

# PENNYRAIL

February 2017

VOLUME 21 NUMBER 2

Please send your digital photos and story material to [billtrainthomas@gmail.com](mailto:billtrainthomas@gmail.com)

or mail to

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## Chapter Chatter

**Next Meeting Monday,  
February 20, 2017, 7:00 pm  
Hopkins County  
Government Center  
Madisonville, KY 42431**

**Bring a friend!**

**Program by Ricky Bivins**

***Port Perry,  
Pennsylvania and Its  
Importance to the  
Steel Industry***

**Refreshments by  
Bill Farrell**

### *In this issue...*

- ◆ Words From Our New President
- ◆ Pickin the Points
- ◆ Mystery Photo
- ◆ E8 On Display
- ◆ Milwaukee Road Window Boxes
- ◆ End of Steam Story
- ◆ Final Call for Circus Train

Western Kentucky  
Chapter, NRHS, Inc.

\* \* \* \* \*  
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“PENNYRAIL” is the official publication of the Western Kentucky Chapter, NRHS. Send news notes, historical notes and other rail information to:

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Greetings.

I hope everyone was able to enjoy the unusually warm January days made available to us. I was able to get over to one of my favorite train watching spots, Gorham IL. Matt Gentry joined me and we had a fun day watching and seeking out trains on the former MoPac and Cotton Belt lines.

The January meeting was a bit long but very informative. Our meeting place last month was the former Hopkins County Court House located in Madisonville. Bob and Bob from the Historical Society of Hopkins County were excellent hosts and the facility was good. We were treated to a tour of the building and provided information regarding the forth coming Coal Museum. We were not given a lot of information as to the needs and/or expectations of the Chapter if we decide to participate but most everyone agreed this is a good opportunity for our group to get the word out about our local railroad history. To recap, the entire south wing, which is roughly half of the museum display area could be allotted to the Chapter. We will provide our own display cases, shelving, hangers etc. as well as the display items. Security will be excellent. The museum will be staffed by volunteers. We will have access to the area in off hours. We will have to build, equip and maintain the area we commit to. Filling display cases with railroad and coal related artifacts will not be a problem, we all have something. (I can fill one

room myself)! Meeting a work schedule during construction I feel will be easy. Everyone will be eager to participate early on. Down the road (rail), maintaining and manning the museum for special events I see a potential issue. If we commit to this endeavor, we commit fully!

As mentioned in the minutes and at the previous meeting, I would like to grow our Photo Archive, see the Archive on-line in some form and make the information available to other not-for-profit organizations as well. Steve Miller, Jim Pearson and I are the committee members for this project. Submit your ideas to us.

The National Convention will be held in Nashville TN, this is close to home. Will King, Bill Farrell and Jim Kemp are committee members for "Project Nashville". Let us see what we can do to aid in the Convention.

And as always, National dues are due, March 31 is the cut-off date. Dues received after March 31 will be treated as a new member thus losing member seniority.

I hope to see you February 20, 2017 at the Hopkins County Government Center, 58 N. Main St. Madisonville KY. Meeting time is 7:00 PM. Bill Farrell has refreshment while I will have a combination talk and video program on Port Perry PA and its importance to the steel industry.

Ricky Bivins, President

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# Pickin' the Points

*Opinions and Stories by Bill Thomas, Editor*



I need your stories! To show you how simple this is, listen to one of mine...

My first train ride was aboard a work train assigned to do some ditch work on the Hook & Eye line of Family Lines (formerly L&N). GP40 4010, in the dark Family Lines gray with red and yellow stripes was literally "choked" with a wooden wedge at the old depot in Ellijay, GA. Behind it was a matching ex-L&N bay window caboose, and THEN... A JORDAN SPREADER! I'd never seen such a creature. While taking some black & white photos on Kodak Tri-X, I met up with the crew, who offered me a ride down the line. This was 1980, no cell phones, so I'm going rogue! At 17 I felt

like being free anyway!

We pulled out and ran south (backward) for a few miles, then the work began with the big arms of the Jordan spreader doing their thing.

We gradually worked our way back to the depot, but my thrill of the day, was blowing the horn at the crossings. We ran along side my 8th grade civics teacher in her car, who waved to me. She was not surprised to see me in the cab of a locomotive!

I can remember this outing like it was yesterday. I hope you might have some similar stories to tell. It's ok to make it personal, don't worry about grammar, I'll take care of that as your editor. Just start talking! (my apologies if you've heard this story before!)

Bill Thomas, editor, The PennyRail

# Circus Train Cars

**Circus cars are sound, but heavily altered - Expert cautions passenger car enthusiasts, museums that circus cars were cleaned out for work**

**By Steve Glischinski | January 20, 2017**

ELLENTON, Fla. — At first glance, the announced shutdown of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus would appear to be a boon to railway passenger car preservation. There may suddenly be available a vast fleet of heritage passenger cars that Ringling Bros. maintained in excellent mechanical condition. You won't find rust and rot in Ringling's fleet, all of which has been equipped with head-end electrical power.

The problem for museums and preservationists is there is a little if anything left of the original interiors, says Brad Black, a vice president with Virginkar & Associates, Inc., which consults on passenger car and rail transit rolling stock, equipment, and locomotive projects. Black says the cars have been "tunneled out," with the interiors stripped to empty shells. So the cars bear no resemblance to when they were in their previous service. In fact, Black says, in recent years Ringling has been purchasing old coaches rather than sleeping cars, because there are fewer interior walls to tear out.

Cars were assigned to specific acts. After being stripped, Ringling installed a custom interior, based on the needs of that act. Some acts occupy an entire car, while others would be divided up. Interior furnishings were tailored to the act, and might even contain special areas for equipment the act would need to take along. Typically, acts were on the road for two years, and the car was considered their home. Some cars don't even have aisles through them, since performers generally did not pass through the cars while on the road.

"They are more like hotel rooms than rail cars," Black says. "So if a museum is going to preserve it as a Ringling Circus car that would work. But if they are thinking, 'The car was originally this,' and they are getting that, not really. They tunneled them completely out."

The cars could be valuable, Black said, to someone who was building a private train and needed empty "shell" cars. "The underbody equipment is very much up to snuff," He says. "They are good, mechanically sound shells."

Cars that might be of particularly use for museums and other organizations, Black says, are

the six-wheel-truck former elephant cars, and the power cars, which once were owned by Union Pacific. In particular, Black said, the power cars are in excellent shape, and are "whisper quiet" when running.

Other cars that might be available are the large stock of un-rebuilt cars Ringling kept at its shop in Ellenton. Even if it didn't have a use for a car, Ringling scoured the country scooping up carbodies for possible future use. When a car wasn't destined for immediate rebuilding, its trucks were usually quickly rebuilt and put to use, so there are a large number of carbodies stored at the shop without trucks.

Black said the Ringling shutdown came as a shock to members of the Railway Passenger Car Alliance, an organization private railroad equipment owners and operators. Some RPCA members have been providing equipment and parts for Ringling's cars for several years, and have suddenly lost a major customer.

One fear, Black said, is that Ringling might just scrap its rail cars. Most of its flatcars have reached 50 years old; Ringling was planning a rebuild that now will never come. The company could decide to simply dispose of the car fleet to scrappers, save a handful going to circus related museums.



**Elephants are unloaded from the Ringling Bros. "Red Unit" train in Charleston, W.Va., on April 19. Most Ringling Bros. cars have been "tunneled" out, meaning little original material is left on the cars' interior.**



# End of Steam Story - Gary Ostlund

Setting the stage: In the early 50s, when steam engines were dropping out of the picture at an alarming rate, TRAINS Magazine send Editor David P. Morgan and his close pal Dr. Philip R. Hastings out into the hinterland to record their demise in word and B&W. As expected they did a spectacular job, Morgan's prose and Hasting's lens recording history, never to be repeated. Between them, a hotshot hoghead and a worn but game 4-8-2, forget what year it is and pretend this dead freight is the 20th Century Limited.



New York Central engineer John Hitchko leans from the cab of L-3a Mohawk 3005 at Galion, Ohio. "oh yes, we'll ride once we get out of here."



NYC Mohawk 3005 had paused to pick up tonnage at Galion, OH., -- no hint of the drama to come. Sixty? Humbug!



Extra 3005 East making 60 mph through Shelby , all the implications of the Book of Revelation.



Shirtless crewman inspects his train as Extra 3005 East rockets over the diamonds heading for Cleveland.

Morgan and Hastings found action in Galion, Ohio. New York Central Extra 3005 East was doing some car shuffling and would depart soon. Like most railfans, they hopped in the car and raced 13 miles to Shelby, where an equally busy line of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad crossed.

The dispatcher had temporarily lost track of Extra 3005 East and was attempting to pin down his location and whether or not he had his train in one piece. In the words of Morgan, "the conversation, as relayed to us by the operator, gave no direct hint of what was to come. As a result

*(Continued on page 6)*

# All Things Trains and Photography by Jim Pearson

Jim will be back soon with more helpful information about rail photography.



## Update on High Iron Trips

From Don Clayton...

Due to some conflicting schedules with the 611 excursions, we are revising our Kanawha River trip schedule. This update is shown in the attached. The BNSF trip has been removed for rescheduling. Information on ticketing for the Piedmont & Northern trips will be available shortly. Sorry for any confusion!

**March 17, 18, 2017 PIEDMONT & NORTHERN** Four repeat trips over the 13-mile long P&N using an ex-IC caboose. Limited to 10 riders per trip. Trips will leave at 9AM and 1:30PM on both Saturday and unday. Fare: \$125/trip. One space per trip in the locomotive at \$250. Please identify which trip you desire: 17A (Saturday morning); 17B (Saturday afternoon); 18A (Sunday morning); 18B (Sunday afternoon), and an alternate selection if your choice is filled.

**SANTA CRUZ & MONTEREY BAY RR.** Trips canceled due to storm damage.

**March 21, 2017.** Deadhead trip Oakland, CA to Chicago in ex-Santa Fe dome cars. No sleeping accommodations. Meals included. \$595.

**March 25, 2017. STREATOR CIRCLE TRIP.** A day trip from Chicago to Streator, IL on ex-AT&SF; then east on ex-NYC (now NS) back Chicago via Schneider, IN (connection with ex-NYC Cairo, IL line to Indiana Harbor). Lv. Union station 8AM; return around 5PM. Fares: Dome \$495; Caritas (open platform obs. car) \$595; coach seat \$295. Lunch included.

**June 3-12, 2017: KANAWHA RIVER RAILROAD BEHIND** ex-NKP 765. (Note: Kanawha River Railroad is a former NYC line, now operated by WATCO).

**June 3:** Deadhead to Pickerington, Ohio (near Columbus), load passengers, run to the village of Eclipse (near Athens) or as far as practical. Use Kanawha River Railroad unit to pull train back to Pickerington/Watkins Yard. Total is about 150 miles.

**June 4:** Deadhead to Pickerington, Ohio to load passengers, then run two short trips, Pickerington to Glouster and return, about 114 miles per trip. Use Kanawha River Railroad unit to pull train on all westbound moves.

**June 5:** Deadhead train to either Nitro or Dickinson Yard for storage during week.

**June 9:** Diesel trip, Charleston as far as we can go toward Enon, MP WV253 and return. Total of about 140 miles.

**June 10:** Load passengers at the University of Charleston stadium in downtown Charleston and run to Maben. Bus passengers to the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine, deadhead train to Mullens/Elmore to wye. Deadhead move may be occupied. Total is about 170 miles.

**June 11:** Repeat of Saturday's trip.

**June 12:** One way move from Charleston to Pickerington, Ohio, Then deadhead into Watkins yard. Equipment will be 611 Steam Train consist plus Caritas and Cimarron River. Pricing to be determined.

**September 14-22, 2017:** AAPRCO Convention in Burlington, VT

The Special Train will start in Albany/Rensselaer, NY on a route not yet finalized but including major portions of the Vermont Rail System. The actual convention dates are

**September 19-22.** We will be participating with the Caritas and Cimarron River.

Clark Johnson Today, 9:07 AM



## End of Steam Cont.

*(Continued from page 4)*

neither Hastings nor I noticed a faint smudge of smoke building in the horizon to the west. A distant whistling was adjudged to be yet another first-class schedule, and we were scanning the timecard to identify it when another, nearer blast propelled us to trackside on the double.

"Why, it's the extra! Can't be --- he might just have --- it is and he's rolling!" Rolling is mild language for what he was doing. Extra 3005 East, now no less than 98 cars between tank and caboose, was bearing down on Shelby with all the implications of destiny of the Book of Revelation, gaining momentum with each revolution of those four pairs of 69-inch drivers, making the legal mile-a-minute with ease and perhaps a notch or two better. The elephant-eared aristocrat of an Alco rammed across the diamond with smoke going high, the Baker up near center, and the crew enjoying the breeze. Out of her dusty wake came her train --- rattling, rocking, rolling, riding to Cleveland at such a pace that as Hastings recalls it, "one felt called upon to wonder at what moment the whole shebang would take either to the air or to the adjacent countryside."

The wooden hack bringing up the markers shot off into the distance. Left in the sudden quiet were two rather shaken train-watchers, one startled operator, and the voice of a dispatcher who, with noticeable alarm, had (1) discovered the pace of Extra 3005 East, and (2) was attempting to stop him so that slower but more legitimate occupants of the eastbound main --- passenger trains --- could overtake the dead freight they had been supposed to run around.

Wonderful! Too often steam departs from us in the form of a fan trip that suffers an engine breakdown . . . How much better to wind it up like the 3005, taking a quiet Ohio town apart, pinning its ears back, performing like Alco said her 4410 cylinder horsepower should perform. Abdicate..? --- not willingly.

Credits: Photos by Dr. Phil R. Hastings & excerpts by Editor David P. Morgan as seen in "In Search of Steam, Volume II: 1954 - 1955

## No Flowers in This Window Box

The arrows point to a window apparatus not standard on most diesel locomotives. Milwaukee Road's #156 was one of the many U. S. railroads theme units celebrating our 200th Anniversary back in 1976. You can see why it was one of the favorites.

All weather bay windows, like that shows here, were



standard on all modern Milwaukee motive power. They were installed on the engineers side only. It allowed the engineer to lean to his right and look both forward and

rearward, important when switching, as it was necessary to see hand signals from crewmen on the ground.

The window seen here is made of durable fiberglass construction, and proven to be more user friendly than the earlier plywood and later aluminum



versions. Note that a clear piece of plexi-glass allowed him view the ground immediately below. In darkness, under certain conditions, it was difficult to judge movement, particularly with moving equipment on adjacent tracks, as in a yard. A downward shining light enhances this view. All weather windows allowed the engineer to perform his duties in the relative comfort of a dry cab.

The bay window did not replace the standard cab side windows and common practice was to leave the engineers side windows open, except in extreme cold when they would be closed to minimize drafts.

Radios have eliminated the necessity of an engineer looking for hand signals. - Gary Ostlund

Credits: #156 com-n-atcha by Wayne Monger, & straight-down from below by Mike Schafer, who along with Art Danz contributed to the story

# Photos!



Here is a mystery photo sent in my Ricky Bivins. No clues included. Send your location entries to me at [billtraintomas@gmail.com](mailto:billtraintomas@gmail.com), or call me at 270-339-9482. Leave a message if I can't answer. Bill

**Below:** This is one of 62 New York Central E8 diesel locomotives as seen by my wife and I at the National NYC Museum in Elkhart, In. recently. General Motors built 450 of these from 1949 to 1954. Each unit was powered by two V-12 Diesel engines and were rated at 2250 HP. Many of these passenger engines were re-gear'd for freight use as the needs of the railroads changed. Rich Hane





**Treasurer's Report To Date—Bill Farrell, Treasurer  
Available at the February Meeting**

**Minutes Summary of January 19 2017 Meeting—Wally Watts, Secretary**

- MINUTES:
- Minutes approved of November meeting.
- Treasurer's report approved from November meeting.
- Old Business: Possibility discussed about paying national dues directly. Discussion of the newsletter being on line early. Also discussed was what needs to be on our web page. Ricky brought up question of what to do about our photos and other archive items. He would like a report in the next month or 2 about what can be done with and about our archive items.
- New Business: The 2017 NRHS Convention will be in Nashville (TN). Discussion about what we could do to participate in the convention. Bill (Farrell), Jim Kemp, and Will Kling will be on committee to check into this. Bill (Farrell) gave info on space available in the old court house for a possible meeting place. Dues Notices have been mailed. No other business discussed.
- Attendance: Wally Watts, Ricky Bivins, Keith Kittinger, Bill Farrell, Steve Miller, Donny Knight, Will Kling, Rich Hane, Bill Thomas, Jim Kemp, Jim Pearson.
- Meeting adjourned.



## NRHS Mission Statement

National Railway Historical Society, Inc.  
Mission Statement - The National Railway Historical Society promotes railway heritage preservation and educates its members and the public about rail transportation, its history and impact, with a focus on North America.

### Objectives

1. To foster the experience of rail transportation
2. To develop and expand educational services and programs
3. To build and maintain archives, to encourage and to support archival activities, and to disseminate information in archives
  - A. To increase collaboration between existing archives
  - B. To develop listing of National and Chapter archives
4. To support preservation of memorabilia and artifacts
5. To facilitate association and networking
6. To maintain and grow the organization



Bill Corum shot the UK and UL P&L units at McCoy Ave, Madisonville, KY. Friday, February 10, 2017 on CSX tracks heading to a P&L siding just south of the mall. The consist was all coal hopper cars. The UoFL and UK engine numbers are the years they were National Basketball Champions.



**TIMETABLE #110**  
FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF RAILFANS ONLY

- February 20 - Monthly Meeting
- March 20 - Monthly Meeting

**Photo Contest Schedule for 2017**

Week of May 1 – 7, 2017  
Submission Deadline: May 11, 2017  
Week of July 31 – Aug 6, 2017  
Submission Deadline: Aug 10, 2017  
Week of Oct 30 – Nov 5, 2017  
Submission Deadline: Nov 9, 2017

**If you know of regional events we can put on the Timetable, please forward those to me,  
bill@fbcmadisonville.com.**



Submitted by Donnie Knight

**PENNYRAIL” is your publication. If you have photographs or other material of current or historical interest that you would like to share with Chapter members, your editor would appreciate hearing from you. Your material will receive the best of care while being readied for publication. Your help is appreciated.  
Bill Thomas, editor  
bill@fbcmadisonville.com**

AS RAILFANS WE ARE OFTEN AT TRACKSIDE AND IN POSITION TO OBSERVE EMERGENCY CONDITIONS THAT COULD AFFECT RAILROAD SAFETY OR SECURITY. KEEP THESE NUMBERS HANDY TO REPORT INCIDENTS.  
BNSF 800-832-5452  
CN/IC 800-465-9239  
CSX 800-232-0144  
NS 800-453-2530  
UP 888-877-7267  
Amtrak 800-331-0008

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www.nrhs.com  
**Railway Preservation News**  
www.rypn.org/  
**Kentucky Railway Museum**  
www.kyrail.org/  
**Indiana Railway Museum and French Lick Scenic Railway**  
www.indianarailwaymuseum.org  
**Illinois RR Historical Society**  
http://icrrhistorical.org/  
**Illinois Railway Museum**  
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**Tennessee Central Railway Museum**  
www.tcry.org/

**VISIT THE CHAPTER WEB SITE: <http://www.westkentuckynrhs.org>**

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