

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 \$12.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$17.00 for NRHS membership. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Thursday of each month (except July, August and December) at the Cooke Business Forms, N. Vermilion Street, next to the Central Illinois Bank, Danville, Il. beginning at 7:30 PM Central Time.

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EDITOR: Richard M. Schroeder - Rickschro@aol.com	PUBLISHER: Allen Cooke
P.O. Box 1013	Cooke Business Forms, Inc.
Danville, IL. 61834-1013	John Cooke Sr., Honorary Member
MEMBER: Illinois State Historical Society - Illinois Association of Museums	

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Volume 29

September 1997

Number 8

Coming Events

September 18, 1997

Monthly meeting at Cooke's Business Products on N. Vermilion Street beginning at 7:30 PM

September 21, 1997

Bloomington, IL - Central Illinois Train Show at the National Guard Armory, 9-3.

September 20/21, 1997

Annual Railroad Days at the Monticello Railway Museum, Monticello, IL. Trains with a variety of equipment, displays, motor car rides (maybe).

September 27, 1997

Chapter Picnic at the museum in Rossville. Time - 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM. See meeting notes for details.

November 7-9, 1997

Fall NRHS Board Meeting - Dearborn, Michigan

July 8-12, 1997

Syracuse, NY - NRHS National Convention - Plan now.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be September 18, 1997 at the offices of Cooke Business Products. We will meet there until December, the annual dinner month. We may be changing after the first of the year.

This summer we had the museum open each weekend and we thank those that volunteered to serve. Only once or twice were we late in opening. The early part of the season was cool and wet, then the hot weather struck and through both times we had very small attendance from the visiting public. By August traffic picked up and we ended the year with a good Labor Day weekend.

There is still work to do on the building. We have more tuckpointing to do on the outside and need to put the downspout back up again. We have two interior wall



sections that have gotten very bad and we need to spend a couple of days making repairs. This work should be completed before cold weather.

25 YEARS - It seems like only yesterday a young boy came up the stairs at the museum in Catlin to look at the trains in the big room. He used to spend Thursday evenings with me and in a very short time joined the chapter as one of our youngest members. I also remember a member from Covington, a modeler in S Gauge, that came to one of our railroad shows and then joined our group. That was 25 years ago and I guess we have all gotten older.

Randy Rippy was that young member from Catlin and Henry Schmitt was the member from Covington. Henry is still in Covington but Randy has moved from Catlin to school, then to the Chicago area, next to Monticello and finally Woodbury, Minnesota. Both will receive their 25 year pins from the NRHS and we congratulate them on their long and dedicated service to the NRHS and this chapter.

CHAPTER PICNIC - Once again we will have a picnic at the museum in Rossville. Come anytime after 11:00 AM, will have hotdogs ready around 1:00 PM. Chapter will furnish the meat, buns and toppings along with soft drinks. Members are invited to bring a covered dish and table service. Guests and spouses are invited to attend. Last year we had a good turnout, great food prepared by President Prosser and CSX provided the entertainment. Come join us on Sept 27.

Pilot lands at BNSF Facility by Mistake

In hindsight, he could have asked for better directions. Instead, the pilot of a single-engine plane landed his aircraft on July 29 at what he thought was Fort Worth's Alliance Airport. The nice runway he thought he recognized turned out to be Burlington Northern Santa Fe's Intermodal Hub Center near Alliance, Texas. The airport is just 2 miles from

the BNSF facility.

"The plane landed on the concrete apron of a ramp track, as the pilot apparently thought it was the Alliance Airport runway," said Tom Kelly, BNSF regional director of intermodal terminal operations. Alert hub employees who noticed the approaching plane was about to land, immediately advised all other employees via radio. The plane was carrying three people, one a young boy, and landed at about 10:35 a.m. on a clear day. "The pilot immediately turned the plane around and apparently was trying to take-off without anyone recording the plane's identification number," says Kelly. "We got into our car and tried to pursue the plane to determine why it had landed on our property."

Other hub employees cleared and secured the area while Kelly attempted to signal the pilot to stop the plane. "We stayed clear of the aircraft, but at the same time tried to get the pilot to stop," says Kelly. Eventually, the pilot yelled that he had been given clearance to take off for Alliance Airport. By the time the plane arrived at Alliance, BNSF security, airport security, and FAA officials were waiting to question the pilot. The 12-minute incident is being investigated by the FAA.

Via Trains OnLine News Wire 8/13/1997

KBSR News

Member Jess Bennett just called to say that the KB&S has a new unit on the property. Ex-Mississippi Central #1100, a chop-nose Alco (what else?) RS-11. The railroad has asked him to stencil and temporarily letter the unit for KBSR. It will not be completely repainted until later.

Jess says that the late Fey Orr's son-in-law is stepping into Fey's shoes pretty well so far. In fact, his wife (the daughter) is now taking an interest in the office.

Member Mark Ziebart reports that according to an elevator operator the TP&W is looking at getting rights, haulage or trackage is unknown, over the KBSR

from Webster (ex-Milw crossing) to Danville to deliver trains to CSX. Watseka is a difficult place to interchange due to city streets and business on the UP/CSX joint track. We will have to wait and see.

The KBSR owns a section of the former Conrail (NYC) line to Free. Apparently Norfolk Southern is meeting with the railroad to arrange for purchase of that portion for the planned Schneider - State Line bypass around Chicago. NS is also meeting with Bee Line Railroad concerning their 11 mile segment.

Interesting rail times are coming along the state line.

Check out the next issue of *TRAINS*. There is supposed to be an article on the KBSR.

Part via Doug Nipper

EMD Open House

General Motors' Electro-Motive Division plant in McCook, IL will hold a public open house on September 21. The events start at 9 a.m and close at 5 p.m at the facility on West 55th Street. Admission is free. There will be displays of products, memorabilia and the new SD90MAC #8204, painted in the special 75th anniversary livery and featured on the cover of *TRAINS* magazine, will be on display.

Historic EMD units from several museum have been invited to attend. It has not been confirmed how many will attend. Special guests include Illinois Governor Jim Edgar and past EMD managers. The plant will be open for tours. This event should be as crowded as was the 50th that many of us attended.



ELECTRO-MOTIVE

Operation Lifesaver

This August, as you have read in this newsletter, the Illinois chapters of the National Railway Historical Society volunteered to assist the railroad industry during the Illinois State Fair by manning the Operation Lifesaver booth in the Secretary of State tent.

This year we were a little late getting the final word to the six chapters in Illinois thus not getting response from some of them. Next year we will let everyone know sooner and hopefully get some other volunteers.

As organizer of the event for the NRHS I especially want to thank Bill Shannon of the C&IM Chapter for his help. We had both Saturday's covered with plenty of help. Attending, in addition to yours truly, were:

Bob Ernst, Chicago Chapter

Bob and Ellen Pinsky, Chicago Chapter

Donald Neltner, Chicago Chapter

Ken and Janet Hodgin, C&IM Chapter

Gene Pool, C&IM Chapter

Bill Shannon, C&IM Chapter

Robert McQuown, Danville Junction Chapter

Larry Prosser, Danville Junction Chapter

Jesse Bennett, Danville Junction Chapter

The first Saturday was rainy and cool in the morning but turned out to be a nice day later (after I arrived). The next weekend was very hot, above 95 degrees. The saving grace was the water barrels in the tent furnished by the Secretary of State. Each day OL gave a way a train set with one of the OL boxcars in the set. We gave away tickets with the drawing at 5:00 pm. On the first Saturday, by 4:30, we had a crowd starting to gather. At the time of give-a-way we must have had 75 crowding around. The winner was a 4 year old boy from Quincy, a thrill for him, his mother and grandparents. The second Saturday went almost as well with a young boy from Bloomington winning the set.

I think everyone that helped had a good time in spite of the weather. Bob Pinsky even got new drivers license and his plates renewed - said it beat the offices in Chicago. We are planning to do the same next year so look for the forms to come out in early spring.

Rick Schroeder

I recently recieved the following letter from Illinois Operation Lifesaver.

August 28, 1997

Dear Richard:

On behalf of Illinois Operation Lifesaver please convey my thanks and appreciation to your members for a job "well done" in assisting with the booth at the State Fair. The display gave us numerous opportunities to convey our highway/rail grade crossing safety message to many people.

It is only because of efforts such as yours that Illinois highway/rail grade crossings are safer. Again, thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

Don Richardson, State Coordinator

Steve Lee: No SP Steam on UP

During his address at the NRHS convention banquet, Steve Lee, UP's Manager of Locomotive Operating Practices and the man who runs the railroad's steam program, is reported to have made the following remarks which appear to be prime examples of the classic "good news/bad news" syndrome. The steam program appears to be in solid with the new post-Drew Lewis management team under new CEO Davidson, as witnessed by the extended 844 excursion operations.

The best proof of this is the new 844 passenger runs into Texas, a high profile event honoring former president George Bush, plus Steve's announcement that their 4-6-6-4 #3985 will be refurbished for continued use in the steam program. The Challenger is currently receiving new boiler flues and superheater tubes.

The bad news is that they plan to run no Southern Pacific steam on the rails of the new, enlarged Union Pacific which is still digesting SP trackage. That means UP does not plan to utilize #4449, #2472 or Cotton Belt #819 in any steam program activities, or is it likely that they will be allowed to run at all on any passenger operations on the new UP

As for #844's epic three-day run over the Rio Grande from Denver to Salt Lake City over June 20 - 23, it came off OK. The Saturday and Monday portions of the one-way trip more or less met schedules but the Sunday trip through the Royal Gorge and up Tennessee Pass poked along at speeds not exceeding 30 mph on aging and jointed track. As a result, the train did not reach Grand Junction until midnight.

The line of train chasers along US 24 (a two-lane road) just below the Pass was ten miles long, and was seldom less than five miles long at any point. At the NRHS Convention in the Salt Lake City area, the most enjoyable attraction proved to be the steam excursions on the little Heber Valley Railway.

Via Dayton Ties & Tracks and several sources

Southwest Chief Derailment - Luck, and No Luck

When Amtrak's eastbound *Southwest Chief* derailed at speed 13 miles east of Kingman, Ariz., in the early morning hours of August 9, there was good luck and bad luck. Consider the bad luck first:

Heavy downpours in the wee hours of that Saturday morning caused floodwaters to wash away the supports for a small wooden trestle over a natural wash on Burlington Northern Santa Fe's main line, which sees 45 to 50 trains a day, including 2 from Amtrak, a Chief in each direction. Although there was a flash-flood warning issued for the region, BNSF track inspectors had traversed the area a couple hours earlier and found nothing amiss. What are the odds the next train through would be a passenger train? Amtrak was the victim of similar long odds with its triweekly *Sunset Limited* in the nocturnal hours on CSX's line east of Mobile, Ala., in 1993 when an errant barge tow had smashed into the Bayou Canot bridge and knocked the track out of alignment. Forty-four people died when the eastbound *Sunset* went into the water.

Now consider the good luck in the Chiefs derailment: Typical of a passenger-train wreck, this incident reinforced the general survivability of such mishaps. The Chief carried 291 passengers and 18 crew members, and it was going 88 mph, just under the speed limit, when it hit the undermined trestle. Yet, although 154 people received medical treatment (treated for minor injuries and released), only 16 were admitted to hospitals, and none had life-threatening injuries. (First reports from the scene indicated 8 fatalities, but confusion in such situations can be commonplace.) Many of those on board were asleep when the derailment occurred. Passengers praised the quick response of local emergency personnel.

Consider also the train's makeup: four new GE P42 diesel locomotives (No. 47, 50, 80, and 52), a baggage car, nine double-deck Sup Superliner passenger

cars, and six boxcars of mail at the rear. The first three diesels separated from the fourth and stayed on the rails; the last unit and all 16 cars derailed, yet the train stayed on the track alignment and all cars remained upright. The train stopped with the last Superliner, sleeper 32088, straddling the 37-foot-wide gap over the sunken trestle. There was little jackknifing of cars as the train ground to a halt. Had the lighter mail boxcars been at the front of the train, as some Amtrak train consists are made up, severe jackknifing might have occurred, resulting in more serious injuries to riders.

Washington Post writer (and *TRAINS* columnist) Don Phillips said investigators revealed that, during the derailment, a broken rail had punctured the fuel tank on the fourth locomotive and continued through a baggage car. Chairman Jim Hall of the National Transportation Safety Board said damage to the crash-proof tanks on the new GB unit produced only minor leaks.

As a result of the Arizona incident, BNSF has issued a slow-order when flash-flood alerts are issued by its private weather service. Freights will be held to 40 mph and passenger trains to 20. The offending wash collects runoff from the Peacock Mountains to crest at the top of its 8-foot-high banks, said the Mohave County Sheriffs Office, and spotters gave unofficial reports of 3 to 4 inches of rain in Kingman, said Charlie Schlott, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service's Las Vegas office. The service at 2:30 a.m. had issued a bulletin warning of flash flooding in the area, and the Chief derailed at 5:55.

One track of the double-track BNSF main line was reopened late the next day. Amtrak provided alternate transportation for passengers off the derailed train, and halted the next approaching westbound Chief at Albuquerque to turn back as a makeup eastbound; westbound passengers were provided alternate transportation from Albuquerque. Saturday night's train out of Los Angeles was canceled.

Via Trains OnLine News Wire, 8/13/1997.

Triple Crown Services Expands to Dallas/Fort Worth

FORT WAYNE, IND. — Triple Crown Services Company, a joint venture of subsidiaries of Norfolk Southern

RoadRailer

and Conrail Inc., has expanded its service territory to include Dallas/Fort Worth through a cooperative effort with The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF).

This marks Triple Crown Services' first service arrangement with a western rail carrier and creates opportunities for the company to move freight throughout several high-density markets in Texas and the Midwest. Dedicated trains hauling Triple Crown Services RoadRailer trailers connect with BNSF trains at Kansas City, Kan.

Trains operated by Norfolk Southern and Conrail for Triple Crown Services use only RoadRailer trailers, which are equipped with air-ride running gear for operation over both rails and highways. To accommodate the expansion, Triple Crown Services has invested \$13 million for 400 additional intermodal RoadRailer trailers and related equipment.

Triple Crown Services first provided door-to-door truckload service in 1986, transporting auto parts between Detroit and St. Louis. Today, in addition to Dallas/Fort Worth, the Triple Crown Services network of terminals includes Atlanta; Chicago; Crestline, Ohio; Detroit; Fort Wayne, Ind.; Harrisburg, Pa.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Kansas City, Mo.; Newark, N.J.; Rochester, N.Y.; St. Louis and Toronto. World Wide Web Sites - www.nscorp.com, www.conrail.com, www.bnsf.com, www.triplecrownsvc.com

Via Norfolk Southern Corporation

Construction Projects

This summer continues to be busy for me and the fall doesn't look much better. We have added several new projects, some as a result of the new company.

Norfolk Southern

In Lafayette, the Route 52 project continues at a fast pace. The contractor has completed a bulk of the new interchange area and road into CSX property. Some of this roadway will be in service by the time you read this.

The abutments and piers for the bridge are under construction with the girders for the two west spans scheduled to be set the week of September 9. The two east spans are scheduled for the week of September 22. These girders are 106 feet long, weigh about 55 tons, and arrived from Wisconsin on rail cars in the CSX yard. They will be offloaded onto trucks and moved the 1/4 mile to the site.

Route 25 is now down to two lanes as grading has started and pile driving is complete on the south abutments. Concrete work will begin in September with roadway construction on the south half of the job completed by late fall, weather permitting.

The city is proceeding with the plans for the final corridor segment between Ninth Street and Route 52. A spring letting is planned, providing funding is in place. They still hope to have the track letting in late 1998 or early 1999. NS has met and the final alignment and crossovers established. HNTB is proceeding with the final alignment plans.

Other NS projects still going on are Mitchell and St. Thomas, Illinois on I-270, Stanford Avenue in Springfield, I-94 in Belfast, Indiana, and Route 34 in Logansport, Indiana

CSX

We got two new contracts with CSX in southern Indiana. The railroad is extending Alice siding, just south of Vincennes, and Harwood siding, just

north of Evansville. Both involve bridge work and we have been contracted to design bridge work for the project. The grading contractor is already on site so quick turnaround in design is needed.

Our other work for the railroad consists of the entrance road to the Lafayette yard and sewer work on the south side of the city.

Conrail

Northern Ohio is the hotbed for our work. At this time there are 9 bridge projects going on, some of which will extend into 1998. In addition our underground pipe work is keeping three field people busy most of the time. Two projects are also underway in West Virginia.

BNSF

Probably the biggest project to come up is the 120 mile extension of the BNSF in Montana. This line will be constructed to connect a segment of the BNSF from Wyoming to the mainline at Montana. URS Greiner, the new firm we are a part of, is the engineering firm in design/build project and it appears our office will have involvement in the survey and bridge design. The project will take 3 years to complete with construction starting in 1998 on the first 50 mile segment.

Rick

Signal, Signal and more Signals - Trouble

From Bill Foster

On Sunday Aug. 24 a major thunderstorm blew through the Terre Haute-Clinton area. The storm blew down block lines and knocked out the CTC system. CSX had gone to manual block authority to move traffic. The repairs won't be made until after Labor Day. Needless to say this is causing major delays in movements with crews outlawing over the place. One example is V501(Cayuga coal). It died early

Monday in Baker siding. J705's crew came down and brought the train home, when they went on duty at 10:00. At 22:00 V501's crew came back on duty and performed J705's work at all the industries.

"We don't normally do this job, so we have no idea how long we will be." was the word from V501's engineer when getting permission to enter the now DTC Dewey block on Monday evening. The crews have been 12hrs out of sync since. Blocks are as follows: Hillsdale(North Clinton-South Clinton); Dewey(South Clinton-Dewey Diamond); Baker(Dewey-Haley). Trains must also stop and flag the Dewey diamond according to Rule 234 B paragraph 3. I've heard that enough on the radio, it's engraved in my mind. :)

Rule 234 states something to the effect they must run the timer on the interlocker and wait 10 minutes before proceeding. Needless to say this is causing all sorts of havoc for the motoring public. Poor drivers. Oh, there is a 24hr switch tender at S. Clinton.

On Conrail...Crews are installing a new Electrocode signal system between T. Haute and Hadley. While work progresses during the day 7:00-17:00, they are also using DTC rules. This is causing more headaches in T. Haute, because crews are stopping at CP68(Preston) to get Form D's before proceeding east.

For those who follow the CP(a.k.a. Soo Line, a.k.a. Milwaukee) a signal gang has been working feverishly all summer installing a new block signal system on the Latta Sub. I haven't had much opportunity to talk with them, but it looks to be Electrocode as well. This may be the writing on the wall with regards to the future of Springhill Tower. Yes, the dispatchers are still there. Most of the old timers retired in late '96, expecting their jobs to go north. The jobs didn't go, but the workers have. The current dispatchers are constantly in touch with the dispatching center in Minneapolis AND their auto license plates still say Wisconsin, which tells me they don't plan on being here permanently.

And that's the way it is in the Terre Haute area, (more or less) *Bill Foster*

An Update from Doug Nipper

Dan Norman, former Danville maintainer and now on the signal gang, stopped to see me today and set the record clear on what Bill interpreted as “trouble” in the Terre Haute area. A suspension of the signal system had been planned for August 25th to cut the Electrocode and radio code system over between Haley and North Clinton. According to Dan, none of this was storm related.

The cut over went as planned, and Dan was coming home today, a day late, because they were able to finish the project 24 hours ahead of schedule. I’m sure the long weekend motivated everyone to get done. They got done at 1400 CSX time today.

The new end-of-siding installations also use a Harmon logic controller that takes the place of all vital relay circuits that used to comprise the “interlocking” aspect of these locations. Dan says the maintainer has a small control panel in each bungalow where he can manually control the switch and signals. The Electrocode units handle the actual signal displays and coded track circuits.

Dan thinks their next project may be going back to Pimento and signaling that siding. In October, they will head to Woodland Jct. and work their way south, to replace code line with radio, and Electrocode from Wellington to Danville.

Status: 75th St. Tower, Chicago

The former Baltimore & Ohio Chicago Terminal tower at 75th Street, Chicago is the most significant mechanical interlocking tower still in service. Nearly all of 75th Street’s functions are controlled the old-fashioned way, using the leverman’s muscles to move pipeline to operate the switches, derails, locking devices, and signals. The interlocking machine at 75th Street is a 132-lever

Saxby & Farmer frame installed in 1908. The tower controls the crossing of B&OCT’s main line into inner city and the two paralleling lines of the Belt Railroad of Chicago and Norfolk Southern (ex-Wabash). The Panhandle line of the PRR once paralleled the B&OCT but was removed by Conrail during the early 1980’s. The only modern features are a couple power switches and a couple searchlight signals on the Norfolk Southern line and color position lights on the B&OCT.

The BRC signals are mechanically-operated semaphores and every train move involves a bit of a workout; first unlock and open the derails on the opposing route, then close and lock the split-point derails on the route to be lined, throw the switches in the proper position, lock them up, and clear the signal. A wonderful retrospective of turn-of-the-century signaling!

In truth, there are other larger mechanical plants in operation. State Line Tower in Hammond, Indiana has a 224-lever frame but only five mechanically-operated switches remain in service and are seldom used. Most of State Line’s levers remain as silent reminders of the abandoned rail lines of yesteryear: the Monon, Erie/C&O, and C&WI.

Dolton Tower has a 172-lever frame and is noteworthy as the largest Saxby & Farmer plant ever installed and as the last ex-PRR mechanical plant in operation. Dolton celebrated its 100th anniversary this year. But all of Dolton’s mechanical levers control its functions by electric circuitry; there is nary a pipe line left in service.

The only other remaining truly mechanical interlockings left in operation are a handful along CSX’s ex-B&O line in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. And Union Pacific’s Ridgely Tower in Springfield, Illinois (on the ex-GM&O line inherited from SP) has one dormant crossover and yard switch still operated

by pipe line.

For many years, rumors that 75th Street Tower would be removed have floated around. As with other projects of this nature, a long time often elapses between talk and action. However, action has begun to take place at 75th Street, partly spurred on by Union Pacific’s desire to construct a new connection between the B&OCT and BRC lines in the northeast quadrant of the crossing. This connection would create a fairly straightforward route between UP’s ex-C&NW lines on the near west side of Chicago and the ex-C&WI/C&EI lines’ connection to the Belt at 81st Street on Chicago’s south side, a couple miles southeast of 75th Street.

Engineering progressed through the fall and winter of 1996-97 and work on site began in spring. To date, a new crossover has been installed on the B&OCT north of the crossings and new signal foundations have been set both north and south of the crossings, with part of an aluminum cantilever bridge

having been installed south of the crossings. New insulated joints are in place on the B&OCT. Trenching and some cabling have been put in place along the B&OCT. No changes are evident on the NS or BRC lines to date and no signal bungalows are yet in place on

site. New signals are on site but not yet erected; these will be color light type. The color position light signals on the B&OCT will be replaced by color light signals displaying “Seaboard” type aspects.

The tentative date for cutover of the B&OCT signaling is the weekend of October 11/12, 1997, with cutover of the BRC and NS signaling taking place over successive weekends and culminating on November 4. That’s the plans, at least. Several portions of the job are behind schedule and could conceivably delay the final changeover. Based on the segmented conversion schedule, it seems apparent that the tower’s pipe lines will be cut on progressive weekends and that

Chapter Picnic

**R e m e m b e r ,
September 27 - Second
Annual Picnic at
Rossville - 11 AM to 4
PM, Hotdogs at 1:00 -
- Be There**

the controls will be modified to operate the new switches and signals on a temporary basis, until all the new signaling equipment is in service. Then, presumably, the temporary wiring from the tower to the new equipment will be cut and the new microprocessor-based interlocking equipment will take charge, allowing the CSX dispatcher at Clearing Yard to control the interlocking remotely. It will be interesting to see whether the modernization of this old plant will yield an improvement in operations. To be sure, antiquated equipment such as that at 75th Street can be cantankerous to operate, especially in the winter. But the transfer of 75th Street's functions from the on-site operators to the already-over-worked CSX Chicago Terminal dispatchers may pose other problems in a locale wherein train operation can best be described as constipated. Only time will tell to what extent this will be a problem.

But whatever the future brings, the end of Chicago's 75th Street Tower will mark the true end of the era of mechanical interlockings. If you are inclined to take a look at the old ways before they slip away, best not to wait very long!

By Jon Roma - Champaign

(Editor - My company "bid" on this project for CSX last year. If you remember, in an issue last year I explained the project for the UP. This will give them a faster route from the ex-CNW yard to Dolton and south on the Villa Grove line. Look for train traffic to increase late this year on an already busy line.)

Railroad Days - MRM

Saturday and Sunday, September 20 and 21, is Railroad Days at the Monticello Railway Museum. Different equipment will be featured this year, especially member Dennis Sloan's IC pile driver. Some of our members will be helping the museum this year so we invite you to go to Monticello and ride the trains.

Wheel Report

LAST TENNESSEE PASS TRAIN - On August 23, the last train operated over the former D&RGW Tennessee Pass in Colorado. At 6:20 PM engineer Francis Thompson and conductor Carl Bierman moved OMIGV19 over the pass, the 10,000-foot pass in the Colorado Rocky Mountains. Much of the line will be sold or abandoned, with trains being diverted to the UP line thorough Denver. Already companies are lining up to bid on portions of the line, especially west out of Canon City to the Royal Gorge area. We want to thank Bruce Bird for his recent article on the Champaign group's trip to the pass.

You know you're a Railfan when you keep your scanner in the kitchen so that you can listen to the dispatcher and yardmaster while you wash dishes.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAINS - Maybe you have noticed in recent months the increased traffic on the former Wabash line. NS and BNSF have added a Triple Crown train from Ft. Wayne to Kansas City. This returns trailers to the Decatur to Moberly, Missouri Route.

NS has also added a train with the UP connection at Kansas City. #295/296 operates out of Columbus, Ohio and connects direct to the UP at Kansas City. The train started short, like #207/208 a few years back, and in very short time has grown to 18 to 40 cars (spine cars in the consist with containers and trailers). Look for this train to grow as the railroads gets more trailers off the highways.

CSX BUSINESS - Business was good over the Labor Day weekend. Each day at the museum we had 5-8 trains, a variety of power from leased units to Conrail power, and a variety of consists. Danville is becoming a great place to watch trains again. Volume and variety - check it out.

LABOR DAY WEEKEND - We had a good turnout of members to assist at the museum and a good number of visitors in the building. Most were first time visitors but we had a number of repeat busi-

ness. Some come each Labor Day with their kids and we can watch them grow each year. Two distant members visited this year, Carol and David Leider from Prospect Heights. Carol found out we even let "girls" run trains. Sunday was probably our best day with over 60 people signing the book, thus expecting over 80 total. The busy weekend made up for the poor summer attendance.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN AND CSX have agreed to help finance a management buyout of the Delaware Otsego Corporation, which oper-

ates the New York, Susquehanna and Western Railway. According to the Wall Street Journal, CSX and NS will each own 10 percent of the company, with the other 80 percent owned by Walter G. Rich, who is president and CEO of Delaware Otsego. When the deal is completed, the new company will remain headquartered in Cooperstown, NY .

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY AND CSX announced an agreement that will improve their ability to recoup market share from trucks and maintain market-competitive alternatives for rail shipments between Canada and the U.S. Northeast. The agreement with CN will build on the plan by CSS and NS to restore Class 1 rail competition in the U.S. Northeast and encourage greater north-south freight moves by rail.

BNSF power is moving through Danville on NS. The new GE's, C44-9W's, are moving west in primer to Mid America Car in Kansas City for painting. Dave has spotted several, keep your eyes open and camera ready.

Conrail may still order new motive power. Reports are from 28 SD80MAC's to 15 SD70MAC's for CSX and 24 SD70's for NS will be ordered - blue paint???

April 14, 1998 - Day before Tax Day - the announcement of the Surface Transportation Board decision on Conrail.