

FIRST CLASS MAIL

“THE DANVILLE FLYER”

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NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER



Chapter Director and URS Project Manager Rick Schroeder along with Project Inspector Charlie Combs pose beside the last train on the former Wabash Railroad corridor in Lafayette, IN 4-6-01

# DANVILLE FLYER

*A PUBLICATION OF THE DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, INC. NRHS*

The *DANVILLE FLYER* is published monthly by the DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER of the NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY for its members and other interested persons.

The DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, NRHS, is a not-for-profit corporation organized to preserve the history of railroading in Eastern Illinois and Western Indiana and operates a museum located in the former Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad depot on East Benton Street in Rossville, Illinois. The museum is open weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day and features many railroad displays plus a large operating HO model railroad.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of railroading. Dues per year are \$15.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$17.00 for NRHS membership. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June, July, August and December) at the Pizza Inn Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX, in Danville, IL, with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

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## Coming Events

### *May 20, 2001*

Danville, IL Monthly chapter meeting at Pizza Inn, Gilbert and Williams Street next to CSX. Lunch at 1:00 PM and meeting after lunch.

### *May 26, 27 & 28, 2001*

Summer opening of the museum at Rossville. We need help each weekend so spend a Saturday or Sunday with us.

### *May 12, 2001*

Danville, IL - Chicago and Eastern Illinois Historical Society meeting at Danville Area College, East Main St. 9:00 AM to Noon - swap tables and visit with friends. Tour of Johnstown America, former C&EI shop area, will start at 1:00 PM. Dinner with the group will be from 5-6:30 PM at the Pizza

Inn. Official meeting at 7:00 PM at the Bremmer Conference Center, program "60 years of C&EI Memories" by Doug Christensen will be after the annual meeting.

### *June 19-24, 2001*

St. Louis, MO. - NRHS National Convention - Convention includes three steam trips, travel on Metro Link, the Museum of Transportation, night photo session and a dinner river cruise.

### *July 28-29, 2001*

Lafayette, IN - Wabash Railroad Historical Society meeting, Radisson Hotel, Rt. 26.

Tour of new corridor, tour of East Yard, program on railroad history of Lafayette.

### *August 11, 2001*

S. Elgin, IL - Fox River Trolley Museum, 4th Annual Chapter Picnic sponsored by Blackhawk Chapter, all chapters and officers invited to attend.

## Next Meeting

The next chapter meeting will be May 20 at the Pizza Inn on Williams Street adjacent to CSX. **This is the last meeting of the this first part of the year. Remember, we don't meet in June, July or August.** However, I will try to publish a newsletter this summer so if you have some stories be sure to send them in and we will print. The program this month will be by Doug Butzow.

Beginning on Memorial Day weekend we will open the museum at Rossville. Bill



Sandusky has been working in the building cleaning up the two rooms and getting some of the "stuff" put away or set out for disposal. Bill Pearson has been mowing the yard and keeping the outside in good shape. We need to do some grading around the new gas installation and cleanup the landscaping areas. We thank both of them for their hard work.

On Saturday May 19 and Saturday May 26 we need workers to finish cleanup of the building. Bill S. has worked on the inside but we need to finish up any remaining tasks. If you can make it up either weekend please take a couple of hours to assist cleanup inside and out.

## Last Wabash (NS) Train

Lafayette residents turned out on Friday (April 6) to watch Norfolk Southern Corp.'s D93 train make a ceremonial final trip on the rail corridor that has cut through the city's center for 150 years. They turned out on the city's streets in their back yards and on their porches. They watched, waved and took photographs as D93, led by Norfolk Southern's Operation Lifesaver engine 4638, pulled three passenger ears from the city's south side, through 19 grade crossings and to a community celebration at Market Square shopping center.

"You can move these tracks," Moses Fowler, a.k.a. David Lahr, told Mayor Dave Heath when D93 stopped so city officials could formally close the Ninth Street crossing. A century-and-a-half ago, Fowler fought to run the rails in front of his Ninth Street mansion. He won when New Albany & Salem railroad officials came to town in 1850, looking for a route to connect Chicago with Ohio River towns.

A century-and-a-half later, after music and speeches, Norfolk Southern engineer Gary Scott waited for the Lafayette Citizens Band to finish "Wabash Cannonball." Scott then hit the train whistle's singular note seven times and plowed through a red, white and black balloon wall before crossing Greenbush Street - the 20th and final grade crossing along the old Norfolk

Southern rail corridor. The trip brought Lafayette Railroad Relocation to its culminating moment

The \$182.5 million project — a testament to how local, state and federal governments can work with the private sector — eliminated a total of 41 grade crossings by moving a CSX line from Fifth Street's center in 1994 and, seven years later, two Norfolk Southern lines in the downtown's other rail corridor. More than 50 trains a day now travel through the conflict-free Wabash River rail corridor.

Former Mayor James Riehle oversaw the project for 24 years and has watched since 1996 as a private citizen while crews worked to wrap it up. "Thirty years is a long time, but it went by pretty quick," an emotional Riehle said after receiving a standing ovation from the Market Square audience of several hundred people.

But the joy spread beyond Lafayette residents, said Bill Romig, Norfolk Southern's vice president for finance. He worked on the deal that saw the railroad advance approximately \$9 million to the city to Speed up Railroad Relocation. "Norfolk Southern is as happy to get this moved as you are," he said. Mayor Dave Heath offered the reason for the joy. "We won't have to worry about anyone dying at a railroad crossing in Lafayette, Indiana, again," he said.

On Friday, Barb Kenworthy helped close the Ferry Street crossing, the last of three stops the ceremonial train made on its way to Greenbush Street. "It really is a milestone when you think about it," Kenworthy said. "For how many years have trains been going through Lafayette? It's wonderful. We don't have to worry about children crawling under stopped trains anymore."

One lady, standing north of the Ferry Street stop, put her sentiment on a sign she held up as the last train went by: "Love you. Miss you. Bye-bye," her sign read. Jan Payne knows how she feels. "It's wonderful, the trains are gone," Payne said. "But I've been here for 20 years, and I'm going to miss the sound of the trains' the train whistles in the background. "But I won't miss the long lines of traffic," she added.

Train D93 created traffic lines as it trekked north through Lafayette's core. But those who waited for the train got a souvenir — a button memorializing their inconvenience. "I got stopped by the last train in Lafayette," the button reads. Members of the Historic Ninth Street Hill Neighborhood Association turned out in turn-of-the-century attire, greeting the train with hand-held American flags and throwing flower petals. One member presented Heath with a sign that once read, "Notice increased train traffic." Neighborhood association members tailored it to read, "No train traffic" and wrapped it in a red ribbon.

Karen Mills watched the last train pass through the Ninth Street crossing as a bagpiper played "Auld Lang Syne." She said moving the rails that have split her neighborhood since the 19th century brings modern problems. "It means more and faster traffic on our streets," said Mills, who expects something nice to stem from Friday's final trip. "Maybe we'll have a garden here, or something nice," she said, referring to Railroad Relocation's final task — restoring the rail corridor that citizens closed on Friday.

No one looks forward to corridor restoration more than residents in the Ellsworth-Romig neighborhood, said Persis Newman, ERNA's secretary. Friday's ceremonial trip began in that neighborhood's territory. "No other area of the city has been more impacted by the old Monon Line and the

Norfolk, with both lines coming a block apart at the south end of our neighborhood," Newman said. It had a disruptive influence, according to Bob Carpenter, ERNA's president. Railroad Relocation calms problems generated by the iron horses. "it frees us at last and unites our community for the first time since 1856," Carpenter said. "The old corridor literally went through our yards."

On Friday, residents came out into those yards to greet the last train. In some cases, the houses have front steps that run down to the railroad tracks. That allowed one South Fifth Street resident to stand at her front door and watch the train pass, roughly 10 yards away. Corridor restoration prom-

ises to give her a front yard. Little wonder, then, Ellsworth-Romig residents threw a "Toot-A-Loo Party" for the final train. They draped red, white and blue bunting over the passenger cars. Angie Klink put some pennies on the rusted-over line as a souvenir for her 2-year-old son, Ross. People have long valued train-flattened pennies. But Ross will someday brag that a special train smashed his. "It's neat," Kenworthy said. "I love that train." Did she love it because she knew no others will follow it? "That has something to do with it," she said.

*By Joe Thomas, Lafayette Journal and Courier  
Via Indianapolis RailFans.  
Editor:*

The day finally came when no more trains operated through Lafayette on the former Wabash Railroad. Though the last freight train had ran a few weeks earlier, this train marked the last move of a long history of railroading in the community.

As part of the project for so many years I was invited to ride the last train. As noted on the front cover of this issue, my inspector Charlie Combs and I got a few shots of the train prior to boarding. At 3:00 PM we gathered at the depot with some 150 invited guests of the city and Norfolk Southern. The last car was NS glass end observation and only a few special guest rode that car. At each stop there were large groups of people that the mayor spoke to as noted in the article. Perhaps the most fitting was the stop at Ninth Street where we blocked traffic for some 15 minutes, including a concrete truck on it's way to some project. (All of us engineering field people expected that load to be rejected.)

Once we reached the shopping center and the location for all speeches we realized how many people had really turned out for the event. I would estimate 3000 or more were present. I was invited on the stage with the two project engineers from NS and CSX. After many speeches from government and local officials, the train blew the horn for the last time and headed east through a wall of balloons.

*On April 7 there were no more excuses for being late in Lafayette.*

## CSX Coal Route

As you hopefully know, a coalmine is being constructed south of Georgetown and west of Vermilion Grove in Vermilion County, IL. Numerous articles appeared in the local papers during the permitting process and a few months back construction actually started.

The mine will begin production late this fall or early next year. Coal will move via rail out of the mine compared to truck movements from the Riola Mine located south of Catlin. A connection has been made to the former Conrail Danville Secondary just north of Vermilion Grove and coal will be transported to the power plant at Cayuga, Indiana.

Last month our office was asked to design two bridge structures for the railroad. About 2 miles east of Chrisman there is a 160-foot span across a creek that needs replacement for the 286,000-pound axle loading. A second structure is a timber trestle located on the west side of Indiana Route 63 on the former B&O line. We submitted the design costs and were then told to wait as the train might come north through Danville and then south of the former C&EI line.

On April 26 we received word to proceed with design and plan to have the timber trestle replaced this year with the steel structure scheduled for 2002. Two years ago CSX constructed a wye connection from the former Conrail line to the B&O in the southwest quadrant of the crossing in Chrisman. No additional connection will be made as trains will make a backup move to reach the other line.

*Rick Schroeder*

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## Memphis Couple Killed

### *Unusual Death While Trying to Beat the Train at Crossing*

On April 10, two Memphis residents were killed at a grade crossing near the Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium in a freak accident as a train approached. In information obtained from the police report, a couple driving a Chevrolet pulled into opposing traffic in an attempt to beat an oncoming Canadian National Illinois Central train after the crossing signal was activated. While attempting to maneuver around both sets of crossing gates, the Chevy collided head-on with an SUV on the opposite side of the tracks. The driver of the SUV, also intent on beating the approaching train, had just driven around the gate on her side of the crossing when the impact occurred. The two occupants of the Chevy were killed on impact. Moments later, the CNIC freight passed through the crossing without hitting either vehicle. This may be the first documented incident of a multiple fatality at a

rail crossing where the train did not actually strike the vehicle. Internet, via Midwest Rail Scene Report

*Editor:* About 3 years ago Norfolk Southern and the state of North Carolina setup cameras at a grade crossing in that state to study the highway/railroad incidents that had occurred there over several years. The crossing was four-lane with gates and a rail traffic of about 40 plus trains per day, including Amtrak.

For 6 months they video taped vehicle and pedestrian traffic going around the downed gates. The cameras were tied into the warning system and activated when the sequence started. During one of the Operation Lifesaver meetings I got to see the video.

The incident mentioned above was witnessed in the video, not with the same result, but similar. At the North Carolina crossing the gates were down and car came around on the north side, a pickup on the south side. Both hit on the crossing and as the rear of each vehicle cleared the nose of the Amtrak train was visible. It appeared that neither driver was injured but I am sure the dry cleaners know how scared they were.

In another case, at night, the gates were down and the cars stopped. You could see a runner approach, go around the gates and cross the tracks. As he stepped onto the center of the one track the Amtrak train passed on the other at 79 mph. To show how stupid he was he was running at night and in the same direction as traffic. Wonder he was not hit before he got to the crossing.

The second half of the study the state erected the rubber tube barriers both ways from the track. This contained most vehicles but there was video of a car backing up, going around the barrier and slamming to a stop as the engine crossed the crossing. One car did make it, but again, the rear cleared as the NS trains went past.

At least in the incident noted above the CNIC will not be blamed for the deaths. Of course, some attorney will find the way I suppose.

## **Pretend like it never happened!**

*By Art Altstadt*

It was the early 1950's and I was working an evening passenger run that was scheduled to arrive Chicago at 8:30 P.M., and my engine was a hand-fired large Pacific type. It was also the era when arriving at your final destination, right on time; (not even one-minute off), was not only very important to the management, it was a sense of pride to the crew that did ALL they could to accomplish it.

We were doing a fine job until we began developing serious engine trouble and began losing more time by the mile. My engineer decided to stop at an interlocking plant about 40 miles out, and talk to the dispatcher of "what-should-we-do-with-this-crippled-engine?" Since we had stopped just a mile from where the south-bound local freight was in the hole, waiting for us to clear so that he could go into the small yard and tie-up, we were instructed to exchange our cripple for the local freight's engine and continue the trip without too much delay. A very big error. This was a very small engine, had been working for 14 hours and the fire was

a total disaster, plus she was very cold, as the crew was counting on quitting very shortly, only waiting the 15 or 20 minutes for us to clear. The fireman told both myself and the engineer that she was in no shape to handle even a local, let alone a hot schedule, but my engineer showed no care of what he'd warned.

As quick as the exchange could be made, and the train pumped up, (all the while I'm trying vainly to get the steam gauge to rise) we had the signal, and he took off like everything was just the greatest. It wasn't 12 miles before he had knocked me out of steam so badly that when he made a small brake application to slow for a slow order, the pump had stopped working, and he couldn't release the brake and we came to a stop, as it would happen, at a small station that few trains stopped at, but did have a line side phone to the dispatcher. I was so enraged at his irresponsible behavior that I first screamed at him like a crazy man, then went to get off the engine to personally talk to the dispatcher.

Just then, a good friend of mine, a huge bull-moose of man, deadheading to Chicago, appeared at the gangway, and I quickly told him what happened. He was almost the same seniority as my engineer, and they knew each other somewhat. But he verbally lit into him in such a way that I almost began to fear he'd belt him 2 or 3 good ones!! I was asked not to call the DS (as an investigation would've surely ensued) and we went to work shaking down the fire, hauling out a few giant clinkers, and built up steam enough to get the brakes pumped off (an engine that carried 200 # steam before popping off, as most engines were, the cross compound pumps would stop working if the pressure dropped to 165 or less) In a couple more minutes she was steaming well enough until we began the rest of the trip.

My bull-moose buddy sat on my seat box (while I worked hard to keep her hot) all the way to the Chicago Terminal, but they never exchanged word one. As bull-moose got down the gangway, he hurried back to my man..."You've-always-been-an-ass-haven't you". To which he replied not a word. The total delay we arrived with was quite a lot, and I fully expected a full blown investigation, or at minimum, a trip to the

master mechanic's office (The Iron Hat), and for a week or more I was still so angry, I truly wished for one.

I never heard a word, from anyone, and for a long long time I really itched to know what was the outcome, but was urged to BE QUIET. I seem to recall that we did, in subsequent years, work with each other but pretending like it never happened was the better way to resolve it for keeps.

## **Galesburg Railroad Days Events**

Galesburg, IL will hold their annual Railroad Days celebration over the weekend of June 23/24, 2001 and a number of events will be taking place during that time. The BNSF will be offering rare mileage fantrips on the Peoria Line from Galesburg to the wye at Yates City and back. The trip will run on Saturday and Sunday, departing at noon each day. The tickets for the rides will go on sale at the UTU Tent, near the depot at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning. There will be both coach and parlor car seating. Coach seats are \$25 and parlor car seating will be \$35. Both accommodations include a box lunch.

Visiting equipment will reportedly include the ex-BN executive covered wagons from the Illinois Railway Museum. It is possible that the Yates City trips will operate with these units—the BN 1 & 2 ran on the opposite end of the consist with the Frisco 1522 that made the trip down the same line last year. BNSF will have a rotary snowplow on display. The Metra consist will operate around Galesburg, giving free yard tours on both days.

The Train Show out at Carl Sandberg College will once again feature a large number of model railroad layouts along with more than 200 tables worth of railroadians for sale.

The poster this year features another great scene by Ron Hatch. The view is out at the Cameron overhead crossing, with an east-bound Santa Fe train led by E6 #15 above a CB&Q FT set and the Monmouth to Galesburg interurban line. It's a really neat scene. There will be one poster of-

ferred as a door prize at the April meeting.

In cooperation with the Illinois Secretary of State, the Galesburg Railroad Days Council has available a limited number of special event license plates celebrating the 2001 Galesburg Railroad Days. Illinois motorists may display these special event plates on their automobile or Class B truck for 60 days to the date of the festival. The special event plates may be purchased from the Galesburg Area Chamber of Commerce, at their office, 292 Simmons Street in downtown Galesburg, or by mail from:

Galesburg Area Chamber of Commerce

Attn: Kelli Bennewitz

P.O. Box 749

Galesburg, Illinois 61402-0749

The cost of the special plates is \$25.00 per set, plus a \$4.00 charge per set for shipping and handling if ordered by mail. Make checks payable to "Railroad Days" and you must include a copy of your Illinois vehicle registration form which shows your current payment and tag number information. Proceeds from this program help defer the promotional costs for the annual event, at which most attractions remain free of charge. For further information contact: Kelli Bennewitz at (309) 343-1194.

*Via North Western Limited*

## **General Electric lays off 450 at Erie, Pa., locomotive plant**

In its largest layoff in nearly a decade, General Electric announced this week it would furlough about 450 workers at its locomotive plant in Erie, Pa. It was the plant's third layoff in six months, bringing the total number of employees furloughed to 850, the Erie Times-News reported. With the 11.5 percent reduction in the Erie workforce, the plant now employs about 4,600 workers.

"GE Transportation Systems is feeling the pinch of the slow economy, and following record years of locomotive production, 2001 is a year of lower production levels,"

## **Summerail at C.U.T.**

**The annual Summerail will be held on Saturday, August 4 at the Cincinnati Union Station from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Cincinnati Railroad Club and the Miami Valley Rail fans sponsor the event. 13 high-quality slide programs are featured this year including Brian Carlson with the presentation My Life. Twelve of the programs are multimedia dual-projector programs set to music.**

**A railroad show and sale will be going on at the same time and the Cincinnati Railroad Club will have Tower A open until 10:00 PM. Tickets are \$12 with parking at \$3. Contact Aubrey Flock, 4103 Elliot Avenue, Dayton, OH 45410 for tickets.**

GE spokesman Jeffrey DeMarrais said. "This action represents our effort to size the business accordingly for the current and forecasted market conditions." GE expects to deliver about 550 locomotives this year, down from 750 last year and a record 911 in 1999.

*Via TRAINS On-Line 4/26/01*

## **Toledo, Peoria & Western Notes**

The TP&W is still operating the west end of their line between East Peoria and LaHarpe, IL. Although the service is now only running about twice a week to interchange with the Keokuk Junction at LaHarpe. No trains have run from LaHarpe up to the old Santa Fe main at Lomax since the last run on February 3. The TP&W does have the coal traffic back going to Edwards Power Plant, owned by Central Illinois Power (CILCO) on the west side of Peoria at Mapleton. The TP&W and CSX teamed up to move this coal circa 1992, until the Union Pacific won the contract. Well the TP&W has the traffic back at the present. The trains are interchanged at Wateska and the TP&W brings the loaded trains west to Peoria. The TP&W uses the UP line through the connection at Sommer Siding to back the train into the six receiving tracks at the plant, located south of Bartonville.

The TP&W is also running a Monday through Friday turn out of Fairbury, IL to East Peoria and return. This train does the

local work along the way and ties back up at Fairbury. They go on duty at 6 a.m. The line is also operating a EPGI train, running daily from East Peoria to Gilman and back. This job is called for midnight at E. Peoria. This train has been dying on their 12 hours before returning to E. Peoria on a regular basis

*Via North Western Limited, thanks to  
Steve Smedley*

## **Iowa regional I&M Rail Link hardest hit by Mississippi flooding**

Although the Big Guys – Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Canadian Pacific, Union Pacific, and Norfolk Southern – have all had their operations affected by this month's Mississippi River flooding, perhaps no carrier has been harder hit than one of the Little Guys, 1385-mile Iowa-based regional I&M Rail Link.

At various points since the flooding began, the regional's tracks have been under water in Savanna, Ill., and Muscatine, Bellevue, and Marquette, Iowa. Just before midnight on April 17, rising water claimed its line through its headquarters city of Davenport, Iowa.

"We've been hit pretty hard," IMRL Vice President of Operations Ken Koff said from his cell phone this morning while out monitoring river levels. Water was 7 feet deep over the rails in Davenport when the

river crested yesterday and today.

Normally, IMRL runs 12 to 16 trains through Davenport. Now there are none, Koff said. Traffic has been detoured over every railroad in the corridor in every imaginable routing, he said, with trains running via Union Pacific, Iowa Interstate, Canadian National's Illinois Central, and Burlington Northern Santa Fe. More than 40 trains have been detoured since April 17, said Koff. "We've had to be fairly creative on our reroutes."

I&MRailLink still has access to its Nahant Yard in West Davenport, but only from the west. That's resulted in some roundabout detours across Northern and Central Iowa for traffic coming from Chicago. Trains leaving the Windy City have been routed to Charles City, Iowa, where they get on IC, or to Mason City, Iowa, where they get on UP, then head south to connect with either the Iowa Interstate, or directly to IMRL's own line, and then ultimately on to West Davenport.

"It's a large, round the block move," Koff said. "It's been pretty devastating."

The flooding is taking a financial toll on the already financially struggling railroad. About 150 employees, mainly operating personnel, have been laid off temporarily on account of the flood, Koff says. The railroad has lost millions in revenue, Koff said, and estimating the cost of track repairs won't be possible until the water recedes.

"We don't think we'll have the whole railroad back on line until May 5," Koff said. Meanwhile, the detours continue.

"I've been very pleased with the help we've received from all the railroads that have been cooperating on our detours," Koff said, adding that customers have been patient and understanding. "If there's a bright spot, that's it."

Downstream, at Hannibal, Mo., the Mississippi is ex-



"It's a large, round the block move," Koff said. "It's been pretty devastating."

pected to crest tomorrow, further disrupting operations for NS and BNSF. The river surged over the rails on NS's lift bridge over the Big Muddy yesterday afternoon, virtually shutting down the former Wabash route that links Kansas City and Decatur, Ill. NS was detouring traffic around the area via its line through St. Louis and said shipments would be delayed between 8 and 24 hours.

Some traffic, however, was being shoved across the bridge by locomotives stationed on either side of the river, said NS spokeswoman Susan Terpay. The top of the rails on the bridge is at 22.8 feet, and the water level this morning stood at 22.98 feet, she said. NS completely shuts the bridge down when water reaches 23.8 feet, she said. Tomorrow's crest is predicted to hit 23.5 feet.

On Tuesday morning the river covered BNSF's Hannibal Sub in the Hannibal area, forcing it to detour traffic on other BNSF routes, spokesman Steve Forsberg said. No major service problems were anticipated as a result of the flooding there, he said.

But on the Upper Mississippi, flooding was still forcing BNSF detours over Wisconsin Central and Canadian Pacific between Chicago and the Twin Cities. A 115-mile stretch of BNSF main line along the river is still reduced to single-track operation on account of high water and prior flood damage.

*Via TRAINS On-Line 4/26/01*

## **Amtrak and FEC near deal on East Coast service**

Amtrak and Florida East Coast are near an agreement that would allow two passenger trains to run between St. Augustine and West Palm Beach, the newspaper Florida Today reported this week. "The significant points have been settled. We are now in the word-smithing stage, doing the clean-up stuff," FEC spokeswoman

Jane Covington told the newspaper. "We're working on a press release right now."

Before service can begin, however, funding must be found for the \$61 million in necessary improvements, including signal improvements, 20 miles of passing sidings, and 11 new stations. The state will contribute \$15.5 million, and FEC \$3 million, but a source for the balance of the funding must be found.

*Via TRAINS On-Line 4/26/01*

## **Deadly Snow!**

Lynchburg, Va., police held up Norfolk Southern operations in the city Wednesday evening, March 7 when an officer drove under a stopped train on Campbell Ave. and was "dripped on" by a mystery liquid. The officer noticed a large, wet patch on the roadway. Because it was a train everyone freaked out and thought it was a hazardous material spill.

The police blocked the road, called NS to stop all trains, and brought in the fire department Haz-Mat team. The fire department would not take the railroads word that all was OK with the car. Even after NS clerks showed up with the computer list of the train and its loads, they were not convinced. So the Haz-Mat team had to approach the drip with airpicks on and test the liquid with some type of litmus paper to determine its chemical content.

This went on for over 90 minutes stopping hot piggyback train No. 204 for 30 minutes. Finally after checking the "spill" the fire department was convinced all was OK and let the NS and city return to normal.

The culprit was an empty box car-complete with side door open-with 8 inches of clearly visible snow on the roof melting in the warm temperatures!

*(From March 2001 Lynchburg Chapter newsletter, Blue Ridge Dispatcher, via Roanoke Chapter).*

## The Kankakee Model Railroad Club & Museum

The Kankakee Model Railroad Club and Museum has been in existence for over 50 years at various locations in the Kankakee area, some better than others. Now, however, they have the site that they have always wanted, the ex-Illinois Central Depot at 197 S. East Avenue in Kankakee. Located on the ground floor at the north end, the club has three operating model railroad layouts in place, one "N" gauge, one "HO" gauge, and one "O" gauge. The club has their train room open and available to the public for viewing every Saturday and Sunday from 11 AM until 3 PM. Various railroad memorabilia and artifacts are also display.

Planned for 200 us the purchase of a stainless steel railroad coach to be put on permanent display to the north of the depot. The coach, a product of Pullman Standard circa 1947, is being acquired from the Illinois Transit Assembly Corporation in Madison, Illinois. "We hope to have the site prepared this summer and the car put in place later this year", said KMRP Vice President and Museum Curator, Harold Woods. "We will be laying about 200 feet of track, because we want to have space to add a second passenger car at a later date."

The Kankakee depot was purchased from Illinois Central by the city of Kankakee some years ago, and the city fully supports the future plans of the club. According to Woods, there is a possibility that the city will give the club more space in the future.

*Reported by Bill Molony, Blackhawk Chapter*



## Exploring the Abandoned Chicago, Attica & Southern Railroad

I have been fortunate to have traveled most of the scenic western railroad routes by passenger train (before and after Amtrak), bus and automobile. Unfortunately I did not do that in the Midwest when I lived in Indiana. One route always at the top of my list was Monon's scenic route through Southern Indiana which I never rode.

Nearer to the home where I grew up was an a very scenic place known locally as Kickapoo Crick. (Yes I know the proper word is creek, but I didn't learn that until I went to college). From the Wabash River to Winthrop the Chicago, Attica & Southern's predecessors used the Kickapoo Valley to gain elevation from a low level crossing of the river. Although passenger service ended when the Chicago & Eastern Railroad cast off the "Coal Road Branch" in 1921, the scenery remained a it did when the C A & S was abandoned in 1946.

The builders of the Wabash Railroad predecessor had chosen a high bridge and fill to cross the Wabash River Valley reaching the north bank near the mouth of Pine Creek in 1856. When the Covington Branch was built in 1881 it came off the mainline at Attica east of the river and went down an embankment to reach street level along Union Street. Two years later in 1881 the Coal Road was built to Northern Indiana. To reach the Kickapoo Valley the railroad turned left and crossed the Covington Branch north of Main Street. Interchange was established along a tangent track

connecting the two railroads. The Coal Road crossed the river on an iron Howe Truss Bridge using a low fill to cross under the Wabash fill out in the bottomlands. From this under crossing it was about two miles to the Warren County road that crossed the C A & S and the iron bridge at Kickapoo Creek.

My first encounter with a railroad was the Chicago, Attica & Southern line a mile south of Winthrop at my grandparent's farm. When the railroad was built they changed the course of Kickapoo creek supposedly to reduce the number of bridges. The old creek bed was on the east side of the farm and was usually dry until the spring rains. The new creek bed was on the west side of the farm near the remains of a log cabin where my grandmother was born. The railroad ran between the new creek bed and the front lawn of the farmhouse. When a train blew the whistle for the road crossing, I would run down the yard to wave at the engineer even though we could see the crossing from the porch of the farmhouse. A north-bound train usually went by in the morning on those Sunday visits, preceded by a speeder to check track condition.

After the C A & S was abandoned, I used the old right of way as a footpath to explore; walking along the creek and returning on the right of way. Springtime was my favorite season. The weather was warm; there was less "growth" to walk through; and the cockle burrs and Spanish needles were no longer there to stick to your clothing. While my parents were looking for mushrooms, I looked for adventure and found relics from the railroad.

To describe the relics and scenic places I will start at Winthrop in the 50's after I got my driver's license. There had been a depot, water tank, coaling tower, and grain elevator. The foundations and pit at the coaling tower remained; evidence if that long 7 mile grade from Attica where engines were replenished with coal and water. A half-mile south (two miles by road) was the remains of an iron bridge just inside my grandparent's property. The approach was gone on the south side. It had rested on pilings instead of an abutment. The I beams running the full length of the bridge were wide enough to walk across once I

had climbed down to the creek and back up to where the ties had rested. On the half mile walk to the road crossing near the farmhouse were wild raspberries, blackberries, and strawberries along the right of way.

As one continued south of the crossing with the creek on the right there was a large pile of white sand that was probably dumped during a derailment. There was more than enough for my younger brother's sandbox. A half-mile below the crossing was a wooden trestle. All that remained were huge pilings 3-4 feet in diameter that had supported the trestle at each end. On the right the creek made a sharp curve undercutting a blue and gray shale bank over 70 feet high. I can imagine passengers on a C & E I train marveling at this precipice as the train passed over the trestle.

Going back to the Winthrop road and turning south the C A & S crossed at the little town of Kickapoo at MP 4.0. The siding was called Independence or gravel pit in different timetables. The railroad passed behind the stone house on a fill and a girder bridge was built over a viaduct to allow the farmer to get to his barn. Off to the right were some waterfalls. I believe there were two since my family and friends always mentioned the upper and lower falls. The falls were on ravines that were tributaries to Kickapoo Creek.

My 1941 Official Guide lists Mudlavia (siding) at MP 2.5; although Kramer is about two miles to the west. Independence was not on the C A & S either, but I have seen timetables also listing it on the Wabash in place of Riverside. I am not sure if it was patriotism or a throwback to the riverboat days when Independence rivaled Attica as a port.

After reaching the Independence river road the C A & S roadbed was just past the Kickapoo iron bridge. Going north a half mile another waterfall is off to the west within sight of passing trains. In the 50's the roadbed was converted to a gravel road and one could drive back near the falls. A pathway led back to the falls which is very scenic.

Continuing west the road crossed a covered bridge over Pine Creek then crossed

over the Wabash Railroad. The road at the intersection with US 41 continued on to Williamsport. Turning left toward Attica one could see the C A & S bridge piers as the Paul Dresser Bridge was crossed onto Mill Street. (The new bridge is connected to Jackson Street; a block down river).

The C A & S built the depot (company headquarters) that still stands along the tracks in Attica; another remnant of the scenic railroad through the Kickapoo Valley.

*Wade Frasch, San Jose, CA*

### **The Hoosier connection to the West Coast**

*Editor: Wade will be back in the area this June and we are looking forward to his visit to the Rossville Museum on Saturday, June 9. Wade plans to visit in the morning before heading to Lafayette to see the relocation.*

## **BNSF and NS Team Up to Provide Coast-to-Coast,**

Non-Stop Intermodal Service Fort Worth, Texas, - The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) and Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS) today (4/19/01) announced they have partnered to provide coast-to-coast, non-stop intermodal service for container loads of freight between California and the East Coast. Effective immediately, eastbound and westbound service is available between West Coast Cities Los Angeles, San Diego and San Bernardino, Calif. and East Coast Cities Harrisburg, Morrisville, Bethlehem and Ameriport, Pa.; ERAIL, Dockside and Croxton, N.J.; Baltimore, Md.; and Norfolk, Va.

BNSF will provide service between Southern California and Chicago, while NS will provide service between Chicago and the East Coast. "This new service reduces transcontinental transit times by at least a day for our customers," said Steve Branscum, group vice president, BNSF Consumer Products Business Unit. "This agreement not only improves transit times, but allows us to provide shippers with coast-to-coast service that is a

competitive, cost-efficient alternative to over-the-road shipping." "By offering a run-through service that eliminates Chicago cross-town truck transfers, this integrated rail service increases reliability between major markets in the Northeast and Southern California," said Mike McClellan, vice president, NS Intermodal Marketing. "It will provide a higher level of service quality to our existing customers and give highway shippers an excellent alternative

*Via NS Internet*

## **NS & CSX Eastern News**

NORFOLK SOUTHERN reported a big improvement in its first quarter earnings with net income of \$61 million on revenues of \$1.54 billion, compared with net income of \$14 million on revenues of \$1.51 billion in the first quarter of 2000. In addition, the railroad reported a one-time gain of \$13 million in 2001 from the sale of its subsidiary North American Van Lines. NS common stock closed at \$16 per share in late April, up from \$13 at the beginning of the year NS has hired a Princeton, NJ-based consulting firm to help overhaul its carload operations by placing the emphasis "not on trains and schedules but on terminals and car handling." NS thinks that it can save money and improve service with this change in strategy (*Traffic World*) NS has decided to defer the installation of a centralized traffic control System on the former CONRAIL Harrisburg and Reading Lines between Harrisburg and Reading. The CTC project between Reading and Philadelphia also has been postponed pending final agreement with SEPTA on the MetroRail project ~Pottstown & Reading Chapter).

Meanwhile, CSX did not do as well in the first quarter, reporting a 20-percent decline in first quarter earnings. Net income dropped to \$20 million from \$25 million in the year-earlier period. Revenues fell 0.4 percent to \$2.03 billion CSX's stock price stood at \$33.38 in late April, which is near its high in 2000 CSX brought its handsome office car special to Philadelphia

March 25-26, after which it headed north to Albany. The 13-car train returned a few days later bound for Augusta, GA and the Masters golf tournament CONRAIL #2943, the 0P38 which received the special paint scheme commemorating Conrail's 25th anniversary (see April *Cinders*), was damaged in a collision at Morrisville yard, and the 30-year-old unit may be retired. Timothy T. O'Toole resigned as president of the CONRAIL Shared Assets organization, jointly owned by CSX and NS. Replacing him is Gregory R Weber, formerly vice president & treasurer of CSX Corp., whose apparent mission is to downsize the Conrail staff.

*Via Philadelphia Chapter [Cinders](#)*

## **Construction Projects**

Well, spring has arrived and the orange barrels are out on the interstate around the country. That is always a sign of spring. The other sign is the amount of work we get with the public projects and this year has been exceptional.

CSX has finally started using the General Engineering Contracts and we have been

getting many projects in our area. Over the past few weeks 15 have been added in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. NS has added 3 more and the work will continue to come in. Many of them are under construction and the backlog in Jacksonville has forced us to scramble to review protection and demolition plans as the contractors are in a hurry to get started.

New ones added are North Baltimore, Waverly City, Woodville and Akron, Ohio. Lansing and Plymouth, Michigan have interstate work. In Illinois Collinsville and Effingham are under way and Tuscola will start soon on I-57 bridges. The underpass in Bremen, Indiana has been awarded and a preconstruction conference will be held this month. Two more projects in the Valparaiso area, US 30 and CR 300, are preliminary projects that will go next year. Three more are coming in Ohio and NS will be adding two more in the same state.

NS has two projects starting in Shiloh, Illinois and the five in northern Illinois and Indiana are well under way. For the first time the CSX projects have outnumbered the NS work. In the Michigan area Conrail is keeping us busy with work around the Ford plant, some underground pipe jobs and I-75 bridge. Our project for CSX in Casky, KY went to bid recently and con-

tractors will start as soon as right of way is acquired. The West Virginia project is proceeding with design approval to be received in about 30 days. CSX wants to get the 30 miles under construction and signals in this year.

Our other offices in New York have been getting work from CSX. This has been the case in Buffalo and even the Boston office is involved in some work. The US Route 6 project in Harvey, Illinois may start soon as IDOT has agreed to the alignment design and the 7 structures to be built in stages. In Montana, the study for the rail route into Lewistown has been given the green light and I will be spending some time traveling to that city and inspecting the line with our track inspector. Should be interesting, at least the snow will be gone.

So when you see the orange barrels think of me (well, don't curse me) as our work has again picked up for the year and another season is upon us.

Rick

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**Below, a westbound CSX train crossing the Potomac River at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. Photo taken during our site visit to our new project. RMS**

