

Official Newsletter  
of



NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 1361

Altoona, PA 16603-1361

[www.hscnrhs.org](http://www.hscnrhs.org)

Spring 2019

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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 10 days after the PRR-NYC merger), evolving from the Altoona Railway Museum Club (1965-1968). We meet on the **FOURTH** Tuesday of each month except December, at the Railroaders Memorial Museum, Altoona, PA, at 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 President and 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](http://www.nrhs.com).

## EDITOR GRATEFUL

This Editor is deeply indebted to those who helped with the information used in this Spring Edition of the Coal Bucket.

The lead article about RPO cars would not have been possible without the help of Frank R. Scheer of the Railway Mail Service Library of Boyce, Virginia. Also fellow Chapter Member Pat McKinney who supplied photos from his collection and a wealth of information about the Robert E. Hannigan car.

Dave Seidel, who alerted me to the installation of a new turntable at Juniata shops which resulted in the article about Juniata Changes and also the Streamliner book review and In Memoriam for Harley Burket which he wrote.

Secretary Joe Harrella also submitted the article on the Chapter's Christmas Party, and Social Meeting at Dick and Toni Charlesworth's home.

Member Jeff Holland, who supplied the vintage photo of a trolley car and bus for the short Under the Wire column in this issue.

Again, THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP, Editor.

## YOU'VE GOT MAIL by Leonard E. Alwine

Long before these words became the norm for persons using computers, people opened their metal mail boxes each day to receive letters and bills put there by the postman.

This past daily service was pretty good for in city deliveries, but deliveries from other towns could take days or even longer as the mail was carried by Pony Express or Stage Coach Lines.

Perhaps the first exception to this was in 1830 when a steam engine built by Peter Cooper named the "Tom Thumb" was raced by him against the horse drawn stage coach of the Stockton and Stokes, a mail hauling line. It was a 13 mile race and the horses won on that day.



An old post card from the early 1950's showing the steam engine "Tom Thumb".

But by January 15, 1831, on the South Carolina Railroad mail was being hauled from Columbia to Bamberg, South Carolina. In 1832, mail was being hauled on railroad cars from Philadelphia to Lancaster with the railroad being paid \$400 a year for the service.

January 1, 1838, the post office issued the first official mail route on the Reading Railroad to carry mail from Philadelphia to Mach Chank, PA, a distance of 117 miles. Of course, this mail was bagged and just carried from town to town.

In the 1860's Assistant Postmaster William Davis experimented with sorting mail while enroute on the trains of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad (later part of the Burlington and Northern).

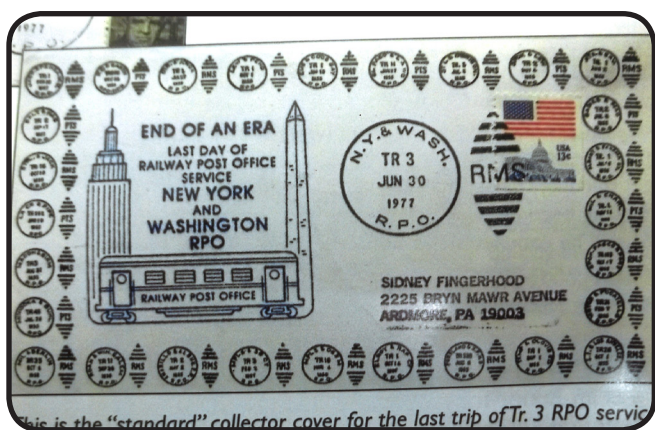
In 1862, Davis began a run from Palmyra to St. Joseph on July 26th and this is recorded as the first Rail Post Office Car.

The first all mail train with sorting aboard was the New York Central Fast Mail Train running between New York and Chicago in 1875.

The use of RPO cars grew in numbers and eventually they were included on most passenger trains running between larger cities.

Most of these original cars were just baggage cars converted to mail use but soon special RPO cars were built, many of them right here in Altoona by the PRR.

With the use of computers and e-mail, less and less mail was being sent through the post office which resulted in less RPO use. The final RPO run was June 30 - July 1, 1977 between New York and Washington D.C. RPO numbers 6536 and 6546 were chose for that run pulled by a GG1. That train arrived in Baltimore on time but a brake problem on car #6536 forced it to be taken off the train and it's mail finished the journey by truck. The rest of the train and car #6546 arrived at Union Station in Washington D.C. at 4:20 a.m. 15 minutes late. When the wheels of that car stopped it marked the end of RPO use in the United States.



Postmark from the last RPO run  
June 30, 1977

But of historic interest to Altoona, is the fact that the last batch of these modern RPO cars were designed and built right here and one car, the prototype so to speak, is still here sitting at the Altoona Railroaders Museum, needing restoration to it's former glory.

The story of this car began back in 1939 when the Post Office and the PRR began working together to design and build a new modern and efficient RPO car. Ideas from mail clerks, Post Masters and PRR car experts were put on paper and the design was developed. It took a while, perhaps due to the war effort, but on April 20, 1946 the new RPO car was outshopped in Altoona.

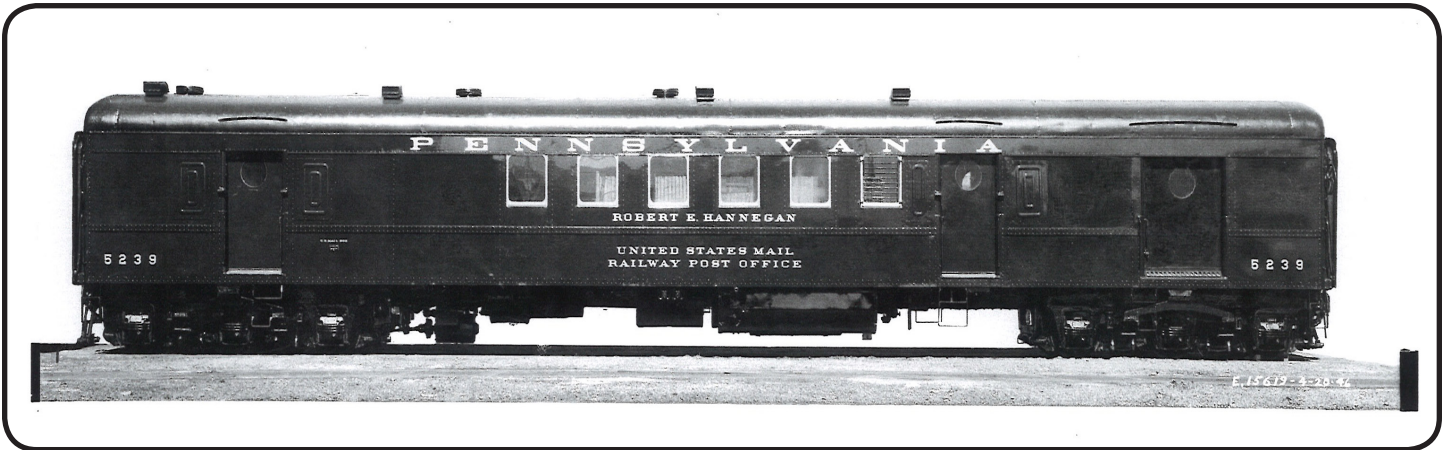


The first new RPO car #5239 sat outside the car shops along Chestnut Avenue in Altoona on April 20, 1946

It was car #5239 and it was named the "Robert E. Hannigan", after the Post Master General at that time. It was one of only a small few RPO cars to be named. It didn't stay for long in Altoona as it was shipped to Chicago for display at the conference of Railway Mail Service Association which was being held there from

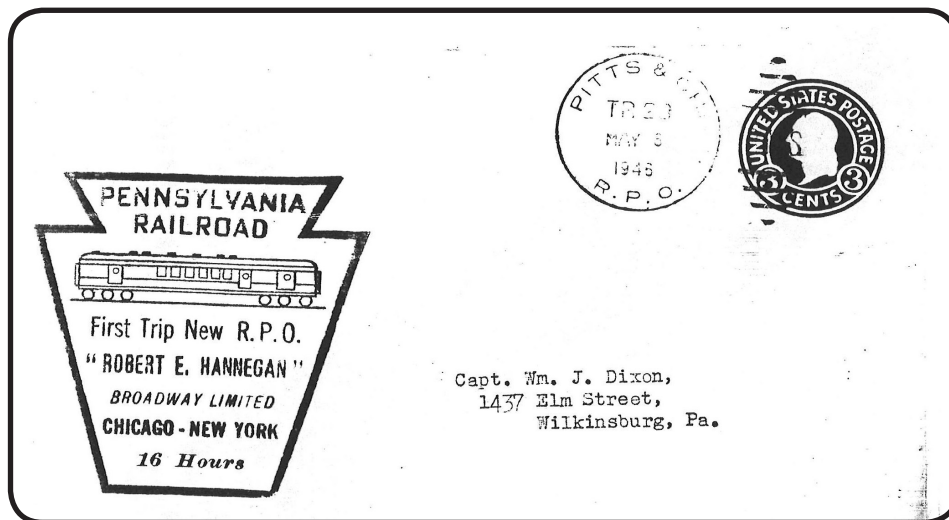


April 22-25, 1946. As part of that conference, the car was dedicated April 23, 1946 at the Union Station. (The PRR produced a small book about the cars design which I am going to try to copy for this issue of the Coal Bucket.)



Side view of the car showing the original lettering and name that was applied.

The car was officially put into service on May 8, 1946 as part of the Broadway limited running from Chicago to New York City in 16 hours.

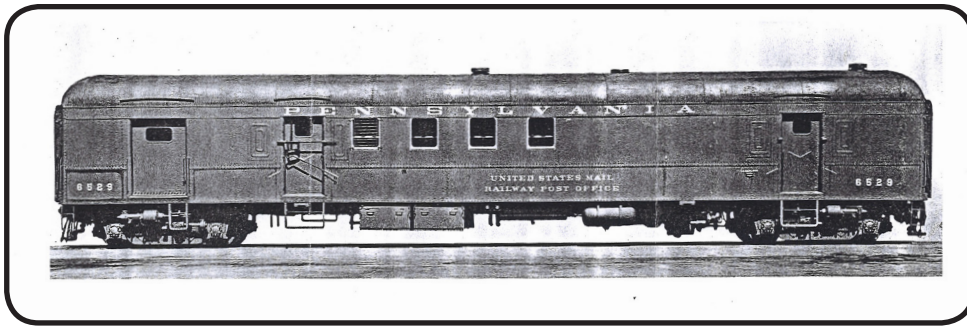


Copy of an envelope from that first run  
with postmark

More cars of this design were then built here in Altoona but had larger square windows instead of the round porthole type. These cars were put into the 6500 number series and on March 31, 1950, The Robert E. Hannigan was re-numbered 6539. It spent most of it's active life on the Broadway Limited.



Photo of the car leaving Chicago enroute  
to New York on one of its runs.



Later, cars were built with larger square windows as shown by # 6529 in this builders view at Altoona.

Under Penn Central ownership, this car was placed into maintenance of way service as were many passenger cars and RPO cars no longer needed for train service. It was again renumbered PC 28157 and it eventually found it's way to Cresson, PA used in that service.



The car sitting at Cresson, PA  
Engine Servicing Building near the end  
of it's railroad days.

On January 21, 1988, Pat McKinney, a member of our NRHS Chapter and also a member of the Keystone Restoration and Preservation group purchased the car from Conrail for \$742.00. It was moved to Altoona and damaged by Conrail when they pushed it into a stopped engine. It was eventually taken to the East Freedom siding and repairs were made to the coupler by Keystone members and the Everett Railroad. It was planned to use this car as a tool car behind the K-4 on trips but that use did not materialize due to unforeseen problems with the K-4. It was painted primer gray at East Freedom and eventually ownership came to our NRHS Chapter when the Keystone group disbanded. (See our history book pages 34-35.)

It made the trip back to Altoona and the ARMM and was painted PRR maroon but is faded and needs done again. The inside is sort of gutted from it's M&W days.

Perhaps the Chapter should decide to restore this special car in the future. The inside could be restored by our talented crew and the outside repainted in better paint and then lettered as original. Then we could build a display panel for it as we have for other cars we have restored at ARMM.

It would be a lot of work but this "one off" special car built here in Altoona should be preserved. It has made it almost 73 years now but without attention it will only deteriorate and be lost forever.



Back Cover

*Something  
New!—*



*The Pennsylvania  
Railroad*



Front Cover

## *Speeding the Mail*

Introducing an Improved type of  
Railway Post Office Car

**I**N collaboration with the United States Post Office Department, the Pennsylvania Railroad has constructed, at its Altoona Works, an improved type of Railway Post Office car, carrying out, through careful planning and design, new ideas for the increased comfort and convenience of the Railway Mail clerks, and improvements to facilitate their work in handling the mail.

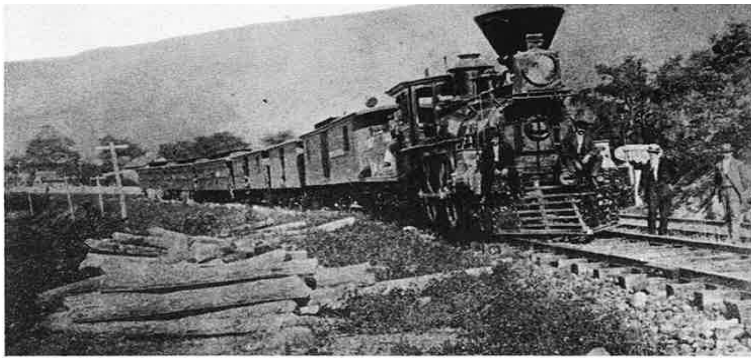
This newly designed car has been named the "Robert E. Hannegan," in honor of the Postmaster General of the United States, and was dedicated to him at a conference of the field officials of the Railway Mail Service held in Chicago April 22-25. This conference included all the field officials of the Railway Mail Service, together with the executive committee and all division presidents of the Railway Mail Association, and was the first meeting of the kind ever held. The conference was honored by the presence of the Postmaster General and the Second Assistant Postmaster General, Gael E. Sullivan.

Many of the innovations created by Pennsylvania Railroad designers and mechanical experts were the direct result of hundreds of ideas and suggestions submitted by the Railway Mail clerks. Thoughtful consideration and careful study was given to every idea presented, and a joint committee of Railway Mail officials and railroad mail traffic officers was named to select the most practical suggestions for incorporation in the new car.

The results have elicited many expressions of approval from the Railway Mail clerks who saw the car in large numbers for the first time during the Chicago conference.

The car features an enlarged wash room with up-to-date facilities, a new type water cooler, a modernized heating system, an improved wardrobe, larger doors, new windows, more efficient lighting, and a new ventilation system, together with several other improvements.





The Fast Mail of 75 years ago

The wash room, extended to four feet in length and three feet, one inch in width, contains a wash stand of the most recent design, with new mirrors and lights. The room has a swinging door, with grill work at the bottom. To aid in ventilation, air is drawn from the top of the room by an electric fan. The room also contains a modernistic recessed refuse container.

In order to provide fresh, chilled water at all times, an electro-mechanical type water cooler has been installed. Above the water cooler is a new stainless steel steam cooker, where the men will be able to cook their own meals more quickly and conveniently.

In conformity with many suggestions, the wardrobe has been redesigned. It now measures three feet, one inch, by two and one-half feet, and contains shelves and a coat rail. The interior lighting of the wardrobe is controlled by a door switch, so that when the door is opened, the light flashes on.

The most modern type of copper fin tube radiation has been provided for the car's heating system. Two thermostats, one in each end of the car, control the heating, making it possible for the crew to adjust the flow of heat to their own comfort under varying degrees of temperature in either end of the car. An enlarged two and one-half inch steam heat line has



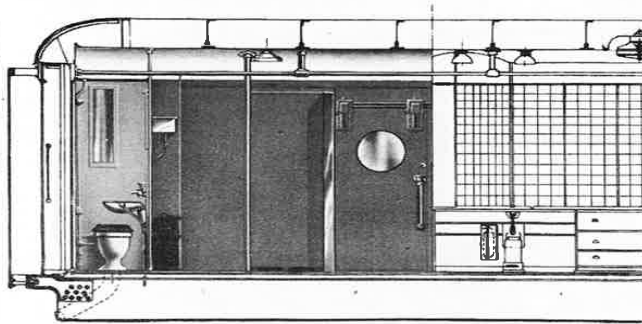
The Fast Mail of today

been installed, with end valves and connectors of equivalent size, assuring the necessary amount of heat at all times.

One of the most important changes in construction, and a feature that is expected to greatly speed the handling of mail, is the increased width of the side door opening. The new door is three feet, two inches, as against the old width of two feet, ten inches. The radiator bulkheads at the door also have been cut down, giving much more room for the loading and unloading of mail bags. Two stainless steel stanchions have been provided at the top of the bulkheads.

Double glazed full-vision windows have been installed for better vision and heat conservation in cold weather. The outside windows are of quarter-inch plate glass, and the inside windows are of quarter-inch safety glass. A novel feature has been added here, also. When a window is raised, a screen automatically slides into place, providing a screened opening of eight inches for ventilation in warm weather. The protection bars, no longer necessary with the use of safety glass, have been eliminated to provide clear view windows.

In a move to increase the lighting intensity, lights have been rearranged scientifically, and the wattage of the lighting units increased by one half. The installation of these lights, it is expected, will be of great assistance to the mail clerks



An interior view, showing the new wash room, modern water cooler, larger door, new lighting and other features

in the performance of their duties.

Batteries have been increased from 500 ampere hours capacity, to 1000 ampere hour. Correspondingly, the axle generator apparatus capacity has been boosted from  $3\frac{3}{4}$  kilowatts to ten kilowatts.

Ventilation, which at times has proved a troublesome problem in the earlier types of Railway Post Office cars, has been most successfully handled in the new car. Three ceiling ventilating fans, each with a capacity of 750 cubic feet per minute, have been installed. These exhaust fans will prove of great value during periods of extremely warm weather, by removing the heat from the top of the car.

The important matter of safety has not been overlooked in the designing and building of the car. The safety rail overhead has been constructed of stainless steel, as are the main stanchions or center stands. The center rail pedestals have been made of aluminum castings to cut down weight, while stainless steel has been used for the center rails.

The entire water supply will be furnished from Pullman-type pressure tanks beneath the car, eliminating the use of

overhead storage tanks. It will not be necessary to enter the car to refill the tanks.

Luggage space has been provided by cutting down the width of three sections of drawers from three feet to two feet, and relocation of the register cases, making space available beneath the letter cases for the clerks luggage.

Two rows of letter cases have been changed from 24 separations to six separations to provide enlarged letter case separations for the handling of registered mail.

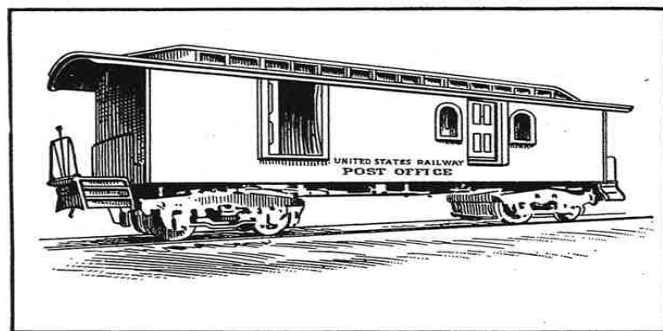
As a matter of convenience, the electrical switch cabinet has been removed from the wash room to a cabinet adjacent to the side door.

Improved trucks with roller bearings, and clasp brakes have been installed for better riding and braking conditions.

Special arrangements have been used for the lights at the door in order to throw light on the outside platform, thus aiding the outside men in the performance of their work.

A new sign has been painted over the outside letter box.

With these, and other minor improvements, the Pennsylvania's new type Railway Post Office car may well blaze the way toward substantially greater comfort and convenience for Railway Mail clerks, with an accompanying increased efficiency in the speedy and accurate handling of mail.



The first railway mail car

## **JUNIATA CHANGES**

**by Leonard E. Alwine**



The Juniata section of Altoona is home to the Norfolk Southern locomotive shops. Recently, some new signs erected in the town as well as a new turntable at the shops have given train watchers a little something different to look at in the area.



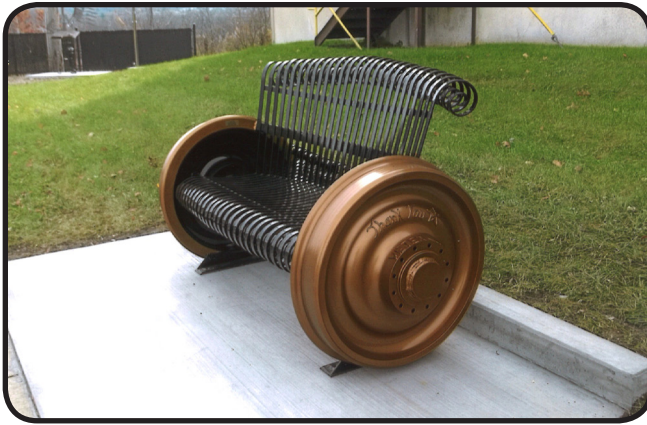
The first is a new sign welcoming you to Juniata. It was built by Shane Michael Rhone from the Troop 3034 Boy Scouts in Hollidaysburg as his Eagle Scout Project. The sign is located at 8th Street and 4th Avenue seen as you cross the bridge over the N.S. mainline and yard. He worked on this project for about a year.



Sign at the bridge exit honoring veterans and the new sculpture placed there recently.

About a block away at the bridge exit is a memorial which names the 8th Street Bridge as The Bridge of Freedom. This project was started in 2013 when the cement slab was built and placed and dedicated at a service on September 11, 2013. This slab was made and installed by myself and other workers at Forsht Concrete that summer as a donation to the memorial. The County Commissioners provided the bronze plaque. Since then a new flag pole and the metal sculpture have been added this fall along with a new bench a few feet away that has a railroad theme. If you are traveling in the Juniata area it would raise your spirits to take a few minutes and stop by these new sites.





Railroad Wheel Bench at Memorial



Closeup of the Wheels honoring Vets

Then about two blocks away at 3rd Avenue and 4th Street a new turntable has been installed at the locomotive shops. I am not sure at what date the old turntable was removed but a phone call from Dave Seidel prompted me to go and take a look. Throughout the Fall, progress was made on the pit, preparing it for the new turntable.



Digging out the old pivot point and installing the new circle track



Pouring the new pivot point and finishing grading the pit floor

All was ready November 15th for the installation to begin. First the new turntable was lifted off the transport truck and trailer by two large cranes. The lifting and installation took a little over an hour. It was an extra cold day with flakes of snow falling, and a large storm forecast.

What was unique about the lifting was that due to the weight and closeness of the area the cranes just couldn't pick it up and drop it into the pit. The turntable had to be moved back past the one crane so the opposite end could be moved sideways under the other crane. Then that crane had to move it's end back past it as the first crane moved it's end back and under it's boom. Then both had to move the table back and over the pit and begin lowering it. It was amazing to watch the two crane operators and the man on the ground with the radio move this 144 ton piece without the slightest sway or jerk of the cables supporting it.





First end moved in side crane



Second end coming around the other crane



Getting lined up on the pit to begin the lowering process



Lowered onto the pivot point and the edge tracks

By the time it was set in place it really began to snow and soon everything was under 11 inches of the white stuff. Several days later a smaller crane was set up to install the yellow railings etc. to finish the project.

It was nice to watch and capture some of the moves on film. (I took more pictures than are shown in this newsletter.) It would have been a lot nicer to watch if it had been 50 degrees warmer but sometimes you just have to put up with Mother Nature and what she deals you if you want to see some railroad changes.



Getting lined up on the pit to begin the lowering process



A few days later a smaller crane was in place to install the yellow railings



## HAVING FUN WITH SNOWPLOWS

by Leonard E. Alwine

This past Fall, the City of Altoona Highway Department and Mayor Matt Pacifico devised a plan to have some of the City's grade schools develop and paint different scenes on five of the snowplows used in the city. The plain yellow plows were taken to the different schools in September and the art students in each school came up with a scene and painted it on the plow at their school. All five of the plows were then taken to the Station Medical Center at 17th Street and put on display. Some of the scenes promoted the school's mascot while others showed different "railroad" themes, as could be expected in a railroad town.

The schools participating were:

Juniata Gap - A space rocket theme

Irving - A train depicting Benzels & Baker's Mansion

Holy Trinity - A snow monster eating the snow

Juniata - The NS Shop Locomotive

Pleasant Valley - A steam train



Juniata Gap Grade School



Irving Grade School



Holy Trinity Grade School



Juniata Grade School



Pleasant Valley Grade School



## **LOCAL YARD NEWS**

### **HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS**

#### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

**DECEMBER 8, 2018**

The regular monthly meeting of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS was canceled due to the Christmas holiday. The chapter held its' annual Christmas dinner at the Geeseytown Fire Hall on December 8, 2018. The members and guests enjoyed a wonderful Turkey and Roast Beef dinner, complete with all of the trimmings including dessert. The dinner this year was catered by Holland Brothers.

A special thank-you goes out to Karen Givler who coordinated the setting up of the tables as well as the buffet. She was also responsible for creating the holiday center pieces which adorned each table.

The guest speaker for the evening was Dr. Kevin Moore. Kevin presented his talk and slide show on his private car "The Berlin". He spoke about the history of the car as well as the restoration work that was done to it. He urged anyone wanting to ride in any private car , not to wait too long as the climate for the operation of these cars is changing. It was a very interesting presentation.

The evening was very enjoyable to all. President Givler then wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

JOSEPH HARELLA

RECORDING SECRETARY

HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS

### **HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS**

#### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

**JANUARY 22, 2019**

The regular monthly meeting of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS was held on January 22, 2019. The meeting was held at the home of Toni and Dick Charlesworth at 7:00 P.M.. Since this was more like a social meeting, Len Alwine made a motion to suspend the regular order of business, Gary Price second, the motion passed.

The members were then treated to pizza, salad, beer and soft drinks, along with fudge and pretzels. We also celebrated member Dave Seidels's birthday with a cake and our own rendition of that old familiar song "Happy Birthday".

Throughout the evening member Jeff Holland was showing films of Nickel Plate 759, as long as the film would stay together.

In between changing films, Pres. Givler called the meeting to order at 8:25 P.M. to discuss several items. He informed everyone that the chapter dues for 2019 are now due. The dues are \$15.00 for a member and \$2.00 for a spouse.

He also reported that Josh Guernsey from Ontario, Canada, is interested in the Duquense. Frank offered the car to him for \$1.00. It would cost us much more to have the car scrapped. He also told him that we would like \$1000 for the windows. Josh was concerned about moving the car by rail. Frank told him that the car would be required to have working air brakes, among other things determined by the NS car inspector. He also told him that he would have to make all of the arrangements to move the car. The members then held a discussion.

We then returned to watching more Nickel Plate 759 films, which were very interesting. Thank-you goes out to Jeff for providing the films, and to Toni and Dick for hosting the evening.

The meeting ended about 9:30 P.M., with 17 members present. Entertainment was provided by Jenny the cat.

Attendance: Mark Yingling, Dick Charlesworth, Toni Charlesworth, Gary Price, Frank Givler, Mike Walls, Paul Campbell, Denny Walls, Len Alwine, Diane Alwine, Dave Seidel, Larry Leer, Jeff Holland, Jim Caum, Ron Givler, Dewayne Miller, Joe Harella

JOSEPH HARELLA

RECORDING SECRETARY

HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS

## **GOING UP AND DOWN AT ALTOONA STATION**

**by Leonard E. Alwine**

In the old frontier days a train station was right along the tracks with a ticket booth that projected out onto a wooden platform that went from the station to the train tracks and was used by passengers to board the trains.

As city's grew and developed around the station many times a larger and more modern station was built a little away from the tracks with steps, hallways and ramps used to access the trains at track level for loading. Sometimes even elevators had to be used to get to these loading platforms. Such was the case at the Altoona Amtrak station.

When the 10th Avenue Expressway was built along the railroad tracks in Downtown, the old PRR train station had to be torn down as the expressway was planned to run right through that space.



The old Altoona Station with train shed for loading passengers.  
(note the two Blue and White flexible buses sitting on what was to become the 10th Avenue Expressway)  
Photo from the collection of Elaine Conrad, Wopsy Railroad Historian.

With this station gone, a travel trailer was used for years as the Altoona Station. Later, a plan for a new station for trains, buses and taxi cabs was adopted which used the first floor of a parking garage built next to the old station.

The only flaw was how to get passengers from that station to the new loading platforms across the busy 10th Avenue Expressway. To do so, steps, an elevator system and a bridge were built. Things worked rather well for many years but elevators, being a machine do wear out, and so did the one at Altoona Station.

Actually, it did not wear out, it only developed a leak in the hydraulic cylinder which was used to raise and lower the elevator car. (Later another leak was found in the piping to this cylinder). This, of course put the elevator out of service as it could no longer go up and down. It was taken out of service in July 2018 and this presented a hardship to older and handicapped passengers.

A company called Eastern Elevator was called and they determined that the cylinder had to be removed and replaced, but that type was no longer made. So it had to be taken back to the shop and rebuilt. Also, the second leak was in piping under a cement floor so new piping had to be run above the floor with holes cut into two 4 inch cement walls for this new piping. It took a long time and \$45,000.00 to get the repair made and solve the problem. By November 2018 the elevator was once again going up and down the station.

Oh, for old days of only a wooden platform between the ticket office and the train!

## **INTERCHANGE TRACKS**

### **Television Quotes**

Recently heard or seen on TV were some quotes which kind of are related to our Chapter. First was on the movie “Miracle on 34th Street” where a line is said that Postmaster Robert E. Hannigan directed all the letters to Santa Clause be delivered to the courthouse where Santa was on trial.

The second was from the show Gilligan’s Island when Thurston Howe, the millionaire, says that if word of his fixing the turtle races ever gets back home he will loose his window seat on the Union League.

### **Museum Successful**

The Portage Historical Museum has been successful in keeping the old brick road in front of it unpaved. (See article in Fall Newsletter 2018.)

Austin M. Rodgers, Vice President, informed me that although the road was paved, a 100 foot section in front of the old PRR Station (Museum) was left unpaved. Also that some bricks were removed from the paved areas and the museum is planning to place them beside the museum as a walkway near the tracks. Anyone wishing to help with this project will be able to purchase one of these bricks for \$15 and it will be engraved with the name of a business from old time Portage before being placed in the walk.

In some cases you can fight City Hall and win!!



## UNDER THE WIRE by Leonard E. Alwine

In this issue we will have a brief Under the Wire column featuring a photo supplied by fellow trolley enthusiast Jeff Holland.

It is a photo of the Third Avenue trolley line at it's terminus on Pleasant Valley across from Rose Hill Cemetery where other Logan Valley bus routes also met.

In the photo is car #58, a 1925 Osgood Bradley trolley and Bus #65 a 1942 Ford 09B. Behind them out of clear site is another Logan Valley bus sitting at the entrance of Rose Hill Cemetery.

The young boy in the photo is reportedly Harley Burket who lived right down the street from there.



Bus #65 & Car # 58 at Rose Hill Cemetery

## STREAMLINER

### Book Review

by

David Seidel

A new book which might be of interest to Chapter members, is ~~the above title, authored~~ <sup>STREAMLINER</sup> by local author John Wall. Most fans of the late, great *PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD* are familiar with the name of Raymond Loewy, the noted industrial

**designer whose designs revolutionized the shape of many industrial products from locomotives to consumer goods. His designs coincided with the advent of the**

**Art-Deco era of the 1930's, leading into the Pennsylvania Railroad's participation at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Raymond Loewy's premier work was the PRR Class S-1 locomotive, sheet-steel shrouding on the boiler which gave it a "bullet" shape and added to its descriptive term "streamliner". In these days a railroad's public image of speed, safety and luxury, was most associated with its passenger fleet rather than the freight operations.**

**Also coinciding with the 1939 Worlds Fair was the PRR's development of the 1938 Fleet of Modernism, of completely new passenger equipment.**

**The Fleet of Modernism was still associated with the heavy-weight era, however, but was characterized with a more modern style of paintwork and other amenities, with two-tone paint along the window line and enhanced with gold (buff) lettering and striping, all designed by Raymond Loewy.**

**The book is penned by Altoona native John Wall, retired columnist from the Altoona Mirror in prior years, especially reviews of theatre and cultural events. In retirement, he may be found in hardware at the Altoona Lowe's ~~Hardware~~ Store.**

**It is anticipated there will be a future book-signing opportunity. The book retails for \$39.95 and can be ordered at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or via Barnes & Noble. This is a biography of Raymond Loewy in text book form as a work of non-fiction, and is NOT a coffee-table book characterized by photographs on glossy paper, although it would have been a good subject for that format. All in all, however, it is a fascinating read.**

### **CONGRATULATIONS**

**Sincere congratulations to JAMES CHARLESWORTH, son of HORSESHOE Curve Chapter longtime members Dick (Max R.) and Toni Charlesworth of Hollidaysburg, PA. Most know James by his nickname, “Beau”. Beau has just had his first novel published, entitled *The Patricide of George Benjamin*. *We have not had the opportunity to read the novel, which is a work of fiction, just recently released in Boston where Beau is employed as a paralegal at a Boston law firm.***

***Some of the older members of Horseshoe Curve Chapter, such as this correspondent, might also remember Beau’s sister, Heather Charlesworth, who regularly attended Chapter meetings with her Dad, Dick, in the 1970’s ; when each meeting was characterized by coffee and cake, and one of those riveting slide shows on trains and railroads (what else ?); it was our claim to fame at the time in those early year.***



## IN MEMORY

### ROBERT L. "BOB" SPECK

December 3, 1942 - December 4, 2018

Robert "Bob" Speck recently passed away at his home in Martinsburg at the age of 76. Bob was a former member of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS. He had retired as a Supervisor for Amtrak in Washington D.C. He had also worked for Conrail.

Bob is survived by his wife Nancy and a daughter, Kim.

May you rest in peace Bob.

### HARLEY WAYNE BURKET

April 12, 1939 - January 10, 2019

Harley Wayne Burket recently passed away at UPMC in Altoona at the age of 79. Harley was a founding member of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS. He was not as active in recent years due to health issues. He retired from Conrail as Foreman of the Materials Department.

Harley and his son Kevin had a mobile HO scale train layout which they showed at many events in the area.

Harley is survived by his wife Judith and son Kevin, and also a daughter, Linda.

May you rest in peace Harley.



Harley Burket with the recently delivered cars of the Chapter at Brookes Mills



Kevin Burket operating the portable train layout built by Harley, his father.

## IN MEMORIAM

### HARLEY WAYNE BURKET

*During 2018, the Horseshoe Curve Chapter celebrated the 50th Anniversary and accomplishments. We can all take pride in the many achievements which are easy to enumerate, and we can reflect on the excellent commemorative book written by Leonard Alwine. But, as we all know, any accomplishments are the combined efforts of many.*

*The memory file isn't as sharp as we want it to be at the half-century mark, but Harley Wayne Burket came on board as the Chapter was forming, back around 1965 when we*

*were informally organized as the Altoona Railway Museum Club under the umbrella of the Blair County Tourist & Convention Bureau, and was elected as the Chapter's(first) Vice-President after our National charter was received in May of 1968.*

*Fast forward 50 years and we find our good friend Harley Burket leaving us in death with a treasure chest full of memories. Over these many years, many individuals and past members made their contributions to preserving the rich railroad heritage that is common to the greater Altoona region. All we need to do is walk through Memorial Hall at Railroaders Memorial Museum, or reflect on the accomplishments of all those who went to work everyday in the once great Altoona Works, Juniata Shops, South Altoona Foundry, East Altoona Roundhouse and the Altoona Classification Yard, and the Samuel Rea shops in Hollidaysburg. The list is endless. Harley Wayne Burket worked 30 years-plus ending up as a Foreman in stores/materiel and was well versed with heavy industry on the railroad, which survived four corporate mergers. His resume' included the PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD, PENN CENTRAL RAILROAD, & CONRAIL prior to Norfolk Southern RR in 1999.*

*As with most things, while our respective careers or work histories accrue, life goes on and things happen. Unfortunately, Harley had interrupted service with the NRHS which prevented him from receiving his 50-year certificate and pin, but, as we all know, he excelled at being a great husband to Judi and Father, especially for son Kevin, developing and building a sophisticated model train layout and teaching Kevin how to assemble and operate the many complexities of it. Yes, there was the permanent layout room at home, and there was also the portable/mobile layout which they would take to special shows and operate for the enjoyment of all who happened by.*

*As you know Harley and I met when the Chapter formed, and I have valued his and Kevin's friendship, these many years. I WILL MISS HIS WIT AND WISDOM AND THE GOOD -NATURED BARBS WE EXHANGED WITH EACH OTHER. Goodbye, Good Friend.*

**Dave Seidel**

**Deepest sympathy goes to Judi, Kevin and Linda.**