



Official Newsletter
of



NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 1361
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www.hscnrhs.org

WINTER 2015

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Note: Horseshoe Curve Chapter, National Railway Historical Society was granted a charter by the NRHS on May 11, 1968 (3 months and one day after the PRR-NYC merger), evolving from the Altoona Railway Museum Club (1965-1968). We meet on FOURTH Tuesday of each month except December, at Railroader's Memorial Museum, Altoona, PA, 7:30 PM. Occasional exceptions are announced to the membership.

90 (+) % of all communications and notices are handled by e-mail. Please keep your e-mail address current with the officers, especially the Chapter Historian/Editor.

Meetings are open to those interested in railroad history and membership inquiries are invited. Chapter-only membership is available but national membership dues are separate. For more information visit www.nrhs.com.

UNDER THE WIRE
By
LEONARD E. ALWINE

SCALE TROLLEYS COME TO ALTOONA

In this issue of Under The Wire, we will look at a smaller version of a traction vehicle. Actually, scale models of traction cars.

There have been many “toy/models” of trolley cars produced over the years. Lionel has had several O and O-27 scale cars, and Tyco, Bachman, and AHM have made several in HO scale. The older Lionel cars were made of tin, but recent ones along with the HO scale cars were basically a one piece plastic body placed on a powered chassis.

These have been done quite well and do look good as an addition to a train layout running down a city street. But most of the time on these layouts they simply run on rails with no over-head wire, not even take un-powered wire, or at least thread to make the scene look realistic. (I know this for a fact because I have done this myself on several layouts I built in the past.)

Then too, the bodies of these cars are basically generic, being a Birney single truck car, or a Brill double truck car, or the more modern St. Louis PCC cars. They are painted and lettered for several “real” traction companies that did or still do run in larger American cities. In recent years, Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) cars and subway or elevated cars have also become available from these manufacturers.

Even so, these are still basically “toys” but do serve a niche in the hobby world and I have purchased several for my collection.

But, for this article, what I am talking about are hand-built models of real trolley cars, built in scale, usually O, but sometimes HO, which are finely built in detail down to the rivets, and they run on layouts built just for them that actually use powered overhead wire and negative rail just like the real trolley cars did years ago. (I have even run one of these cars on a layout that used a real trolley controller and brake unit from a retired street car to make it run and stop. I also have a certificate from the East Penn Traction Club that says that I passed a test and am qualified to operate on their layout.)

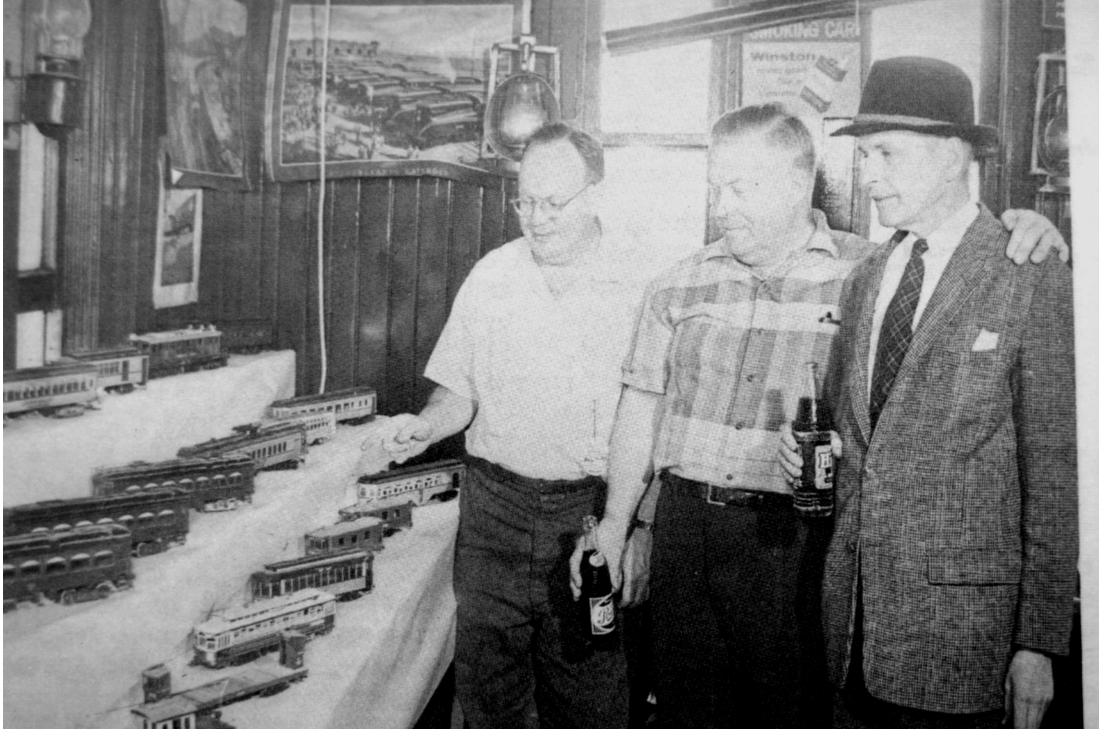
The prime era for this type of modeling seems to have been in the 1950's – 1970's, although some still exist today.

The idea for this article came from a purchase of old model trolley car newsletters, “Trolley Talk”, which I recently purchased at a show. They were produced by the Wagner Car Company of Cincinnati, Ohio who, at the time, manufactured trolley trucks and poles in brass for modelers to use on their scale cars. These newsletters were from 1954 to the early 1970's.

The builders of these models were generally men who remembered the days of real trolleys and interurbans and built a scale model of their favorite car or cars. These were finely built by scratch out of wood and brass, and most likely took quite a while to complete. Of course, once built, the modeler wanted to show off his cars so an informal club was formed in the 1950's simply called “Trolley Men”.

This club was quite unique in that it had no officers, collected no dues, and lived by the motto “Have Trolley-Will Travel”. They would get together about three times a year for a weekend at different members cities. While there, they would display their models, run them on the hosts layout, share photos and plans for models, slides of real trolleys, show trolley films of last runs, etc., and just talk trolley. Sounds electrifying to me ! Wish I would have been into trolleys then.

The “Trolley Men” even visited Altoona at least two times. The first was April 19-20, 1958, when the Altoona Association of Model Railroaders hosted the event at the Webster building on Lexington Ave and 10th St. The “Central Traction Company”, the name of the layout in Altoona, was an “O” scale figure-eight on a 14’ by 24’ table. It had a single track with a tunnel and an old wooden truss bridge.



L-R: Andrew Giles, President of the Altoona Association of Model Railroaders, and Dudley Olney, Oyster Bay, NY, and Robert Graham, Brooklyn, NY, enjoy looking over the model trolleys while have a Pepsi at the Webster building, April 19, 1958. Note: Those Pepsi bottles are now collectible too !

They again came to Altoona on April 27-28, 1963 and met at the Webster building. The hits of this show were Richard Vible’s Johnstown Traction Company # 410, an HO model of a PCC car and Dave Cope’s Chester Valley Traction Co. # 100, an O scale model of “Yellow Springs”, the lines business car.



Model of Johnstown Traction Co. # 410, built by Richard Vible...visiting Altoona in 1963.



Model of the Chester Valley Traction Co. # 100 “Yellow Springs” business car. Modeled by Dave Cope who visited Altoona April 27, 1963.

Modeling in Traction, can be fun and takes a lot less space than trains. It can be a single car on a city street scene or an interurban on a country scene going to an amusement park. Traction companies also did haul freight, but in small trains of only one or two box cars and a freight “motor”.

Even if you just want to display your collection of vintage trolleys from different eras and companies, a simple car barn and a loading platform alongside a short straight piece of track and you just modeled a trolley car museum.

Of course, the layout could be as big and complex as some train layouts are if you wish to model a larger system or city. The ideas for modeling traction are endless and could be a lot of fun. You could even make up your own company and model it anyway you wish. So, lets get sparking Under the (scale) Wire!

Leonard E. Alwine

Editors Note: I remember an event at Railroader’s Memorial Museum back in the 1980’s which was a major open house with specialty exhibitors. One of the most fascinating exhibits was a trolley/interurban display in very compact form in a city setting. There was a maze of automatic switches involved which were controlled by a software program on a laptop. The PCC-HO trolley operated on a maze of city streets having many complex switching moves, all controlled by the program which opened and closed the switch points. Extremely fascinating and compact.

RAILROAD ARCHIVE MATERIAL

On line searching can reveal a treasure-trove of interesting information, both for the casual information seeker or the serious researcher. Pennsylvania informational streams can be accessed by looking at www.pa.us and a search for old railroad maps or photographs can lead to interesting destinations, as well as information on how to access this information. As an example, note the following:

Manuscript Group 286: Penn Central Railroad Collection [ca. 1835-1968]

The bulk of this collection consists of the records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, [ca. 1847-1968]. The PRR, incorporated on April 13, 1846, became by the turn of the century the "standard railroad of the world" and the largest single employer of men and women in the United States. Sometimes referred to as the world's first modern corporation, the PRR handled more business transactions and raised more capital than any other public or private sector organization of its time.

The Penn Central Transportation Company was formed in 1968 with a merger of the PRR and the New York Central Railroad. It went bankrupt in 1970, and was succeeded by the Penn Central Corporation.

Part of this collection was received at the State Archives as gifts from Consolidated Rail Corporation in 1990, part as deposits with Penn Central Corporation and Conrail in 1986, part through the distribution of 8,000 to 10,000 linear feet of an original 400,000 linear feet of records as part of the Penn Central Records Project, 1984-1986, a federally-funded effort involving eight major libraries, part from the Altoona Public Library, and part through the Penn Central Auction of 1972.

The collection at the State Archives contains materials relating to business, transportation and labor history. Included in this collection are the administrative and financial records of the PRR Comptroller, Presidents, Secretary (including records of the Board of Directors and PRR Library), Vice President of Finance (including records of the Treasurer), Vice President of Real Estate, other Vice Presidents, Voluntary Relief Department and hundreds of Subsidiary Lines. Also included are over 1,000 cubic ft. of technical and engineering records of the Vice President of Operation, including registers, historical cards and specification books of the Chief of Motive Power and Supervisor of Motive Power Expenditure; mechanical engineering drawings (tracings and blueprints) of the Mechanical Engineer, and architectural drawings of the Chief Engineer. Also included are general correspondence, 1860-1968; presidential correspondence, 1899-1954; minutes of the salary committee, 1874-1881; and record of employees, 1899-1912. (For a complete listing see the extensive Search Room listing in binders).

The photographs are arranged into three series: the General Office Library Photograph File, donated to the State Archives in 1976, which includes a historical reference file of PRR photographs, ca. 1850-1960; Conrail Mechanical Engineering Department Photograph File was acquired by the State Archives in 1981 and includes nearly 2,000 prints, ca. 1930, primarily builders' views of locomotives and rolling stock interior views; the Penn Central Auction Photographs, obtained by the State Archives in 1972 when Penn Central began divesting its holdings, includes: PRR locomotives, snow and ice conditions, suburban views, and Johnstown Flood of 1889 views, among others.

CURRY RAIL SERVICES

Is a relatively new railroad and structural steel fabricating industry in Hollidaysburg, PA, occupying the west half of what was once the Hollidaysburg Car Shop (Sam Rea Shop in PRR times). A division of Curry Supply Co. of Currysburg, PA, the business is expanding significantly into the railroad arena. The company has been manufacturing locomotive cabs for Norfolk Southern and shortline railroads and has just taken delivery on a collision damaged Union Pacific locomotive (UP 5699, C44ACCTE) with severe left side side-swipe collision damage, which the company will rebuild. Off-loaded from railcar delivery on Monday, November 10, 2014 by Saylor & Son's crane service of Altoona, work will begin to re-structure the car body and a damaged fuel tank while trucks and traction motor repair will be done by Norfolk Southern RR in Altoona. In addition to collision damage, the locomotive sustained topical fire damage from the punctured fuel tank.



Cab of ex-PRR Class I-1 Steam Locomotive No.4679 formerly owned by Les Schaefer of Altoona on the property at Curry Rail Services. In another life, Les used the cab as an attachment to a shed in his yard which housed his one-inch scale train which circled the yard. Les and wife Pat evidently downsized somewhat but he was noted for building one-inch scale live steam locomotives which many Chapter members were witness to over the years.





Preparations to life UP 5594 from a rail flat car onto timbers for car-body rehabilitation. The trucks/traction motors were on a separate carrier.





In this view can be seen the topical fire damage from a pierced fuel tank (welded to frame) in the collision.



Arriving on the property soon will be a shipment of approximately 160 freight cars from Progressive Rail for rebuild. Track connection has been restored with Norfolk Southern on the north side of the car shop (aka DeGol Industrial Center) and the Everett Railroad Company on the south side. This is truly an example of history repeating itself on this property formerly occupied by Hollidaysburg Car Shop.

Norfolk Southern RR had a full track repair gang working on Monday, November 10, 2014 re-building track with new ties on the line from Wye Switches (Dunansville) into Hollidaysburg Yard. This ingress to Hollidaysburg Yard is a busy one, also handling traffic for the nearby Watco-Greenbrier Rail Shops, formerly known as Millenium Rail Services and Berwind Car Service Company of Berwind-White Coal Mining repairing or servicing private label rail cars. Note: Berwind-White Coal had a logo: A white square with a blank circle in the middle (like a donut hole). What did this logo represent? Answer at end of newsletter.



Norfolk Southern track crews re-build the main track entering Hollidaysburg Yard.



Former Hollidaysburg Car Shop in background, now home to DeGol Industries and Curry Rail Services.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN UNVEILS FIRST PUBLICLY FUNDED, EMISSIONS-FRIENDLY LOCOMOTIVES

Altoona, Pa. – Jan 06, 2015



ALTOONA, PA. – The first emissions-friendly locomotives funded by the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program have been released for road testing by Norfolk Southern from its Juniata Locomotive Shop in Altoona, Pa.

The first two GP33ECO switching locomotives – of a total 25 partially funded by CMAQ for production by Norfolk Southern – sport a distinctive paint scheme that reflects their environmentally friendly mission. After in-service testing in the Altoona area, they will be permanently assigned to their respective grant award areas of Chicago and Atlanta.

Funding for the locomotive to be used in the Chicago area was awarded by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency, sponsored by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Funding for the locomotive to be used in Georgia (on Norfolk Southern's Atlanta Terminal) was awarded by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division.

Dedication ceremonies will occur in the months to follow.

Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC) is one of the nation's premier transportation companies. Its Norfolk Southern Railway Company subsidiary operates approximately 20,000 route miles in 22 states

and the District of Columbia, serves every major container port in the eastern United States, and provides efficient connections to other rail carriers. Norfolk Southern operates the most extensive intermodal network in the East and is a major transporter of coal, automotive, and industrial products.

Norfolk Southern contacts:

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SUNNYSIDE YARD, NEW YORK CITY

Here we go again ! In a somewhat obscure article in the Sunday New York Times of November 30, 2014, entitled "New York's Next Big Thing", an opinion piece by Daniel L. Doctoroff, the article talks about the shortcomings of the present-day Javits Convention Center on Manhattan's "far west side", and the need for a better venue, closer to major hotels and with better accessibility. That proposed new venue, it would appear, is the tract of land occupied by the famed railroad Sunnyside Yard in Long Island city. Constructed by the Pennsylvania Railroad to serve the needs of the PRR and the Long Island RR, it has always been considered to be an engineering marvel and still serves the needs of Amtrak, the Long Island RR & NJ Transit today. Following is an excerpt:

"The key is to replace the Javits Center. There's been talk over the years of expanding it, but that won't solve the affordability problem. Fortunately, the perfect undeveloped location for a new convention center exists at Sunnyside Yards, the more than 160-acre rail yard that carves a nasty scar through the heart of Queens."

..."Given the neighborhood's many advantages (Long Island City), redeveloping Sunnyside Yards seems obvious – but the biggest barrier has always been the multibillion-dollar cost of building a platform over the train tracks that can allow the trains to run while accommodating large construction." The plan will be to sell the existing convention center real estate to fund the Sunnyside Yard project.

Sound familiar ?....its the early 1960's all over again with the destruction of Pennsylvania Station in New York City to accommodate the new, but very bland, Madison Square Garden. New Yorkers...watch your backs.

Southern Blair County Law Enforcement

This is a special message for our brother, Chief Ronald Givler, who is about to close another chapter in his book of life and begin a new chapter. Chief Givler has served the Greenfield Township Police Department since 1995 serving as the Chief of Police for most of his tenure, and recently made the decision to retire from this position at the end of this month. Chief Givler is well known in his community and throughout southern Blair County as a dedicated Chief and a very knowledgeable police officer. Chief Givler is one of the leaders who assisted in creating the Southern Blair County Law Enforcement Facebook page, so it is only fitting that we recognize his service on this site. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on a job well done, and wish him the best in his future endeavors. Chief.....you'll be missed but not forgotten. We'll see you soon, in your new "chapter". Stay Safe and Carry On!

[See More](#) (From Facebook)



Congratulations to Ron Givler (brother of President Frank Givler as most Chapter members know) on his recent retirement (January 9th) . We wish you many enjoyable years of other pursuits, Ron. Dws

RAILROADERS MEMORIAL MUSEUM

As autumn gave way to Thanksgiving and the start of the slow season for tourism, Railroader's Memorial Museum gained "occupancy" of the new Roundhouse and moved selected pieces of rolling stock inside to stave off the effects of another winter outdoors: GG 1 # 4913 (Built in Altoona 1942); the *LORETTO*, former private mid-train Pullman owned by steel magnate Charles M. Schwab; the *MOUNTAIN VIEW* ex-PRR Observation Lounge from the famed *Broadway Limited* [sister car *Tower View* is at RR Museum of PA, Strasburg]; industrial shifter locomotive [steam] *Nancy*, formerly from Berwind Car Shops, Hollidaysburg; and the tender for K-4 No. # 1361 (which is complete except for painting).



Overview of the new Roundhouse during construction. The 105' turntable installation was completed in 2006.

Included with the new roundhouse facility is the relocated MEMORIAL HALL, containing the names of hundreds of railroad men and women who served in the industry, mostly local. Formerly housed in the original one-story museum building which transitioned over the years from museum, to meeting space and Memorial Hall, to shop space, the Memorial Plaques of former railroaders needed a new home. With the construction of the Roundhouse and full activation of the previously installed turntable, the opportunity to create a more fitting location presented itself. The Memorial Hall plaques, formerly small plastic badge plates were re-manufactured onto plaques twice the size, all with uniform gold coloring, presenting a most fitting indicator for the railroaders service.



Detail of the various panels which contain the names of prior rail workers. Directories with alphabetical listings, provide the key to locating a rail workers plaque on the panels shown. David Seidel photo.

We hope the opening of Railroader's Memorial Museum for the Spring season in 2015 will include a re-dedication of the Memorial Hall space, providing a fitting tribute to those enrolled in Memorial Hall as well as the opportunity to tour the great Roundhouse facility. Still pending development within the roundhouse, are the equivalent of three stall spaces for educational needs of Penn State Altoona's Railroad Technology Degree program.



R. B. White is the grandfather of Chapter member, Mark Yingling.



Preceding and following: Horseshoe Curve Chapter members will be restoring two Railway Express Agency baggage cars, as a project for Railroader's Memorial Museum. In the rear is steam locomotive (shifter) "Nancy", former from The Berwind White Coal Mining Co. Car Service Department, Hollidaysburg, PA, which shares a track with GG-1 # 4913. Mark S. Yingling photo





Private Pullman car LORETTO of steel-magnate Charles M. Schwab. Mark S. Yingling photo.



Turntable control unit, formerly installed on the PRR's East Altoona Roundhouse pre-1968. Fully restored. David Seidel photo

It should be noted that Railroader's Memorial Museum has two venues for honoring those with railroad service:

- (A) By going online to www.railroadcity.com, look for a drop-down menu near top of screen entitled "Call Board". This will lead the viewer to screens for enrolling a railroader in the museum's DATA BASE of former railroaders, either to view or add a new entry. This type of listing is FREE, and is a fitting way to memorialize a former rail worker.**
- (B) For MEMORIAL HALL and the preparation of a permanent plaque to be affixed to the wall, the cost, per enrollment is \$100.00. This would include the worker's name, name of railroad(s) served, job title(s), and years of service. The enrollment is tax-deductible.**

It should be noted that railroad service need not be restricted to the Altoona area. It can be ANY railroad or RELATED industry such as a private rail car shop or service with a shortline operation.



Ex-PRR Broadway Limited Observation Car "MOUNTAIN VIEW".

Keep the memory alive... *Forever.*



The Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum was founded as a tribute to the Men and Women of Railroading. Enrollment in the Memorial Wall, Harry Bennett Memorial Roundhouse is a way for you and your family to personalize this tribute. For a one-time enrollment fee of \$100, your family member or friend will become a permanent part of the Memorial Wall at the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum. A lasting tribute to the railroader in your life...

The Men...

The Women...

The Memories...

Jimmy Cosmos	
Machinist	
PRR PC CONRAIL	1955—1991

Remembered

Forever...

I wish to enroll the following person on the Memorial Wall in the Harry Bennett Memorial Roundhouse at the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum

Name _____

Railroad(s) _____

Occupation/Craft _____

Years of Service: From _____ to _____

My Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

☐ Enclosed please find a check for \$100 Please bill my: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Card _____ Tel () _____

Make checks payable and return to:

Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum/ 1300 Ninth Ave / Altoona, Pa 16602

WINTER CHAPTER SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 27, 2015 at Railroader's Memorial Museum

Tuesday, February 17, 2015 at Railroader's Memorial Museum. Note: February has 5 Tuesdays and we always meet on the 4th Tuesday

Tuesday, March 24, 2015, Railroader's Memorial Museum; note that March also has 5 Tuesdays.

EXTRA BOARD

Sunday, March 15, 2015 9AM to 2 PM: SCALEFEST Model Train Show, Altoona Convention Center, 1 Convention Center Blvd., Altoona, PA 16602 sponsored by Alto Model Train Museum www.altoonatrains.com ALSO: BUS TRIP TO ALLENTOWN TRAIN SHOW SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2014; BUS FARE ESTIMATED AT \$30-\$40 + \$7.00 ADMISSION, CALL DICK CHARLESOWRTH: 695-2201 ASAP

Also visit the Altoona Association of Model Railroaders at www.aamr.org . Meetings and visits to their facility is open each Friday evening after 7:30 PM. You can also find them on Facebook.

SANTA TRAIN RETROSPECTIVE 2014

As most know, our annual SANTA TRAIN excursions, held each Saturday and Sunday preceding and following Thanksgiving, were a tremendous success. Most seats were sold out 3 weeks prior to the event, the weather was manageable, and SANTA wowed the children as he always does. There were a few casualties among chapter members who came down with colds later, but V.P. Joe Harella had to go one better with pneumonia, but has since recovered. We did sympathize with you Joe, and praise you for your service.

As is customary, Santa collected letters from the children (assisted by Chief Elf, Nicholas) aboard the train, and those with a stamped, self-addressed envelope provided by Mom and Dad, got a reply letter from Santa in the week immediately following the trips. Santa's helpers are a great team! Also, as is customary, each child received a bag of goodies from Santa. After the ride each child also received a bag of duck feed for the water-fowl at Roaring Spring pond, and all got to sample hot chocolate and cookies. Hungry folks were admirably served by Doug's Dawg's concession. But, oh, those porta-potty seats are cold !

THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED MAKE THIS ANNUAL EVENT A SUCCESS, ESPECIALLY THE ROARING SPRING HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE CREWS OF THE EVERETT RAILROAD COMPANY WHO ARE VERY ACCOMODATING. Crew member Travis was recognized especially

with a Horseshoe Curve Chapter jacket by Joe DeFrancesco.



CHAPTER CHRISTMAS DINNER

The annual Christmas dinner for Horseshoe Curve Chapter was held on Saturday, December 6th at the Geeseytown Fire Hall. Their wonderful cooking and hospitality are second to none. The invocation was given by Bill Burket, especially mentioning our recently deceased member of 42 years William (Bill) Temple.



William Hayes Temple, Oct 30, 1936 – Nov 1, 2014

Our guest speaker for the evening was journalist Ron Morgan whose published histories of the "Broad Top" are well known by most, chronicling the history of the coal fields of the Broad Top, and especially either the Huntingdon & Broad Top Mountain Railroad or the East Broad Top Railroad, each on different sides of Broad Top Mountain and running north and south...the H&BTMR from Huntingdon to Saxton, and the East Broad Top from Mt. Union to Robertsedale. Ron supplemented his remarks with a power-point presentation which was most informative. Coincidentally, Horseshoe Curve Chapter owns a 16mm film of the last run of the H&BTMR from 1954 which is currently on loan to Ron for conversion to CD from video tape.



Ron Morgan

In the week following Mr. Morgan's presentation to our Chapter, his good friend and colleague, Jon Baughman, owner of the Broad Top Bulletin newspaper in Saxton, PA, with whom he co-authored one of the Broad Top Histories, died from complications of open-heart surgery. Jon was also noted for serializing a lot of the Broad Top's many stories/histories, in the newspapers of the area and had the respect of all his readers. I have seen many of the articles on occasion and enjoyed them immensely but the Bulletin or weekly newspapers of the region were not always readily accessible here in Altoona. He will certainly be missed.

Answer to Berwind-White logo question: The white square with the blank hole in the middle (on the side of every coal hopper) meant that the customer received an "all around square deal" !

NEWS FROM DUANE MILLER

Saturday, January 10th 2014"

Saturday was the last Saturday that I didn't have to work till after tax season is over. Because of that I decided to go the Farm Show in Harrisburg. On the way back I stopped in Lewistown. There are a lot of former Lake Erie, Franklin & Clarion box cars in the yard there. They now bear the reporting marks of the Genesee & Wyoming. Most of them have built dates from 1979. I also stopped at an antique store that is now in the Huntingdon train station.

