

THE



MIDDLE
DIVISION
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 2003

By
Dave Seidel

Meeting of Oct 2, 2003

The October meeting was convened at 7 PM at the Bavarian Hall by Chair Bob Wertz.

Joe Carrieri reviewed the NARVE [National Association of Railroad Veteran Employees] meeting recently held at the Altoona Ramada Inn. NARVE apparently would like to establish a "Local" in the Altoona area. The presentation was excellent and commentary very good. NARVE apparently is a lobbying organization, employing a full-time lobbyist in DC. 15 persons in the Altoona area belong to the Cumberland MD Local. R A Jackson indicated the group has a good track record. However, to form a 'Local' would involve developing a Chapter with officers, necessitate maintaining minutes etc. 16 members would be required to form a local. Statistics indicate there are 59,000 retirees in PA, of which 8100 are in the Altoona area. Nearest office for NARVE is in Pittsburgh. Newsletter [The Switch List] is published by NARVE also send info via computer for those who are on-line. Bob Wertz dispensed applications for membership, Many within the MDTC group expressed interest but without the responsibility of organizing and managing a 'Local'. Extensive discussion on the subject. Many MDTC members accepted applications. Dues are: \$12. Per individual + \$7.00 per spouse=\$19.00 per couple.

C E Noble reviewed a recent newspaper article detailing the thoughts of Railroader's Memorial Museum's advertising consultant Harry Webber, who detailed definite thoughts on collecting oral histories of railroaders.

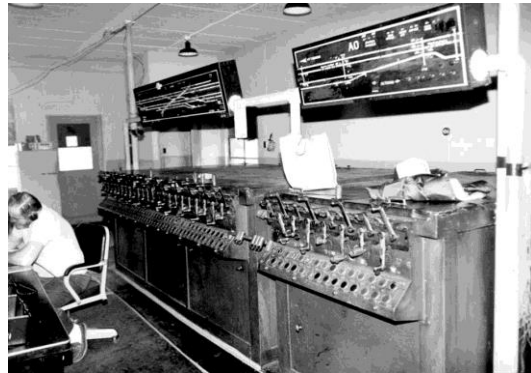
Upcoming Railfest activities reviewed by D W Seidel.

Pittsburgh Division News

The former PRR Tower at Conemaugh, known as "C" Tower, closed recently. The last shift commenced at 2200 hrs on Oct 26th, concluding at 7 AM on Oct 27th. CP-AO and CP-JW will now be controlled by the Pittsburgh East Dispatcher.



"C" March 1985



Interior "C"



Operator at "C"

This is yet another chapter in the continuing dilution of the infrastructure that was once the hallmark of the Pennsylvania Railroad. C Interlocking has been completely re-built with non-position light signalling, as well. The changes for "C" actually started back in 1993 with the announced closing of the Bethlehem Steel works in Johnstown. C was the major interchange point with the Conemaugh &

Black Lick RR, a solely owned subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel Corp which serviced the giant industrial complex within the greater Johnstown area. Shipments of raw material or finished product diminished drastically with the closing, not unlike the impact felt at the end of the steam-era in the greater Altoona area.

“C” Tower also had another tragic chapter to it’s existence on September 30, 1958 when Extra 7065 West derailed at that location.



Associated Press WirePhoto/Dave Seidel Collection.

In this image of the derailment, caused by a loose L-3 wheel on PRR 178840, the original C Tower was demolished killing 1 operator, and injuring another operator and a signal maintainer. Extra 7065 west was powered by diesel-electric units 7065, 7173, and 7055 [probably GP-9 type equipment], and a consist of 98 cars and a cabin. Train speed was 42 mph. The accident occurred at 11:27 a.m. and the weather was clear.



Changes starting March 1985
All photos this article by D W Seidel

MISCELLANEOUS

October 28th marked the 40th anniversary of the start of demolition on Penn Station, New York City. This was the architectural crime of the 20th century.

Norfolk Southern has begun to experiment with replacement power on the east slope helpers. Traditionally for many years dating from the early Conrail years, SD40-2's ruled the helper service obligations. Currently, GE units C40-9W's are being tried. A trio of SD40-2's were observed last week heading up a westbound hopper train movement as primary power.

2004 will mark the 150th anniversary of Horseshoe Curve. Watch for special events and observances in the next 12 months.

Special Train Watching Spot: Cassandra PA at the walking bridge over the mainline at the beginning of the rock-cut. This is an observation bridge only and park benches are available. Visiting Cassandra? Stop in to chat with Mayor John Shuniak at the only convenience store in town.

11-27-1957- PRR-Fire dropped on steam locomotive 4271 marked the end of the steam era.

Oct 29, 1983 Final Run of GG-1 # 4877 on New Jersey Transit. No. 4877 had earlier been restored to tuscan red and 5-stripe PRR heritage paint.



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FOR A
HAPPY THANKSGIVING*