

Official Newsletter  
of



NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 1361  
Altoona, PA 16603-1361  
[www.hsenrhs.org](http://www.hsenrhs.org)

**Summer 2022**

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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.**

This Summer 2022 issue of the Coal Bucket is dedicated in honor of Dave Seidel, a founding member of the chapter and former editor of the newsletter.

*Dave W. Seidel*

January 4, 1938 - March 11, 2022



Dave typing one of the original issues of the Coal Bucket in his kitchen in the late 1960's.

**IN THIS ISSUE SUMMER 2022**  
**by Leonard Alwine**

The first article “Turning a Vision into a Reality” is a short history about the chapter and Dave Seidel’s involvement over 50 plus years to bring the chapter and the ARMM into existence.

The second article by John Fisher is written about an 1879 poster in his collection announcing a fabulous local trip by the PRR 143 years ago. Attached to this article are three photos your editor found in doing some more research on the narrow gauge railroad.

Next is an article by Editor Leonard Alwine with some personal reflections of Dave Seidel and working with him over the years.

Next, Joe Harella continues to keep us informed about Local Yard News combined with the Chapter’s minutes for this past Spring meetings.

Then there is an article about your editor some 50 years ago when he was the editor of his business school’s newsletter and his working with Virginia to produce it before she was married to Dave.

The “A Look Back” in this issue is a story which your editor wrote for that business school newsletter about the school’s building being torn down which sat on the 13th Street hill overlooking the old Altoona PRR Station.

And finally, the “In Memory” section honors two chapter members, Dave Seidel and Charles Swenson. Since both were very involved in local clubs, their full obituaries are copied in this column.

That said, the staff of the Coal Bucket hopes all enjoy this edition of the newsletter as once again it was produced with grief on our hearts. We want to wish all a happy and safe Summer 2022.

- The Coal Bucket Staff

## TURNING A VISION INTO REALITY

by Leonard Alwine

Most chapter members today would probably have a hard time imagining a time when Altoona had no organized group of people collecting and preserving items from the great PRR heritage of the area. Or a time when there was no museum to display those items to educate visitors or future generations about our local railroad history.

But in the mid 1960's that was the case. Shortly after the announcement that the state railroad museum would be built in Strassburg, PA, a group of six local people banded together in 1966 and formed "The Altoona Railroad Museum Club" with the vision to build a railroad museum in Altoona. It was a mission that seemed impossible. Dave Seidel was one of those six people and he took that mission to heart and devoted much of his life turning that vision into reality.

That little group literally had nothing to work with other than desire to do something for the Altoona Railroad heritage which at that time was fast slipping away as the PRR and the New York Central were talking merger plans.

By May 11, 1968, that group had become the 81st Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and adopted the title Horseshoe Curve Chapter after Altoona's most famous site The Horseshoe Curve. They also acquired the post office box number 1361 as a mailing address after the number of the K-4 at that time displayed at the curve.

Even though it had taken two years to accomplish this, that date was just the beginning of many years of hard work that this group of six people would undertake to make their vision come true.

To raise funds to help with that desire to build a museum, Dave Seidel and Mary Jo Wahl went to the Horseshoe Curve and gathered up buckets of old steam cinders and placed them into baby food jars to sell to the public.



Jars of cinders displayed on shelves in Dave's den.

Since they had no place to call home yet, this group of chapter members met at the old Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. conference room in Wehnwood.

Photo of officers at meeting to receive the chapter charter. Dave Seidel, President, receives the charter from Wayne Burket, National Director; as Mary Jo Wahl, Secretary-Treasurer, and Ralph Gundel, Vice President, look on.



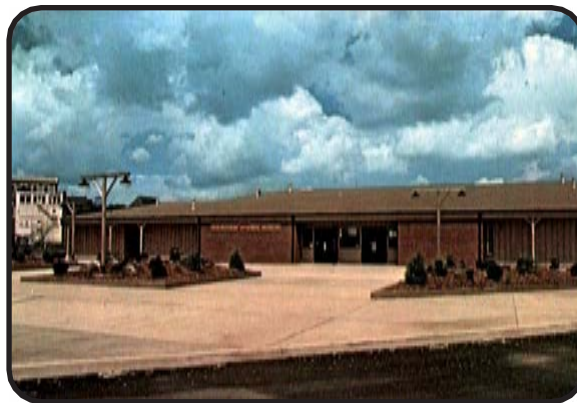
RAIL FANS HISTORICAL GROUP CHARTER. Pictured - David W. Seidel (left), as president of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, receives from National Director H. Wayne Burket, the local club's charter; as Miss Mary Jo Wahl, secretary-treasurer, and Ralph M. Gundel, vice president, observe.

This group also began displaying PRR items and photos around town to try to get local support for the museum.



Original six members set up a display at Lakemont Park.  
Harley Burket, Dave Seidel, Kay Maloney, Julia Corl, Mary Jo Wahl and Alan McCormick (kneeling).

After many years of behind the scenes hard work raising funds and support, a museum (the original small building) was opened September 1986.



The first original building

It was then that the really hard work of building displays and restoring rolling stock began and Dave was there to help with that work, making that vision come true.



Dave helping lay tracks at the yard.



Dave sanding the turntable at the roundhouse



After much of that work had been finished, it was time to show off the museum to visitors and Dave was there proudly telling Altoona's Railroad Heritage. He would meet bus loads of people and school children and take them on tours. He also loved to act as a car host for Railfest which gave people a chance to travel around the Horseshoe Curve on a train.



Railfest, July 2007  
Les Shaffer, Dave Seidel, Joe Harrella,  
Denny Walls, and Leonard Alwine  
as car hosts.



Dave Seidel narrating a tour of  
old Logan Valley Trolley routes,  
another of Dave's historic  
Altoona railways interests.  
August 2004

Dave also realized that hard working members needed a social time to relax so he and his wife Virginia would host a chapter picnic at his cottage each summer.



Dave and Virginia eating at the table



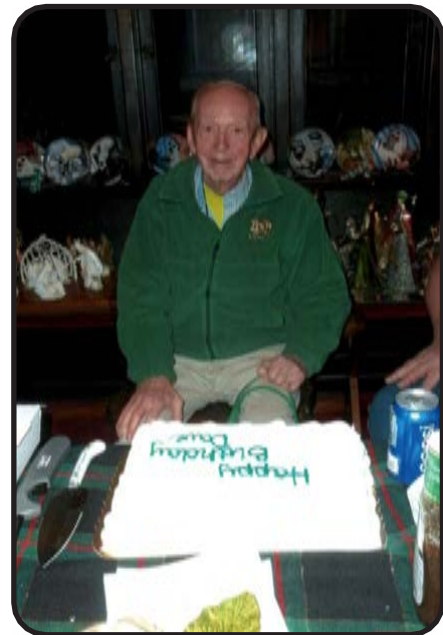
The food line inside his garage  
at the cottage

In 2018, the Chapter celebrated its 50th Anniversary. The vision has become a reality largely due to Dave's untiring efforts to keep things going. At the banquet, Dave received a certificate on behalf of the chapter honoring that 50 years.



2018 Officers receiving the award:  
Joe Harella, Len Alwine, Joe Defrancesco,  
Dave Seidel, Frank Givler,  
Harold Shank, NRHS Officer  
and Denny Walls.

But Dave was not done yet, even as his health failed he still went to meetings, if someone could take him, especially the social meetings.



At a social meeting in January at Dick Charlesworth's house, Dave received a birthday cake.



Dave also still did what he could restoring items for the museum. His last project was the REA Express baggage carts. Perhaps his last train ride was on the Everett Railroad in Hollidaysburg during their Pumpkin Patch train when Dave had the privilege of riding in the cab of number 11.






Preserving Altoona's railroad heritage began as a dream for Dave, and through 50 plus years, a reality. Dave spent the better part of his life making that dream come true. Hopefully our current members will pick up where Dave left off and continue to preserve our railroad heritage in honor of Dave.

Picture of the poster inspiring the following article:

**PLEASURE TRIP**  
 OVER THE  
**Allegheny Mountains**  
 On Friday, August 29th, 1879,  
 STOPPING AT  
**ALTOONA,**  
 AND  
 Including a Trip over the Bell's Gap Narrow-Gauge R. R.



**THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD CO.**  
 Offer this fine opportunity to the enjoyment of traveling and scenery on the Allegheny Division. It is a delightful excursion to go and return on the regular route.

**RATE FOR THE ROUND TRIP FROM PITTSBURG, \$3.00**  
 Including Trip over Bell's Gap Narrow-Gauge Road.

**RATES FROM OTHER STATIONS AS FOLLOWS:**

Pittsburg 2.00	Greenburgh 65.00	Westerville Ind. 22.00	Smith Fork 21.75
East Liberty 2.00	Tart 2.00	Waverlyville 1.50	Waverlyville 2.75
Williamstown 2.00	Amportown 9.75	Slovak 1.00	W. Homer 2.00
Harrison 2.00	Donner 1.75	Hamory 1.50	Portage 2.00
Yanick Creek 2.00	Colerain 2.00	Lawrence 2.00	Lawrence 2.00
Warwick 2.75	Shanty 2.50	Lancaster 2.00	Cromton 2.00
Lawrence 2.75	Borwick 3.75	New Stanton 2.00	Lawrence 2.00
Irwin 2.75	W. Valley 2.00	Shank 2.00	Shank 2.00
Waverly 2.75	Henry 2.00	Amherst 2.00	Amherst 2.00
Waverly 2.75	Wright 2.00	Lawrence 2.00	Lawrence 2.00
Waverly 2.75	Wright 2.00	Lawrence 2.00	Lawrence 2.00
Waverly 2.75	Wright 2.00	Lawrence 2.00	Lawrence 2.00
Waverly 2.75	Wright 2.00	Lawrence 2.00	Lawrence 2.00

Excursions will take the Express leaving Pittsburg at 8:15 A. M. every week, and stop wherever rapid service is required. The Express will stop at Greenburgh, Portage, and Lawrence, and take mail, express and freight. The Express will stop at Greensburg, Portage, and Lawrence, and take mail, express and freight. The Express will stop at Greensburg, Portage, and Lawrence, and take mail, express and freight.

The excursion will leave PITTSBURG on Friday, August 29th, and return to PITTSBURG on Saturday, August 30th. The excursion will stop at Greensburg, Portage, and Lawrence, and take mail, express and freight. The excursion will stop at Greensburg, Portage, and Lawrence, and take mail, express and freight.

**THEO. A. STECHER,**  
 General Ticket Agent, Altoona, Pa.

**L. P. FARMER,**  
 General Ticket Agent, Altoona, Pa.

## PRR PLEASURE TRIP 1879

by John Fisher

On Friday, August 29th, 1879, the Pennsylvania Railroad conducted a special trip over the Allegheny Mountains to Altoona and then up the Bells Gap narrow gauge railway. The trip was described in the poster as follows:

Excursionists will take Day Express leaving Pittsburgh at 8:26 a.m. city time and stop wherever flagged between Greensburg and Johnstown. Passengers between Pittsburgh and Greensburg will take mail train and change for Day Express at Greensburg, at which station those from South West Penna. Branch will also change for same train. From Johnstown and stations east, passengers will take Johnstown Express as far as Altoona.

The Day Express will reach Altoona at 12:20 p.m. and after dinner a special train will carry the excursionists to Bells Mills, at which point they will change cars and pass over the Narrow Gauge Road to the summit of the Alleghenies, ascending at a grade of one hundred and sixty feet per mile. The novelty of this ride and the magnificent views of the mountain scenery meeting the gaze at every curve of the road cannot be excelled upon the continent. Coming down, each car is cut loose and manned by strong and careful men, descending by its own gravity; now cautiously winding around the mountain sides, and then suddenly making a bold dash across deep ravines for the opposite mountain upon trestle work, with the cars seemingly suspended in the air. It reflects the greatest credit upon the management of this mountain to say that not the slightest accident has yet occurred, and thousands of pleasure seekers each year pass over the road. Upon the summit of the mountain are located the most romantic picnic grounds in the state, with the coolest springs of water, pleasant fountains and an atmosphere at once cool and invigorating, all tempting excursionists to prolong their sojourn as much as possible. The party will reach Altoona, on the return trip, in time for supper, to return to Pittsburgh on Fast Line. Passengers from South West and Indiana Branches can remain over night at either Cresson or Altoona.

Many pleasure seekers have frequently expressed a desire to make this trip and the opportunity is now afforded them at rates which will not again be granted. Do not fail to take advantage of a trip which at this season of the year will be especially enjoyed.

THEO A. STECHER  
General Ticket Agent

L.P. FARMER  
General Pass'r Agent

The above was copied from the poster word for word. It must have been quite an excursion for the time period, 1879, over the PRR Railroad and the narrow gauge which ran out of Bellwood to the top of Blandburg Mountain in today's names. It is really impressive to think that the return trip down the mountain was done with just the car brakes to hold it back. Can't even think of doing it that way today with all the new regulations.

Also the price of just \$3.00 for the round trip (although most likely a good sum of money in 1879) is very little for an all day train trip of about 250 miles. Not like today's tourist railroads which have only about a 10 mile trip on the average.

Also the following station schedule with prices from each and return trip shows a total of 44 stations along the PRR line. It is definitely pre-Amtrak days.

At any rate it would have been a nice late summer trip 143 years ago.



## RATES FROM STATIONS ALONG THE ROUTE

<u>STATION</u>	<u>RATE</u>	<u>STATION</u>	<u>RATE</u>
Pittsburgh	\$3.00	Blairsville Int.	\$1.80
East Liberty	3.00	Blairsville	1.85
Wilksburg	2.85	Black Lick	1.90
Brinton	2.85	Homer	1.95
Turtle Creek	2.80	Indiana	2.00
Stewart	2.75	Bolivar	1.70
Larimer	2.70	Lockport	1.65
Irwin	2.70	New Florence	1.55
Manor	2.65	Ninevah	1.50
Penn	2.60	Johnstown	1.25
Grapeville	2.50	Conemaugh	1.20
Greensburg	2.40	South Fork	1.10
Tarr	2.55	Summerhill	1.10
Connellsville	2.75	Wilmore	1.00
Dunbar	2.85	Portage	1.00
Uniontown	3.00	Sonman	.95
Beatty	2.25	Cresson	.80
Latrobe	2.10	Ebensburg	1.00
St. Clair	2.00	Gallitzin	.75
Derry	1.95	Bennington	.65
Millwood	1.90	Altoona	.50
Hillside	1.85	Hollidaysburg	.70

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

In doing some further research on the Bells Gap Railroad at the Bellwood Public Library, I found these interesting photos that they allowed me to copy for our newsletter.

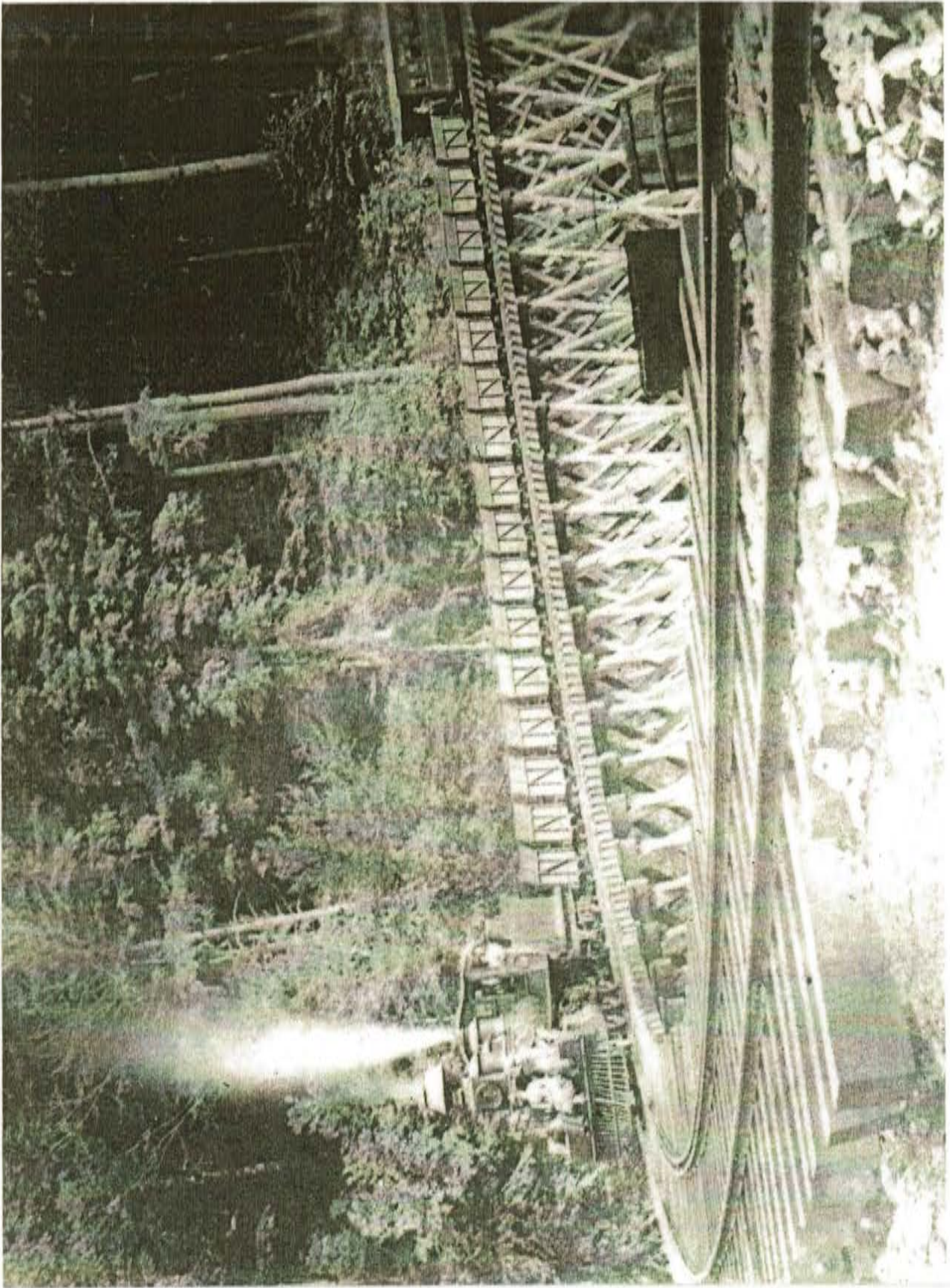
1. This is the trestle as mentioned in the poster and the article by John Fisher. Look at the cow catcher and see people riding on it as I found in the research that this was allowed going up the grade at a very slow pace in the early days.
2. A photo of the Lloydville station at the top of the grade about a mile before the Blandburg station at the top of the mountain.
3. At Lloydville was Rhododendron Park also mentioned in the article and this is a photo of a family taken in the late 1880's at that park and put into the Altoona Mirror Yesteryear page on December 17, 2006 by their relative.

Editor: Leonard Alwine

Photos used with permission of the Bellwood Public Library

Information supplied by the Librarian at the Altoona Public Library

\$3.00 in 1879 funds are equal to \$86.73 today. Still a good price for a trip like this one.



The wooden trestle on the line going up the mountain.





The station at Lloydville

Sunday, December 17, 2006 **COMMUNITY NEWS**

**Yesteryear** Photograph submitted by Regina Kear, Tyrone RR 5

This photo was taken in the late 1800s or early 1900s at the picnic grounds in Lloydville, near Blandburg. At far left is Annie Kavanagh, whose granddaughter, Regina Kear, submitted the photo. Next to her is Mary Clark, Kear's third cousin.

Family on a picnic  
at Rhododendren Park  
Lloydville in 1880



## A PERSONAL REFLECTION OF DAVE

by Leonard Alwine

Back in the mid 1980's, I met Dave when I was putting on a slide program about the Altoona & Logan Valley Electric Railway. It was there, after the program, that I found out that Dave was also a trolley follower and had actually rode the Last Ride in Altoona on August 7, 1954.

Dave invited me to present my slide show at a chapter meeting and also to join the chapter, of which I did both. Eventually after much help from Dave and the late Dick Heiler, that slide show was converted to a VHS tape in December 1990 and was sold by the chapter.

At that time, Dave was Editor of the Coal Bucket and he talked me into writing a column about trolleys (especially Logan Valley) for inclusion in the Coal Bucket. We entitled the column "Under the Wire".

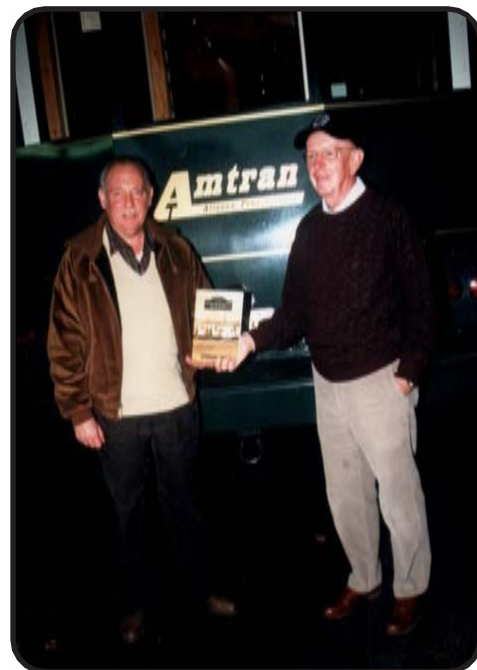
After the addition of many more photos of Logan Valley equipment to my collection, Dave strongly suggested that I write a book about Logan Valley. I am not computer savvy which is how it had to be submitted to be published. Dave took me under his wing for the project. For almost a year I wrote and laid out the book and Dave put it into computer format needed for it to be published.



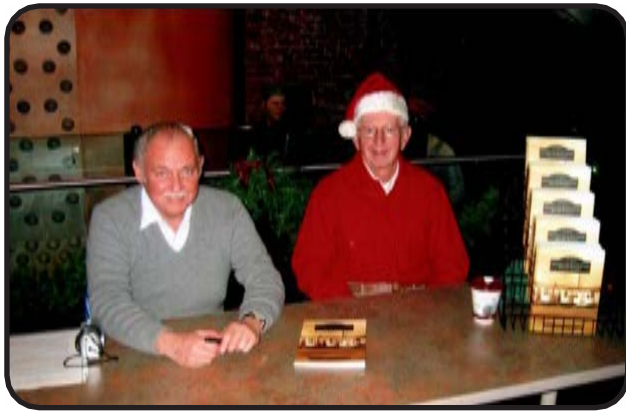
Lenny and Dave working on the book in Lenny's kitchen.

Finally in 2005, the book was printed and released by Arcadia and we donated all royalties from it's sales to the chapter for use maintaining the Logan Valley Service truck 18, which the chapter had recently restored.

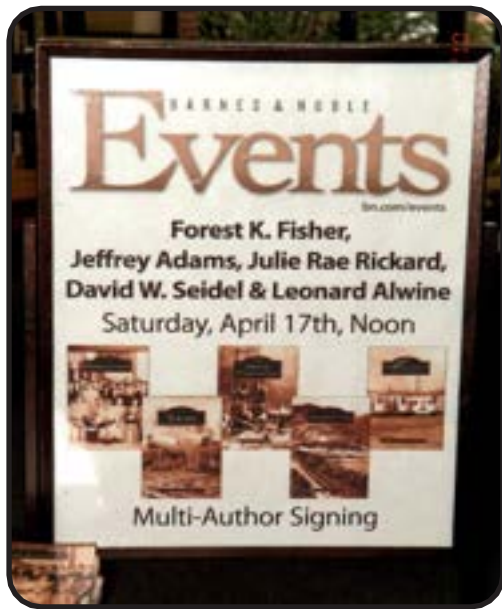
The book was dedicated at a service at Amtran, inside what used to be the Logan Valley Trolley barn using Amtran's Trolley bus as a stage.



After that book dedication, Dave and I made many trips around the area to do books signings and Dave and I became very close friends during those trips.



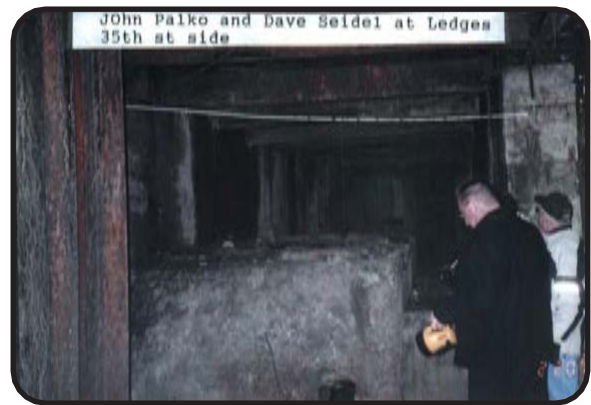
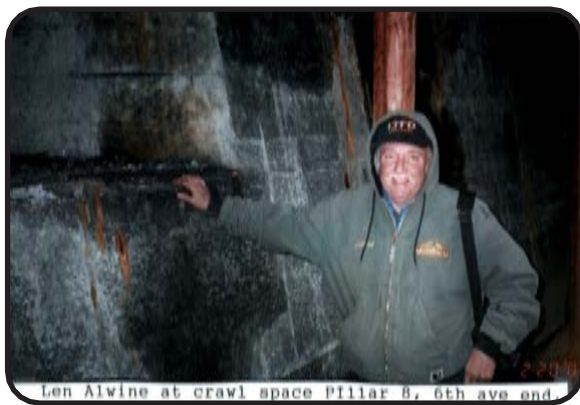
Book signing at the ARMM in December



Multi author signing in State College, PA



This close relationship even got us to see some things from the old Logan Valley days, like the basement of the old powerhouse plant along 5th Avenue.



Dave and myself in the basement on a cold February day 2008.

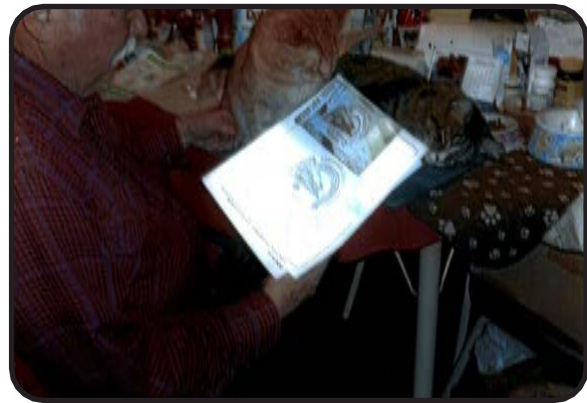
In November of 2007, Dave and I were given the Historical Preservation Award by the Blair County Historical Society for the work publishing the book.

It was mainly due to our close relationship that Dave convinced me to write the history book for our chapter's 50th Anniversary.

For a couple of years my late wife Diane and I would go to Dave's house and he would share information and photos of the chapter's history while Diane and Virginia would sit and have coffee and cookies in the next room. Without their help for those many nights and Dave's encouragement, the history book would never have been written.



Award from the Blair County Historical Society



Lenny and his helpers Fluffy & Tiger working on the 50th Anniversary book.

Later, as Dave's eyes were getting bad, he asked me to take over the editor's duties for the Coal Bucket. I reluctantly did so, but with Dave's help was able to usually get the quarterly editions out to the members.

Many times Dave would still submit an article for the issue by quoting it to Virginia and she would type it up and bring it to me.

When the issue was done and sent out, Dave would always call me and let me know how it looked. Even after his eyes went bad, Virginia would read it to him cover to cover and then he would call and tell me it was good. It was his way of encouraging me to get started on the next issue.

Sadly, the Spring 2022 issue came out on the day that Dave passed away and he did not get to hear it read to him or call me on the phone. That does make me very sad, but I will never forget the time we spent together and the encouragement he gave to me over those many years.

He was a true supportive friend whom I will sorely miss.

- Editor, Leonard Alwine



Dave running a Logan Valley Trolley that I made for him on his Christmas layout a few years ago.



# LOCAL YARD NEWS AND CHAPTER MINUTES

by Joe Harrella

## HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS

### REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

MARCH 22, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS was held on March 22, 2022. The meeting was called to order by Pres. Frank Givler at 7:16 P.M.. The meeting was held here at King's Family Restaurant.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved by Ron Givler, second by Gary Price. The motion passed.

The financial statements were read by Treasurer Denny Walls. Gary Price made a motion to accept the financial report, Gary Clare second. The motion passed.

**GUEST**- Pres. Givler introduced Bill Ferry, a Penn State student and recipient of one of our chapter scholarships. Bill just wanted to thank the chapter and said that he was very appreciative for the scholarship.

### OLD BUSINESS

1. Penn State Scholarships- Pres. Givler informed everyone that he has signed the paper work for our \$1000 per year scholarship fund. The program will run for another five years.
2. K-4 Update- Work continues on the K-4 as a crew from FMW Solutions of Tennessee along with museum volunteers work together on the project. Currently workers are concentrating their efforts on the firebox area. The original firebox had to be removed and will be replaced with a new one.
3. The N-10 Caboose Update- Denny Haire reported that places on the exterior of the car that are rusted , are being cut out and replaced with new metal. The project is moving along.

### NEW BUSINESS

1. Pres. Givler informed everyone that the chapter teamed up with the museum to provide the luncheon after Dave Seidel's funeral. Also, Gary Price would like to see a bench dedicated to Dave to be placed either at the museum or up at the Horseshoe Curve.
2. The Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS has been requested to provide a " Letter of Support" for Armstrong Trails Inc. for various railroad projects. The company owns 37 miles of trails, also the Brady Tunnel and Red Bank Coaling Tower. The NRHS provides funding for these projects

3. Museum Yard Upgrade- Pres.Givler reported that major changes will be coming to the museum yard in the up-coming months. The large dirt piles are being removed and excavation work is being done to prepare for building a new track for the Queen Mary to sit on. Also, three tracks are being laid inside the round house in the bays that were never used by Penn State. The museum itself is slated to get a new roof sometime in June.
4. Denny Walls reported that the Everett Railroad has purchased a B-60-B. It came up from Philadelphia.

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

1. John Fisher said that he heard a song on the radio and the lyrics were all about the history of Altoona. The group who performed the song is coming to Altoona on March 26TH to the Arts Altoona Center, 2212-6TH Avenue at 6:00 P.M..Dean McKnight explained all about the event and said that this would be a good way to support the local arts. John also said that author **Brock Kirchner** will hold a book signing at the Railroader's Memorial Museum on April 7TH.
2. Dean McKnight would like to express his appreciation and gratitude for the way the Horseshoe Curve Chapter has made he and Nancy feel so welcome. He said that he loves the subject matter that is discussed and he would just like to say thank-you to all.
3. Nick Martino informed everyone that the Penn State students are working on the N-10 caboose usually one Saturday per month.
4. It was reported that Paul Campbell is now at home and is recuperating from taking a fall.
5. Dave Seidel- The Horseshoe Curve Chapter would like to extend our sincere sympathies and condolences to Virginia Seidel and her family on the passing of her husband Dave.

Ralph Simpson then made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ron Givler second, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 P.M.-29 Members Present

**ATTENSimpson. DANCE:** Ron Givler, Dee, Don Goebel, Gary Price, Betsie Price, Ralph Simpson, Marge Larry Lear, Nick Martino, Dana Martino, Nancy McKnight, Dean McKnight,Denny Haire, Gary Clare, Dan Summers, Jean Noonan, Zach Noonan, Guest Bill Ferry from Penn State, Denny Wall, Mike Walls, Karin Givler, Frank Givler, Wil Teeter, Larry McKee, John Fisher, Mary Ann Stanley, George Stanley, Len Alwine, Joe Harella

- JOSEPH HARELLA
- RECORDING S3CRETARY
- HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS

## **HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS**

### **REGUIAR MONTHLY MEETING**

**APRIL 26TH, 2022**

The regular monthly meeting of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS was held on April 26TH' 2022. The meeting was called to order by Pres. Fran Givler at 7:38 P.M.. The meeting was held here at King's Family Restaurant.

Right before the meeting began, we were entertained by Miss Dee with a railroad song. All were encouraged to join in. Everyone enjoyed it as it was very nice. Thank you Dee.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved by Denny Haire, second by Don Gobel. The motion passed.

The financial statements were read by Treasurer Denny Walls. Ralph Simpson made a motion to accept the financial report, Denny Haire second. The motion passed.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Museum Roof Project- The new roof on the museum is just about finished, however, the windows for all of the dormers have been back ordered. The North American Railway Foundation is funding most of the project.
2. The N-10 Caboose Update- The project is moving forward as the restoration work continues. Crews are repairing metal on the exterior of the car as well as stripping everything from the interior.
3. K-4 Update- The crews are still working on replacing firebox.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Allegheny Convention and Visitor Center- A discussion was held on whether or not we should renew our membership. The cost to renew is \$146.00. After the discussion was held, Denny Haire then made a motion not to renew our membership, Don Goebel second, the motion passed.
2. Windows for the Duguense- Since we no longer have any use for the windows a discussion was held on what do we want to do with them. Dick Charlesworth suggested that we could possibly sell them. He said that he could check with Alan Maples to see if he could use them. If not maybe we could sell them on E-Bay.
3. Altoona Transportation Center- Dean McKnight reported that Altoona has received 1.29 million dollars to renovate the center. The money will go for public safety as well as many other improvements such as renovating utilities, new access signage, updating



passenger spaces and transfer areas and providing more reliable passenger access. In addition all doors and floors will be replaced. The renovations to the center will make it safer and more reliable.

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

1. It was noted that the 8-60 needs to be cleaned out.
2. Dean McKnight said that he saw where Penn State received a large grant for their engineering department.
3. Bus Trip To Cumberland- Dick Charlesworth said that he might run a bus trip this fall to Cumberland to ride behind the 1309. He said that the trip would benefit the chapter as well as the Alto Model Train Association.
4. Len Alwine- He is asking anyone if you have anything for the coal bucket to please let him know.
5. John Fisher reported that Larry McKee is in the hospital because his sugar is acting up. John says that he is doing better though.

Ralph Simpson then made a motion to adjourn the meeting, **Mark** Yingling second, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 P.M. - 22 Members Present

ATTENDANCE : Mary Ann Stanley, George Stanley, Len Alwine, Marge Simpson, Ralph Simpson, Nancy McKnight, Dean McKnight, Don Goebel, Dee, Larry Lear, Jean Noonan, Zach Noonan, Denny Walls, Mike Walls, Dick Charlesworth, Denny Haire, Diane Haire, John Fisher, Karin Givler, Frank Givler, Joe Harella, Mark Yingling.

JOSEPH HARELLA  
RECORDING SECRETARY  
HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS

### **HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER NRHS**

#### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

**MAY 25TH. 2022**

The regular monthly meeting of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS was held on May 25TH, 2022. The meeting was called to order by Pres. Frank Givler at 7:17 P.M.. The meeting was held at Perkins Family Restaurant.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved by Ron Givler, second by Paul Campbell. The motion passed.

The financial statements were read by Treasurer Denny Walls. Paul Campbell *made* a motion to accept the financial report, Mark Yingling second. The motion passed. Denny also reported that the chapter donated \$2,500 towards the firebox matching fund drive. If the museum comes up with \$50,000, then the PRRT&HS will also contribute \$50,000.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Thank-you cards received- Pres. Givler reported that he has received a thank-you from Virginia Seidel for the chapter helping out with the luncheon after Dave's funeral. She also was very appreciative for the friendship that developed over the years with us. She said that Dave considered us as his second family.  
A thank-you was also received from the Roaring Spring Historical Society for our donation.  
A thank-you was also received from Lori Bechtel from Penn State for our continued support of their scholarship program.
2. Windows for the Duquense- Since we no longer have any use for these windows and are trying to sell them, Dick Charlesworth gave one window to Alan Maples to look over and see if he could possibly use them. So far he has not gotten back to us.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Bus Trip To Cumberland- Dick Charlesworth will be running a bus trip to Cumberland, Md. To ride behind the 1309 on Saturday August 27TH. Freedom Excursions will provide the bus and will leave the Railroader's Memorial Museum at 9:00 A.M.. The cost for the trip is \$134 for coach and \$199 for the Dome car. We will be stopping at Cracker Barrel for supper. Let Dick know if you are interested.
2. Rotary Club Train Ride- Morrisons Cove Rotary Club will sponsor their 2022 Summer Glory train ride on Saturday June 4TH. Two excursions will leave the Roaring Spring train station at 10:00 and 12:00 for the one hour train ride. Tickets are \$15.00 per seat, and children under 3 can sit on an adult's lap.

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

1. John Fisher reported that the Everett Railroad has purchased two railroad cars. One car is a diner and the other is a coach which will be converted into a parlor car.

Paul Campbell then made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ron Givler second, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 P.M.-27 Members and 3 guests present.

**ATTENDANCE-** Don Goebel, Mark Yingling, Mary Ann Stanley, George Stanley, Ron Givler, Marge Simpson, Ralph Simpson, Nancy McKnight, Dean McKnight, Larry Lear, Paul Campbell, Denny Walls, Mike Walls, Dan Summers, Wil Teeter, Karin Givler, Frank Givler, Dewayne Miller; Larry McKee, John Fisher, Jean Noonan, Zach Noonan, Dick Charlesworth, Jim Caum Gary Clare, Jeff Holland Joe Harella, plus three guests.

JOSEPH HARELLA  
RECORDING SECRETARY  
HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER **NRHS**

**WESTERN MD. SCENIC RAILROAD**  
*Ride behind Ex C&O Steam Locomotive 1309,  
 Articulated 4 cylinder*

Sponsored by Horseshoe Curve, Chapter N.R.H.S and  
 Alto Model Train Museum Association



**SAT.,  
 AUG. 27**

**Bus to  
 Cumberland,  
 Maryland**

Ride steam trip to Frostburg, Maryland & back  
 Ride either Deluxe Coach or Upper Level Dome Car

**Meal Enroute Home**  
**Deluxe Coach \$134.00 - Upper Level Dome \$199.00**  
*Price includes: Bus, Train, Meal and Driver Gratuity*

**Additional Info & Reservations Call After 6 PM  
 DICK CHARLESWORTH 814-695-2201**

**IT WAS MEANT TO BE?  
 by Leonard Alwine**

Sometimes life throws us a curve that causes us to sit back and think, maybe it was just meant to be.

While trying to tidy up a closet this past April I came across a bag of items that I hadn't seen in at least 50 years sitting in a box at the bottom of a pile in the back corner of the closet. As I looked at the stuff including old photos and newspaper clippings etc., it amazed me how much my life today is a reflection of those days past.

Back in the early 1970's, I was enrolled in the Altoona School of Commerce (ASC) studying accounting and business management. ASC was established in 1884 and was located downtown near 11th Avenue on 13th Street above the old PRR station. Redevelopment forced it to relocate to 5th Avenue and 41st Street in 1972. Later, it moved again to 58th Street in Eldorado and the name was changed to South Hills Business School.

One of the photos found in the bag was that of the school's secretary, Virginia Folcarelli.

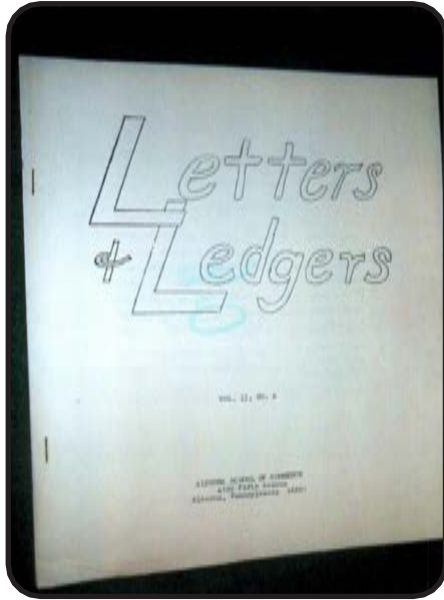


Virginia at her desk in the office of ASC  
 after the move in 1972.



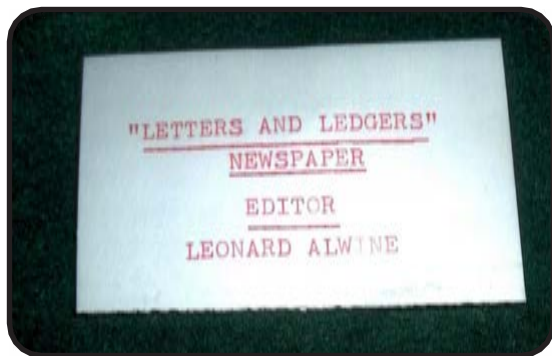
There were also some old newsletters which were published in-house, bi-monthly, by the Journalism Club for the student body. Virginia gave the club lots of help producing these newsletters as at the time they were hand drawn and typed, then stenciled off. Then they were hand assembled and stapled (really old school style, but up to date then).

The club had about 15 reporters each assigned their own column covering different aspects of the school and it's students. Letters & Ledgers, the name of the newsletter reflected the school's secretarial and accounting themes.



One of the newsletters from the early 1970's. (Tracey would have gone nuts doing a newsletter this way!)

The President of the club was also the editor and oversaw the writings and production of the newsletter. We each had a name tag to wear when using the office and equipment for it's production.



My name tag, found in the bag, from the years I was the editor.

What I found amazing as I sifted through this stuff was the fact that myself and my late wife Diane, who also attended ASC, both knew Virginia long before she became Dave Seidel's wife. We had been friends of theirs for many years before Dave asked me to begin writing the "Under the Wire" column for the Coal Bucket. Of course, that column grew into me becoming the Editor of the Coal Bucket years later as Dave's health took a down turn.

Fifty years later, it just seems to me as I look back on these items, that it was just meant to be.

**A LOOK BACK**  
**by Leonard Alwine**

In this issue, the "A Look Back" column will be an article I wrote for the Letter & Ledgers newsletter of April 1972, Vol. II, No. 6.

It is a story about the demolition of the old ASC building in downtown Altoona. I hope that everyone will enjoy this different look back.

DEATH OF A BUILDING

The Altoona School of Commerce wasn't always located on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It formerly occupied the building at 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> in downtown Altoona, Redevelopment forced the school to move to its present location.

Redevelopment can best be described as a cancerous disease moving through a city tearing apart, breaking down, and destroying many sound buildings, new and old. Hundreds of homes and business's had already been wiped out by the spreading disease, leaving block after block of mud and weeds. It doesn't matter how useful or valuable a building can be. If it is in Redevelopment's pathway, it is sure to be destroyed, as was the former A. S. C. building.

For many terms the building served her purpose as the place to learn how the business world operates. Hundreds of students entered her big front doors with hopes of becoming accountants, business managers, medical secretaries, bookkeepers, and expert typists. Although some fell short, many students graduated and went back through her big doors into the world of business.

Everyday, close to 150 students traveled throughout her four floors to one of her six large classrooms. Many things happened inside her walls which have long since turned into memories in the minds of her former students.

But she was old and her floors and steps creaked. Dust and dirt built up on her ledges and window sills. Redevelopment was all around her. With each building that came down, her hopes for life grew dimmer. Then the final blow was dealt.

In April 1971, the school moved and redevelopment set in. Now she knew it was only a matter of time. Unlike fire or some other natural cause which brings a fast death, Redevelopment is a long slow death. For her it would be ten months.

The first physical signs of the disease came in early February when her windows and doors were removed letting Winter's icy winds howl through her rooms. February 19<sup>th</sup> was the day picked for her to die. The big "Iron-Ball" crashed through her roof. All day long it kept hitting her but she wouldn't give in. A large steel beam ran through the middle of her roof holding the building together.

1-1-1-1-

February 26<sup>th</sup> a crane was called in to lift the beam away. The crane pulled and strained but she fought desperately for her life. She was cold; covered with snow inside and out, 13<sup>th</sup> and badly scared and weakened from previous beatings. Her final battle for life was fruitless as the crane ripped out the beam and her walls and roof collapsed into a pile of rubble. The end had come. She had died. The ruins were transported by dumptrucks to a land-fill east of Altoona and buried with ruins of other buildings. All that remains now is memories of good times and bad, in the minds of the people associated with her in some way during her life as the Altoona School of Commerce.



ALTOONA SCHOOL *of* COMMERCE  
AND ZETH SCHOOL, INC.

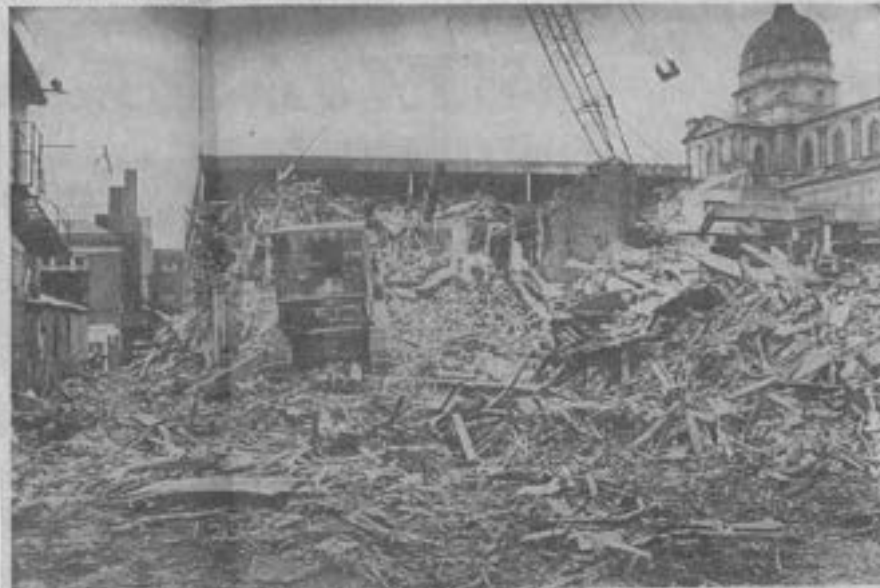
ESTABLISHED 1884





**LANDMARK IS RAZED** — Employees of Penn Ohio Demolition Co. on Friday began razing the old Altoona School of Commerce Building. This building also housed the second installation of the Bell Telephone exchange in Altoona. Wrecking crews will begin razing the Levan house on Wednesday or Thursday of next week.

Crane used to pull the beams out of the building looking from 12th Avenue towards 11th Avenue February 21, 1972



**CLEANING UP THE HUBBLE** — Rubble is all that remains of the building that most recently housed Altoona School of Commerce. Demolition work was resumed last Thursday, after being halted until demolition company officials could provide the development Authority with a certificate of insurance. EA officials said the firm's insurance had lapsed only technically, and the work was resumed after delivery of the certificate.

The building demolished looking from the alley towards 12th Avenue with the Cathedral in the background. February 29, 1972

## IN MEMORY

DAVID W. SEIDEL

Jan. 4, 1938-March 11, 2022



David W. Seidel, 84, Altoona, passed away peacefully Friday at his residence following a five-and-a-half-year battle with glioblastoma. He was born in Altoona, the son of the late William J. and Catherine V. (Maricq) Seidel. He married Virginia G. Folcarelli on Oct. 4, 1980 at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church, Altoona. Dave is survived by his wife; brother, Timothy R. Seidel (Sonya); sister, Christine (Seidel) Behe (David); nephews: Robert T. Seidel (Christine), Christopher J. Behe (Kelly), Dennis P. Behe (Nancy), Brian J. Behe (Nicole) and Timothy A. Behe (Julie); nieces Deborah Schreyer (Phil) and Karen Claar; many cousins, great nieces and great nephews. He was preceded in death by a sister, Kay Alyce (Seidel) Lint.

David was a 1956 graduate of Altoona Catholic High School. He served four years in the U.S. Air Force, during which time he attended Mitchel College of Long Island University. He retired from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Labor & Industry with 30 years of service in employment and training programs. Previously, he was employed by the Pennsylvania Railroad in its last 2.5 years of operation until 1968, which confirmed his life-long interest in railroad history. During this period, he became a founding member of the Altoona Railway Museum Club, Horseshoe Curve Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (serving as Chapter Historian), Railroader's Memorial Museum and maintained an active association in these interests during his lifetime.

David was an active member of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church; the ABC Photographic Society, Antique Automobile Club of America, Buick Club of America (Appalachian Chapter), Plymouth Owners Club, Blair County Antique Auto Club, Blair County Historical Society from whom he received "The 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award Railroad and County Historian", Blair County Genealogical Society, Bellwood Historical Society, Tyrone Historical Society, Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society and Pennsylvania Association of Retired State Employees. In addition, he authored the following histories: "Horseshoe Curve" and "Altoona-Post Card History Series"; and was co-author with friend, Leonard E. Alwine "Altoona & Logan Valley Electric Railway". He consulted on production of a DVD about the Altoona & Logan Valley Electric Railway. He particularly enjoyed volunteering at the Railroader's Memorial Museum.

Friends will be received from 2-7 pm on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at The Stevens Mortuary, Inc., 1421 8th Ave., Altoona, Pa. 16602 where a vigil for the deceased will be held. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10 am Wednesday March 16, 2022 at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church by The Fransican Fathers. Committal will be held at Calvary Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Dave's memory to: Railroader's Memorial Museum, 1300 9th Ave., Altoona, Pa. 16602; Horseshoe Curve Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, P.O. Box 1361, Altoona, Pa. 16603 or Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church/Church Organ Fund, 806 11th St., Altoona, Pa. 16602.

Condolences may be made at [www.stevensfamilyfuneralhomes.com](http://www.stevensfamilyfuneralhomes.com) or Stevens Family Funeral Homes Facebook.

CHARLES J. SWENSON  
May 1, 1945 - April 10, 2022

Charles J. Swenson, of Altoona passed away peacefully in his sleep on Sunday, April 10, 2022. He was born on May 1, 1945, in Wilkinsburg, the son of the late Charles Otto and Geraldine (Bowman) Swenson. On June 19, 1971, at the Leechburg Graystone Presbyterian Church, he married Sarah "Sallie" Swenson who preceded him in death on Oct. 17, 2021.

He is survived by two children, Mary Ann (Gunter) Volders, and Matthew (Layne) Swenson; one granddaughter, Elise Volders; and one cousin, Carole (John) Cummings of Stow, Ohio.

Chuck was a 1963 graduate of Norwin High School. He received his Bachelor's degree from California University of Pennsylvania, and received his Masters of Divinity from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Tyrone for 16 years, followed by the Woodland United Methodist parish in Clearfield. In his retirement he supported many other area churches. He was also a bus driver for Blue and White and Fullington Trailways, transporting the Tyrone Golden Eagle football team to all of their away games as well as the Tyrone Ski Club to their ski trips.

He was a member of the Kiwanis Club, the Rotary Club, the Elks Club BPOE Lodge 212, and the Washington Trolley Museum. He served as a Road Runner for the Shriners, and was a previous chaplain of the Blazing Arrow Hook and Ladder Fire Company.

A 3 p.m. Celebration of Life will be held on Thursday, April 14, 2022 at Fairview United Methodist Church, Altoona, with the Rev. Dr. Joleen Willis officiating. Friends will be received on Thursday from 1 p.m. until the 3 p.m. service at the church.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the Central PA Humane Society, 1837 E. Pleasant Valley Blvd., Altoona, PA 16602.

Arrangements are under the care of Richard H. Searer Funeral Home, Inc., 115 W. 10th St., Tyrone.  
[www.searerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.searerfuneralhomeinc.com)