



THE FEEDWATER HEATER

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MARCH & APRIL, 2005

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VOL. 26, NO. 2

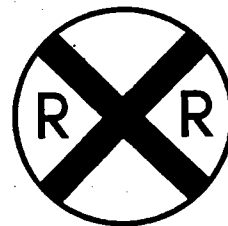
MEETING SCHEDULE

Activities of birds, the seemingly longer periods of daylight hours and other subtle signs remind us that Spring is not too far off. However we remain on guard for more rough weather as Winter "plays itself out" for another year. Therefore our programs for March and April will be more of the "in house" variety, with productions from our archives and some input from local chapter members. Here's what's proposed for our next two regular meeting and program nights:



Thursday, March 10: For this night's program, we'll bring a group of classic rail videos out of the archives, and members can choose (by show of hands) which of them to be shown as the program.

Thursday, April 14: Member Don Jilson, who is a frequent traveler outside of his regular job as a locomotive engineer, will be our speaker, with slides and narrative on his trip to visit China and the **JingPong China Orient Express**. He'll also talk about the last steam trip through the Pass. This is a once-in-a-lifetime program. Don't miss it!



As usual, we'll meet at the Lecture Room in the Vestal Public Library, 320 Vestal Parkway East, Vestal, NY 13850. The strong possibilities for inclement weather remain with us for a while longer. If there's a storm in the works, or any conditions present that would make driving hazardous, members are asked to tune in to their favorite radio, TV or internet advisory sources to obtain the latest information on school and institutional closings. Generally, if the schools have to close, the Vestal Library does likewise. We advise you to call the information desk at the Library if you're not sure.

Otherwise, we'll plan on being at the Library and having the usual fare of goodies available for your enjoyment during the programs. Your donation toward defraying the cost of refreshments is always appreciated. The Lecture room is open for the chapter's use by 7 p.m. on the meeting nights. After time for sign-ins, socializing and perusing the small exhibits or bulletins on the front tables, there will be pertinent short announcements. The programs usually begin by 8:00 p.m. and typically are finished not later than 9:30 p.m. If you have a presentation you would like to make at a future meeting, or if you know someone who would be available as a guest speaker sometime hence, please contact Programs Chair Bob Pastorkey at (607) 775-1267.



OBSERVATION CAR, By John Goodnough

It's late in February as I put my thoughts and observations together for this edition of the FEEDWATER HEATER. Earlier in the day I spent some time cleaning nearly six inches of new-fallen snow off the driveway and the front walk. Sometimes one finds little "daydreams" popping up while busy at such outdoor winter chores. Occasionally the sounds of a NYS&W locomotive horn are heard blowing for the crossings at Prentice Road and Kattelville Road less than a mile from my neighborhood. More than once it's got me to thinking - passenger service on the old DL&W "S&U Division" has been gone since 1958. Rail passenger service to the entire Southern Tier ended on a snowy January morning in 1970. For over 35 years now it has been all freight. Numerous transformations have taken place since, and they will continue - hopefully some for the better, but many likely for worse. I've heard and read many times that changes are (supposed to be) good, but I think society "missed the train" when rail passenger services, along with many of the (then) typical mail and express amenities, were ushered out in favor of motor vehicles and the airlines getting virtually all of the attention..

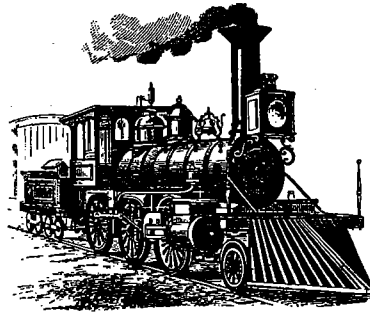
Here in 2005 I am occasionally in conversation with folks who talk about their long-distance travels, and grumble about poor highway conditions, "gridlock" in and around major cities, cuts and increasing inefficiencies in air travel services, the long waits at terminals, lost baggage, poor connections at major hubs, "cardboard meals" served on board (and more often no meals offered at all), along with a host of other "spilled milk" complaints. And when the opportunities present themselves, I often half-kiddingly advise them to "take the train".

The railroads were, and still have the strong potential of being, the best all-weather means of overland transportation. I've said it many times before in these pages - when other conveyances, including the airlines, were delayed or couldn't get through, the railroads did; and they usually were on or close to "the advertised".

Practically every year we are given false hopes that return of a semblance of regular scheduled railroad passenger and related services will happen "soon". But each time such revelations and promises end up being nothing more than "hot air" to fill columns of local newspapers and enhance political ambitions of a relative few. Enough said!

As I presided over our last Annual Meeting, held January 13, I couldn't help but notice the preponderance of older, grayer heads of attendees in the conference room. It's a sign of the times; very few younger people seem to have an interest in or appreciation for perpetuating remembrances of railroad history. Where will we be in another ten years? Already we've had a small number of long-serving officers and committee people who have expressed intent to step down from their various duties and responsibilities. Thus, more belt-tightening and "doubling up" of tasks are in the offing as we move along in this, the chapter's 43rd year. We're not alone in this, by the way. I've noted that an increasing number of similar affinity organizations are facing problems such as vacant officer and committee positions, and the need to cut spending, services and programs. Not good signs! But those of us here are not discouraged. History is fraught with such dilemmas of organizations like ours. And unless some unforeseen circumstances present themselves, I am confident we'll do just fine.

Stay tuned in these pages for more interesting activities during the year. Our meetings and programs continue to be on the second Thursday of each month, September through June. Interim bulletins on short-notice programs and events will be provided at the various meetings. Your continued support and input are appreciated! Full steam ahead!



MEMBERSHIP ITEMS

We're entering the month of March, and a handful of members from 2004 have not yet sent in their dues for the current year. Membership Chair Jack Manarky recently sent out final notices to those we haven't heard from. We ask that you submit your dues to Jack as soon as possible, so that your membership will remain intact.

Several of you recently also sent in monetary donations toward the work of the chapter. For this we are in appreciation! Every bit counts as we continue to render services to our members and the community. And over the past several months, we note those who have donated time and/or materials toward projects, provided transportation for chapter exhibits and equipment, and who have continued to volunteer at various activities. Without such support, we would have been forced to operate mainly as an "armchair" organization.

On another related item - we see that NRHS is slowly catching up in getting out the issues of the BULLETIN, though there is still a way to go in that respect. And they did a nice job in designing the new membership cards! If any of you members in good standing have not been receiving your copies of publications from NRHS, please let us know. Membership Chair Jack Manarky is generally at the regular chapter meetings, however if you need to contact him at any time in the interim, please call 607-775-1730, e-mail him at: jmanarky@echoes.net, or send inquiries via U.S. Mail to Jack at 29 Riley Road, Windsor, NY 13865.

GLEANINGS FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Final Meeting of the 2004 Board of Managers and the Annual Meeting of the SVRHS Membership were held on the evening of Thursday, January 13, 2005 at the Lecture Room in the Vestal Public Library. Fourteen members attended. We closed out all business of 2004 at the meeting, with the exception of the report on the outcome of the October 17th Rail Fest (Three Board members subsequently met with the management of the Roberson Museum on Tuesday, January 25, at which time we were apprised of all aspects of the closeout of the train show matter, and we received a check for \$1,500 for our participation). At the time of the Annual Meeting, our Treasury contained a balance of \$2,132.22. This does not include recent receipts for NRHS and local dues nor the Roberson check, however as this edition of the FEEDWATER HEATER goes to be copied for distribution, those deposits have been made to the chapter account.

Among the committee reports was one from Archives Chair Bob Pastorkey which included detailed printouts of lists regards our collection of back issues of NRHS Bulletins and the FEEDWATER HEATER, audio and video tapes in the chapter library, and old Erie Railroad employee magazines. Last year, he gave a detailed account of all the items then in our collection of artifacts. This winter he is coordinating inventory of miscellaneous chapter equipment and supplies, plus weeding out any items deemed surplus. Up ahead is the matter of updating the inventory on the numerous hard and soft cover books in our collection. Restorations Committee Chair Frank Tisdell has also been quite busy providing enhancements to the items on loan to the Roberson Museum's railroad exhibit. He has recently been restoring two old whistleposts - one Lehigh Valley and one DL&W, along with an array of old switchlocks and keys in the chapter collection.

Our ad hoc Web Site Committee, coordinated by member Todd Nielson, reported that they were on the verge of showing a pilot rendition of the site (which was done during the "announcements" period at the subsequent membership meeting on Thursday, February 10). We will soon have a host for the site. The committee, made up of Todd, Bob Gongleski, Diana Spicer and David Haynes, has been meeting once monthly lately, and will continue to do so until all aspects of the site are "up, running and de-bugged."

(continued next page...)

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ANNUAL MEETING, Continued:

There are some openings coming up in chapter administration. Officers from 2004 were re-elected, with the exception that member Robert Gongleski has declined to serve another term, and has also dropped off the Board of Managers. However Bob has agreed to serve as Acting Treasurer until that key position is filled. Member Don Jilson had submitted letter of interest to remain on the Board, and was re-elected. Member Sandy Tisdell also submitted letter of interest, and was elected to fill one of the two vacated Board positions. We now have six out of seven Board seats filled, and one officer position (Treasurer) vacant.

So as of the Annual Meeting, we had this roster of officers:

President: John Goodnough
First Vice President: Robert Pastorkey
Second Vice President: Jack Manarky
Secretary (and Director to NRHS): Don Jilson
Treasurer: Robert Gongleski (Acting, until position filled)
Board Members: Frank & Sandy Tisdell

Jack Manarky has agreed to stay on as Membership Chair until the end of 2005. Member Robert Pastorkey will step down as Chair of the Programs Committee after the June, 2005 meeting. Other posts needing volunteers are: Newsletter Editor, Historian, and Curator (See "Job Descriptions" elsewhere in this issue). And, as member Bob Gongleski, after long and faithful service, has informed us that occupational commitments prevent his being in charge of providing refreshments and transporting the chapter's audio/visual equipment to and from meetings, we also are looking for member volunteers to handle those responsibilities. We've already had some inquiries regarding vacancies, and we will take up any outstanding matters when the officers and Board meet on Thursday, March 17 (see below).

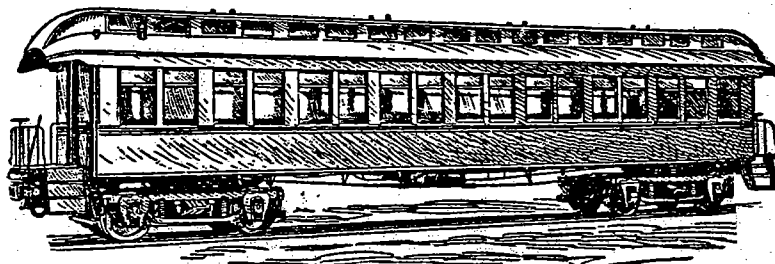
We thank all who attended and provided constructive input (including motions, seconds, "AYES" [No 'NAYS' were heard!]) at the recent Annual Meeting.

OFFICERS AND BOARD OF MANAGERS TO MEET MARCH 17

A meeting of the officers and Board, SVRHS, will be held in the evening of Thursday, March 17, at the chapter's rented storage room in Trelease Plaza, 3125 E. Main Street, Endwell, NY. The meeting will be held to keep chapter business current, and to make plans for activities during Spring and Summer, 2005.

Items to be taken up will include, but will not be limited to, the following: Membership, Archives, Programs, Newsletter, Restorations, Special Events, Financial, Governance Documents updates, Chapter Collections, Exhibits, plus any other matters deemed needing review or action.

We ask that all committee chairs come prepared to give their reports. The general membership is invited to attend these administrative meetings. Aspirants to serve as future officers or committee members are encouraged to come and make their interests known. We hope to begin the meeting promptly at 7:30 p.m. Inquiries please contact John Goodnough at 648-3072.



FINGER LAKES RAILFAIR



**APRIL 23 & 24, 2005
ITHACA, NEW YORK**



SATURDAY 10AM-5PM & SUNDAY 10AM-4PM

The Cornell Railroad Historical Society (CRHS), and Cornell Chapter, National Railway Historical Society (NRHS), are proud to sponsor the 22nd Annual Finger Lakes Railfair. The event is a two-day show located at a nearly-new, 32,000 sq. ft. facility known as "The Field", 1767 East Shore Drive (NY Route 34), Lansing, NY. "The Field" is approximately 6 miles north of downtown Ithaca – see the map below & watch for the roadside signs. 2005 will be our 4th year in this outstanding location. As always, the Railfair will feature all sorts of vendors and model railroad displays, including operating layouts in Z, N, HO, S, L (Lego), O, G, and Large (Live Steam) Scales. Reasonably-priced refreshments (including a hot breakfast) will be available. Of course, the facility is completely accessible to the handicapped.

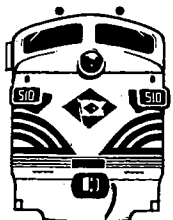
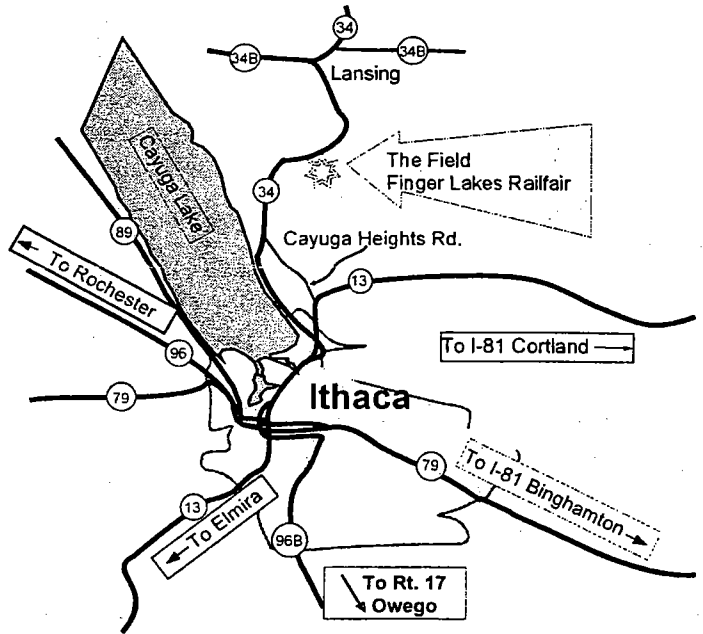
ADMISSION:

- Adults: \$5.00
- Children (3-12): \$2.00
- Family: \$10.00

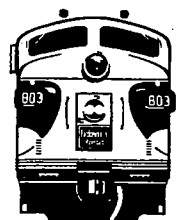
**For more information, please contact:
James S. Torgeson – Railfair Coordinator
(716) 439-2577 ist25@cornell.edu**

**CRHS Website: www.lehighvalleyrr.com
"The Field" Website: www.crcthefield.org**

- MODEL TRAINS - RAILROADIANA-
- COLLECTIBLES - FOOD - HO SCALE-
- LIVE STEAM - ANTIQUE TOYS-
- BOOKS – DVDs - LEGO - N SCALE-
- PHOTOGRAPHS – VIDEOS - Z SCALE-
- OPERATING LAYOUTS - LIONEL-
- HISTORICAL DISPLAYS - S SCALE-
- TEST TRACK – MINIATURE GOLF-
- THOMAS ITEMS – DOOR PRIZES-
- CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES – SLIDES-



The FIELD



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ANOTHER "NEW" RAILROAD

Due to the memorial tribute to J.J. Young Jr. in our last issue, several other items of potential interest to followers of old and "modern" railroad history were necessarily omitted. At the end of 2004 a new operator, the Central New York Railroad Company, leased approximately 125 miles of the Norfolk Southern's historic former Erie Railroad corridor from a point near Port Jervis, NY, to East Binghamton. NS would continue to use the line, respecting provisions of the lease agreement with CNYRR.

The CNYRR is a subsidiary of the New York, Susquehanna & Western, which has had a familiar presence in Southern Tier NY and northeastern PA railroading since the early 1980s. One of the plans of the new operator is to remove all redundant track and unneeded signals (subject to FRA approval) along that mileage. Then, what is still substandard or unimproved will be upgraded as needed to allow for wider safety margins and maintenance of faster speeds of freight trains (no scheduled rail passenger services are in the "wings" at this time).

A recent estimate has it that approximately \$10,000,000 will be needed to make the improvements. Part of the proposed undertaking will involve removal of one of the two parallel tracks now passing over Gulf Summit here in Broome County. New or improved passing sidings will be strategically located throughout the corridor, at intervals of approximately 20 - 30 miles, where possible. History has it that whenever something major like this takes place, some old customers are lost, and other new ones are acquired by whoever is running the lines. We hope the change will bring some measure of prosperity to the under-utilized railroad corridor!

Possibilities are high for running special excursions, including dinner trains, on a sporadic basis. If things go real well, folks may even be able to ride as passengers on rare trips powered by resurrected steam locomotives in the future. It would certainly be nice to be able to ride a train over such portions of the "Old Erie" as the Starrucca Viaduct and scenic vistas along the upper Delaware River. Let's hope we'll see some good opportunities for railtrips and such in the months to come!

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"JOB" DESCRIPTIONS

SV Chapter volunteer "job" positions now or soon to be open are as follows:

Programs Chair: Arranges for guest speakers or member presenters at the nine regular meeting nights during the calendar year. Provides backup programs for use if scheduled presenters are unable to be present. Keeps members informed of upcoming events and programs; informs the newsletter staff well in advance, so that time-sensitive material can be included in the newsletter.

Historian: A long-time member in good standing who, through education, experience and familiarity with the origins and history of the chapter, serves as the chapter's authority on such matters. Periodically provides articles on chapter history for the newsletter.

Curator: Long-time member in good standing having "hands on" charge of chapter collections. Keeps records of items in the collections, as provided by the Archivist. Monitors items loaned to other organizations. Works closely with the Archives and Restorations Committees.

Newsletter Editor: A member in good standing with good grammatical and composition skills, and who is responsible for compiling, editing, writing articles, copying and distributing the editions of the chapter's official newsletter THE FEEDWATER HEATER on a timely basis.

Audio/Visual and Refreshments Services Coordinator(s): These can be two jobs or all rolled into one! Provides refreshments and prepares water for hot coffee/tea, and brings A/V equipment to and from the meeting place on scheduled program nights.

