

## NRHS Film Archival Digitalization Committee

The Committee met on September 24, 2016, in Princeton, New Jersey, to review and plan for future action regarding the various aspects of this multi-faceted and on-going endeavor. At the conclusion, here's a status report:

1. The 8-mm. project is about 75% complete and has involved an equipment investment of about \$11,000 and more than 250 hours of volunteer labor so far.
2. On this front, a) there will be continuing work to bring this to completion in coming months; and b) with the desire to begin to make this footage available for viewing by the public, there's a plan to create a couple of pilot segments complete with narration (as most of the footage is silent film).
3. On the 16mm. side, there are several aspects involved before the Committee provides any recommendation to the NRHS Board of Directors ... all of which will be addressed as time permits. These include:
  - a. Completing a full and accurate inventory of what's in the library, presently housed in safe storage in New Jersey.
  - b. Determining if the commercially-produced films have copyrights and, if so, whether those copyrights remain in effect.
  - c. Review of the various systems and approaches for digitizing, followed by determination of which and what is best for our purposes, with prime consideration being the funding needed and available.
  - d. Before any film is digitized, it was decided that possibility of the film having already been digitized by another organization should be researched, where we can simply acquire a copy rather than duplicate the labor.
4. A request is being prepared for dissemination to every NRHS member, requesting that if they own any original 16mm. film, or knows of any person who may have such film ... please consider a) donating it to the NRHS for digital preservation or, if not interested in giving it to us, then b) loan it to the NRHS so that we may produce a digital copy.
5. We, the Committee, are in agreement that our mission has a two-pronged goal – to digitize as much rail-related footage for long-term historical preservation and to, when possible, make it available for public viewing via modern-day systems.

The Committee is led by NRHS Vice-President Joe Maloney and consists of NRHS members Mitch Dakelman, Tom Coughlin and Marlin Taylor ... all committed to moving these endeavors forward at maximum possible speed ... yet tied very much to available volunteer hours and the financial support needed for purchasing equipment and supplies.