

COAL BUCKET

Official Newsletter
of

HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER

National Railway Historical Society
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UNDER THE WIRE by Leonard E. Alwine

In this installment of Under the Wire, we will continue the research on Altoona & Logan Valley Electric Railway's maintenance-of-way equipment.



This time we will get right under the wire as we look at the equipment that actually worked on the overhead power lines.



The first piece was a one-horse powered or drawn wagon with a spring loaded tower ladder and platform, which could be raised to work on the overhead lines. This may have been a home-built unit as it appears to be rather crude and unsafe by any standards. It was first used by the City Passenger Company to electrify the horse car lines in 1891. Through the merger, 'Logan Valley' acquired this unit.



Logan Valley also had a 2-horse powered wagon which they purchased in 1892. It appears to have been a commercial built unit which was raised by cranks and pulleys and seems to be much safer in operation. I have seen many photos of this type line tower used by other trolley lines, but am sorry to say that I do not know who built them. [If anyone has knowledge of such units, I would like to hear from you]. Interestingly, this tower actually lasted until after the end of trolley operations,

and was used to remove the overhead wire system. More about this in a few lines.



The next line tower purchased by Logan Valley was # 505, a 1905 Stephenson. This unit was actually powered off the trolley wire and was a rail vehicle used mainly for wire maintenance, greasing and tightening the trolley wire. Its cost was \$2,260.00 new, and lasted until the end of operations, and was retired 12-30-1954, and scrapped with the other trolley cars. Trailer Car # 608, which carried a large spool of wire, was usually coupled to this car. This trailer car cost \$500.00 when new in 1909.



In 1915, Logan Valley purchased a new Mack chassis and the shops transferred the tower from the 2-horse-wagon to this truck. This gave the line crew a quicker and more flexible way to get to the wire location to do work and repairs. Oddly, this truck, like the two horse-drawn wagons, were never given numbers.

In 1926, another new Mack AB chassis was purchased and the shops again transferred the wooden tower from the first Mack truck to this truck and it was listed as Service Truck # 3. It cost \$5,461.15 to complete.

From 1925 to 1930, Logan Valley rebuilt virtually every mile of track, overhead, and double-tracked much of the private right-of-

way lines. This put quite a strain on the service trucks which were in service at that time. In 1930, many new trucks were purchased and a new 1930 Ford chassis



(\$1,734.39) was outfitted by the shops using this old wooden tower again, resulting in a new tower truck, Service Truck # 12. During the next 15 years, trolleys were slowly replaced with buses and the overhead wires became fewer. But, even this Ford truck began to wear out, so in 1949 (Altoona's centennial year) a used 1941 Ford chassis was purchased and the shops again transferred the wooden tower to this vehicle which became a line tower, Service Truck # 20 at a cost of \$1,517.17.

As stated before, this truck and the tower lasted until after the end of trolley operations in 1954. It was actually used to remove most of the remaining overhead so it could be sold for scrap by Logan Valley.

But, even with that job completed, it was not the "end-of-the-line" so-to-speak for this truck and tower. In March, 1956, Logan Valley transferred it to Tyrone and the Home Electric division where it was re-numbered # 49 and was used by them to repair street lights and wires until they became a part of Pennsylvania Electric Company. The truck and tower then disappeared...most likely scrapped...sort of a sad ending for a unit close to 70 years old. I think it would have been nice to have the tower remounted on a wagon under a length of wire in a museum in the Altoona or Tyrone area. However, in those days there was little awareness for historic preservation. Nonetheless, this line tower most likely can claim First Place for the most time spent "Under the Wire" in Blair County. leh

ALTOONA BUS PRESERVED IN A MUSEUM

A second Altoona transit vehicle has made it to a museum. Amtran bus # 153 has become part of the Museum of the Museum of Bus Transportation located in the basement of the Antique Automobile Museum at Hershey, PA, 161 Museum Drive, Hershey, PA.

Bus # 153 is on a rotation display of vintage buses shown there. The display is changed a couple times a year so # 153 will sometimes be in storage. Of course, the first Altoona transit vehicle preserved in a museum is Logan Valley Service Truck # 18 which is sometimes on display at Railroader's Memorial Museum in Altoona or at other area vehicle shows.

[Note: See article in Altoona Mirror (www.altoonamirror.com) dated Tuesday, September 14 2010 on this subject].

On March 27, 2010, I had another rare Saturday "off-work" and decided to travel to the Hershey Museum with my wife, Diane, to see the G.M. Futureliner Bus which was also on display there (on loan from the National Automotive and Truck Museum of the U.S. of Auburn, IN). The Futurliner, a traveling GM Exhibit Vehicle was built in 1939. It was number 10 of 12 and built for GM's "Parade of Progress" and toured the country until about 1956. Only 9 of these Futureliners are known to exist: three restored, one converted into a camper, and five in poor condition. Another unit, restored, recently sold for \$4million at a Barrett Jackson auction. Perhaps a future issue of "Under The Wire" will have a more complete article on the Futureliners. It is a massive vehicle and I was glad I had the opportunity to see one personally.



Much to my surprise as I entered the basement bus display area, was Amtran Bus # 153. I knew the bus was donated to this facility but did not know it had been restored to display status. Accompanying the unit is a bus driver-mannequin with an Altoona (AMTRAN) uniform donated by Chapter Vice President (and Amtran Bus Driver) Joseph K. Harella.



The Amtran Bus was also known as "New Look" and "Fishbowl" bus. "New Look" came in 1959 when this very advance-styled bus was introduced. Up to that point, almost every bus built for the transit industry looked the same, no matter who built them. They all looked like a loaf of bread with square windows down the sides. With the introduction of this bus, they became known as "Old Looks" and the industry was changed forever. All other manufacturers quickly tried to come up with their own version for the "New Look" or just went out of business soon thereafter.

It is this authors opinion that the GM "New Look" was the best looking transit bus ever built. It had style. The front and back were curved and streamlined as was the side windows. It looked like it would go fast even though top speed was usually 20-30 mph in city traffic. Below the side windows was silver extruded aluminum siding which made the bus look like a fast streamlined train. Inside, sort of pastel colors and fluorescent lights made the bus just look more inviting and appealing to the riding public.

The name "Fishbowl" was given to the bus as a nickname very soon after introduction, due to the massive 6-piece windshield which made visibility better than the small square windows of the previous models.

Bus # 153 actually began life as one bus in an order for CAT, i.e., Capitol Area Transit of Harrisburg, PA. While there, it operated as bus # 729 in an orange and cream color with the aluminum siding. After 18 years of transporting legislators around the capitol, it came to Altoona in June, 1993.

At Altoona, this bus was repainted Green, White and Black above the aluminum siding and numbered 153. It operated primarily in daily school bus service by Amtran until retired, August 2005. It was then acquired by the bus museum and taken to Hershey for restoration and display.

The Fishbowl buses were also some of the most dependable buses ever made. While some still are used in a few cities around the country, they are fast becoming an extinct model. However, they were being engineered in the mid-1950's and modified examples of their bodies were actually first used on the cars of the ill-fated ****Aero Trains** built by GM (a model train-set was tested in use on the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1956 between New York and Pittsburgh). Sales and production of regular buses began in early 1959 with the first units delivered in September, 1959. They were available in 29', 35', and 40' lengths and 96" to 102" widths. In late 1960, a suburban model (all seats facing forward and no rear exit door) was also offered in 35' or 40' versions. Both transit and suburban models were produced virtually unchanged for 18 years until 1977 in the U.S. A total of 33,413 of all models were made in America.

The General Motors Canadian Diesel Division also produced fishbowls for the Canadian market from 1961-1986 including building 53 massive articulated units using two bus bodies coupled with an accordion passageway similar to passenger trains. From 1983-1987 they also produced the 'Classic' model which was a new-look body with a flat windshield and square side windows. A total of all models produced in Canada was 12, 245 which brings the total production of all new looks to 45,658 buses. And, this happened during a time when the riding public was switching to cars and private bus companies were going out of business sometimes replaced by public authorities similar to Amtran.

Amtran's first use of a "new look" bus came in 1968 when they purchased 17 new units from GM to replace about half of the older buses acquired from Logan Valley in 1959. (Note: one of the pre-1959 buses, No. 115, was actually acquired by Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS when retired in July 1996, intended for preservation. However, the bus was sold in October 1997 to raise funds for the restoration of Logan Valley Service Truck # 18 which was felt to have more historic value (1946 Walter SnoFighter). As other bus authorities retired "new looks" Amtran purchased 38 more due to their reliability. Buses came to Altoona from: SEPTA (Philadelphia), CAT (Harrisburg, PA), CATA (State College), and DART (Montgomery AL). In total, Amtran has had 55 GM "New Look" pass through its roster and still has 12 in use today...6 still in the original aluminum siding and 6 re-painted bodies. That may not seem like a lot until you realize that Amtran at any given time usually had only 30-32 buses on its roster. The 12 remaining fish-bowls are 1974-76 models, outlasting many which are 15-20 years newer which were retired.

At any rate, it was a great day and seeing another piece of Altoona preserved in a museum made the trip to Hershey doubly worth-while. *Leonard E. Alwine*

***Addendum: The February 2010 issue of HEMMINGS MOTOR NEWS has a most informative article penned by Jim O'Clair on the GMAeroTrain.*



Of the two train-sets produced by GM (using EMD's own LWT12 switcher engine-rated at 12,000 hp), the train also had passenger cars cloned from GM's inner-city bus division riding on an air-cushion suspension system similar to the buses. These coaches were only 40-seat

capacity – half the length of a standard passenger car – riding on two axles rather than the standard four. Shorter and lighter they were...as intended...but ride quality and cost effectiveness wasn't a match. There were no buyers for the demonstrator train sets (on the New York Central and the Pennsylvania railroads). Both trains survive in railroad museums: The National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, WI and The Museum of Transportation in St. Louis, comprising of the locomotive and two cars, although the St. Louis locomotive has had its LWT12 engine removed.

RAILROADER'S MEMORIAL MUSEUM ANNIVERSARY



The quotation “time flies when you’re having a good time” [from the railroad enthusiast or museum volunteer perspective), might apply here. It seems THIRTY YEARS has gone by since opening day at Railroader’s Memorial Museum [September 21, 1980], which means, of course, that your editor (and a few others, especially Harley Burket, who, self-quoted, is older-than-dirt) are also 30 years older. In my case, I refuse to grow up!

Railroader’s Memorial Museum was an idea within the then fledgling Horseshoe Curve Chapter (1968), but was chartered on paper as a separate non-profit entity in 1972 under the leadership of Raymond G. Garvin and his Board of Directors. For some years, the idea was slow to gel, but the catalyst that gave credibility to the museum idea was the successful acquisition of the private rail car *LORETTO* from the Magee Transportation Museum in Bloomsburg, PA in 1975 [following aftermath of Hurricane Agnes [1972] and the death of their benefactor, Mr.

Magee of Magee Carpet Mills]. This historic artifact’s importance was not lost on Altoona because it frequently traveled to this city with Charles M. Schwab, founder of Bethlehem Steel Corporation, who had his summer estate, *IMMERGRUN*, in nearby Loretto, PA, in neighboring Cambria County, about 20 miles west of Altoona. Thus, this railroad museum idea suddenly had substance and credibility [thanks to local broadcaster Denny Bixler of WVAM-AM, who spotted the advertisement of sale in the Wall Street Journal, and the project proceeded from there with fund-raising efforts. The museum’s early days were humble indeed, but the location was decided through the generosity of the successful developer of the Station Mall property [Center Associates] (former site of the PRR’s original railroad shops in Altoona). Center Associates offered 5 acres of land on this historic property and \$50,000 seed-money for the museum’s endorsement of their concept. The rest, as they say, is history.

The Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS has steadfastly supported Railroader’s Memorial Museum these many years and continues to provide multi-faceted services to restore and help maintain the museum’s rolling stock. The museum is generous in-kind by providing the chapter a venue for monthly meetings and special events.

And, speaking of the *LORETTO*, the chapter is in the process of restoring the exterior of this excellent example of private varnish. We have never known the *LORETTO* to have other than a silver coated roof and dark green car body from its early days at the Magee Transportation Museum. However, the roof has been returned to gloss-black, and the car body is receiving the proper ‘Pullman Green’ paint, a dark-olive color. Watch for further details. As an aside, the royalties from the book “Horseshoe Curve” by your editor, are being donated to Railroader’s Memorial Museum and are specifically earmarked for the “Restore-the-Loretto Fund”. The central room in the car, still needs restoration from the 1983 fire, but the other rooms of the elegant car are done.



Anniversary Commentary from Mr. Larry
Salon, Executive Director, Railroader's
Memorial Museum

“30 years! It’s really unbelievable if you sit back, talk to the people that have been around those 30 years, and listen to the stories of how it got to here, and what it started as. I have to admit, I was nothing more than a tourist at the Horseshoe Curve for 28 of those years, in fact, never even visited the museum as a tourist until 2005. So I never had the pleasure of buying a museum ticket years ago from a young Dick Charlesworth working the gate, and as I am told, he was the ticket agent of ALL ticket agents!! So I cannot address all the stories; maybe someday someone will write a book about the museum’s story. It really is amazing to follow that progression; But, since I have been here for the last 2 1/2 years, I have some thoughts on the place.

First, when I came in in Oct. 2007, what I discovered and un-raveled, was amazing and you would not have convinced me then that we would ever have gotten to the 30th year. The museum was perilously close to closing for good within weeks of my coming in. But a lot of work, a lot of help from many people, allowed us to survive what we had back then, keep it open, fix it, and now, start to move forward. It really has been a lot more work to fix the past issues than we expected and were led to believe, and it took a lot of time and we had to mend many, many fences. And we did just that.

Now, we move forward, and this 30th year could be a great year to finally kick-off some projects that have stalled, or were in serious danger of being canceled. The roundhouse should be going out for re-bid in September. Let’s hope for groundbreaking in October. The K4: well the re-build plan is almost complete. It will require a little more funding, from private donors and we are working hard on that. We are hoping to start work on it in late October here at the museum. Penn State is moving into the new roundhouse we hope, if they get approval from their internal board, for the new Rail Transportation Engineering program. This is a REALLY big deal, worldwide, for us, PSU Altoona, and the entire rail transportation industry. It puts Altoona back on the top of the railroading world. We will house railroad technology laboratories in the new annex on the roundhouse.*

We also are finally addressing the issues of displays inside the museum. It is difficult to change exhibits, as the museum was really built with fixed displays, but we have started to address the glaring need to freshen the experience, the displays, and now look at what we can do with what we have, and what we need (money, space, etc) to begin to update the museum itself.

We are working on a Memorial Hall plan, to house additional exhibits there, keep the Grimshaw room as a meeting room with new AV equipment, and possibly outfit the old storage area into a small machine shop to support the K4 and our other equipment collection.

I feel good about where we are from what we started with, so we hope that all of us on the staff here at the museum have contributed just a little bit to the museum, as we’ve only been here a couple years, but if we can stabilize the place, get these projects moving forward, then the museum can continue to grow and age well, for another 30+ years. Heck, someday maybe Dick will be taking tickets again, and I will be just another tourist at the Horseshoe Curve. Nothing wrong with that.....”

**RAILROADER'S MEMORIAL MUSEUM
ROUNDHOUSE GROUND BREAKING**

***Railroader's Memorial Museum, Altoona, PA, has announced the groundbreaking for the new Quarter Roundhouse for Friday, October 22, 2010 at 10:00 AM. This long awaited project, to be constructed on the perimeter of the turntable pit/bridge which was installed previously, will complement all facilities at the museum.**

The new structure will be known as the Harry Bennett Roundhouse, named for one of the early Master Mechanics at Altoona Works, whose family provided a generous donation toward the project. Additional costs are being supplemented by a State (PA) grant, which will tie in Penn State Altoona's new curriculum to train rail industry professionals, as well as much needed maintenance facilities for the museum's collection. The roundhouse will also house ex-PRR steam locomotive No. 1361.

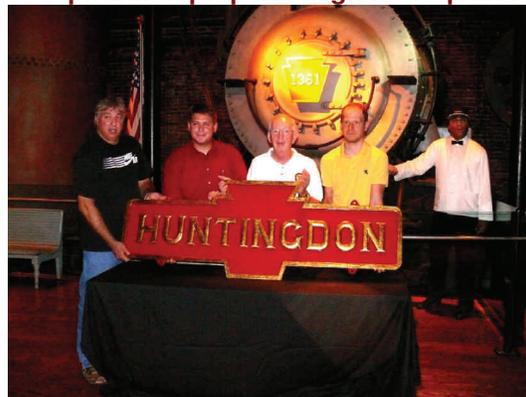
**STATION SIGN DONATED TO
RAILROADER'S MEMORIAL MUSEM**

A cast-iron station sign from HUNTINGDON, PA was donated to Railroader's Memorial Museum by David and Virginia Seidel on August 4, 2010. Seidel purchased the sign in 1968 after the new Penn Central RR decided to replaced all ex-PRR signage. It was mounted on a seasonal residence for these many years, but was removed for preservation, after which the sign was meticulously restored by Joseph J. Dixon of Altoona and Hackettstown NJ, using gold leaf as the primary medium of impact. Larry Salon, Executive Director of Railroader's Memorial Museum received the acquisition assisted by Joseph DeFrancesco.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
PRR PRESIDENT - SAMUEL REA
9-21-1855**



Joseph Dixon prepares sign for re-paint.



Larry Salone, Executive Director, Railroaders Memorial Museum; Joseph DeFrancesco-Curatorial Staff, David Seidel, and Joseph J. Dixon.

**NEWS AND NOTES ON NORFOLK
SOUTHRN RR IN ALTOONA**

Altoona Yard

The phrase 'nothing is as constant as change' certainly applies to daily life everywhere. Of note in Altoona, NSRR has embarked on removing the remaining remnants of the former 'eastbound' rail classification yard east of the former Juniata Scales. Kovalchik Salvage has been removing all rail and ties from the area. Used for storage of

old freight cars for decades, often highlighted by small trees growing up between the cars. Taken out of service with the advent of the Penn Central RR after February 1, 1968, the yard initially saw extensive storage of the passenger fleet, particularly heavyweight section cars, Pullmans, parlor cars, as well as the sleeping cars from the light-weight era. Some of the heavyweight equipment was converted to M&W equipment use, while some of the lightweight cars were sold, many pieces going to Mexico.

Subsequent years have seen freight car storage but that era has ended (as has the vast storage of company owned rolling stock at the former Hollidaysburg Car Shop yard).



Salvage operations will include several heavy plate steel light towers (not the 1939 World's Fair Towers with the cone tops) as well as the East Juniata (17th St) bridge, which has been out of service since an excess-height car knocked down a section of the bridge in a sifting operation around 1967.

The bridge provided direct access to the famed East Altoona (Juniata) Roundhouse on its east side as well as the once busy diesel pit on the west side where the ash pits were located in the steam era. For those of us who remember the vast Altoona Yard operations, the diminished views of today caused by tree growth, it's hard for a younger person to visualize sprawling real estate all occupied by track and equipment.

NS Office Car Shop

As most rail enthusiasts know, the famed NS Office Car Train is housed and maintained in Altoona (Juniata). While the train has been in heavy use this year (visit YouTube.com), the shop has other tasks ahead to enlarge the fleet, i.e., a car has been acquired for conversion into a diner for the business train.

Also, five coaches have been acquired for future "excursion service" use, presumably on steam powered trains, as has a car for conversion into a head-end power car. NS has previously announced that steam powered trains may be returning to their system and a fleet of passenger car equipment is being assembled. The new coaches will be numbered # 42 through # 47. These coaches, acquired from Connecticut Dept of Transportation, are now on the property in Altoona (car bodies are white with some blue and red [faded] trim). The office car train does have two coaches still on the roster from the 1980's steam train, No. 28 & 29 respectively and still retain the name "Powhattan Arrow". Certainly, as the rail-fan community, we welcome such news and look forward to further developments. History does have a way of repeating itself but sadly the NS steam shop at Birmingham AL is gone which would be a great asset for locomotive maintenance.

Minor De-Railment in Altoona

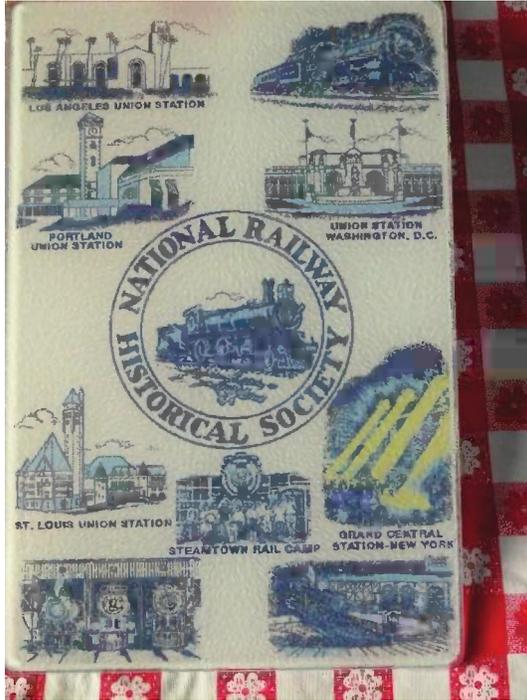
Seven coal hoppers derailed on Sunday, September 12, 2010 just east of the 8th St Juniata bridge. The cars 'appear' to have picked a switch. No major disruptions of service. Attributed to a broken rail but as we all know, "stuff happens".

NRHS CHAPTER PICNIC

Our thanks, once again, to Diane and Will Teeter for hosting our annual picnic at their lodge near Hollidaysburg, PA. Its always a pleasure to visit this rustic location and share food and conversation. We were honored this year by a visit by our Regional Vice-President,

John D. (and Mrs.) Sweigart. A great time was had by all and we thank the Teeter's for the gracious hospitality.

Mrs. Sweigart displayed the NRHS "Tile" which is available from Society sales, which makes a nice addition to NRHS memorabilia.



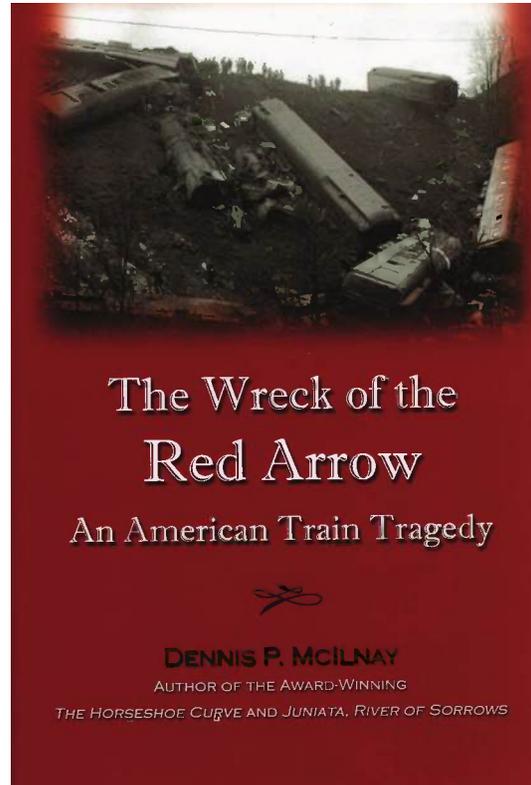
These scenes which also adorn a woven blanket-throw of excellent quality.



NRHS TILE

NEW BOOK ON PRR HISTORY

THE WRECK OF THE RED ARROW An American Train Tragedy



Author
Dennis P. McIlnay

Dr. McIlnay has penned another segment of local history chronicling this tragic event in Pennsylvania Railroad and Altoona Area history. While many students of Pennsylvania Railroad history are familiar with this event of February 18, 1947, and online informational reports are available about it, this major disaster has never been documented in literary form. *The Wreck of the Red Arrow* follows Dr. McIlnay's previous work *The Horseshoe Curve – Sabotage and Subversion in the Railroad City*, also chronicling a chapter in the Pennsylvania Railroads history associated with Altoona, PA.

We recommend these two works by Dennis P. McIlnay as important studies of these two segments of the PRR's history near Altoona, PA, a city founded by the

Pennsylvania Railroad. The book follows the circumstances leading to this tragic accident as well as following up on factual reporting of the day, with detailed research on how the tragedy impacted the lives of those most affected, the passengers and their families. It's a 'must have' for your railroad library.

The book is available at all Altoona area book retailers for \$24.95 and is also available via www.SevenOaksPress.com, and toll free: 866.695.5960.

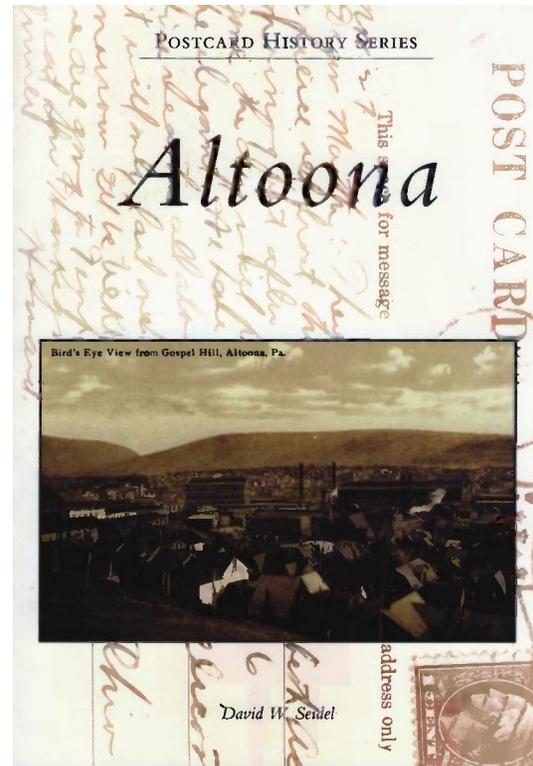
NEW BOOK ON ALTOONA

And...speaking of books..., your editor has also recently published a photographic history entitled "Altoona" with Arcadia Publishing Co.'s Postcard History Series. The book includes a plethora of railroad images, primarily Pennsylvania Railroad, since the city was, of course, founded by the PRR. The book retails for \$21.99 and sales benefit the Blair County Historical Society. You can find the book at local retailers, www.amazon.com, or www.arcadiapublishing.com.

Previously, a photographic history entitled "Horseshoe Curve" was published by Arcadia Publishing Co. Sales of this publication benefit Railroader's Memorial Museum and are *specifically earmarked for the "Restore The Loretto" fund* (see separate report on the LORETTO elsewhere in this newsletter.

Also available is a history of the "Altoona and Logan Valley Electric Railway" by Leonard E. Alwine and David Seidel. Sales of this book benefit Horseshoe Curve Chapter, National Railway Historical Society.

Note: There are TWO books by Arcadia Publishing Co. entitled "Altoona". They complement each other. This most recent work is in the Postcard History Series while the former, authored by Sr. Anne Frances Pulling, uses a variety of historical images in the "Images of America" series. We do, of course, recommend both.



HORSESHOE CURVE CHAPTER PROJECTS 2010

LORETTO

With the advent of the many capital improvement projects of Railroader's Memorial Museum in the early 1990's, one other project, almost out of necessity, slipped from the 'front burner' of attention. Namely, the continued restoration of the private railroad car "Loretto", formerly owned by Charles M. Schwab, founder of Bethlehem Steel Corp.



This fine example of Pullman varnish was a frequent visitor to the Altoona area in the 1920's and 1930's when Mr. Schwab visited his summer estate "*Immergrun*" in nearby Loretto, PA. In the early 1970's, the *LORETTO* was a splendid stationary exhibit at the Magee Transportation Museum, Bloomsburg, PA (an avocational interest of Mr. Harry L. Magee of Magee Carpet Mills). In 1972 Hurricane Agnes devastated parts of Pennsylvania and partially flooded the Magee Museum property (wheel high); Mr. Harry L. Magee passed-away the following year and his heirs had no further interest in the museum operation resulting in the *LORETTO* being advertised For Sale in the Wall St. Journal, an advertisement spotted by Altoona broadcaster Denny Bixler. At that same time, the fledgling Railroader's Memorial Museum was attempting to organize and raise funds for the Altoona railroad museum idea and the *LORETTO* became the catalyst which got the project off the ground and gave the museum idea substance. A separate campaign was launched to acquire the *LORETTO* and was successful with the famed car arriving in Altoona in 1975. Temporarily headquartered on a rail siding made available to Mr. Donald Snyder, President of Stanley Electric Co., the car was opened to area residents on a weekly basis for tours at \$1.00 per person. The response was quite positive and the visibility of the car was constant on industrial space formerly occupied by the PRR's Altoona Car Shops along Chestnut Avenue. The *LORETTO* also gave credibility and substance to the concept for Railroader's Memorial Museum and the projects were launched and ultimately successful...so much so, that Railroader's Memorial Museum paid off its construction mortgage five years after opening their doors. The rest is history as "they" say and the museum has continued to flourish...not without its bumps in the road, of course, but various obstacles have always been surmounted and goals achieved.

At the time the *LORETTO* was placed at Railroader's Memorial Museum to coincide with the grand opening of

September 21, 1980, the *LORETTO* received a new paint job courtesy of the Lithcote Corporation (Division of Union Tank Car) which the car has worn proudly these many years. However, after 30 years exposed to the elements, the *LORETTO* need another coat of paint. The Horseshoe Curve Chapter NRHS took on the project, funded by proceeds from the book "*Horseshoe Curve*" , restoring the exterior of the car, but with differences. At the Magee museum and for the first 30 years in Altoona, *LORETTO* wore a Silver Roof and Forest Green car body pigment...which was not according to specifications at the time of its construction. Therefore, the chapter elected to change the roof to regulation black paint, and the car body to Pullman Green (a dark olive color similar to Washington DC's "*Dover Harbor*"). As this newsletter is being written, the project is almost complete. The *LORETTO* name will be applied in gold by chapter member Joseph DeFrancesco. Work has been primarily performed by Frank Givler, Joseph Harella, Dick Charlesworth, Dave Seidel, Dan Moringiello and Bill Temple.

As some may recall, the *LORETTO* sustained serious fire damage in 1983. The interior of the car was restored with the exception of the central parlor room with dual berths. Plans are drawn for the conclusion of this project but has languished due to lack of funds, but it is hoped that goal can still be reached.

As a side note, Charles M. Schwab had a prior private rail car, also named *LORETTO*. This fine example still exists and may be found at the North Carolina Transportation Museum, Spencer, NC.

Charles Schwab's summer estate '*Immergrun*' is still intact also in Loretto, PA and is owned by Immaculate Conception province, St. Francis T.O.R. community. The hallmark of the estate with formal grounds are the magnificent sunken gardens, water cascade, and reflecting pool. Schwab also had a mansion in New York City which no longer exists. He is interred in a family

mausoleum, St. Michael's cemetery,
Loretto, PA.

MARPLEX PROJECT

....for want of a better name or title.
Railroader's Memorial Museum owns a
utility truck of the approximate size of a
Jeep CJ but built like a Sherman tank
with plate steel..donated to the museum
by Conrail. Used around the grounds to
transport welding tanks or tow the air
compressor, the vehicle deteriorated
somewhat and needed some attention.
Over the winter months, Horseshoe
Curve Chapter undertook its restoration,
both mechanically and cosmetically.
This project is almost complete and will
be returned to the museum shortly.

HISTORICAL MARKER UNVEILED

On Thursday, September 9, 2010, the
above historical Marker was unveiled by
the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
commemorating the US Railway Strike of
1922:

*“Over 300,000 skilled tradesmen went on
strike against US railroads to defend
gains by unions during WWI. The
Pennsylvania Railroad shops in Altoona
led the anti-union opposition. The bitter
struggle led to the 1926 Railway Labor
Act that upheld unions right to organize.”*

The original intent was to place the
marker curbside in front of the Juniata
Locomotive Shops (formerly Conrail,
Penn Central Transportation Co.,,
Pennsylvania Railroad), but Norfolk
Southern would not grant permission as
it portrayed a negative image. The
marker was therefore installed about one
mile away at the offices of the Blair-
Bedford Central Labor Council. Many
public officials and union leaders
attended, particularly State
Representative Richard Geist, Altoona
Mayor William Schirf, and Robert Kutz,
President of the Labor Council.

Blair County Central Labor Council
September 9, 2010
E. Wopsonnock Avenue and Juniata
Gap Rd., Altoona, PA.

SANTA TRAINS PLANNED

Yes, we know, it's a little early, but please post your calendars for the Saturday preceding and following Thanksgiving as there may not be another Coal Bucket prior to that time. SANTA trains will operate for three round trips on these Saturdays, probably at 10:45 AM, 1:00 PM and 3:15 PM. Car hosts will be needed and SANTA will greet all the children and grown-ups. Treat bags will be given to all the children. More details will be announced closer to the time but please reserve the dates on your list-of-things-to-do.

Addendum: Over the summer months, vestibule repair works has been on-going on one of the coaches to enhance safety and reliability.

CHAPTER TRIP TO WELLSBORO PA

...Was a tremendous success, on Saturday, September 18, 2010. Although we were about ten days ahead of the Fall Foliage leaf change, the weather was ideal as we enjoyed a very scenic drive to Wellsboro, PA, home of Pennsylvania's "Grand Canyon" at Leonard Harrison State Park. The trip, planned by Chapter Director Dick Charlesworth, had long time Chapter Friend John Rouzer driving one of Fullington's newest buses. Following a pleasant visit at the 'canyon', we visited/toured Highland Chocolates, a remarkable partnership of private and county government where about 20 special needs individuals are trained and employed to make high quality chocolate products. Lunch was at the Penn-Wells Hotel in downtown Wellsboro where we all enjoyed a full sit-down meal in very elegant surroundings. Visiting downtown Wellsboro is always special because of the period architecture and gas-lighting along the main street. Our afternoon was occupied by a 24-mile round-trip ride on the Tioga Central Railroad to within a mile or two of the New York State border. Our predominantly "Pennsy" group enjoyed bantering with the staff on this former

New York Central line, especially the very good-natured Conductor, Herb Snook.



We thank them for their courtesy and hospitality. Our return trip included a rest stop for food and refreshment at Wegman's in Williamsport, returning us to Altoona around 9:30 PM. Thanks to Dick Charlesworth for another well-planned trip experience.

dws

WINDMILL PROJECTS IN LOCAL AREA

Blair and Cambria counties in our region have witnessed the emergence of the giant windmills on our mountain tops. This dramatic change to our landscape can be perceived in many diverse ways from the positive "clean energy" to those who see them as marring the landscape. Regardless, its an interesting process to observe, the

most recent being the development in the Chestnut Flats area on Buckhorn mountain (PA 36 north of Altoona). These towers, when erected will have a height of 300 ft supporting generators weighing almost 85 tons. These generators are arriving in Hollidaysburg PA on heavy duty flat cars from the plant in Fairless Hills, NJ.

The most recent, TTX flat cars with eight wheel trucks on each end, supporting two such generators. They are being off loaded at the east end of the former Hollidaysburg Car Shop Yard near what was once Conrail's Reclamation Plant. A special crane provided through Saylor & Sons Cranes of Altoona (Greg Saylor) off-loads the generators at this location prior to transport by special truck trailer to the job site. Windmill towers are arriving by special truck from Wisconsin and the propeller blades are manufactured locally in nearby Ebensburg, PA.

100TH ANNIVERSARY PENNSYLVANIA STATION NEW YORK

2010 marks the centenary of what was once one of the more remarkable architectural landmarks in New York City. In what became the 'architectural crime of the century, the station was razed in 1963 for the present day Madison Square Garden, a bland structure (exterior) that will not be missed when its time comes.

Tentative plans call for Amtrak to mark the occasion in October with a ceremony but details are not yet announced. For the past month, Chapter friend and Penn Station NY historian John Turkeli has had a display of his historic images on display at the Long Island RR facility in the station. John gives monthly tours of the station (behind the scenes) also. A slide program on the subject was also presented by him at the recent monthly meeting of the Sunrise Trail Chapter, NRHS, on Long Island.

You may not be aware, but Railroader's Memorial Museum has a slice of Penn Station NY on display in the museum yard. During station renovations last year, a complex cross-beam from the former station was being removed, intended for the salvage yard. It is now on display in the yard near the Crossover Bridge corner. Just a hunk of steel, but it represents great PRR history.

P.S. Future plans call for conversion of the Farley Post Office (opposite on 8th Ave., NY and of similar design to the original Penn Station) to be converted into a passenger railroad station.

CALENDAR

September 28 – Regular Meeting, 7:30 PM
October 26 – Regular Meeting 7:30 PM
November 23 – Regular Meeting 7:30 PM
December – Chapter Christmas Party on or about first weekend; watch for details.

All Regularly scheduled meetings are held at Railroader's Memorial Museum's Theatre, First Floor on the 4th Tuesday.

