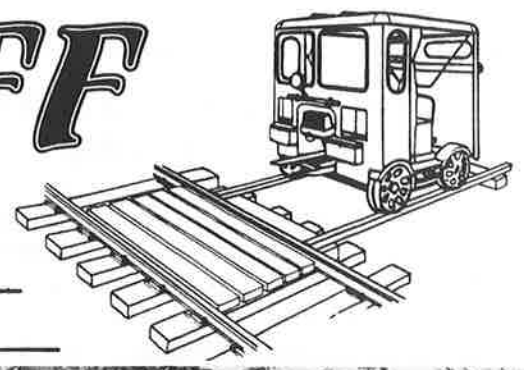


Dick Ray

THE SETOFF

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

Winter, 1988



CONTRIBUTING MATERIAL TO THE SETOFF

THE SETOFF is the official newsletter for the NORTH AMERICAN RAILCAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (NARCOA), and as such, we depend heavily upon the contributions from you, the readers, for material. Each issue of THE SETOFF can get progressively better, if we have a good variety of material to present to the readership.

We can always use photos, and articles from you folks (black & white or color prints are equally acceptable, and occasionally color slides). We are interested in your rail car hobby...the following are a few examples of what we need: photos and descriptions of the type of car(s) you own; where you operate (legally); some of the obstacles that you may have overcome during the restoration process of your car(s); maintenance tips; modifications to make the car run or look better; restoration and painting techniques, etc.

For those of you who would like to contribute articles, but are afraid that their writing is not good enough...I suggest that you give it a try anyway! We will be glad to edit your material so that it reads well, and we'll still give you the byline in THE SETOFF. Drawings (including maps of where you run) are also welcome...and they don't have to be perfect either. Simple sketches are fine, since we usually rework the material for good reproduction in the newsletter anyway.

Give it a try...we need your support! Besides, its always fun to see your own material in print! Send your material to: Doug Leffler, 622 Pawnee, Jackson, Michigan 49203

COVER PHOTOS

Top - A fall motor car meet, held on October 31, 1987 on the Southern Michigan Railroad at Clinton, Michigan was very sucessfull, with over 20 motor cars participating in the meet. Lined up at Clinton after a run to Raisin Center, are a few of the cars that were in attendance.

Lower - The Motor Car Collectors of America held their first motor car meet on October 17 and 18 on the Keokuk, Iowa-based Keokuk Junction Railroad. The above scene shows a few of the cars in attendance, in juxtaposition with a retired Mississippi River "paddle-wheeler".



A NOTABLE QUOTE FROM "THE TRACK INSPECTOR"

"The best part of Christmas to me...was bringin' home the tree on the "303"!"



THE SETOFF

Volume 1

Number 4

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

KEOKUK JUNCTION RAILROAD HOSTS MCCA MOTOR CAR MEET

By Doug Leffler
(New York Central M-9, No. M220)

The Keokuk Junction Railroad, of Keokuk, Iowa hosted a two-day motor car meet for the Motor Car Collectors of America (MCCA) on October 17 and 18, over portions of trackage that were formerly owned by the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad. The meet was the first ever for the MCCA, arranged through the KJRR, by MCCA founder and NARCOA member Mark Mayfield of Wever, Iowa.

The meet was based out of the Keokuk Junction Railroad headquarters in Keokuk, Iowa, with runs over the Mississippi River bridge to Hamilton, and LaHarpe, Illinois and a side trip down a five-mile branch from Hamilton to Warsaw. The highlight of the meet, of course, was the opportunity for the attendees to run their cars on the former TP&W swing bridge over the "Mighty Mississippi", which is about 1/2-mile wide at Keokuk. After the runs on Saturday, a slide, movie, and video program was held at one of the local restaurants. Repeat trips to LaHarpe and Warsaw were again run on Sunday.

As one of the forty-nine attendees present (with 12 motor cars and 2 Hy-Rail vehicles) at the meet, I can honestly say that the ride over that long bridge was worth the 500-mile trip from Michigan!



SMRS HOSTS FALL MOTOR CAR MEET

By Doug Leffler
(New York Central M-9, No. M-220)

The Southern Michigan Railroad Society, Inc. of Clinton Michigan hosted its third annual fall motor car meet on the Southern Michigan Railroad on Saturday, October 31, 1987.

Twenty motor cars were present for the meet, with two runs from Clinton to Raisin Center. After the second run, the SMRS provided a hot dog roast for the motor car enthusiasts, and an evening of slides and video followed. The weather cooperated very nicely for the event, with sunny skies and reasonably warm temperatures, considering the time of year.



The Keokuk Junction Railroad operates several nifty SW type locomotives on its line out of Keokuk. This Orange SW-7 is owned by RELCO, and leased to the KJ; hence the number RE 1215 on the cab. Photo By Doug Leffler

←

Editor Doug Leffler's 1951 ex NYC Fairmont M-9 is shown on a recently rebuilt wood trestle, a few miles south of La Harpe, on the return leg of the Saturday trip out of Keokuk. Photo By Doug Leffler

IT'S A "FAIRETTE" !

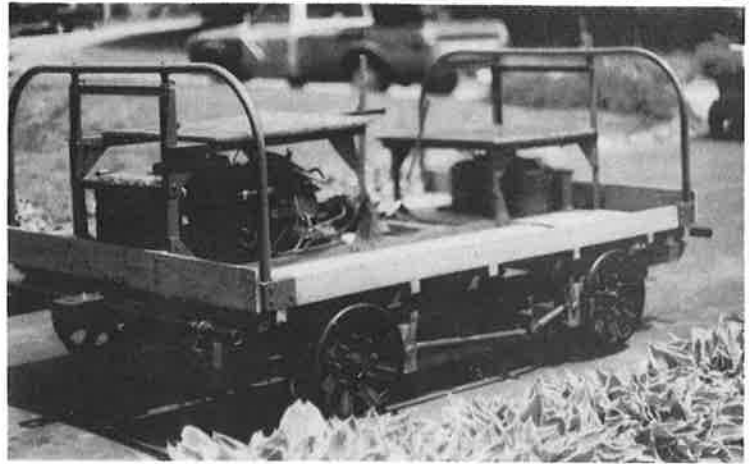
By Wade Monn
(Maryland & Pennsylvania A-3)

My son Chip and I have always considered ourselves rail enthusiasts. One afternoon, while picking up some parts at a local junkyard, Chip and I spotted two old Fairmont motor cars sitting forlornly amid the pile of rubble. One car was an A-3, and the other an M-19. We both agreed that it would be neat to purchase, and restore these cars, but we had no place to run them once restoration was complete. Oh well, it was a neat idea!

Within two years of us first seeing the cars in the scrapyard, Chip and I became actively involved in the Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad Preservation Society. This group has negotiated the purchase of a portion of abandoned track from the old "Ma & Pa" Railroad, (as the line is affectionately known) with hopes of eventually operating passenger excursions (for the present time, however, there is a lot of work to be done on the line, and it is not yet open for operations).

As we became more involved with the Society, it became obvious that if we were to assist the group in helping to renovate the line with new ties and ballast, plus do our part with the ever continuing tasks of tree cutting and brush clearing, we would need some rail vehicles. We decided that the two cars that we had spotted in the junkyard would be just the ticket!

After inspecting the cars in the yard, and making our best deal, we hauled our two "prizes" home. The worst part about the condition of the cars was the fact that neither car had an engine. After checking the dimensions of the carbody of the A-3, we determined that a 4-cylinder Chevette engine and transmission would fit nicely into the chassis. The M-19, we decided, would have to wait until we could locate an engine.



Wade's "Fairette" A-3 looked nearly brand new, when he rolled it out into the family driveway.
Photo By Wade Monn

Three months later, after many hours of hard work, lots of parts, paint, and American know-how, we rolled our "Fairette" A-3 out of the garage. The A-3 is now parked on one of our sidings on the "Ma & Pa", and it is the most dependable car on the line. In the meantime, if any of you readers know where we can get a Fairmont engine for our M-19, we would appreciate hearing from you. Our mailing address is: 2014 Hillcroft Drive, Forrest Hill, MD 21050.



This is what Wade Monn's two Fairmont motor cars looked like when he picked them up from the local junkyard. Note the crushed cab on the A-3. Photo By Wade Monn



"LIGHTS; CAMERAS; ...MOTOR CARS !"

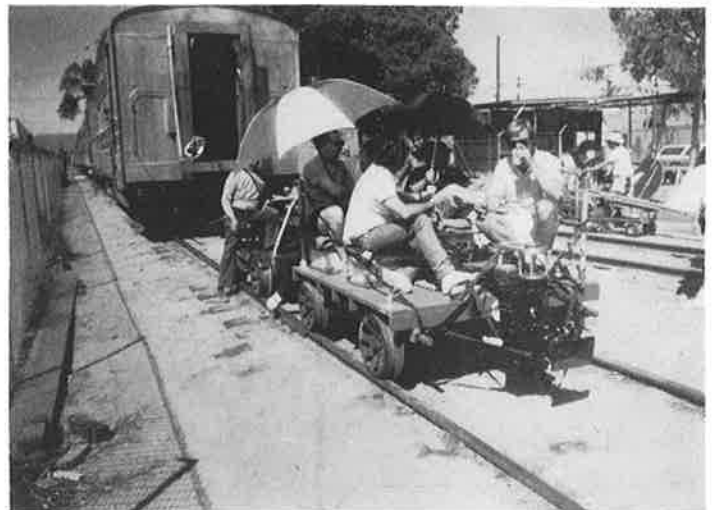
By Ken Garges and Jim Britten
(Sheffield Velocipede)
(LA&SL R.R. M-19)

We have read with interest in THE SETOFF about the various lines that many of our fellow NARCOA members operate on. We have also noticed that most of these folks have arranged with the railroad owners or operators some sort of working agreement whereby the motor car operator performs work and inspection along the line to "pay" for his privilege to operate safely over the railroad. We too have made such an agreement with a nearby "home road" that we regularly operate our track cars on.

After having owned track cars for a number of years, looking for a place to run, we now operate on a 5-mile, isolated section of the former Southern Pacific Santa Paula Branch, near Newhall, California (Newhall was located on that portion of the branch, between Saugus and Piru, (PIE-roo) California). The section of track that was preserved is on a portion of land owned by the Newhall Land & Farming Company, and was retained by them for use in filming railroad action scenes for several Hollywood studios.



Ken also has a neat restored velocipede that he occasionally takes out for a spin on the isolated line. Here's Ken coming off a light weight Pratt truss bridge, while on an inspection run. Photo By Ken Garges



Jim Brittan's motor car and trailer is shown during the filming of the recently released movie "Throw Mama From The Train". That's director and actor Danney DeVito sitting on the trailer car. Note the Panavision camera mounted low on the front of a car for a "dolly shot". Photo By Ken Garges

THROW MOMMA FROM THE TRAIN

**"The film with the
best title around...
is even funnier than
it promised to be."**

The Track is owned by Newhall Land & Farming Co., and the railroad equipment used on the line is owned and operated by Shortline Enterprises, under contract by the Hollywood movie studios.

We are authorized by Shortline Enterprises to operate on the railroad by performing inspection and assorted work along the line, including minor track work, and clearing the line of brush and weeds. We have also used our motor car and trailer for movie camera "dolly" work. To accomplish this, the crews mount a Panavision camera to the trailer for a variety of runs.

We have worked behind the cameras with the motor car and trailer for filming scenes on several commercials, a segment on the TV show "MacGyver", and on movies such as "Hot To Trot", and recently on "Throw Mama From The Train", with Danny DeVito. We have even taken Locations Department personnel, from the studios, on tours of the property....it's lots of fun!

In addition to operating the motor cars and trailer, we also have a restored velocipede that we occasionally take out for a spin on the line.

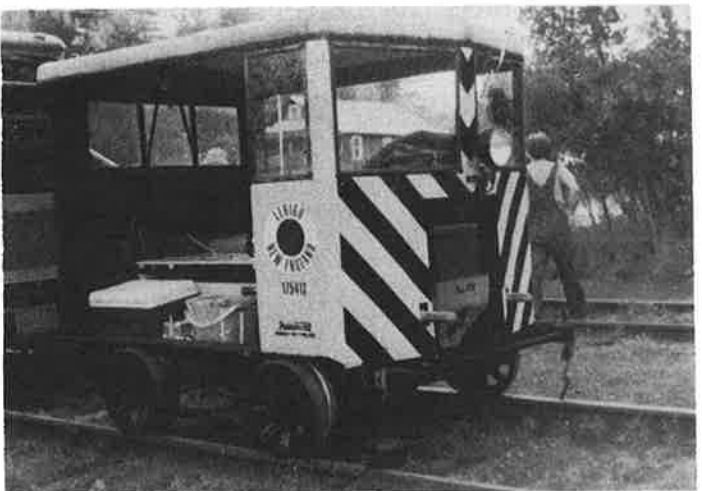
MOTOR CAR PHOTO LINEUP PHOTOS OF MEMBER'S CARS



NARCOA member Tom Derwin of Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut owns ex WM #336, a Fairmont M-19 twin motor car that is a sister car to NARCOA roster coordinator Joel Williams' #334. Photo By Joel Williams



This neat Lehigh & New England Fairmont ST-2 is owned by Paul Armstrong of Pittsford, New York. Photo By Paul Armstrong



NARCOA member Kevin Page of Petersburg, Virginia acquired this neat "push-to-start" Sheffield from the Norfolk Franklin & Danville Railway (now Norfolk Southern). The photo was taken in May 1987, by Joel Williams at the third annual NARCOA convention at Clinton, Michigan.





NARCOA members Mary and Roger Sackett operate this beautifully restored ex Northern Pacific Fairmont M-9, Series G car in the Pacific Northwest. Photo By Roger Sackett



This sharp looking ex Central Railroad of New Jersey Fairmont A-3 is owned by the "PRR Co." ...no, not "Pennsylvania Railroad", but "Peoples Railroad Company" of Farmingdale, New Jersey. Photo By Joel Williams

MOTOR CARS OF THE AKRON CANTON & YOUNGSTOWN RAILROAD

Photos from the collection of
Vaughn Neel,
New London, Ohio

Operating entirely within the state of Ohio, the Akron Canton & Youngstown Railroad originally ran west from Mogadore, (near Akron) to Delphos. The railroad was sold to the Norfolk & Western Railroad in the late 1960's, and operations have since been cut back from Delphos to Cary.

At one time the line served primarily as a "bridge" line, interchanging with several roads on its trek across Ohio, however, the road now sees primarily local freight operation under the Norfolk Southern banner.

Motor car operations were continued for awhile after the acquisition of the railroad from the N&W, however, current inspection and repairs are now performed by HyRail equipment.



The AC&Y section gang is about to depart Sycamore, Ohio for a run in 1939. The AC&Y once had twenty-two section gangs to work the 171-mile line. Today the line (now 116 miles long) is owned by Norfolk Southern, and is maintained by one section gang!



An AC&Y gang car pauses for a portrait on bridge #400 over the Sandusky River, just east of Tymochtee, Ohio in 1939



The section foreman is shown at the setoff, just west of the depot in Spencer, Ohio

GOOD TRACKING

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

If your motor car does not track well, or lurches from side to side while running down the rails, it may be due to worn out wheels. The easiest cure is to install new wheels from Fairmont. However, with the cost of new 16" wheels being about \$82.00 each (plus freight), it would be wise to check out the old ones first to make sure that they are indeed worn out. This article will show you how to check out your wheels to see if they need replacement.

The measuring method is simple, and requires only a carpenters square and a metal straightedge about 1" wide and a minimum of 16" long. Figure 1(a) shows the ideal configuration of a good wheel. Look for a "gap" at the outer edge of the wheel, indicating the proper taper of the wheel surface. Figure 1(b) shows a wheel worn "flat" with no taper. Wheels like these are still usable, but the car will not track well. Figure 1(c) shows the configuration of wheels that are worn out from the rails and brake shoes to the point where the gap observed between the square and the wheel surface is in the middle of the wheel. Wheels that have this type of wear should be replaced.

If your wheels are worn nearly "flat", the low cost solution is to place the flat ones at the back of the car, and replace the front pair with new ones. In most cases, this will greatly improve the tracking of the car. Rear wheels should be kept as pairs; in other words, don't replace just one wheel at a time. This could cause the car to run toward one side or the other, causing rapid wear, since the wheels have a different diameter.

One final tip...always handle wheels, especially new ones with a pair of gloves. The manufacturing process leaves a razor sharp edge around the inside edges of the spoke holes, and these can cause nasty cuts.

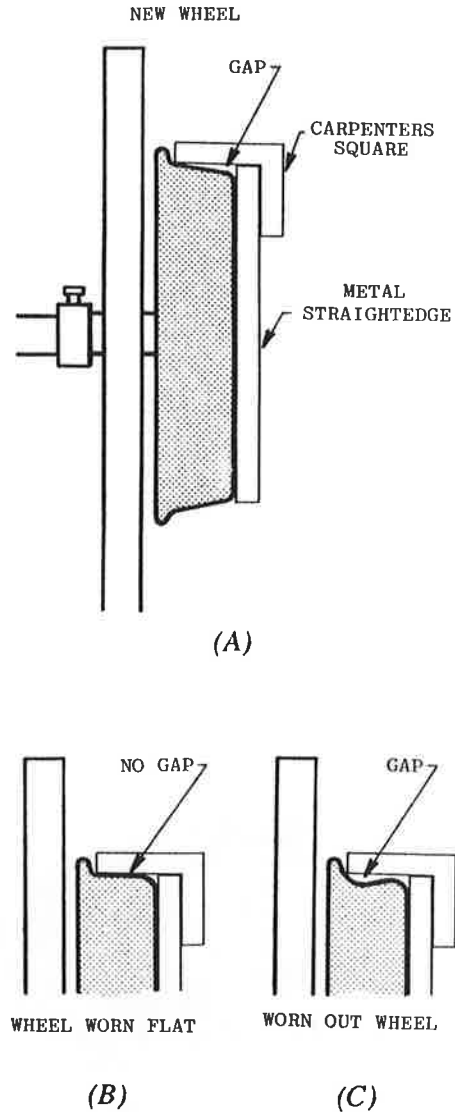


Figure 1.

*Method for Checking
Wheel Wear*

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

Terry Durkin
3754 Pringle Street
San Diego, California 92103

Our NARCOA member for this issue is as comfortable at the throttle of an Amtrak F40PH locomotive as he is on the seatboard of one of his Fairmont M-19 motor cars...you see, Terry Durkin is by profession a locomotive engineer for Amtrak.

Terry originally hired on with the Santa Fe as a student fireman back in 1960, working summers, and attending college full time, until 1966, when he earned a Ph.D. in zoology. Railroading was Terry's first love, however, and he continued working for the Santa Fe in passenger service, until Amtrak. Terry fondly remembers the Alco PA locomotives as being his favorite. "They had tremendous pulling power" says Terry. "They rode smoothly without "hunting" from side to side like the "War Bonnet" F units".

Terry got into motor cars about 1960, when he purchased one from the Santa Fe for about \$15.00! One car led to another, and another, and he also picked up hand cars and velocipedes along the way. "Back then", says Terry, "You could pick one up from most any railroad, just for the asking"!



Terry is in to "big stuff", along with his motor car collection. He once owned this beautifully restored ex Ventura County Baldwin 2-6-2, which he has since sold to the Orange Empire Railway Museum at Perris, California. Photo By Terry Durkin



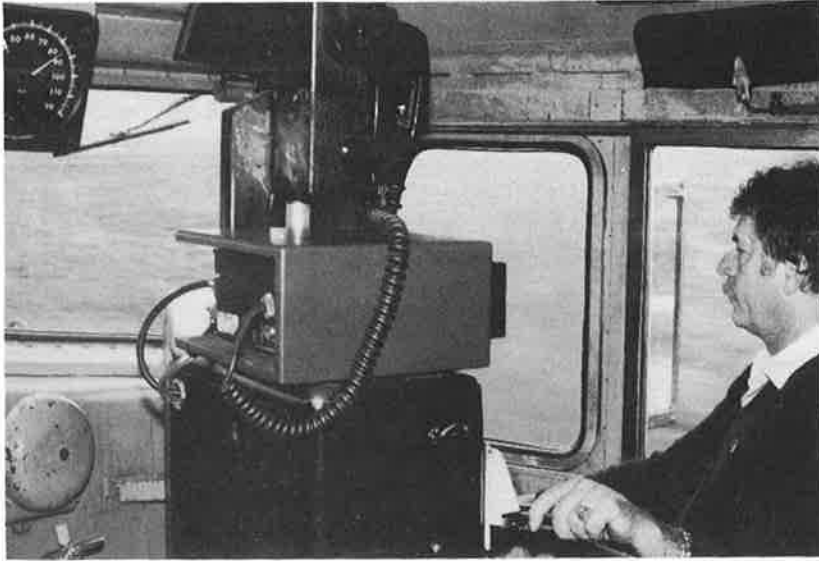
A rare cloudy day in December 1987 finds Terry Durkin with three of his M-19's at the Campo, California headquarters of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, which is located along the old San Diego & Arizona Railway. Photo By Brett Tallman

In order to operate his cars, Terry constructed about 1500 feet of track on his property. The railroad was called the Mission Valley & Southern Railroad, and it featured a switchback with a rather stiff grade. Although the MV&S is now dismantled, Terry has had the opportunity to operate legally on many lines, including the Santa Fe, Sonora-Baja California, San Diego & Arizona Eastern, and the Navy's Port Hueneme railroad facility.

The collection of railroad equipment continued through the years, buying, selling and donating, and Terry even owned a beautifully restored 2-6-2 steam locomotive that came from the Ventura County Railway (it has since been sold to the Orange Empire Railroad Museum at Perris, California).

Terry is the founder of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, of Campo, California. This museum is perhaps one of the most successful operations in the southwest. Motor cars are, of course, an integral part of the operations at the museum, and Terry regularly operates his cars in an inspection and work capacity for the museum.

When Terry is not "working on the railroad" at the museum, his daily routine finds him "working on the railroad", running one of the Amtrak *San Diegan* Passenger trains between Los Angeles and San Diego. So, if you should ever be out on the west coast, and happen to have the opportunity to ride one of the *San Diegans*, it's quite possible that another NARCOA member, like yourself will speedily take charge of your journey.



Terry is shown in his "office" doing 85 mph (note the speedometer) on his regular Amtrak run between Los Angeles and San Diego. Terry feels just as comfortable though on an M-19 as he does on an F40PH! Photo By David Ruiz

FOR SALE

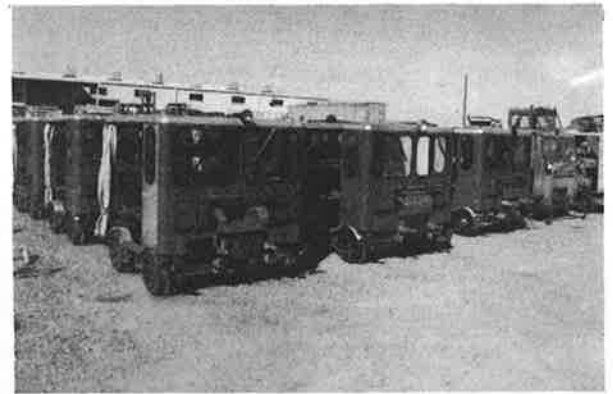
MT-19A & MT-14L MOTOR CARS

Priced from \$1,200.00 to \$2,000.00

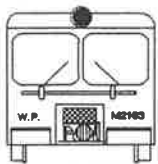
Contact:

NEWMAN MACHINERY, INC.

MAINTENANCE OF WAY EQUIPMENT
PHOENIX, ARIZONA
800 872-0718



FOR SALE



Gregory Brahms
635 Montclair Dr.
Santa Rosa, Ca. 95405
707-539-8519

Announcing Two New Products for Motorcars:

➔ **Dynabuzz Electronic Buzzer Coil**

Replaces expensive mechanical buzzer coil with standard automotive type: Gives hotter spark, less radio noise, longer point life, replacement coils available anywhere.

\$35.00 Includes Coil

Specify DB12-A for 12 Volt neg. ground or DB6-A for 6 Volt pos. ground

➔ **Dynading Warning Bell**

Electronically operated bell rings at approximately the same rate as a locomotive bell.

\$25.00 Includes Bell

ALLOW 4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY
ALL ORDERS PLUS \$2.50 SHIPPING PER ITEM

DD12-A 12 Volt only

FOR SALE OR TRADE

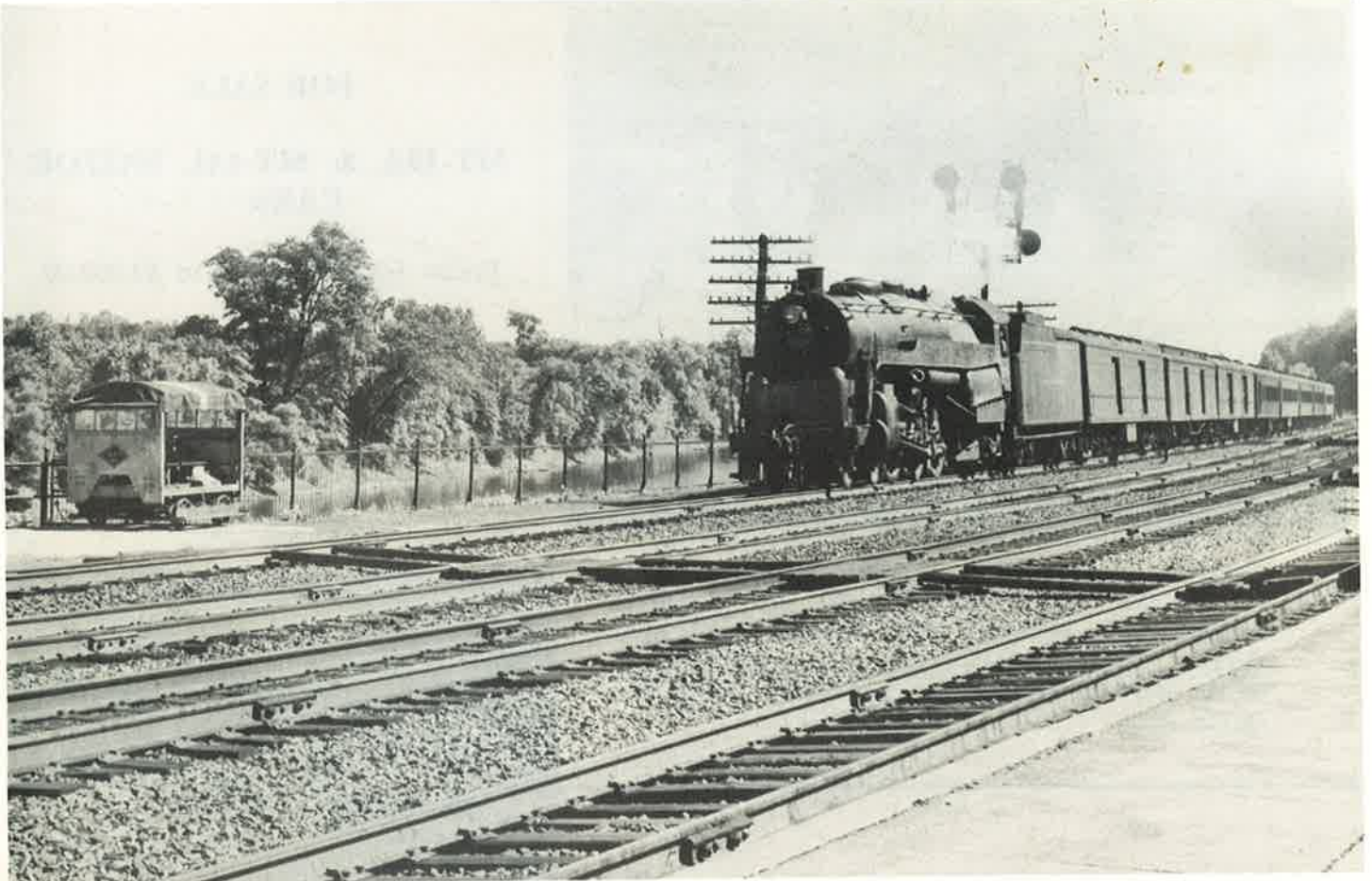
Fairmont MT-14, with Aluminum front and roof, side curtains, rear curtains, Onan 2-cylinder, 20-HP, 4-cycle engine, 2-speed transmission, good condition....**\$800.00**

Fairmont MT-14, with all aluminum Milwaukee Road-specified, Tomah (fully enclosed) cab, Onan 2-cylinder, 20-HP, 4-cycle engine. 2-speed transmission, very good condition....**\$1,000.00**

I am also looking for a Fairmont M-9 in running condition

John E. Knight
325 Iroquois Ave. #1
Rockford, IL 61102

Phone (815) 965-7648 after 6:00PM
(no collect calls accepted)



Above - NARCOA member Walter Matuch provided this neat photo of a Reading passenger train highballing past a Reading gang car in the early 1950's. Left - This Pennsylvania Reading Seashore Lines gang car was photographed in the early 1950's at Osage, New Jersey. Photos from the collection of Walter Matuch



NARCOA member Phil Hines of Inkster, Michigan, photographed this Fairmont A-5 on the Soo Line Railroad at Sault Saint Marie, Michigan in October, 1986.

THE SETOFF

622 Pawnee
Jackson, Michigan 49203



POSTMASTER: IF UNDELIVERABLE, PLEASE RETURN TO SENDER