

ARM Convention Report

By Norman Holmes

Barbara and I spent two weeks in the east, flying into Newark NJ, renting a car and first attending the ARM convention in Scranton PA. About 200 people attended the 5+day convention. Met some new friends and renewed connections with old friends. After the convention we drove through New York State and ended back in Newark. Two days of "seeing" New York City finished the trip.

Wednesday, Sept 20. Our first day started with a review of the restoration and reuse as a hotel of the beautiful 1908 passenger station. This was the "convention hotel." (We stayed at the Howard Johnson Motel near the Steamtown facility.) We had a train ride up the line stopping at three stations, two restored and one waiting restoration. In the evening, we visited the vendor's tables.

Thursday, Sept 21: Scott Becker, president of ARM, gave an opening talk and mentioned that this is the 40th convention. They also have a web site, www.railwaymuseums.com. John Hinkley's talk centered on the fact that we should no longer look to the railroads for support. We need to know what we are, where we are and we need to look ahead 50 to 100 years. Next Walter P Gray III said most importantly museum trustees are responsible for the preservation of the collection. Any changes in items during restoration must be documented, some items should be left unrestored. Visitors are important, we need to provide a memorable experience for them to leave with. Barbara Pahl with the National Trust for Historical Preservation stated that we should compare our railway preservation to other forms of industrial preservation. As an example, we took a trip to the Lackawanna Coal Mine as well as the Anthracite Heritage Museum. A tour of the coal mine, going down 300 feet was offered and accepted. (I would never want to be a coal miner!)

Friday, Sept 22: The first session was on resources development, in other words fund raising. The Board of Trustees must give, get or get out. It is best to have a board with corporate people on it as this impresses those in charge of foundations that give money. Fund raising must have a specific need, do not take no for a final answer and obtain visitors names and addresses following through with a fund request. Memberships are generally money losers. Next was a two-hour session on the legal basics of collections. Here the legal status of collections was analyzed as well as how to acknowledge donations. There is no such thing as a "permanent loan." The Board must approve any loan of equipment. There is a need to have professional management. In the afternoon, the first session was "Telling the Modern Story." "History is everything that has happened up to today." We need to keep our railroad history up to date. David Conrad talked about preserving steam into the 21st century wondering if there will be people who will have the knowledge to repair the steam locomotives in the future. This was followed by a session dealing with buying, selling,

and the exchanging of trolley parts. Not much for us here.

Saturday, Sept 23: We met at Steamtown NHS, in the theatre where a panel discussion on the new FRA steam rules was Q&A'd. Then in the same location another panel discussion on how we can explain railroad history in relation to our exhibits. In the afternoon, we were pretty much on our own to explore the exhibits at Steamtown and the new Electric City Trolley Museum. That evening we attended the banquet with speaker, Don Phillips, Washington Post and Trains Magazine (Washington Pundit) writer. He said that not many period freight cars have been saved, I'm going to write him a letter.

Other railway museums we visited: Tioga Scenic Railroad, an eleven-mile tourist line that also hauls freight between Owego NY and Newark Valley. Operates on weekends leaving at 1pm. The ride takes one hour each way, costs \$9. A lunch on Saturday and dinner on Sunday at \$22 and \$29 respectively is also offered. Our train was pulled by a SW-1, had a diner where food was prepared, a coach converted to a diner, an open car of ancient vintage and 2 EL MU cars as coaches one with original seats, one with park benches along both sides. A 30 minute layover at Newark Valley made possible a visit to the village. The freight house station contained a model railroad layout, snack bar and souvenirs. There was nothing particularly scenic about the ride that one could not have seen in the surrounding area by car, but it was a train ride (at 10mph!).

We were going to stay in a caboose motel (5 PC cabs) at Avoca, but they wanted \$80 for the night so decided to press on. This motel is off the main highway and in this off-season wonder why they wanted to charge so much? Maybe they saw my hat!

New York Museum of Transportation, located south of Rochester. They were closed as they open only on weekends. I was able to drive in and see equipment stored outside and only on leaving noticed the No Trespassing signs. Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum at the same address in the Tourist Railway Guide was no where to be seen.

Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad at Milford, 8 miles south of Cooperstown was again only a weekend operation. The equipment stored at Milford consisted of a number of different types of coaches and cars, some of which had no seats etc. An EMD switcher headed the train. No where to be seen was the "museum" that reportedly has 2 GG-1's, a big hook etc.

At Oneonta we found the D&H caboose where the Brotherhood of Railway Brakemen first organized. This four-wheel bobber is protected in a glass enclosure in a city park. Union Station in downtown Utica has one of only 2 saved NYC steamers, this one an 0-6-0. Also there was an Adirondack RSD, a Santa Fe coach and a caboose of PRR vintage. We visited the Schenectady Museum, which had a number of exhibits from the area's largest employer, General Electric. Not much on its railroad activities, howev-

er. A photo of an Alco built UP Big Boy was shown but nothing else on Alco. Outside a freshly painted Alco RS-3, in Great Northern paint, was on display.

The Catskill Mountain Railroad, at Mt. Pleasant (no town, nothing but a train station, try to find this on a map!) advertised hourly trains from 12-4pm through Oct 9, but nothing was operating. A sign on the station said weekends only. They had a 50-ton Porter side rod diesel, 2 open cars and a caboose. Wonder what they do when it rains as it frequently does in this area? Other equipment listed in the guide must have been located elsewhere.

The Trolley Museum of New York at Kingston was locked up behind a high fence. We could see lots of equipment rusting away in the damp atmosphere. Could not see where they would have a "2 1/2 mile, 40 minute round trip.

New York City Transit Museum is located in Brooklyn in a no longer used subway station. Stored on the two tracks were at least 25 cars of various vintages. Also on display were various fare collection devices, bus and trolley models, parts, and a history of how the subways were built including a movie showing same.

A nice trip, but it is also nice to be home.

Slowly Slipping Away

By Eugene John Vicknair

The San Jose area recently lost some major portions of its quickly fading WP heritage. Perhaps the most noticeable and tragic was the demolition of the downtown freight house on The Alameda, one block west of the famous SP Cahill Station. The freight house, one of only two which remained from the WP (the other in Elko, Nevada) was built when the branch to San Jose was constructed in the early 1920's. It served until 1971. In recent years, it had fallen into a terrible state of disrepair, but still sported a Western Pacific Freight Depot sign until the end. Efforts to preserve the building as part of downtown redevelopment fell by the wayside some years ago as local preservationists chose to focus on the nearby Del Monte warehouse and the rail community focused on the SP roundhouse.

The major shipper on the end of the San Jose Branch, the Del Monte cannery, finally closed early this year. Now, the last shippers spur, located just north of the WP line's crossing of the ex-SP Vasona Branch, has been tied into the former SP line and the WP branch beyond Monterey Road has been embargoed. This line was notable for tiptoeing through the backyards of the historic and pricey Willow Glen neighborhood.

Finally, the WP's Seventh Street spur, which took off from the branch near Spartan Stadium, is being torn up. Once a major line of an extensive industrial district where SP and WP tracks meshed and crisscrossed each other, the spur had one rail pulled over in recent weeks, a fate also befalling some SP trackage in the district. UP is rapidly pruning the San Jose Branch and very few customers remain.

Obituaries

Bruce Lee Cooper 1943-2000

We lost a very dedicated member when Bruce Cooper died August 22, 2000 from complications resulting from diabetes. He was born in Redding, California on April 1, 1943 was a fire fighter for the City of San Rafael for 15 years and after retirement on disability moved to Grass Valley.

In 1987, Bruce and his wife Sue visited our museum and found it so interesting that they moved to Portola and joined the Society in August 1987. Bruce and Sue became active volunteers, Sue in the Beanery and Bruce in the operating department. Bruce was elected to the Board of Directors in 1988 and in 1989 started the now famous run-a-locomotive program. This program has made the public aware of our existence through TV, newspaper, and magazine publicity. The R-A-L program had done more for the museum's financial welfare than any other one thing.

Bruce was also responsible for obtaining our first land acquisition, a 3.46 acre donation which included our picnic area. He also obtained supplies and equipment from Government Surplus at Herlong.

A memorial is being established with the American Diabetes Association, 10445 Old Placerville Road, Sacramento CA 95827.

Guy Dunscomb 1915-2000

While not a current member of FRRS, Guy Dunscomb supported our Society with photos and information. Guy authored a number of books on the Western Pacific in addition to his extensive Southern Pacific works. Guy could always come up with a photo or roster information when asked. He was a fine gentleman. He passed away on September 1, 2000.

George L. Bates

We were recently advised by Mrs. Bates that George passed away on September 23, 2000. Retired and living in Amirillo, Texas we regularly received donations from him in addition to his membership dues. Our condolences go to the family.

Unofficial Poll Results

The following FRRS poll held on our EGroups mailing list site is now closed. This was not an officially sanctioned poll by the FRRS. Here are the final results:

POLL QUESTION: If repainted, which paint scheme should the Southern Pacific SD-9 be repainted into?

CHOICES AND RESULTS

- Black Widow (Black/Orange/Silver), 15 votes, 75.00%
- Bloody Nose (Red/Grey), 5 votes, 25.00%