



# HARRISBURG RAIL REVIEW

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE HARRISBURG CHAPTER, NRHS, INC.  
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**MARCH 2018**

## SIGHTINGS DEPARTMENT:

Work day at Harris on 2/10 yielded two sightings of CITX locomotives amidst NS engines on two different trains. CITX is a leasing company owned by CIT Finance, Inc. . . . Six more of those GE locomotives painted and lettered for Indian Railways were seen in Enola by Fred Voigt on 2/22. See the January *HRR* for a December sighting and a link to a video. They are narrow gauge and being shipped on flat cars.

## FEBRUARY 13 MEETING MINUTES:

The 66 people present at 7:00 pm included guests Tom Nemeth, editor and publisher of *Railpace* magazine, Gary Farmer, president of the Penn Central Historical Society, retired PRR employee Gary Heintzelman, and Don Paul Shearer, president of the West Shore Historical Society. We also recognized our new RailCamp candidate Malik Belle and his father Kevin Belle. Treasurer Richard Crow presented the chapter financial report, which was available for review. Activity included a check for \$1,005 to Railways to Yesterday in Orbisonia to restore Valley Traction's Jackson & Sharp streetcar #12. This check was the sum of donations made by chapter members to date. Donations may be made via Treasurer Crow with a note for "Railways to Yesterday VT car #12. President Smith discussed obtaining several small pieces of Valley Traction trolley rail from the Borough of Wormleysburg. Also, most of the interlocking machine cover parts are now with the body shop for painting. Thanks to Dan Rapak, Jim Nowotarski, Dave Feath, and George Greider for those efforts in taking the machine cover apart.

President Smith thanked Fred Wertz for continuing to purge old ROW files. Member Ryan Emrick was thanked for keeping the tower parking lot clear of snow. Presenter Tom Nemeth indicated that his book on the Scranton-based Delaware Lackawanna Railroad is at the publisher. The Chapter will have copies at the train show for sale. Fred Wertz reported that the 2/10 work day at Harris Tower focused on landscaping and cleanup and cleaning the

interlocking machine interior while the covers are removed for refinishing. Mark Irvin reminded us of the March 10 Train Show at the I.W. Abel Union Hall in Steelton. There will be a members' Slide Show March 27 at Hoss's Enola. The chapter annual banquet will be April 7. John Smith reminded everyone that we could use many more door prizes for the banquet so every attendee can get one. Our meeting ended at 7:20 pm.

Sam Wilder, Secretary

The program following the meeting was a fine presentation by long-time *Railpace* Editor Tom Nemeth. On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of Penn Central, Tom gave an excellent pictorial view of many PC trains that he has seen over the years. Thank you Tom.

## AMHERST RAILROAD SHOW: Kathy Potterton

Bill and Kathy Potterton have been attending this annual spectacular railroad show at the New England Exposition Center in Springfield, MA, for about ten years. The show is held on the last weekend of January every year. It is a huge show which occupies four large buildings at the Exposition Center, which are the fairgrounds for all of New England. The show is a Saturday and Sunday event, which attracts upwards of 25,000 people.

The vendors include toy trains, railroad-related museums and local railroad shortlines, complete with equipment! Both this year and last year, a museum group from Maine brought their full size, ex-Edaville narrow gauge steam locomotive on a flatbed truck. The locomotive was unloaded into the parking lot, steamed up and run on a 100-foot piece of track! Included were all the smells, sounds and whistle blowing that anyone could want. The rail-related attractions represented include museums and model railroad clubs from all of New England, NY, PA and some from the South and Midwest. If you are into model trains or railroads in general, this show is for YOU!

The major attractions are the extensive layouts in all gauges. Also on show are various demonstrations and exhibits

for those interested in building their own layouts. Some of the seminars on model building include the ability of participants to build structures, etc. for themselves during the demonstrations. In addition, a "rubber-tired" amusement-type train ride was running inside one of the large buildings for the "little" kids to enjoy!

The show is a great way to talk with folks from various museums and railroad attractions for vacation planning. Most museums have counter-top videos of their facilities and equipment that they show to folks while discussing and handing out their brochures, maps, and small give-aways. As in past years, we leave on Thursday for the roughly five-hour drive, spend Friday in Palmer, MA, where the New England Central (ex-Central Vermont) Railroad and CSX (ex-Boston and Albany Railroad) interchange. At the junction, there is a good restaurant called "The Steaming Tender," which occupies the old Palmer Railroad Station. This show is huge and one can easily spend both days. The Amherst Rail Society, which sponsors the event, is a volunteer group, and uses the proceeds from the event to provide grants and other support to local rail restoration projects.

### **TRAIN SHOW—MARCH 10, 2018**

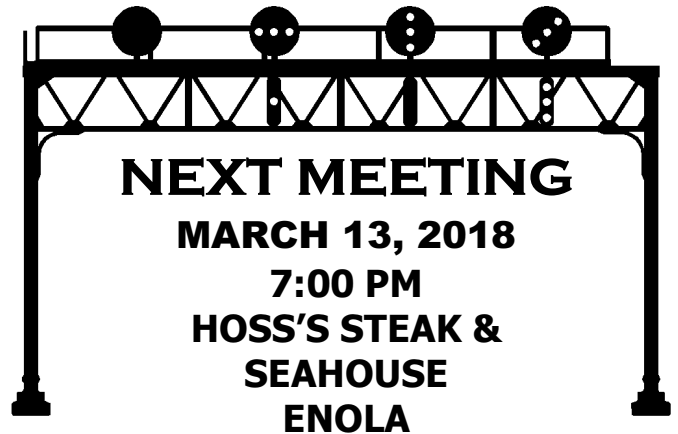
Volunteers are still needed for the Train Show. Table set up will be on Friday, March 9 at 3 pm. Help with the vendors will be needed on Saturday, March 10 at 6 am as the vendors unload and bring their things into the building. Help for the vendors will also be needed at the end of the show when they pack up their wares and get them to their vehicles. In addition, help is needed for door security during the show. A special request is for a person to help John Sheetz with placement of signs in the morning. Please call Mark Irvin at 717-732-3867 or email him at [irvinwepfer@msn.com](mailto:irvinwepfer@msn.com) if you can help with any of these things.

The Train Show is the Chapter's biggest fundraiser. Everyone is needed to participate. If you cannot help at the show, please come out and buy a ticket for \$5 to attend. Bring a friend. Train movies will be shown and a special program on the Penn Central Railroad in the 1970s presented by Chapter member Kerry Jury will start at 11 am. All kinds of model trains and railroadiana will be sold. Many new vendors have been added this year. Also, the new book *The Delaware Lackawanna Railroad*, written by Tom Nemeth, will be available for purchase. The price will be \$35, tax included. Remember, the Train Show will be back at the I.W. Abel Union Hall on Gibson Street in Steelton this year. See you there!

### **NEXT MEETING AND CHAPTER NEWS:**

The meeting in March will be held on the **13th** at Hoss's Steak and Seahouse, 743 Wertzville Road, Enola. Take Exit 61 (Wertzville Road) off I-81 and go east on Wertzville Road for 1.8 miles. The restaurant is on the left,

across from CVS Pharmacy. Dinner is available to everyone, or you can attend just the meeting at 7 pm. As part of Hoss's Community Night Program, Hoss's will donate 20% of the total amount of sales from our group back to us. We have been very fortunate to receive substantial payments from Hoss's, so enjoy eating there if possible. Prepare to order with staff in the meeting room rather than at the register. Please pay your tab before the meeting and tip your waitstaff accordingly.



"Reading & Northern in the Anthracite Region" will be the topic of an illustrated talk by Olev Taremae. Taremae is Program Chair for Anthracite Railroads Historical Society. He has an extensive archive of railroad photos which have appeared in books and rail-related publications. Founded in 1975, the Anthracite Railroads Historical Society is a non-profit organization with membership of over 1,100 individuals interested in the history of anthracite-hauling railroads that include: Central Railroad of New Jersey, Lehigh Valley Railroad, Reading Company, Lehigh and New England, Lehigh and Hudson River Railroad and Lackawanna Railroad.

There will NOT be a Harris Tower work day in March due to a conflict with the Train Show on March 10. For any members who want to volunteer at the Train Show and didn't get to sign the list at the February meeting, please contact Mark Irvin at [irvinwepfer@msn.com](mailto:irvinwepfer@msn.com) or 717-732-3867). The March meeting will be after the show. . . . The Harrisburg Chapter is very appreciative of donations from the following members that were made since the last *HRR*: Frank Castrina, Dick Charlesworth, Dan Cupper, Dean and Rylee Hixson and Gregory Martin. . . . We had a new (actually, returning) member re-join last month. He is Robert Killoran and his roster data is: 13 Monarch Lane, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050 (717-919-8936)(R). Thanks to Bob for a donation along with his application. Bob is working on the benchwork for the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor diorama. . . This year, there are no NRHS members who have reached a longevity milestone that we know about. As our membership continues to age, this fact is somewhat surprising. . . . There will be a **SLIDE SHOW** March 27 at Hoss's at 7 pm. Bring slides or, if you have digitized pics, let Mark Irvin know.

Historic Harrisburg Association, of which the chapter is a member, has selected the Harris Tower Railroad Museum to receive the 2018 Preservation Award in recognition of the outstanding efforts on the part of our volunteers to preserve and restore the authentic historic features and original architecture of the unique Harrisburg landmark. The Association's cover letter says: "Historic Harrisburg Association has been presenting Preservation Awards since 1986 to recognize and encourage excellence in restoration and preservation and to underscore its mission of *"promoting historic preservation, urban revitalization and smart growth"* since 1973." Giving Harris Tower new life and purpose as an educational and heritage tourism destination, while preserving and interpreting its role in railroading history and its authentic 1930 original appearance, makes it especially worthy of Historic Harrisburg's Preservation Award!"

The flyer for the April 7 banquet was emailed last month and is mailed via USPS this month. The March meeting would be a good time to make your reservation and submit your payment.

#### **SHORT HOPS:**

Both MARC (Maryland Area Regional Commuter) and SEPTA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority) as well as other states' rail systems have purchased new locomotives from Siemens Corp. based in California. MARC is getting eight diesel SC-44 models while SEPTA ordered 15 ACS-64 electric locomotives. MARC's (popularly called "Chargers") 80 and 81 have been delivered and were used in a test train from Baltimore to Brunswick on 1/15. With no regular service on the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King holiday, the engines and three bi-level coaches made test stops at all stations. SEPTA ACS-64 (popularly "Cities Sprinters"), numbered 901—the same model Amtrak uses on the Hbg Line—is in the testing phase in the shop and on the road (*High Green* and *Cinders*). SEPTA 901 test-ran on Amtrak's Hbg Line on 2/25 as far as Hbg. This was done for higher-speed testing and required Amtrak pilots. The next shipment of Siemens locomotives started moving eastward the first week of February. SEPTA ACS-64s 902 and 903 and MARC SC-44s 83 and 84 were the numbers. The 902 and 903 have been delivered to SEPTA (Trainorders.com).

Amtrak intends to make changes at its train station in Latrobe, PA to improve accessibility for passengers with disabilities riding the *Pennsylvanian*. According to Amtrak spokeswoman Beth Toll, the improvements will be designed this year, with construction in 2019. Currently, a set of stairs leads up to the train platform from a parking area at Alexandria Street and McKinley Avenue next to DiSalvo's Station Restaurant, which occupies the restored 1903 PRR station. The platform has exterior benches under a canopy and additional benches inside a modest shelter. Toll said Amtrak will replace the existing platform with a new version that rises eight inches above the top of the rail. According to the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, a platform at that height "generally

does not provide level boarding" but "does facilitate boarding by ambulatory passengers." Amtrak also plans to modify parking, the stairs and the passenger waiting area and will add signage that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Toll said. The Latrobe station served 4,246 passengers and generated \$247,569 in revenue in the 2017 fiscal year, according to Amtrak's Great American Stations Project website (*Greensburg Tribune Review*).

The Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society is planning a trip for their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary convention in Altoona in May. Using Bennett Levin's E8s 5711 and 5809, the train will depart from Philadelphia on May 9 and run to Altoona via Paoli (stop), Lancaster (stop), Hbg (stop), Williamsport, Lock Haven, Tyrone and Altoona. The return trip will leave w/b from Altoona on May 13, go around Horseshoe Curve, loop at Gallitzin and return to Philadelphia via Lewistown, Hbg, Lancaster and Paoli, with stops at each. The cars will be all parlor cars, no coaches. Fare will be \$1,000 per person. Here's a link to the excursion information: <http://www.philaprrths.com/>. The trip is already over half full. Note the advice that due to the need for PTC equipment on the engines, future use could be problematic. For those of you interested in the convention, go to the society's website and click on the "Annual Meetings" link in the left hand column.

On March 7, the Cumberland County Historical Society at 1:30 pm will present a slide show titled "Highlights of the Jim Bradley Photograph Collection" by Richard Tritt. Jim at one time had been a Hbg chapter member and was a professional photographer. He still lives in Hbg and donated his extensive photo collection to the Cumberland County Historical Society. Railroads were one of his main interests, but the presentation also will cover local scenes, family history and miscellaneous subjects. Attendance is free. The address is 21 North Pitt Street in Carlisle. Their website ([www.historicalsociety.com/](http://www.historicalsociety.com/)) advises there is limited free parking available behind the building or metered parking on nearby streets.

The Steam Railroading Institute in Owosso, MI sold its ex-Mississippian Railway 76 (2-8-0, B. BLW, 1920) to the Oakland, MD B&O Museum. The locomotive will be leaving Owosso later this year. The Oakland Community Heritage Foundation has already engaged a steam locomotive expert to work on 76 upon its arrival. For more info on the museum, their website: [www.oaklandbandmuseum.org](http://www.oaklandbandmuseum.org). The local connection to our area is that older members may remember the 76 when it saw service on the Gettysburg Railroad. The Cornell family owned it and moved it to Gettysburg in an unusual move for that time. Their two engines, No. 76 and Baldwin S12 No. 407 (ex-Monongahela Railway) and some other rolling stock were moved under their own power from Blairsville to Mt. Holly Springs on Conrail except for diesel helpers over Horseshoe Curve. If memory serves, Dan Cupper wrote an article about the move for the *Harrisburg Patriot*.



Fred Wertz, Editor  
Eric and Joan Ohstrom, Mailing

The Cumberland Valley Rails-to-Trails Council (CVRTC) was awarded a Tourism Product Development Grant from the Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation (CAEDC). The grant will assist with the development of the Cumberland Valley Railroad Museum, housed in a 1956 Penn Central boxcar. The site is at the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail trailhead, adjacent to Shippensburg University and just blocks from the community's historic downtown. The \$71,000 award, which requires a 25% local match, will fund an upgraded parking lot at the CVRT's Fort Street trailhead, the cleaning and repainting of the boxcar, the building of a deck linking to the rail trail, and the construction of the museum itself. When completed in summer 2018, the Cumberland Valley Railroad Museum will be open year-round for self-guided tours (Cumberland Valley Chapter *Pioneer*).

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Here is a shot of the Harris Tower interlocking machine “undressed.” All the olive green panels have been removed and sent out for painting with funding from an NRHS grant and a match provided by Bill and Kathryn Potterton. The levers would go in the round holes near the top, with notched segments above them. The press buttons are known as “call on” buttons. All electric wiring had to be labeled to reinstall the steel panels and connect the original wires correctly. The boxes and machinery underneath are parts, supplies and interfaces to allow us to simulate original operation of the machine. Photo by Jim Nowotarski.