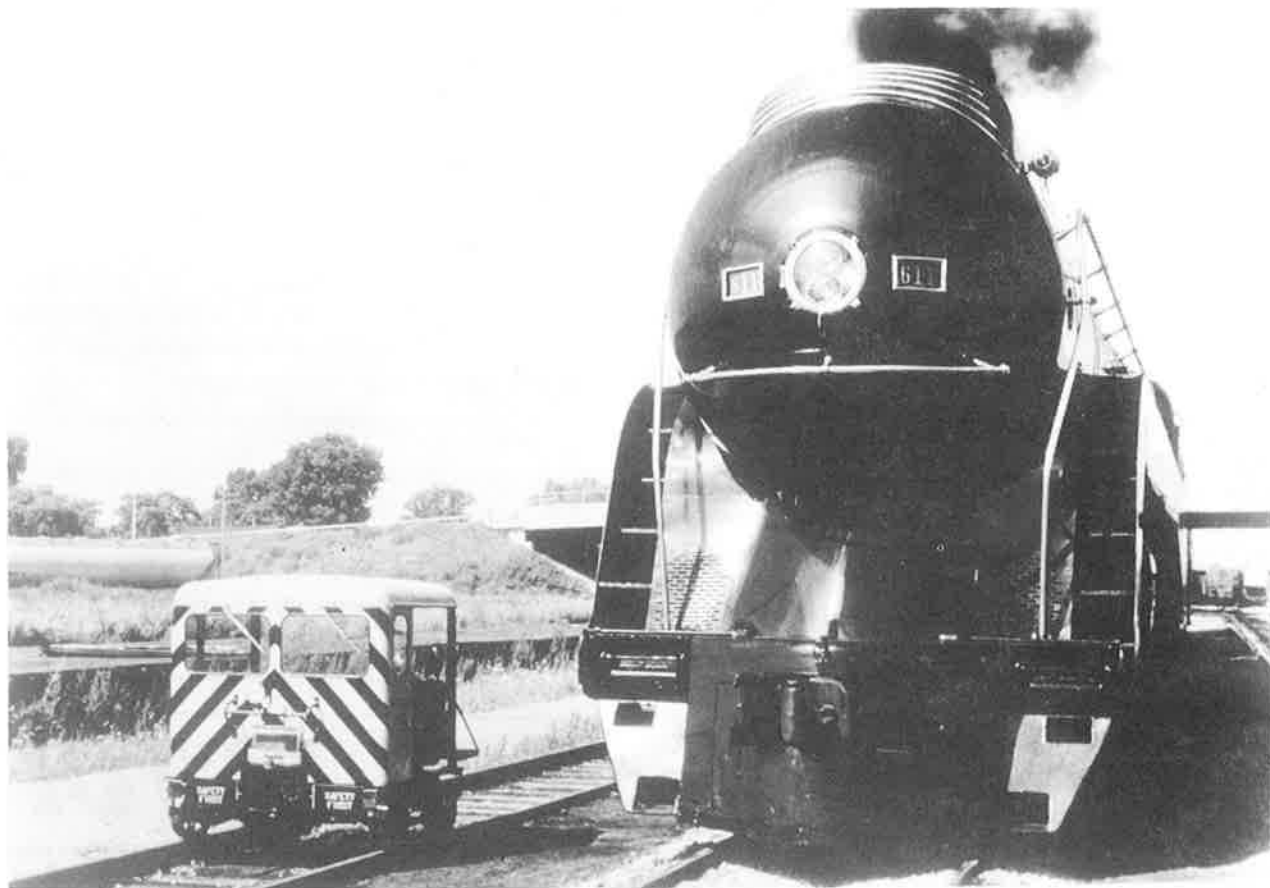
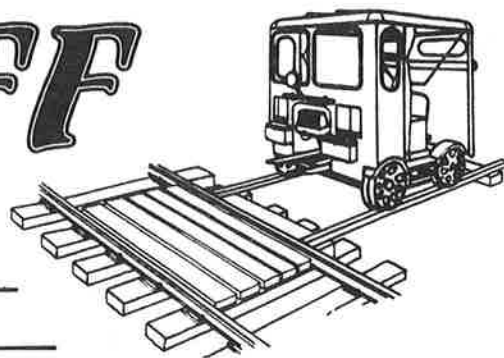


Dick Ray

# THE SETOFF

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN  
RAILCAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (NARCOA)

Summer, 1987



## EDITORIAL

The Setoff is published by the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) to bring together railcar hobbyists. This includes folks who own motor cars, hand-cars, velocipedes, HyRail vehicles, railbusses, and related railroad vehicles. Additionally, the Setoff promotes safe and responsible operation of railcars, while simultaneously promoting a positive image of the railcar hobby to those "outside" our hobby, particularly host railroads.

The Setoff is dedicated to contributing to this positive image goal, and through its pages we can hopefully learn many aspects of our hobby. This is your publication! We welcome articles, photos, comments, and suggestions. We would like to receive inputs from you so that we can print articles such as car restorations, history of your car, how you got into the hobby, tips on finding hard to get parts, histories on the various railcar manufacturers, interesting trips (legal ones), local groups and organizations with railcars, get-togethers and meets, or just send us your favorite railcar photo with a short explanation or story about yourself. Your material doesn't have to be professionally written...we can help with that, and your name will still appear with the article.

The bottom line is this...the more contributions that we get from you, the better our publication will be! Send your material to: Doug Leffler, Setoff editor, 622 Pawnee, Jackson, Michigan 49203.

## COVER PHOTOS

**Top** - Fred Furminger's Fairmont M-9, Number 303 meets "The J", N&W #611, at Buffalo, NY. For more information about Fred and the 303, see this issue's "We'd like you to meet this NARCOA member"...column. Photo by Fred Furminger **Lower** - Four Fairmont motor cars, lead by Setoff editor Doug Leffler's 1951, ex New York Central M-9 prepare to cross a back country logging road, near Bergholz, Ohio, on former New York Central Trackage now operated by Ohi-Rail Corporation. The other three cars, an ex Milwaukee Road MT-14, and two ex NKP M-19's, were piloted by NARCOA members Ernie Jeschke, Jeff Gray, and Dave Robinson. Photo by Doug Leffler

## SOUTHERN MICHIGAN RAILROAD SOCIETY HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL NARCOA CONVENTION

The Southern Michigan Railroad Society, Inc. of Clinton, Michigan once again hosted the NARCOA National convention over the Memorial Day weekend, May 22-25.

In spite of very cool weather, and overcast skies, the convention seemed to be enjoyed by all attendees. This year's convention drew folks from all over the U.S. and Canada, with over 40 different motor cars.

The NARCOA attendees were also treated to rides on the SMRS's "new" cabooses, that were purchased from Conrail, and restored to their original NYC and PC livery.

The convention featured day and night runs on the 13.5-mile, ex NYC line, a Saturday night slide, movie, and video program, and of course a buffet dinner.

### A NOTABLE QUOTE FROM "THE TRACK INSPECTOR"

"You know your hooked, when you carefully search the pictures in TRAINS and RAILFAN & RAILROAD for motor cars in the background".

# THE SETOFF

Volume 1

Number 2

Editor

Doug Leffler

Associate Editor

Dick Ray

Contributing Editor

Brett Tallman

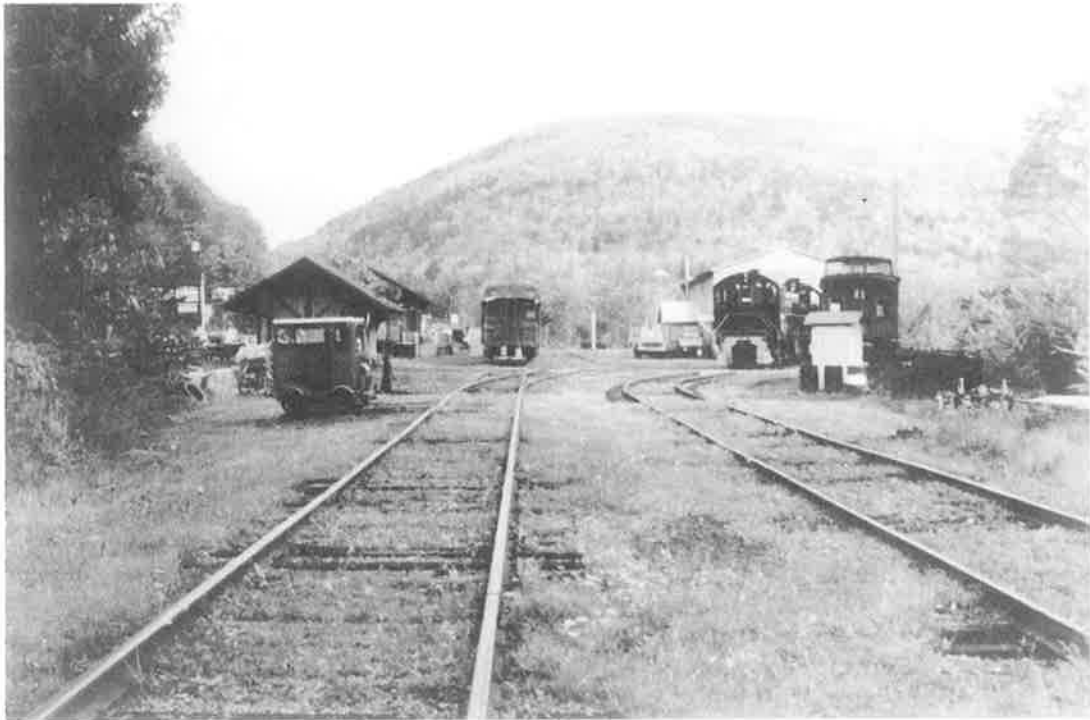
NARCOA Roster Coordinator

Joel Williams

THE SETOFF is published quarterly by the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA), to promote safe operation of railroad motor cars, and to encourage fellowship and exchange of information among motor car enthusiasts.

Additional information about NARCOA can be obtained from Joel Williams, Box 82, Greendell, New Jersey 07839. Subscriptions to THE SETOFF are \$10.00 per year, and are available from Doug Leffler, 622 Pawnee, Jackson, Michigan 49203

**DELAWARE & ULSTER RAILROAD TO HOST  
1987 REGIONAL NARCOA MOTOR CAR MEET**

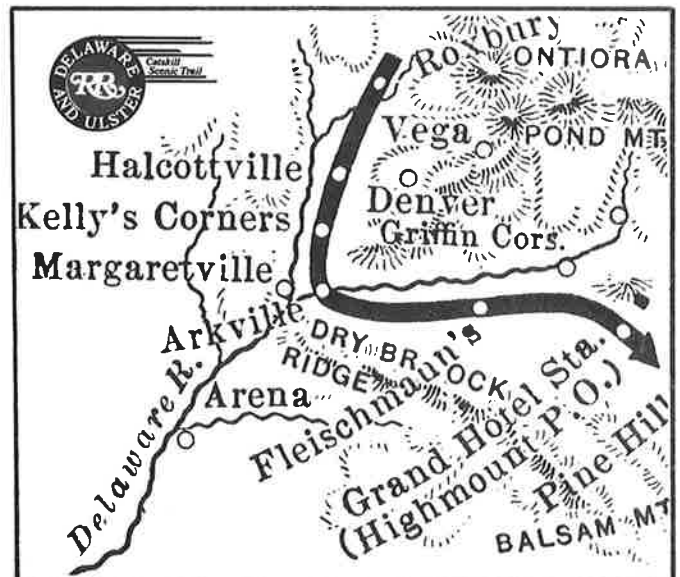


Arkville, New York, nestled in the scenic Catskill Mountains, will be the site of the 1987 Fall Regional NARCOA Motor Car Meet on the Delaware & Ulster Railroad. Photo By Joel Williams

The Delaware & Ulster (D&U) Railroad of Arkville, New York will host a regional NARCOA motor car meet September 25, 26, and 27. All activities will be based out of the railroad's headquarters at Arkville, and will include day and night runs on the 18-mile Delaware & Ulster Railroad through the scenic Catskill mountains, a slide, movie, and video program, three skills contests, parade, and night photo session. Additional activities will include a maintenance clinic by Dick Ray, a picnic, and group photo session.

The D&U was originally called the Ulster & Delaware, and was built to carry vacationers to the numerous resorts in the Catskills. After abandonment, the line was purchased by Delaware County, and is once again carrying passengers along the scenic route.

For more information on the meet, contact NARCOA roster coordinator Joel Williams, at Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839 (201) 852-6294.



**"FIRECRACKER" MOTOR CAR MEET  
HELD AT THE  
INDIANA RAILWAY MUSEUM**

**By Stan Conyer  
(Monon M-19, No. 611)**

On Saturday, July 4, 1987, the tranquillity of the French Lick, Indiana valley was interrupted by an unfamiliar sound. The residents along the rails of the Indiana Railway Museum rushed to their doors and windows to see what was making such a ruckus. These folks are used to the shrill whistle of a steam locomotive, or the blast of air horns from one of the museum's diesels, but the distinctive "putt, putt, putt" noise coming from the tracks was something new. One quick look brought the answer to their questions...the railfans had some new "toys"...track motor cars.

The French Lick, West Baden & Southern Railroad, of the Indiana Railway Museum hosted a special 4th of July motor car meet for new IRM members and their families. The members, (who are also members of NARCOA) operated 11 motor cars on two 34-mile round trips during the weekend. The participants came from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. The cars, ten Fairmonts, one Kalamazoo, and one Olson/International HyRail truck departed the limestone French Lick Union Station at 12:00 noon, for a fun-filled trip on the museum's 17 miles of former Southern Railway branch line trackage.

Upon leaving the station, Al Spenser's Fairmont M-14 failed, due to some "fried" electrical connections; thus, Al had to make repairs and wait for the evening run. As the group proceeded south, the cars passed Larry Bird's house, Marshal Lake, a log cabin, the 2200-foot Burton Tunnel, Parsons Falls, the towns of Norton and Cuzco, two iron truss bridges and several smaller trestles that crossed the meandering Patoka River. The trackage climbs a 2% grade through the Hoosier National Forest and through several limestone cuts.

Along the way, Dennis Slone's Fairmont M-9 quit running, due to a broken wiping block in the timer, and the car had to be towed back to town. All the operators and riders took it in stride though, along with the hot, muggy weather. Photo stops were made at Burton Tunnel, and at one of the bridges. Most of the people agreed that they wished they could have stayed in the cool tunnel longer. A 6:00pm evening trip to the end of the line went flawlessly.



Attendees at the Indiana Railway Museum "Firecracker" motor car meet prepare to hit the high iron on ex Southern Railway trackage at French Lick, Indiana. The cars from left to right are: Stan Conyer's Monon #611, Bill Ford's N&W 1630, Bruce Ressler's Nickel Plate M-19, Ron Piskor's Wheeling Pittsburg #49, and Jeff Mast's C&O #M-1168. Photo By Stan Conyer



John Knight's ex Milwaukee Road MT-19 exits the north portal of 2200-foot long Butler Tunnel, built in 1907. Photo By Stan Conyer

The motor cars operated on the trackage between regularly scheduled excursion trains, which run at 10:00am, 1:00pm, and 4:00pm. Train orders were issued to the train crews and the motor car operators to ensure safe operation. Crossings were also flagged to further ensure a safe trip.

All in all, the day was a tremendous success, with many of the car owners indicating that this was one of their finest motor car trips. We at the Indiana Railway Museum hope to make this an annual event. Anyone who would like additional information about the Indiana Railway Museum at French Lick, Indiana can call (812) 379-4401.

## NEW JERSEY NARCOA MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN RAIL EXPO

By William Sternitzke  
(Fairmont M-9, Columbia)

We all know that our railcar hobby costs us money...but did you ever think that perhaps your car could in some way make some money for you?

This happened earlier this summer for a group of NARCOA members in the New York and New Jersey area, who participated in Rail Expo, held every summer at the former Jersey Central Railroad terminal, at Liberty State Park, in Jersey City, New Jersey. The terminal, restored by the National Park Service, is located across the Hudson River from lower Manhattan, and just north of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty.

Rail Expo, headed by Mr. Walter Matuch, consists of an extensive display of railroad equipment, collectables, toy trains, and railroad related hardware. NARCOA member Dick Ray was the fellow responsible for obtaining the information and arranging the participation for the NARCOA members in the Expo. Dick convinced Mr. Matuch that a display of motor cars would be a unique addition to the show. Each NARCOA member received \$25.00 for their participation, and they all had fun in the process.

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## QUIETING NOISY WHEELS

By Dick Ray  
(Western Maryland M-9, No. 67)

I'm sure that most of you have noticed the ringing noise that the wheels of your motor car make as you are rolling down the rails. This noise is significantly greater than the engine noise (the sound of an approaching motor car is usually heard first by the wheel noise).

The reason the wheels make this noise is that they ring when struck, just like a gong, because of the numerous rough spots and joints in the rails. This can be eliminated by cementing a noise-dampening material inside the wheels.

I first saw this technique applied, in 1980, on John Eppler's home-built car. Joel Williams' and Paul Lafever's cars also employed a technique using flat pieces of spring steel inside the wheels, which were apparently installed at the factory, or perhaps some M of W shop. My favorite method, however, is to use rubber stair tread runner. A two-foot by eight-foot runner provides enough material for the wheels and two handy floor mats for the tool trays.

One interesting aspect of the show was that many railfans that we talked to had no idea that motor cars could be privately owned. Some of these people, who consider themselves experts in the rail hobby field had never imagined that this sort of thing existed! The most amusing thing that happened was with some men that were displaying live steam locomotives. They were very "cool" to the people in our group who wandered over to inspect their equipment...they apparently thought our machines were from Conrail. At the end of the day, when we were loading our cars onto our own trailers, the guys couldn't ask enough questions, once they realized that the equipment was privately owned!

All in all we had a great time...we got into a nice train show free, got paid for our participation, and met a lot of nice folks in the process. The fellows in our area have all agreed to participate again next year...why not see if some of the fellows in your region can get together, and promote participation in one of your local train shows too!



Four NARCOA-member-owned motor cars bask in the early summer sunshine at Liberty State Park, not far from Manhattan, and the twin towers of the World Trade Center, during the annual Rail Expo. Photo by Dick Ray

I cut the runner for the wheels in 3-inch wide strips, cut to the proper length for each wheel's inside diameter. I use Z-Brick cement to glue the rubber in place but other motor car owners have used tile cement. Whatever your choice of adhesive is, make sure that it remains slightly flexible. I coat both the wheel surface and the rubber with a heavy coating Z-Brick cement; the rubber is then installed, and let to dry for a day.

The end result is much less noise and a more pleasant ride. The technique should work on any type of small motor car. A future article will describe how to muffle the exhaust.

**VIVA BAJA!  
VIVA VIA FERREA VAGON! \***

**By Brett Tallman  
(AT&SF M-19)**

Saturday, March 28, 1987, was a date of international importance (literally) to four motor car enthusiasts, and friends, who undertook the adventure of riding the rails through the semiarid countryside of Baja, California (Northwestern Mexico) over rails originally laid in 1912 by the San Diego & Arizona Railway. Authorization for the trip was granted by officials of the Sonora-Baja California Railway, current owners of the Tijuana to Lindero portion of the line.

There is quite an interesting history behind this railroad. The entire original mileage of SD&A was sold to the Southern Pacific in 1932, and was renamed the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway. The line was operated as a subsidiary of the SP until 1970, when the SP sold the Mexican portion of the railroad (approximately 45 miles) to the Sonora-Baja California Railway. In 1976, a tropical storm washed out the railroad in several locations, and SP filed for abandonment of its portion of line. San Diego's Metropolitan Transit Development Board purchased the US portion of the line from the SP, and set up Kyle Railways as the operator of the line, and maintaining the San Diego & Arizona Eastern name.

In 1984, the line was taken over by the San Diego & Imperial Valley Railway, who, like the previous SP and Kyle Railway operations maintains operating rights over the Mexican portion (S-BC) of the railroad (see map). The S-BC refers to the line as the "Distrito De Tijuana", or Tijuana District. The line is also unofficially called the "Tijuana & Tecate" (pronounced Tah-cah'-tay). The "other" lines of the S-BC are not connected to the T&T, operating from Mexicali to Benjamin Hill, Sonora, Mexico. The Mexicali-Benjamin Hill line saw the last operation of EMD FT "covered wagons" in North America!

Our journey began in the town of Tecate, where we would run approximately 58 kilometers to the village of Garcia. Terry Durkin and myself suggested that we not proceed into Tijuana proper, due to the numerous grade crossings. We had no problem finding the depot, since it was located behind the town's tallest building, the Tecate Beer Company's brewery.



The arid country of the T&T is exemplified near Valle Redondo. Photo by Brett Tallman

After checking with the operator at the Tecate depot for our clearance over the line, we unloaded our four motor cars, set on, and headed west. Our operators for the trip were Terry Durkin (founder of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association at Campo, California), Lee Adams, Andrew Hoskins, and myself.

As the rails sung under the wheels of our three Fairmont M-19's and S-2, we were treated to the delightful rolling hill country, and towns of La Puerta, Rita, Redondo, and Matanuco. We crossed over several wooden pile trestles and passed through two tunnels, both of which were alongside of Rodriguez Dam, near Garcia.

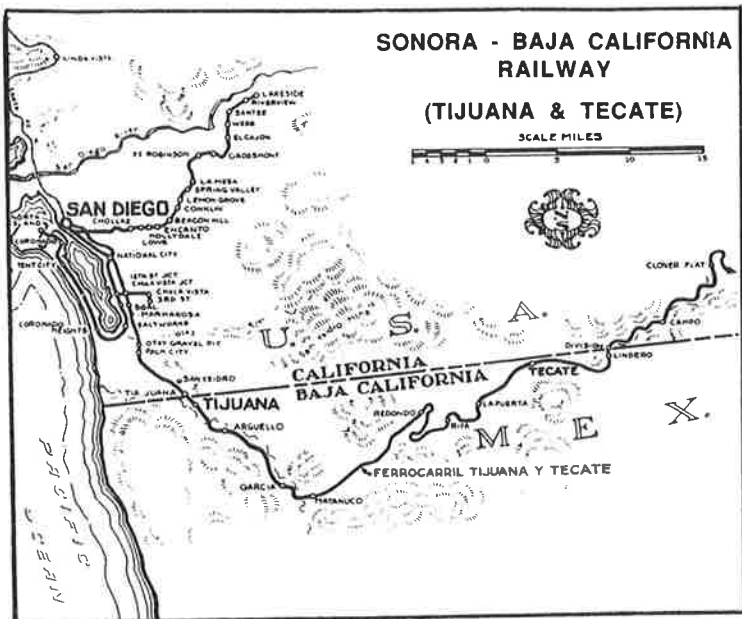
After our arrival in Garcia, the representative from the S-BC drove out from Tijuana to meet us, and to give us clearance back to Tecate. Our group was treated much the same as if we were one of the section crews that make the daily trips over the line. The representative, Mr. Quintana Silver was very helpful in providing assistance in many ways, as were all S-BC employees.

On the way back we all took note of the fine condition of the track...it was well surfaced and lined...and without the aid of sophisticated track equipment!


Making this trip an enjoyable one can be attributed to the cooperative and caring employees of the S-BC, and the safe and careful operation of the NARCOA motor car operators. If anyone is interested in making a trip over the S-BC Tijuana & Tecate line, I encourage them to please contact me well in advance of a proposed trip, and I will make the arrangements through the railroad officials. Please feel free to contact me at:

3354 Fuchsia Street  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626  
Phone (714) 546-4131

\* "Via Ferrea Vagon": Railroad Track Car



At Garcia, the group paused for return clearance by S-BC officials...enough time for a few "amigos" to inspect their motor cars, before the run back to Tecate. The cars, from right to left, are owned by Terry Durkin, Lee Adams, Brett Tallman, and Andrew Hoskins. Photo by Brett Tallman.



**OFICIALES DE LA EMPRESA**

**ING. CARLOS MALO KAHUAM**  
AUXILIAR EJECUTIVO  
MEXICALI, B. C.

**SALVADOR TIRADO C.**  
SUPTTE. GRAL. DE TRANSPORTE  
MEXICALI, B. C.

**ING. JOAQUIN ECHEGARAY L.**  
SUPTTE. VIA Y ESTRUCTURAS  
MEXICALI, B. C.

**ING. CARLOS NAVA FLORES**  
SUPTTE. GRAL. DE MAQUINARIA  
BENJAMIN HILL, SON.

**ISIDRO ALVAREZ G.**  
JEFE DE DESPACHADORES  
PUERTO PEASCO, SON.

**MIGUEL TORRES H.**  
JEFE DE TRENES  
PUERTO PEASCO, SON.

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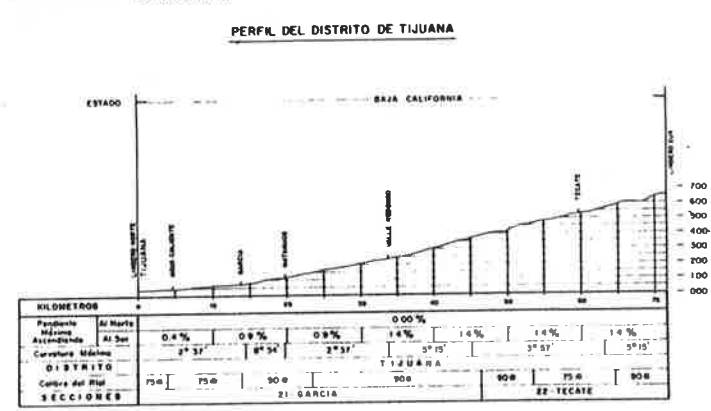
**DESTRUYANSE TODOS LOS HORARIOS ANTERIORES**

AUT. DG-FF. CC. OFICIO 126-405-RTG-204  
ABRIL 16 DE 1986

DISTRITO DE TIJUANA

NUMERO DE LAS ESTACIONES	DISTANCIA EN KILOMETROS DE LA LINEA DIVISORIA	RUMBO AL SUR	PENDIENTE MAXIMA ASCENDIENDO EN %	HORARIO No 15		RUMBO AL NORTE	CAPACIDAD DE LAS VIAS AUXILIARES EN UNIDADES DE 8 METROS	AGUA BASCULA COMBUSTIBLE GANADO REGISTRO TELEFONO
				ESTACIONES	PENDIENTE MAXIMA ASCENDIENDO EN %			
B-0	0 0			LINEA DIVISORIA				
B-1	1 0		0 40	D TIJUANA JN			PATIO 65	
B-5	4 7			AGUA CALIENTE				
B-14	13 9			9 2 GARCIA			25	
B-20	19 2		0 90	5 3 MATANUCO		0 00		
B-34	33 9			14 7 REDONDO			EN-38	
B-60	59 9		1 40	26 0 D TECATE TA			PATIO 82	8
B-72	71 4			11 5 LINEA DIVISORIA LINDERO				

DIRECCION SUPERIOR RUMBO AL NORTE





Brett Tallman had just set his motor car onto the rails of the S-BC at Tecate, BC, Mexico, when he took this photo behind the Tecate beer brewery.



A young "amigo" is infatuated with the "Americanos" and their motor cars at Tecate. Photo by Brett Tallman

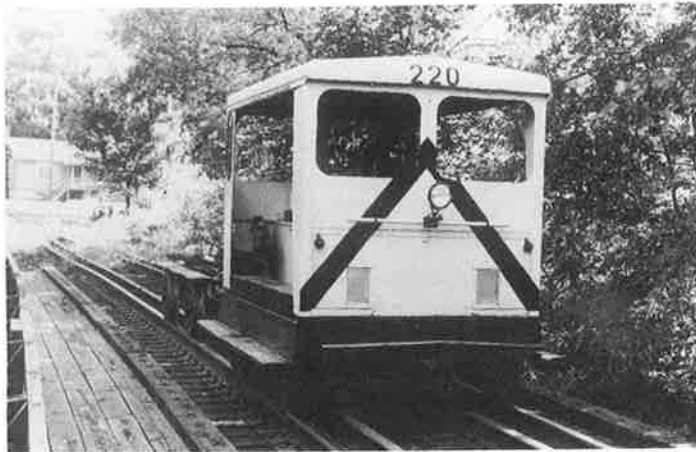


Five miles east of Matanuco the group pauses for some cold "agua" (water). Photo by Brett Tallman

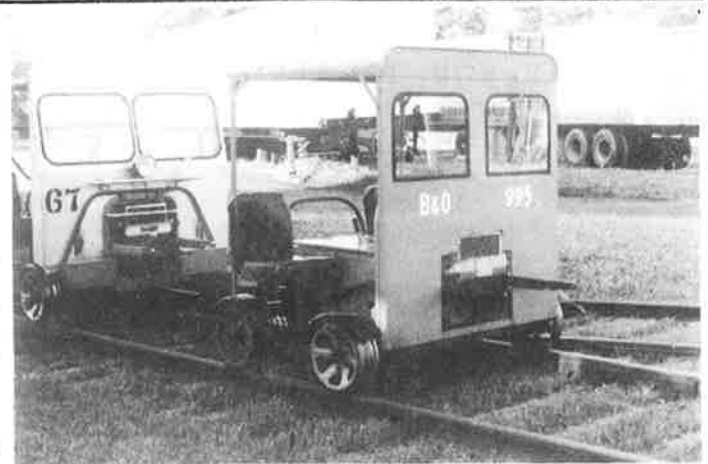


# TRACK CAR PHOTO LINEUP

## PHOTOS OF MEMBER'S CARS



Ohi-Rail General Manager and NARCOA member Tom Barnett regularly uses his Fairmont A-6 for work duties. In August, 1986, NARCOA member Mike Couture brings the A-6 through Phillips, Ohio on the way back to the railroad's Mechanicstown, Ohio headquarters after a work detail on the Wolf Run branch. Photo by Doug Leffler



NARCOA member Ron Cook's neat ex B&O Fairmont M-19 is shown at the 1985 NARCOA convention, at Clinton, Michigan. Photo by Chris Cooper



NARCOA member Jeff Mast poses momentarily by his ex Virginian Railway Fairmont M-19 during a winter work session on the Southern Michigan Railroad in December, 1986. Photo by Jeff Mast

## WE'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THIS NARCOA MEMBER...

Fred B. Furminger  
30 Lou Ann Drive  
Depew, NY 14043

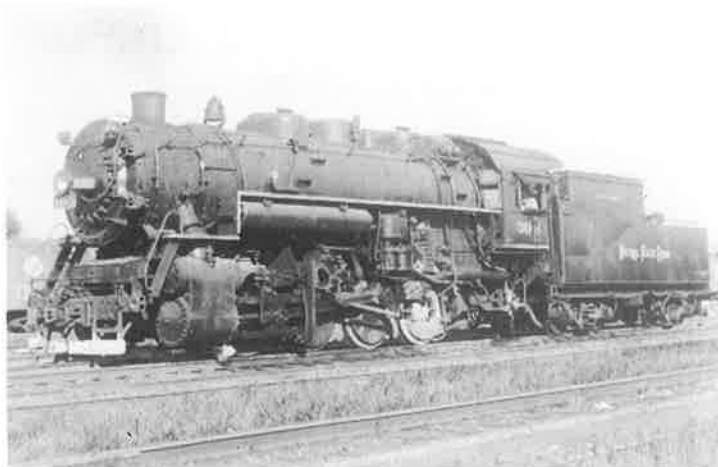
Fred Furminger grew up in Kenmore, New York, and the earliest railroad experience he can remember was at age 6. Fred would walk down to the tracks of the Delaware Lackawanna & Western Railroad to watch the steam locomotives pull the transfer runs from East Buffalo, to Black Rock, where they would be yarded and sent over the border to Canada.

Fred's first (and no doubt finest) cab ride was at age 11, in the fall of 1951, in NYC Hudson #5328. The ride took him from Suspension Bridge, NY to Buffalo. By age 14 he was not only riding steam locomotives, but photographing them as well with "...a baby Brownie." Not content with just still photography, at age 16 Fred purchased an 8mm Kodak movie camera, and shot the last of steam on the Central, GTW, CN and CP, IC, NKP, PRR and B&O.

"My interest in railroads subsided in the early 60's, when I got married", says Fred, "But by 1970 (and four kids later), I was back at it again." Fred's interest in photography through the years has paid off, by having quite a number of his photos published in **Trains** magazine.



The New York & Lake Erie Railroad is the normal "stamping ground" for Fred and the #303, where he volunteers for track inspection and brush clearing along the right-of-way. Photo by Fred Furminger



Fred Furminger numbered his motor car after a boyhood Nickel Plate Road 0-8-0 steam locomotive...number "303", photographed in 1956, by 14-year-old Fred at Buffalo, New York.

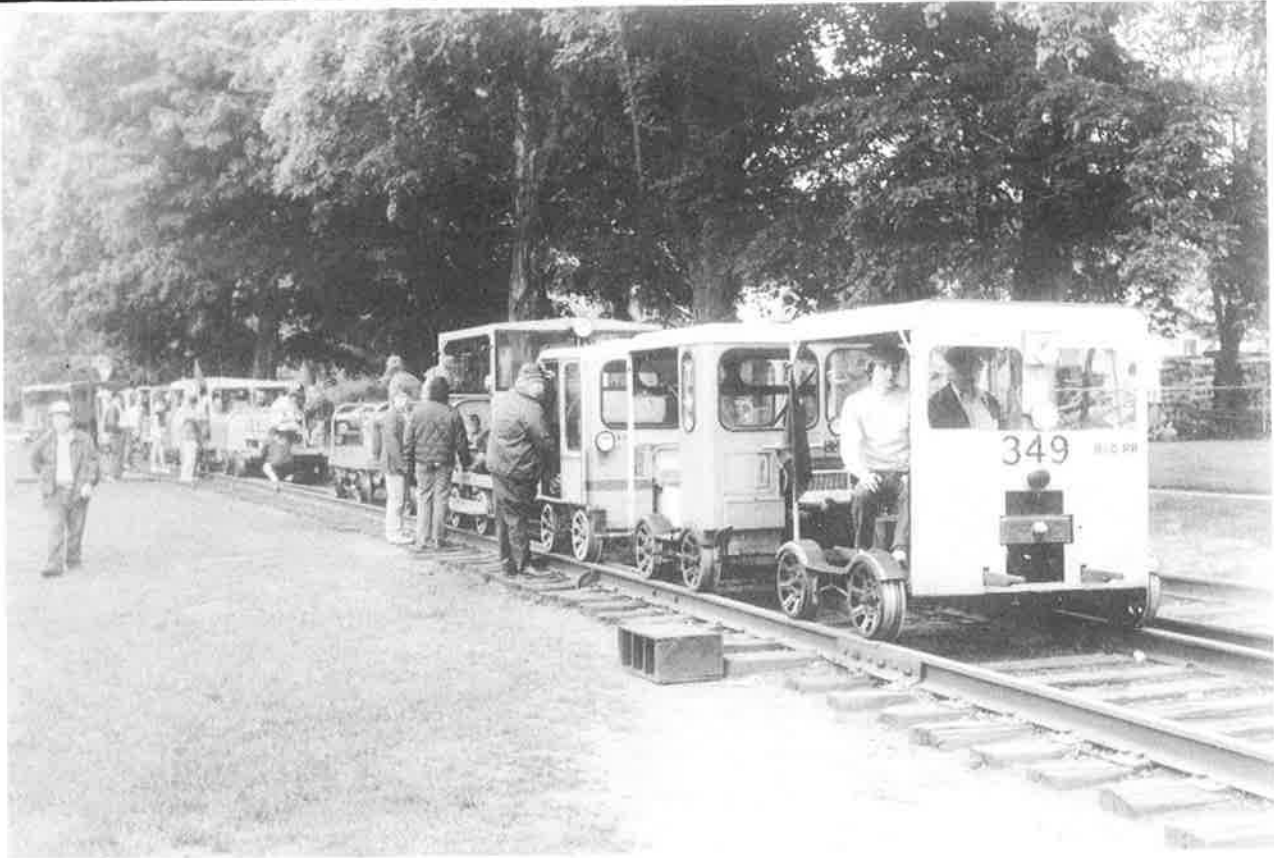
"By 1980, I started looking into motor cars, acquiring an ex C&O car from a friend in Webster, NY." Says Fred. Fred numbered his Fairmont M-9 the "303", after a favorite boyhood NKP 0-8-0 switcher. While railroad "editor types" have tended to "frown" on restorations of motor cars in a "non-railroad" paint and numbering scheme, we must admit, Fred did a **remarkable** job on the "303"...and it runs every bit as well as it looks! (Anyway, the "303" was **numbered** after a "real" piece of railroad equipment!).

Fred was in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, (1957-65), and in the Air National Guard (1981-1985). This enabled him to photograph a few trains from helicopters! He is also in the Depew Fire Department as a volunteer fire fighter, and was honored as Fireman of the Year in 1985.

When Fred is not railfanning, working on, or riding his motor car, or fighting fires, he somehow finds time to earn a living at the Buffalo News, as an advertising representative.

Even though Fred is an extremely busy man, he has recently taken on yet another "hobby"...that of helping Winter's Rail Service clean up railroad wrecks! "So far, since I became broken in, I've helped clean up a 22-car Conrail wreck at Palmyra, NY, and a 9-car pileup at Wellsville, NY", Says Fred.

Fred is also a member of the NRHS, the Western New York Railway Historical Society, The Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society, and of course NARCOA.



Trip number 1, with Jim Baird's ex B&O Fairmont M-19 in the lead, prepares to depart Clinton, Michigan during the third annual NARCOA convention. Photo by D. Leffler

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car model 535 (car has 1 1/4" diameter axle)

Contact: Joel Williams  
Box 82  
Greendell, NJ 07839  
(201) 852-6294 (home)  
(201) 859-4050 (work)

**WANTED**

Instruction book for Sheffield/Fairbanks-  
Morse model 36 motor car.

Contact: Dean Keding  
Rt 1, Box 134  
Oakfield, WI 53065  
(414) 923-3920

**WANTED**

Instruction manual for Fairmont 1921 model  
M-14E motor car. I would like to copy and return  
the book.

Contact: Paul Raysik  
37 Division Street  
Bangor, ME 04401



**Top-** Soo Line SD-40 #6609 and a brace of CP Rail units lead one of Soo Line's hotshot Montreal/Chicago container trains past a CN Fairmont A-4, in Windsor, Ontario, in April, 1987. D. Leffler photo **Middle-** CP Rail caboose #434622 brings up the rear of the container train as it passes the A-4 at Windsor (The CP caboose will be exchanged for a Soo caboose when the train reaches Detroit). D. Leffler photo **Bottom-** The Sonora-Baja California Railway in Mexico still uses motor cars to a great extent. Brett Tallman photographed this fairly modern car at Mexicali, BC, Mexico in March, 1987.



***THE SETOFF***  
 622 Pawnee  
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