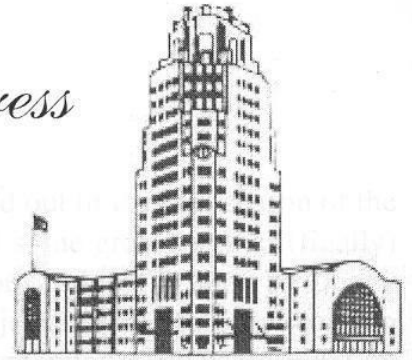


Empire State Express



SEPTEMBER 2024

PUBLICATION OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER NRHS, INC.

Editor: John C. Dahl Email nfcnrhs@gmail.com

The meeting of the Chapter is scheduled for Friday, September 13, 2024 at 7:00 PM at the Town of Wheatfield Community / Senior Center, 2790 Church Road, North Tonawanda NY. Follow Rt 62 north to Ward Rd, turn left onto Ward Road and turn right onto Church Road.

IRON HORSE EXPRESS TRIP TO CLEVELAND



The September meeting presentation will be by one of our members, Dan Sikorski. He said his father owned Lionel trains, who passed on his love for trains. Dan likes all kinds of trains, but his favorite is steam locomotives. This will be his first presentation, and he said “Miss Becky” was his inspiration to share his adventures, when she recently made a presentation on train stations. Dan has an N-scale layout in his basement and has named it the Iron Horse Express. This presentation will be on one of his many trips; this one is from Buffalo to Cleveland, and places in between. He hopes you will all enjoy it. So please attend the opening meeting of the 2024-25 season. *Photo by Dan Sikorski.*





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems to me that the older that I become, the more I look at things from the longer view. For instance, as I write this, I'm thinking about the fourth quarter, not just September. Between now and then, a lot needs to happen. We will have four monthly meetings, two Chapter elections, introduce our 2025 Calendar and go to the WNYRHS Train Show and perhaps participate in Winterwalk. The Museum will be open twelve Saturdays. Restoration work will be ongoing at the Museum.

Looking at Restoration, since this page last appeared in June, the shop crew has pulled up the rails behind the station and put new ties down and are relaying the track. That's about 200 feet of track. It's old school "stick rail", 39 foot sections bolted together in the style of the day. The ties that were under the rails just crumbled as they were removed. The restored track will make for smooth running of our 25 ton GE when it's ready. (See "Scene on the Line" in this issue of ESX for coverage of this project.)

Speaking of our latest addition, on August 10th we received a donation of an air compressor for the 25 ton GE and two buckets of track spikes from the Niagara Railway Museum in Fort Erie. A huge thanks Ken Jones and his people!! The track gang made immediate use of the spikes.

Inside the station we have rehabilitated three doors on the east side of the middle section including the transom windows over those doors. This allows us to open them as needed and to have them locked and alarmed when they are closed. The fact that we can open E2 gives us access to the boxcar. In the Clerks' room (the south end), Bob Andrycha painted the four windows and installed the shades that we bought. He is currently working on the Agents office.

We recently received a \$5,000 bequest for the Chapter Archives from the estate of long time Chapter Member Jon Rothenmeyer. This will go a long way toward preserving our Railroad Heritage for future generations. The Board approved a \$3200 expenditure to replace the existing air conditioning unit that services the Archive room. The current unit is 25 years old and the refrigerant that it uses is no longer available. This upgrade will bring all the HVAC equipment for the newly expanded room to current standards with none of the equipment more than two years old.

We had the Museum open every Saturday during June, July and August. We were open both Saturday and Sunday on June 15th and 16th, for the Path Through History Weekend. The Sunday half of that was, well, not what we had hoped for. Oh, well. We will continue to open the Museum on Saturday as we have done in years past, until the season closes us out. We have had visitors from as far away as Seattle.

Looking forward to the end of the year, we will hold our annual elections at the December meeting. We are in need of a Recording Secretary. We are in need of a Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator job is not a Board position, The coordinator just needs to generate an ongoing report and manage the schedule.

Thanks to all those who make everything happen!

See you at the Meeting, or at the Museum.

Jim Ball

SCENE ON THE LINE



All photos trackwork project by Jim Ball

Steve Frey's grandson Lee Carr is having a turn at driving spikes on reconstructed siding at the station. Carl Butland supervises and M. J. Lewandowski keeps an eye on the track gauge. August 31, 2024.



Bryce Dahl is marking rail as part of the siding reconstruction project. June 22, 2024.

SCENE ON THE LINE – continued



Carl providing some convincing to undoing the old track bolts. June 22, 2024. Below, the removed old track will soon be reconstructed. July 20, 2024. Bottom: The disintegrated pile of old ties. July 20, 2024



SCENE ON THE LINE – continued



Left to right: Lee Carr, Steve Frey, M.J. Lewandowski and Carl Butland reconstructing the line. August 17, 2024. *Jim Ball photo.*



Double heading diesels on just five Amfleet coaches? The power balancing move of train #64 was captured September 3, 2024 at the Robinson Street crossing, North Tonawanda, NY. *Larry Gustina photo.*

SCENE ON THE LINE – continued



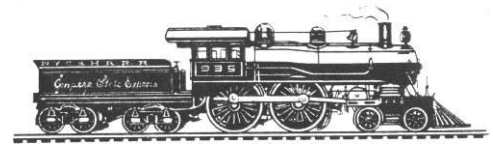
Next stop, Exchange Street Buffalo! A half hour late train #64 rolls south over the Thompson Street crossing and will ascend the elevated grade separation trackage through North Tonawanda and into Tonawanda. September 3, 2024. Amfleet has been around now for decades but changes will be starting to happen as Amtrak slowly begins the inevitable transition to newer equipment. Capture these all pure consists now. *Larry Gustina, photo.*



A sunny, beautiful Saturday, August 31, 2024 sees the westbound Maple Leaf with a Heritage scheme locomotive heading the train north on the Niagara Branch adjacent to I-190 near downtown Buffalo. *Larry Gustina photo.*

CHAPTER MEMORIES

Story collected by Geoff Gerstung



The Railroad Enthusiast – March-April 1941 issue

January Meeting [1941]

At the regular meeting of January 3, in the Lehigh Valley Terminal the speaker was Mr. H.W. Mould, Traveling Freight and Passenger Agent of The Milwaukee Road, The talk was illustrated by both still and motion pictures of scenic attractions reached by this railroad.

President's Visit

On January 11 President Smith made his first official visit to the Buffalo Division. In the evening a special meeting was held in the Lehigh Valley Terminal to give the members an opportunity to meet Mr. Smith. The meeting was well attended, and, at the close, refreshments were served.

Trip Program Meeting

The annual joint meeting of Buffalo and Central New York Divisions of the Enthusiasts and the Rochester Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society to plan the year's fan trips was held on January 19 in the B&O Building in Rochester. The three groups were well represented, and many ideas for trips were proposed and discussed. Among the several interesting trips that have been definitely arranged for 1941 are London & Port Stanley Ry., an electric interurban line in Canada, on May 18, and Coudersport & Port Allegany RR, a 33 mile steam road in northwestern Pennsylvania, on June 15.

ON THE TRACK AHEAD



Mark Klingel will present October's meeting program, "Along the New York-Pennsylvania State Line". This promises to be an evening of great photography of contemporary railroading in our own backyard. Mark your calendar now and please attend the meeting on October 11. Here is a sample of railroading in the Southern Tier area. We'll keep the specific location of this Buffalo & Pittsburgh RR train mum for now. Come to the meeting to see and learn about this and many more great photo locations. August 12, 2024.
Photo by Mark Klingel.

CHAPTER CALENDAR

- SEP 13** **Regular meeting, Town of Wheatfield Senior Center, 7 PM. “Iron Horse Express Trip to Cleveland”, program by Chapter member Dan Sikorski.**
- OCT 11** **Regular meeting, Town of Wheatfield Senior Center, 7 PM. Program by Mark Klingel. “Along the New York-Pennsylvania State Line“**

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