Johnson City Public Library.

Work on rail cars at the society’s yards in Jonesborough takes place on a regular basis each Tuesday and Saturday, weather permitting.

For more information, contact the WVRHSM at 423-753-5797; on the Internet at <wataugavalley@gmail.com>; or visit the website at <www.wataugavalleyrrhsm.org>. The mailing



THE OLD AND THE NEW — The Chuckey Depot (top photo) is shown at its previous location before it was moved to its new home and restored as a railroad museum, adjacent to the restored caboose.

Oregon Rail Heritage Center gains traction with new exhibit

By *ARLEN SHELDRAKE, Pacific Northwest Chapter NRHS*

The Oregon Rail Heritage Center (ORHC), located in southeast Portland, continues to be a major Portland visitor attraction!

Since opening in September 2012, the rail center has hosted 132,970 visitors of all ages, all abilities, and from all over the world. The 2016 visitor count was 38,196; nearly 7 percent over the record in 2015.

The ORHC's premier exhibits include the City of Portland-owned three historic locomotives: the Oregon Railway and Navigation No. 197, built in 1905; the Spokane, Portland and Seattle No. 700, built in 1938; and the world famous Southern Pacific No. 4449, built in 1941. Many other exhibits surround these locomotives, including the featured American Freedom Train exhibit that runs through August of this year.

The Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation (ORHF) is a consortium of seven organizations dedicated to the preservation of the

City of Portland's three steam locomotives and Oregon rail history. The Pacific Northwest Chapter, NRHS is one of the seven organizations with President Keith Fleschner serving on the ORHF board of directors. Three of the chapter's rail cars reside on the ORHC campus and are used in the annual "Holiday Express" consist.

The all-volunteer Oregon Rail Heritage Center is open to the public Thursday through Sunday, 1-5 p.m. There is no admission charge, but a suggested donation of \$5 helps keep the lights on.

The ORHF is a 503(c)3 non-profit educational corporation.

The ORHC is located just south of the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry at 2250 SE Water in Portland, Ore., one block from the Portland Street Car and TriMet MAX Orange line light rail OMSI/Water Avenue stations.

For more information, visit www.orhf.org.



OREGON CENTER — *The Oregon Rail Heritage Center features an impressive collection of rail equipment.*

There's still time to be a part of NRHS RailCamp in 2017

By *BECKY GERSTUNG, NRHS RailCamp Program Director*

There is still plenty of time for potential campers to register, for NRHS chapters or members to sponsor a camper, or to volunteer to help with the NRHS RailCamp program this summer.

RailCamp East will be held June 25-July 1. All of the East Coast partners are on board and are prepared to offer an exciting week of activities.

RailCamp Northwest is scheduled for July 30-Aug. 6. Again, our partners in the Northwest are ready and anxious for our return.

After attending a recent meeting where rail camps were a topic of discussion, we find that the NRHS program is an exception to the rule. The NRHS offers more than "day camp" entertainment. RailCamp is a serious learning experience

with hands on opportunities.

Other camps do not provide housing for remaining in a group for a full week. At RailCamp you have the experience of living with other young people who are interested in railroads, working with professional railroaders and forming lasting friendships.

Each year we hear about how RailCamp was "the best week of my life", "so we know this program lives up to its reputation of being a quality program, with an emphasis on learning, and with plenty of time for fun and fellowship

Go to the NRHS web site at <http://www.nrhs.com/program/railcamp> for an application and more information. Final deadline is April 15, 2017.



AT OPERATING SESSION — *On Tuesday night of the RailCamp Northwest week, the campers had the rare opportunity to enjoy an "operating session" on the HO layout representing the Tacoma area in the 1950s. The layout, constructed and operated by the Puget Sound Model Railroad Engineers Club, features buildings built using actual building blueprints, or photos. This year is the third year that the club has invited RailCampers to join club members in the 2-1/2 hour operating session.*

Union Pacific donates historic locomotive to Portland museum

By *ARLEN SHELDRAKE, Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation*

In October, the Union Pacific Railroad donated the last remaining SW 10 switcher locomotive to the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation (ORHF) in Portland, Ore.

In the early 1980s, the Union Pacific Railroad manufactured 75 SW 10 switcher locomotives in their Omaha, Neb. shops. This last remaining SW 10, UP 96, was last assigned to passenger service as part of the Historical Diesel Fleet in Cheyenne, Wyo.

The SW 10, UP No. 96, will join other historic locomotives — including SP 4449, OR&N 197 (UP 3203) and SP&S 700 — on display at the ORHF, located just south of OMSI, 2250 SE Water Avenue in Portland. ORHF is open to the public Thursday through Sunday, 1-5.

This donation marks the first piece of rolling stock to be owned by the ORHF. The other pieces of historic rolling stock at the center are owned by ORHF member organizations, individuals or, in the case of the three steam locomotives, the City of Portland.

The UP 3203 (originally OR&N 197) steam locomotive built in 1905 was also donated to the City of Portland by Union Pacific Railroad in 1958 and is currently undergoing restoration by volunteers; it will be fully operational in the future.

Long term, in addition to being on public display, UP 96 will

become the shop switch locomotive at the ORHF.

For more information, contact Arlen Sheldrake, ORHF, email <asheldrake@comcast.net>, phone 503-351-9881; or Aaron Hunt, Union Pacific Railroad, <AMHUNT@up.com>, phone 503-249-3079.



Historic Texas steam engine restoration celebration set in Spencer

Officials of the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer will host a celebration marking the completion of the restoration of the famed Texas locomotive April 28-30.

The locomotive, built in 1856, was half of the “Great Locomotive Chase” of the Civil War (with the *General*).

The engine has undergone a year-long restoration in Spencer. After the celebration, it will be returned to Atlanta, where it

will be housed in the newly constructed Lloyd and Mary Ann Whitaker Cyclorama Building.

To learn more about the engine, visit <<http://www.nctrans.org/Events/The-Texas-Locomotive.aspx>>.

The NRHS plans to have a table at the celebration to distribute information about the NRHS to visitors. If you can help man the booth, please email <nrhsnews@charter.net>.

Smallest standard gauge Pacific steam locomotive still running

By KARRI GRUNER, reprinted, with permission, from The Daily Reporter, Coldwater, Mich.

COLDWATER - There is a hidden gem here in Coldwater, and it is also an important part of history for Gatlinburg, Tenn., and the Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

The No. 110 steam engine from the Little River Railroad is the smallest standard-gauge Pacific steam locomotive ever built. It has four small wheels in the front, six driver wheels in the middle and two truck wheels under the cab, and weighs in at 51 tons.

The Little River Railroad, which was originally the Little River Lumber Company, was founded in 1901 by Col. W.B. Townsend in Kentucky. The company was one of the largest commercial lumber operations in the Smokies.

From 1901 to 1939, the company's Little River Railroad Company built over 150 miles of tracks in the Smoky Mountains, and the company sawed over 560 million board feet of timber.

The wife of Col. Townsend, Margaret, actually used the locomotive frequently to run her errands. There was a portrait of Margaret in the control area of the steam engine, which now hangs in the train depot, located at 29 W. Park Ave., in Coldwater.

Terry Bloom, a National Guardsman during the Vietnam War, and his wife, Gerry, purchased the steam engine and spent two years to restore it. They have four children, Travis, who works as an engineer on the NE Railroad; Heather Kaiser, a nurse at Cameron Hospital; Trevor, a licensed train engineer; and Tyler, an Iraq War veteran, who also helps his parents with the steam engine. Heather is a "fore-woman" on the No. 110 and shovels coal.

The No. 110 now travels from Coldwater to Quincy

and back at a nice leisurely pace. Over 6,000 people have ridden on the train this year (2016) alone.

On Nov. 23, a fire was started at Chimney Top 2 in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, the park that the Little River Railroad helped build. This fire unfortunately devastated an enormous area.

"Over 17 thousand acres were burned in the national park, 764 acres in Cobby Nob, 700 structures were destroyed in Sevier County, 300 of them in Gatlinburg, 14,000 people were evacuated, and there are now 14 confirmed fatalities as of Dec. 15," said Marcy Claude, public relations director for the city of Gatlinburg, Tenn.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LITTLE MOUNTAIN RAILROAD

STILL WORKING – This Little River Railroad engine, which once worked in the Smokies (upper photo), is now transporting passengers in Michigan (lower photo).

Are steam locos still hauling freight? At Strasburg, the answer is ‘yes’

The Strasburg Rail Road is a popular tourist line with headquarters located in Strasburg, Pa., near Lancaster. What some people may not know is that the railroad routinely uses steam power to help move freight to its interchange with Norfolk Southern.

The railroad uses its leased Maine Eastern GP9 to “haul the freight,” occasionally along with former Great Western Baldwin decapod No. 90. But the diesel developed mechanical problems late in 2016. Railroad officials, concerned that No. 90 wasn’t up to making the run by itself, added former Norfolk & Western Baldwin No. 475 to the consist.

The trip from the East Strasburg Yard was needed to pick up seven cars that Norfolk Southern dropped at the Leaman Place interchange on the Amtrak Harrisburg-to-Philadelphia line.

To make the Wednesday, Dec. 28 event even more special,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JIM KLEEMAN

DOUBLE HEADED FREIGHT – Strasburg Rail Road officials recently used two steam engines to pull a revenue freight when the diesel engine went down.

the railroad added two coaches and sold tickets to passengers for \$15 each. Passengers were thus able to ride a double-headed steam train, on a standard gauge line, on an actual revenue run rather than on a “photo freight.”

The railroad ran another steam freight two days later, again selling tickets for the two coach cars.

Additional issues of *NRHS News, Bulletin* planned for 2017

NRHS members should check their mailboxes in late February or early March for the March 2017 issue of the *NRHS News*.

The issue will be the first of three eight-page printed issues of the *News* planned for this year. They will be published in March, July and November, in addition to the six .pdf issues of the *News*. Those six issues are planned for February, April, June, August, October and December.

Of course you can keep up with the latest news from the NRHS (such as updates on plans for the annual convention) and other rail news by “liking” the NRHS page on Facebook at <<https://www.facebook.com/RailPreservation/>>. Over 2,700 members and railfans follow the page. You can announce upcoming meetings and events on the Facebook page by emailing the information to <nrhsnews@charter.net>

For the print issues of the *News*, the deadline for submission of articles and photos is the first of the preceding month.

The deadline for the .pdf issues is the 10th of the preceding month. When possible, please don’t wait until the deadline to submit photos and items for the *NRHS News*. Early submissions make the layout process easier. Items submitted after the deadline will be held until the next issue. We welcome photo submissions from members of any rail-related event.

Send submissions to <nrhsnews@charter.net> or Charles S. Williams, Editor, *NRHS News*, 4712 Brushy Mountain Road, Moravian Falls, NC 28654. For questions or further information, phone 336-838-2754.

Please submit articles as a text file or in the body of an email. Photos should be submitted as separate, high resolution files (300 DPI at eight-inch width) attached to an email. Please do not include photos intended for publication in the body of text files or emails as they cannot be used. Caption information should be included with the article or in a separate text file and not used as the name of the photo file.



PHOTO BY ED POST, CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER NRHS

“WHOPPER HOPPER” – The one-of-a-kind “Whopper Hopper” railcar is displayed on the REA siding track at the beautifully restored Rocky Mount, N.C. Train Station.

‘Whopper Hopper’ on display at restored depot in North Carolina

By ED POST, Editor of The Green Block, the newsletter of the Central New York Chapter NRHS (and reprinted with permission)

The 135-ton capacity Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) “Whopper Hopper” car No. 500000 is now on display at the Rocky Mount N.C. train station, about seven miles from the Exit 138 on Interstate 95. It has been nicely restored to its original ACL livery, sporting shiny stainless steel sides and an orange-red colored outside steel frame structure.

It is a unique and innovative covered hopper car, the only one of its type that was ever built. At the time of its construction, the “Whopper Hopper” was the largest covered hopper in existence.

The car features four separate stainless steel compartments for simultaneously hauling up to four different bulk products with no cross contamination. All surfaces that came in contact with product are made of Tenelon stainless steel to speed unloading and cleaning and reduce long term maintenance. A built-in pressurized water-spray system hastened the cleaning of the four compartment interiors. All that was required was to connect a water hose to the system.

New design six-wheel trucks allowed for a 135-ton capacity, far beyond the typical 70-ton covered hopper at the time. The bright orange-red color and billboard size lettering was for marketing purposes.

The “Whopper Hopper” was built in Michigan City, Ind. by

the Pullman-Standard Division of the Pullman Car Company for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad in 1964 as a prototype large capacity compartmentalized covered hopper car designed to reduce the cost of hauling bulk commodities. American Steel Foundries worked with ACL for about a year to develop a new six-wheel truck for the “Whopper Hopper.” U.S. Steel supplied the steel used in the car, including the stainless steel.

The “Whopper Hopper” was completed in June 1964 and moved to Jacksonville, Fla., where the car was christened in a ceremony on Sept. 8, 1964. An article by Henry B. Comstock that appeared in the October 1966 issue of *Popular Mechanics* describes the ceremony:

“Not long ago, the world’s largest covered hopper car was launched with a ceremony worthy of a luxury liner. Atlantic Coast Line officials bared their heads as a lady in a mink stole bashed a bottle of champagne over one of the monster’s couplers. Next, a bevy of Florida beauties dumped sacks of simulated cargo down the hatches. Strobe lights winked, and a Dixieland band swung into ‘I’ve Been Working on the Railroad.’ Minutes later, the stainless steel brute rumbled out of Jacksonville to pick up a quarter of a million pounds of calcium phosphate. Every revenue mile the “Whopper Hopper” has rolled since then, she has earned two bucks for the ACL. That’s twice what the standard-size hopper car turns in.”

“Whopper Hopper” No. 500000 continued in service through three owner railroads: ACL, Seaboard Coast Line (SCL) and CSX. The car routinely served shippers in the Rocky Mount area throughout its long career, mostly hauling fertilizer and flour. This accounts for its display at the Rocky Mount station as a piece of ACL history. “While serving as a SCL car, the “Whopper Hopper” had big SCL lettering instead of ACL and the number SBD No. 200000.

The “Whopper Hopper” was retired from service in May, 2000. CSX sold the car to Savannah Metals Scrap Yard in Georgia. After some haggling with the scrap yard, the North Carolina Department of Transportation purchased the car in 2001 for preservation and donated it to the City of Rocky Mount. The City of Rocky Mount completed restoration of the car in 2005 using FHWA/NC DOT Funds.

“Whopper Hopper” Specifications:

- Pullman Lot 8883
- ACL Class L-12
- Overall Length: 68 feet 10 inches
- Height: 14 feet, 11 inches
- Width 10 feet, 7 inches
- Capacity: 5,006 cubic feet
- Load limit: 301,500 pounds
- Light weight: 93,300 pounds

References

- Whopper Hopper plaque, Rocky Mount train station
- *Chicago Tribune*, September 8, 1964
- *Popular Mechanics*, October 1966

Salute to *The Phoebe Snow* planned at ‘Railroad Memories’ show

The Susquehanna Valley Railway Historical Society (a chapter of the NRHS) will present a “Railway Memories from the Southern Tier” show, which includes a 50th anniversary salute to *The Phoebe Snow*. The show is on Saturday, April 22, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., at the Brothers 2 Restaurant, located at 2901 Watson Boulevard in Endwell, N.Y.

Presentations will spotlight railroading from the mid-1980s and earlier along the Corning-Elmira-Binghamton-Scranton-Hoboken corridor and will include any of the surrounding routes/railroads and special interest railroading within the region of this area.

In addition, special interest programs will salute the 50th anniversary of *The Phoebe Snow*. The daytime/afternoon presenters include Bob Bahrs, Kermit Geary, Jr., Don Jilson, Ben Martin, Tom Nemeth and Ed Zech. The guest luncheon presenters are noted photographers and rail historians Richard J. Allen Sr. and Art House.

Schedule of presentations

The schedule of programs is included below.

8:15– 9 a.m. — Registration, welcome and introductions.

9-11:50 a.m. — Morning programs (three);

Noon–12:45 p.m. — Lunch buffet;

12:45–1:30 p.m. — Keynote speakers: Richard J. Allen, Sr., and Art House;

1:30–4:30 p.m. — Afternoon programs (three);

4:45–5 p.m. — “Farewell *Phoebe Snow*,” a special tribute.

The registration cost per person is \$28, which includes all programs, lunch buffet (soup du jour, garden salad bar, garlic bread, chicken marsala, roast beef, oven roasted potatoes and coffee). Non-alcoholic refreshments will be available at a cash bar.

Visit <http://www.trainweb.org/SVRHS/RailSymposium2017.html> for more information and a link to the registration package for the event.

History of ‘Butter and Cheese Express’ available

A new publication, *Butter and Cheese Express* by Richard F. Palmer and Douglas J. Ellison, is now available from the Chenango County Historical Society.

The Auburn branch of the New York and Oswego Midland has been gone since 1882. According to the introduction, “the line never got beyond the simple early railroad technology of the day with its wood-burning locomotives, link-and-pin couplers, timber trestles, board-and-batten depots, and 56-pound (to the yard) rail. That is what gives the Auburn branch an air of enchanting nostalgia.”

The book was originally published in 1974 and updated in 1990. This revised and enlarged edition expands upon the two earlier editions, adding to the knowledge of a 10-year experience in railroad building in central New York. Along with a more comprehensive text, the new edition includes over 50 images and six new town maps, along with a chronology of important events.

The cost of the book is \$22, tax included. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted. Mail checks payable to Chenango County Historical Society to CCHS, 45 Rexford Street, Norwich, NY 13815.

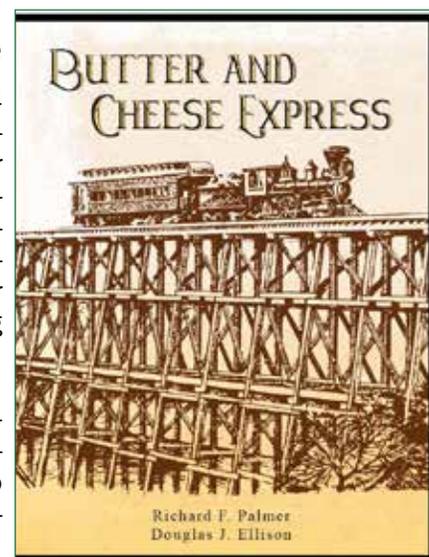




PHOTO BY RICHARD LEONARD, COURTESY OF KEOKUK UNION DEPOT

IN KEOKUK – Work is continuing on the roof of the Keokuk Union Depot. This photo was taken on Dec. 2, 2016. Work is expected to slow during the winter months but fund-raising will continue.

Keokuk Depot officials reach major fund-raising goal for roof project

By BOB WOODBURN and JANET SMITH, Keokuk Union Depot Foundation

The Keokuk (Iowa) Union Depot Foundation (“KUDF”) has successfully raised the \$667,000 match for the capital campaign challenge grant from the Jeffris Family Foundation.

Receipt of the Jeffris grant of \$333,000 results in KUDF having raised \$1 million toward the roof restoration project, accomplished one year ahead of schedule.

Roof restoration work has progressed as funds have been received, with notable help from \$100,000 in grants from the State of Iowa Historical Resource Development Project, the generous support of the Keokuk area community, and donations from people across the country.

In 2015, the chimney was raised to its original height and restored, and the eaves, soffits, and brackets on the upriver end of the Depot were restored. In 2016 the central tower

was rebuilt to its original height, with turrets and dormers, red clay tiles, and copper finials and gutters. The downriver eaves were also restored in 2016.

The plan is to install the red clay tiles and copper gutters on the upriver and downriver ends of the roof in 2017, completing the roof project two years ahead of the original schedule.

The original application for the Jeffris grant in early 2014 estimated the cost of the roof project at \$1 million. The 2015 and 2016 deconstruction of the eaves and 2016 contracts for copper and tile work have provided valuable information needed to project the final costs to complete the roof restoration project.

KUDF now projects an additional \$250,000 will be needed to complete the roof restoration. KUDF has set the goal of the

Depot 125 Capital Campaign at \$1,250,000, with a target date of Sept. 30, 2017, to raise the additional \$250,000 and complete the roof in 2017.

The following information gleaned during the 2015 and 2016 phases comprise the increased cost estimate:

- Deconstruction of the eaves and soffits on the upriver end of the depot in 2015 revealed that the original design for structural support of the brackets had been insufficient to continue to support the roof properly. Structural engineers devised plans for reconstructed masonry pockets around the brackets. Furthermore, tests on paint samples proved that the brackets had not simply been painted, but a faux finish that closely resembled oak woodwork had been applied. The added cost of these improvements is about \$90,000.

- Discovery of an original clay tile from the 1891 roof enabled matching its color with a custom “Summer Rose” tile that is still available from the successor to the maker of the original tiles. These custom tiles are more expensive than the tiles priced in 2014. The upgrade will cost about \$70,000 more than originally estimated.

- Copper fabrication and installation cost will be about \$30,000 more than estimated.

- Other factors contributing to the increased cost estimate are the decision to move and conceal gas and electric during the roof restoration rather than later, the need for reinforcement of the base of the central tower due to rot, and additional work needed to restore the chimney after discovery of a second stack inside the visible one.

Some of these additional costs are not solely utilitarian. KUDF's goal is to restore the depot as nearly as possible to its original condition and appearance, as well as to ensure many more decades of use with minimal maintenance. The Jeffris and State of Iowa grants require compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation pertaining to buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Built in 1891, the Keokuk Union Depot is one of Keokuk's finest historic buildings. Keokuk is fortunate to be among the few small communities in the Midwest that still possess a significant edifice designed by the renowned Chicago architectural firm of Burnham & Root, creators of the famed Chicago “White City” for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.



PHOTO BY ALEX MAYES, POTOMAC CHAPTER NRHS

INTRIGUING DIESELS FOR A SHORTLINE — For most of the 1980s railfans were drawn to the Louisiana and North West Railroad, a 62-mile shortline running between McNeil, Ark., and Homer, La. The attraction was the L&NW's fleet of 30-year-old EMD F7s hauling freight, which were becoming uncommon to see on most railroads by then. In 1986 the L&W had five F7s and one FP7 on its roster, however the F-units were gone by the early 1990s, replaced by EMD Geeps. This photo was taken of a south bound L&NW local at Brister, Arkansas on June 7, 1984. Leading the 27 car train are F7s No. 47 and 45, both ex-Southern Pacific units.

Coming next month in the *NRHS News*

Have you ever been to Thurmond, W. Va., a popular spot for railfans and photographers nestled in the New River Gorge near Bluefield. Many years ago, Thurmond was a boom town thanks to the then-thriving coal business. Now the main street is lined with empty store fronts, and the population has dwindled to only six residents who live on the hills along the CSX main line. The depot has been restored by the National Park Service and is open to tourists in summer months. The Bankers Hotel (now closed) was opened in 1975, and the photo at right was taken by Robert Slavy from his second floor room. Learn more about the town, and Slavy's visits, in the March (print) issue of the *NRHS News*.



The *NRHS News* is published nine times a year by the National Railway Historical Society. Charles S. Williams, Samuel Spencer and Tidewater Chapters NRHS, Editor. Lynn Burshtin, West Jersey Chapter NRHS; Ellen Pinsky, Iowa Chapter NRHS; and Sami Williams, editorial assistants. Alex Mayes, Potomac Chapter NRHS, special contributor. Send items to: *NRHS News*, c/o Charles S. Williams, 4712 Brushy Mountain Road, Moravian Falls, NC 28654. E-mail: <nrhsnews@charter.net>. Phone 336-838-2754. The address for the Society is: NRHS, c/o John K. Fiorilla, Esq., Capehart & Scatchard P.A., P. O. Box 5016, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054.



PHOTO BY ALEX MAYES, POTOMAC CHAPTER NRHS

EX-PENNSY "DOODLEBUG" BACK IN SERVICE – Former Pennsylvania Railroad Gas-Electric car No. 4666 has recently been acquired by the Allentown & Auburn Railroad and is hauling passengers on its 4.12 mile long former Reading Company branch line. The historic Doodlebug, Model 660, was built by the J. G. Brill Company of Philadelphia in 1930, and was used in passenger service on lightly patronized PRR branch lines until 1963 when it was taken out of service. It was stored at the PRR's Hollidaysburg, Pa., facility until 1965 when it was purchased and used on the Attica & Arcade Railroad in New York, and then subsequently owned by two other railroads before ending up on the Black River & Western Railroad in New Jersey. In July 2016 it was purchased by the Allentown & Auburn Railroad and underwent some mechanical work before being placed in excursion service. The Allentown & Auburn Railroad was chartered in 1853 as the Dauphin and Susquehanna Coal Company and went through a series of mergers until formally being merged into the Reading Railroad in 1945. In 1976 this line was merged into the newly created Conrail system, and later the East Penn Railroad provided freight service. In 2013 freight service ended after a foundry closed, and new operators began excursion service in 2015. The Allentown & Auburn Railroad runs between Kutztown, Pa., and the interchange on Norfolk Southern's former Reading main at Topton, Pa. For information about the excursion trains, visit <<http://allentownandauburnrr.com/excursions/>> or call (570) 778-7531.