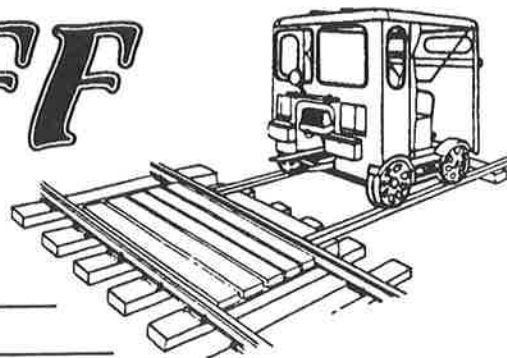


THE SETOFF

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

Fall 1992



Dick Ray took these photos of the long, long line of cars waiting at the Sycamore Bridge on the South Branch Valley Railroad in this year's annual mid-August trek to West Virginia. A record number of motorcars attended the meet. See story about the meet on page 8.



Guest Editorial

CANCELLED OCTOBER MEET IN TENNESSEE

By Hugh Cain

I had received a call from Malcom Curvin in early September. He had pulled off what was thought to be impossible, a motorcar meet sanctioned by a major railroad--CSX--and run with their blessing. Etowah, Tennessee, was the setting for the October event.

Immediately I made up flyers, had them duplicated and mailed out 25 to enthusiasts that might be able to make the trip. I even went so far as to ask the members to pass the word about the event, which happened very nicely. Thanks, guys!

Malcom, on the other hand, mailed 200 flyers to other enthusiasts. Of all the mailings and phone calls, he had 62 motorcars set for the meet.

The Depot restaurant in Blue Ridge ordered extra food for the event and went so far as to set up extra picnic tables around the Depot for the expected crowd. At least two area television stations planned coverage. The local newspapers were interested in the event as well as AMTRAK and TRAINS magazines.

Malcom learned early on Friday morning that the event was, as CSX called it, "on hold." He had no inclination why the event was placed on hold.

Since operators were coming from Michigan and other places of equal distance from the meet, Malcom, on learning the trip was no longer a certainty, began notifying the participants. All but two were contacted. These two were told of the plight of the trip upon arriving on Sunday morning.

We don't know the reason for CSX's cancellation of the event, but our motorcar club wishes to apologize to our fellow motorcar operators for any inconvenience associated with this failed effort. Our group is planning other events for the future on the numerous shortline railroads in our area. Watch *THE SETOFF* for details.

7½-INCH GAUGE TRACK INSPECTION CAR BUILT

By Hugh Cain

After quite a few years of informing my friend Roger Yard, of motorcar events we could go to, I had all but decided he would never get a motorcar. How wrong could I be. Roger just went out and built his own.

Roger's car is built to 7½-inch gauge. It is roughly a two-thirds scale M14. He powered it with a lawnmower motor and used a chain drive similar to the MT series cars.

Even though Roger now has a speeder to run, I'm still trying to get him to get a conventional motorcar. For now, though, he is quite satisfied with his speeder. I would be, too. This car is an excellent performing car and looks very good. Way to go, Roger!



Roger Yard's track inspection car is a 7½-inch gauge model he built in April 1992 at Yard & Associates Car & Loco Shops.

Editor's Notes

By Gene Tucker

Since this issue of *THE SETOFF* is being published only a month and a half after the Summer issue, you'll notice that there are no meets listed and the number of ads included in this issue are fewer in number than the last issue.

We do have a large number of meet stories, though, and we encourage you to send any material you'd like to have published. If you're planning a meet during the winter months (railcar owners are a hardy lot!), send us that information.

A few reminders:

1. If you'd like to have photographs returned, please note that on the back of the photos, and send us a stamped, self-addressed envelope so we can return them.

2. Remember to put the caption on the reverse of the photos, as well as whose photo it is.

THE NUMBERS GAME

By Dick Ray

Several years ago, as an editorial policy, *THE SETOFF* stopped highlighting the number of cars attending a meet. This was done because the number of cars was considered to be unimportant. We would prefer to see twice as many meets with smaller groups of cars so that everyone can have a good time without traveling thousands of miles to a few giant meets.

Having said that, we now report that the South Branch Valley meet last August (see article on page 8 in this issue of *THE SETOFF*) had 60 cars, all going the same way in one group. This is notable because it is the largest numbers of cars that ever went one place, ever (*Editor's note: All but one were Fairmonts.*). More importantly, it proved that it can be done!

3. Sharp color photos work best (next to black and white photos). It helps if the images are fairly large, also.

4. We prefer that stories submitted be typed (in upper and lower case, not all caps), but if this isn't possible, we'll take the material in any form you can get it to us.

5. Deadline for the Winter issue of *THE SETOFF* is January 15th, and that issue will appear in your mailboxes early in February.

It's a joy to serve as your editor, and a continuing tip of the hat to my sister, Deanna, who finds the time to continue to choose the headlines, arrange the material and photos, and make it all look great, and also to Ernie Jeschke, who does the speedy and excellent job of printing.

THE SETOFF

Volume 6 Number 3

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1992 NARCOA REGIONAL CONVENTION HELD AT MANLY, IOWA, ON THE IOWA NORTHERN RAILROAD

By Hank Brown

Friday, August 28th, was a great day! It was the start of my five-week vacation which would take me from South Dakota to Georgia to ride my motorcar.

Friday afternoon, Fred Furminger drove up my driveway with his usual enthusiastic grin. As I had been waiting for this day and was all packed, we quickly departed for the Second Annual Regional Convention in Manly, Iowa, on the Iowa Northern Railroad.

We stopped at Church's Restaurant in Prairie DuCheir, Wisconsin, for supper. The view at the restaurant was fantastic; the main line of the Burlington Northern passed within 100 yards of the eatery. While we dined, the BN paraded four trains past our supper table. After supper, we crossed the Mississippi River and followed the east-west main line of the SOO (now CP Rail) across to Charles City.

We arrived in Manly about 11 p.m. with no place to stay. We decided to stay in my van along the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad main line from Minneapolis to Kansas City. Every two hours, Fred woke me to share the joys of watching another long grain train blow past us. With four trains in the six hours, you can imagine how much sleep we got.

The morning came way too soon. NARCOA members began arriving from all over Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Missouri. We formed a long line and towed our 17 motorcars through a parade in town. The route traveled through every street in Manly. There were about 2,000 people along the route asking questions and listening to Jon Knight's and Fred Furminger's horns. It was a great time for everyone.

After the parade, most of the members went to Clear Lake to visit the Iowa Terminal Trolley Museum. We enjoyed a ride on their trolley, which traveled 10 miles from Clear Lake to Mason City. This is a ride everyone

should try to take. It is an active traction freight railroad, as well as a tourist line. After the rides and inspection of their equipment, we headed back to clean up for a banquet.

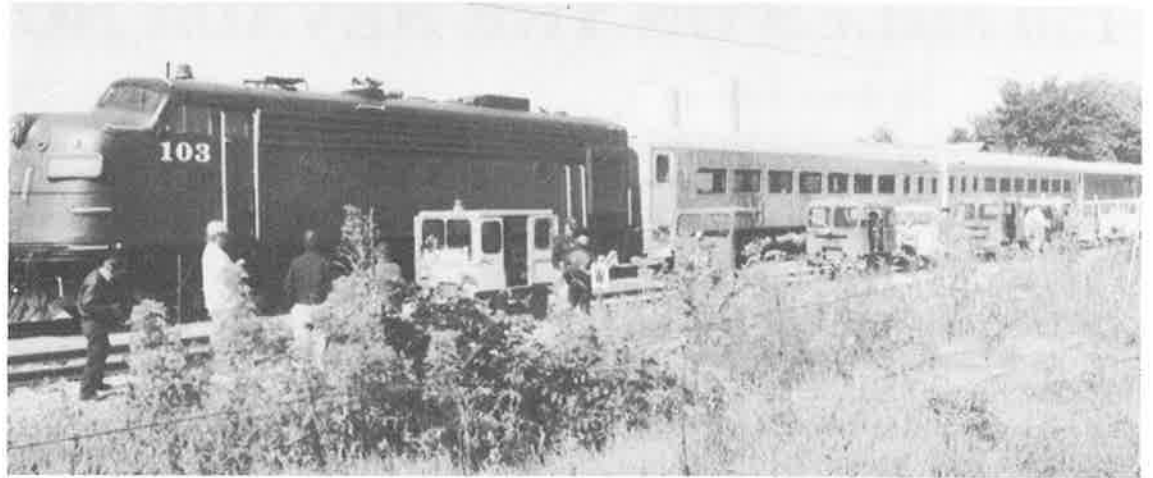
The banquet was held at Murph's again this year, where they an open pit grill. After supper, we were entertained by Carroll Kaduce, assistant general manager, who has taken over the operation of the railroad while C.J. Stofer recovers from his surgery. Carl Schneider and Dave Pratt showed many slides of our past meets.

Six a.m. came quickly for Fred and me the next day. We had overslept, and the rest of our group was preparing for the day's run to Cedar Falls. We had camped on the CNW main line again and, of course, we woke up for the three trains which passed by us at intervals of 45 minutes in both directions.

Carroll Kaduce and Frances Ediker were at the railroad to meet and inform us of the 134 miles we were about to run. We had



Vintage Brill Iowa Terminal Trolley at Mason City, Iowa, in August, 1992.



signed waivers the night before at the banquet, so we were anxious to get started. There were 32 motorcars waiting for the word to head south across the SOO main line in Nora Springs. This year we didn't have as many railroad dignitaries, so we made excellent time.

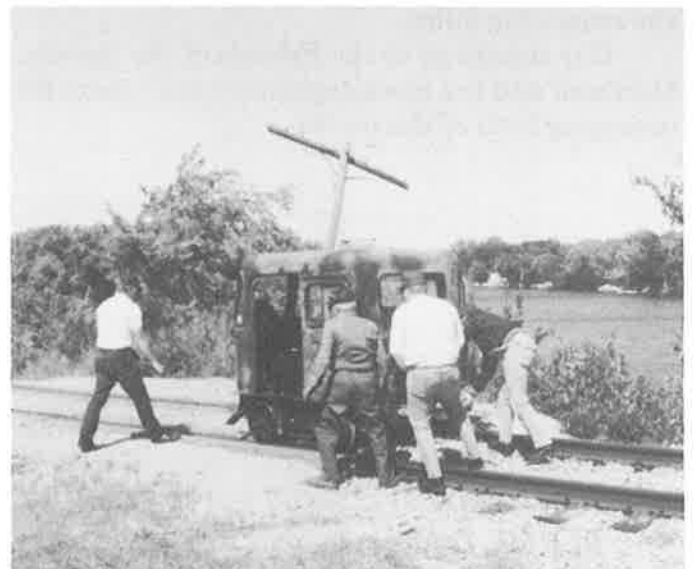
The weather was cool and clear. The track was in excellent condition and everyone rolled south. Our first stop was the interchange at Plymouth where the SOO line enters the Iowa Northern track. After we received clearance, we proceeded to Nora Springs for a look at the diamond. Our next stop was Rockford. We arrived way ahead of schedule. Unfortunately, no one was there to greet us except a woman who was trying to sell Fred a used 16-inch wheel for his M9.

Our next stop was Greene, the home of the Iowa Northern RR. They had a passenger dinner train sitting on a siding waiting for a new coat of paint.

Because of our schedule, we needed to make the interchange in Cedar Falls prior to 2 p.m., so we were off on an extended run. We arrived in plenty of time. We turned along a bluff above the Cedar River, which provided a beautiful backdrop for our pictures. This section of the railroad is the most scenic. The river parallels the railroad for five miles.

Our trip back was one of the quickest I've ever experienced. We arrived in Manly at 6 p.m., one hour later than last year when we

Above, the motorcars line up in front of the dinner train at Greene, Iowa, on the Iowa Northern Railroad at the August 1992 NARCOA Regional Convention. Below, everyone lends a hand in turning the cars on the Iowa Northern RR at Cedar Falls.



Photos on these two pages by Hank Brown

had 17 cars. My hat's off to all the members who came to this year's convention. Everyone did a great job. We thank the Iowa Northern and all their employees who helped make our day so pleasant.

150 MILES ON THE NEVADA NORTHERN

By Brett Tallman

The chuffing sound of 1910 Nevada Northern Ten Wheeler #40 filled the air as our group of motorcars and a lone hy-rail truck departed East Ely yard trackage on September 19, 1992. This meet, arranged by Bill Kaminsky for W.R.Y.M.O.O. (the Western Railway Motorcar Owners & Operators), followed one put together by Ron Zammit for M.O.W. only a week or two earlier, so motorcar owners could choose the date suitable to their schedules.

The meet was dominated by MT19s, and also included a couple of MT14s, an A3, an S2, plus a Chevy hy-railer. Over 150 miles of line were covered each way between the open pit copper mine in the vicinity of Copper Flat and the junctions with the Union Pacific and the Southern Pacific Railroads in Shafter and Cobre, respectively. Actually, the Nevada Northern Railway diamond has been removed across the U.P. (ex-Western Pacific), and since I did not personally run this far, I assume only the hy-rail truck ran the remaining miles.

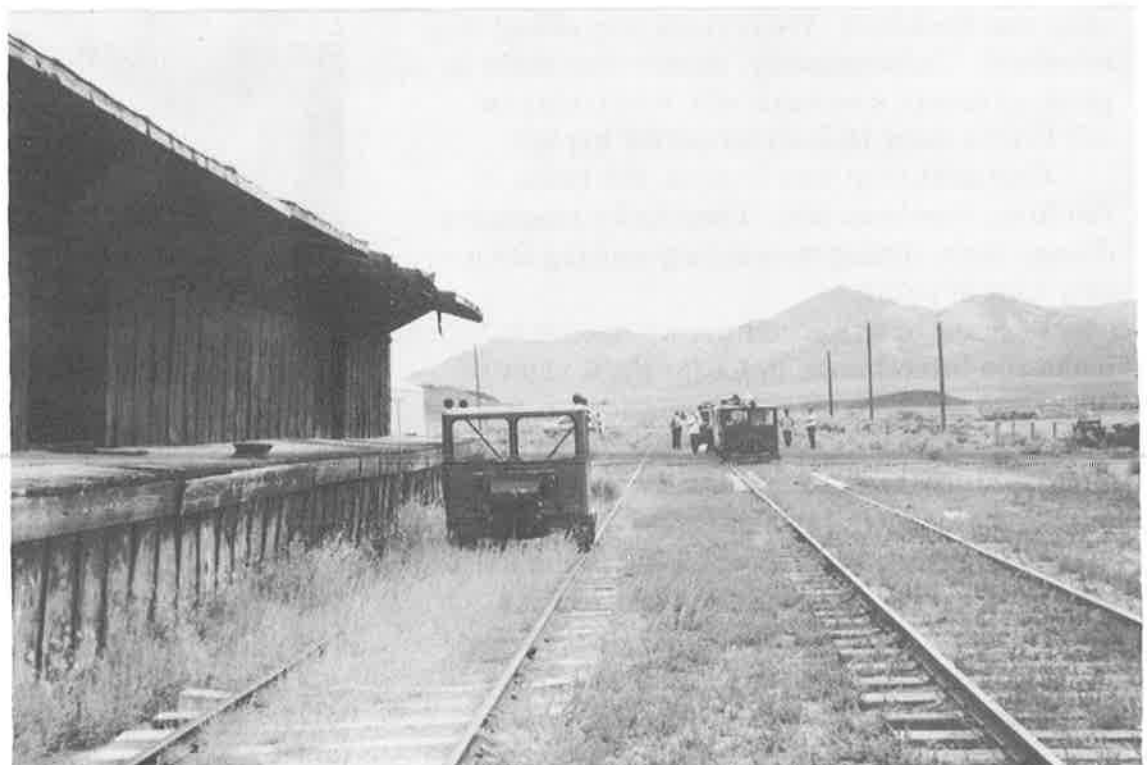
Our thanks go to the Friends of the Nevada Northern and the meet organizers and others for arranging both of the meets.



Tom Wellbaum's ex-Southern Pacific A-3 at Cherry Creek, Nevada on September 19, 1992.

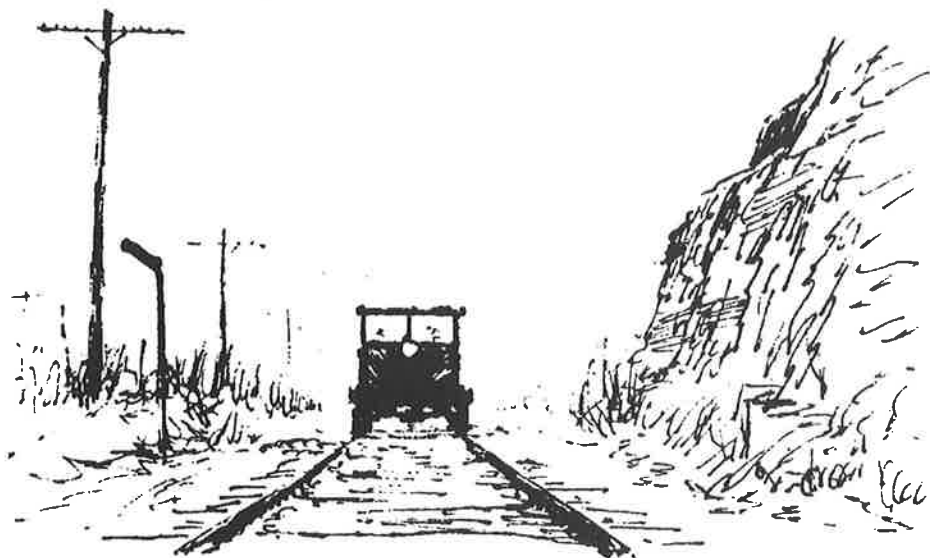
Photos by Brett Tallman

Brett Tallman's MT19, left, and Bill Kaminsky's MT19, both ex-Southern Pacific, at Currie, Nevada.





At left and below, Brett Tallman's ex-Southern Pacific MT19 #6567 on the Nevada Northern Railway near Currie, Nevada.



Vic Westman, of Danbury Connecticut, a long-time New Haven engineer, has been drawing for some time. He sure has a knack for it, and we're glad he shared this drawing with us.



SOUTH BRANCH VALLEY IS A POPULAR EVENT EVERY SUMMER IN WV

By Dick Ray

The usually popular South Branch Valley Railroad event was even more popular this year. Fortunately, I had a lot of capable help getting it all going on Saturday morning, August 15.

Sharon Woodburn helped with the sign-up and release forms, Ken Kurdt did the safety inspection, and Stan Conyer organized the unloading and parking. He had two and three trailers unloading simultaneously and got them parked in neat rows in the field beyond the Moorefield shops. Amazing!

By 9:00 a.m., I was standing on the deck of a tank car with the SBV RR bullhorn, describing the plan for the day to the group. The safety talk reminded the operators that this is open range country and that the cows are not bred for intelligence.

I normally bring up the rear of the group to help get the lame and disabled cars moving again. Sure enough, just out of town, a car was set off with a bad battery connection. By the time I got there, it was repaired and ready to go again, with no delay to anyone.

We waited at Sycamore Bridge for the Potomac Eagle excursion train and followed it through "The Trough" to Romney, where we passed on the siding and continued north.

Due to track construction, we couldn't turn on the wye at Green Spring, so we turned on a gravel grade crossing.

The turn left me in front for once, and Reggie Clauze of the SBV RR in the rear with the company A8. On the way back to Romney, we organized a variation on the group flagging theme because of a tight downhill curve in a narrow cut that ends in a paved crossing with very poor visibility, both ways. I dropped off a flag person and pulled down the track several hundred feet. The flagger had instructions to stop the road traffic, if necessary, and allow the railcars to cross without stopping. This reversal of normal priority was necessary to avoid having the railcars stopping on wet track on a downhill blind corner.

After ten to twelve cars were across and waiting, Dave Williamson of Frazer, PA, came

along and I explained the plan to him. As the rest of us left, Marilyn Francis moved the A5 down the track a short distance and Dave protected the next group. Then he organized the next group. I heard later that the plan worked all the way to the end.

Our meet with the Potomac Eagle was scheduled for 5:30 at Romney and it appeared we had more than forty minutes to wait in the siding and visit the gift shop. We used thirty-nine of those minutes before the last car entered the siding and the locomotive headlight appeared half a mile away.

I had brought a switch key down from Green Spring so I unlocked the siding as soon as the train stopped, and we were once more putt-putting south toward The Trough.

By 6 p.m., we were far from civilization and staring intently down the track to avoid the flocks of deer who came down to the river to drink. The slightest sound sent them running up across the rails and into the woods. Further south, the sound of the moving motorcars disturbed a huge bald eagle which flew up and down the river before settling onto a remote perch across the river.

Arrival at Moorefield around 7:00 p.m. provided an opportunity for those who wanted to load up to do so, and for the rest of us who never get enough to go on another thirteen miles to Petersburg. Hank Brown helped out at the yard switch and probably regretted it later because he threw it nearly sixty times!

It was still a large group that came to a stop again when I came upon a bull in the middle of the rails. He simply refused to move and he was bigger than an M9. When he pawed the ground, snorted and started swishing his tail I turned off the headlight. Apparently this was the key and he ambled off.

We turned on the first paved crossing in Petersburg for two reasons: one, I couldn't get the wye switch lock open and two, the frogs were all self-guarding, and a hazard to small wheels.

The night run back to Moorefield was slow and uneventful. By the time we arrived at Moorefield, the early group was loaded and gone, leaving us plenty of space to load up several cars at a time.

Despite the record turnout, nobody came back on a tow bar, and the loading and unloading went even more smoothly than ever. Thanks to all attendees who made the day a great success.

NORTH SHORE R.R. HOSTS FALL MEET

By Gary Gadziala

Way back in 1932, Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Passenger Local #26, leaving Northumberland at 7 a.m., took one hour and fifteen minutes to reach Beach Haven. There were nine stops on this 39-mile trip.

If you missed that train, there were departures at 2:15 p.m. and 5:50 p.m. as well. You could have gone all the way to Barclay Street in Manhattan by taking their ferry across the Hudson from Hoboken.

The tracks east of Beach Haven, which ran to Scranton, are gone, so this was our destination on September 12, 1992. Our running time was somewhat longer, but we had more fun.

The prominent DL&W initials on the engine house at Northumberland left little doubt about the heritage of this line. Before our departure, Wayne Lepple from the North Shore gave us a talk about the interesting features of this railroad.

Not far from Northumberland, we came upon two ancient Lackawanna MU electric cars on a siding, pantographs extended skyward. The New York Times aboard dated back to mid-1982. A local restaurant owner plans to refurbish these for his facility.

Heading further east, we passed through Danville, where a street fair was in full swing. Plenty of onlookers here. But for me, the highlight of the trip was at Rupert, where there are three parallel bridges across Fishing Creek. We crossed on an open deck bridge in between an ex-Reading trestle to the north and a covered highway bridge downstream. The trestle made an excellent vantage point for photographing our cars.

We also crossed under the right-of-way of the former Reading Catawissa branch.

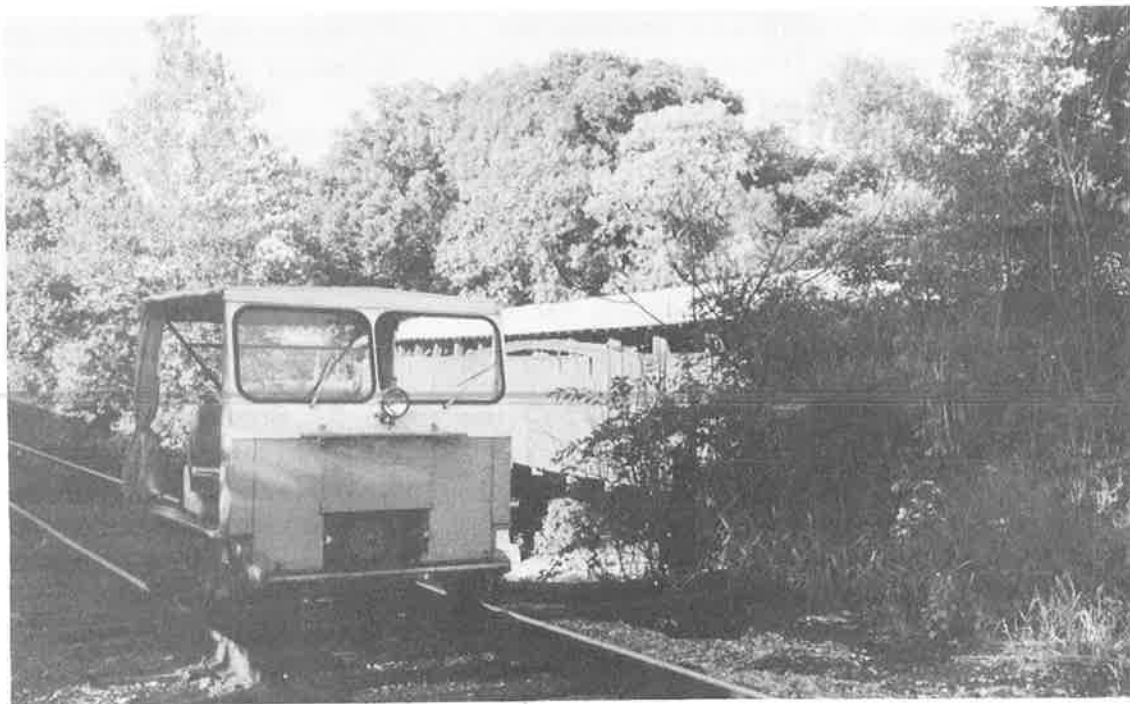
For most of our trip, the railroad ran along the old North Branch Canal, which was abandoned in 1901. Some portions still had water. The DL&W bought the canal and relocated part of their right-of-way onto the canal.

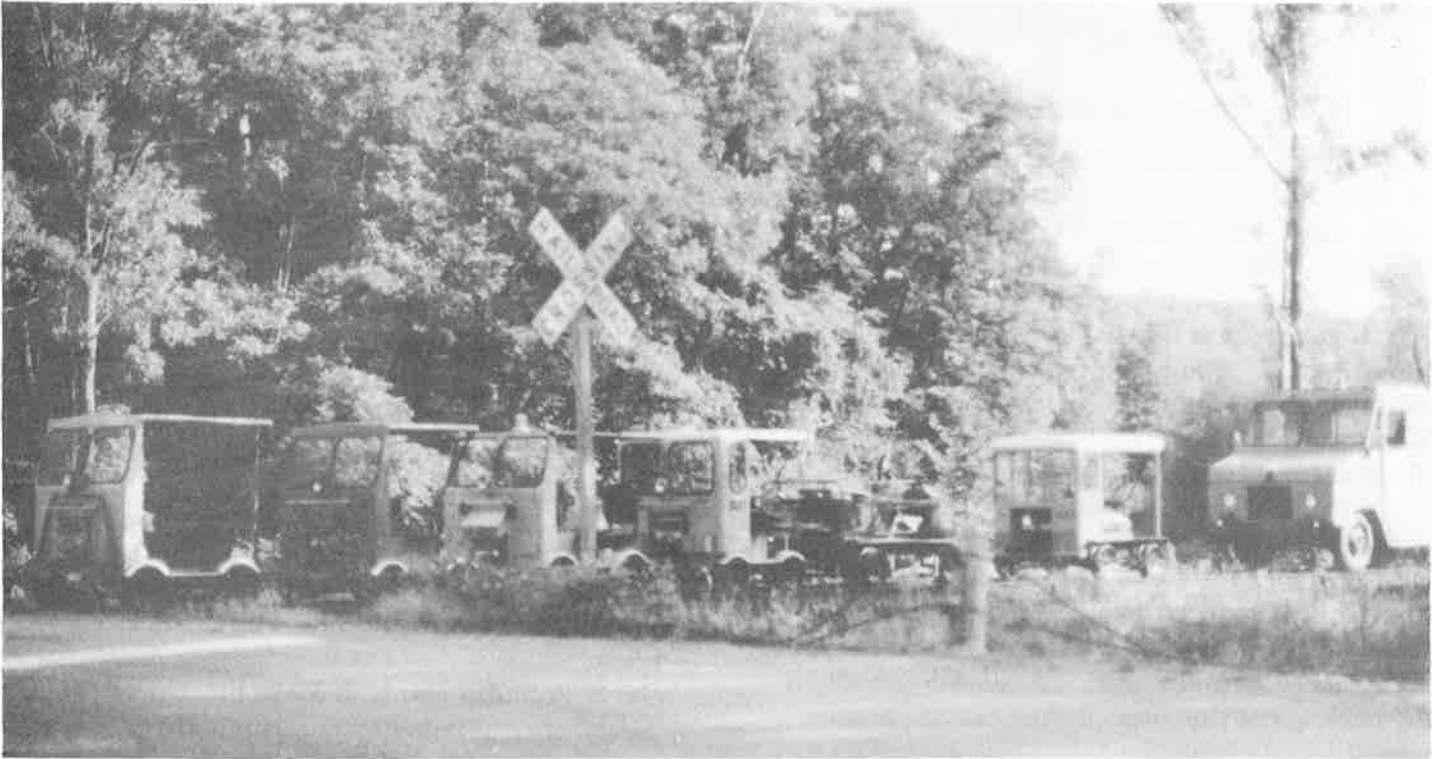
At Beach Haven, the Pennsylvania Power and Light Company has a large nuclear generating facility. They built a beautiful park, which fronts on the Susquehanna River, where we stopped for lunch.

We rode over a mile of welded rail at the end of the line, which was part of a DL&W upgrade project for the Bloomsburg branch years ago. Another interesting feature was the Berwick Hill track, which served the huge former American Car & Foundry plant. It looks like they used plenty of sand going up this track. Now, the largest shipper is a Heinz pet food plant.

Thanks to Scott Cottner for helping arrange this trip. The plan is to have a three-day, three-railroad trip next year.

Gary Gadziala took a picture of his ex-Union Pacific MT14 on an ex-DL&W trestle with a covered bridge in the background.





Eleven motorcars and one hy-railer made the trip on the OC&T RR this summer.

2ND OIL CREEK & TITUSVILLE RUN BIGGER, BETTER

By Ric Tritsch

The morning of Saturday, August 29th, was cloudy and rainy. By 10:30 a.m., however, the clouds had cleared and 11 motorcars and one hy-rail truck were ready to cover the 13 scenic miles of the Oil Creek and Titusville RR.

We did have two casualties for the first run. Don Francis removed the brake rigging from his Portec shortly after unloading, but not on purpose. He brought his hy-rail truck, so all was not lost. Don Barnes' MT14 would not run, but he found the problem. August 29th dawned down for Dons!

The motorcars and hy-rail switched onto the main line and followed the train when it pulled out at 11:45 a.m. for the 13-mile trip.

We returned to Perry Street Station, after some track cleaning, in time for half the group to ride the afternoon train. The R.E.P.A.I.R. Group (Rail Equipment Preservation and Information Restoration), the sponsoring body of the OC&T meet, hosted 21 underprivileged young people

and their counsellors on the OC&T train trip and on a tour of the Drake Well historical site.

The rest of the motorcar gang took a short run on the Filmore freight track through the center of Titusville, about three miles.

We kicked off the night run with a "hobo picnic" beside the tracks at Drake's Well State Park, hosted by the local historical society. The hobo stew, cooked in an iron kettle over an open wood fire, was delicious. (There was a rumor that the stew meat was road kill skunk.)

The night run was chilly but fun. A number of deer were startled by the merry band of putt putt nutts!

Sunday morning dawned beautiful, as the seven remaining motorcars and one hy-railer made the 13-mile ride one more time. This trip was highlighted by a number of photo stops.

The afternoon lunch ride to Burger King on the Filmore freight track was cut short by some major liquid sunshine. The rain didn't dampen our spirits, however, and plans are in the works for the third annual OC&T motorcar run in 1993.

RECIPE FOR MULTI-MOTORCAR MOVER

By Ric Tritsch

Ingredients:

1. One four-horse trailer (cost varies; I paid \$100).
2. 30 feet of two-inch square tubing, \$130.
3. One two-inch ball receiver, \$29.
4. One tongue jack, \$30.
5. 50 feet of multi-conductor cable (five- to seven-conductor, cost varies).
6. Two tail lights (I used the truck type with back-up lights, \$15 each, \$30 total).
7. Miscellaneous marker lights and reflectors, \$25.
8. Two junction boxes, weather tight, \$7 each, \$14.
9. 20 feet of flexible wire tubing, connectors, wire ties, miscellaneous screws and bolts, \$25.

Directions:

1. Remove everything from trailer, including fenders and wood flooring. You can leave the wooden floor. Mine was made of 2 X 8 boards, so I removed them to cut down on weight.
2. Clean all surfaces. I had mine professionally sand blasted and primed for \$175.
3. Cut two-inch square tubing to desired length.
4. Position square tubing at exact width on top of trailer frame rails, using track gauge or measuring device.
5. Tack weld square tubing. Regauge. If correct, weld in place.
6. Weld two-inch ball receiver to tongue. If yours is okay, delete this step.
7. Remount fenders. Mine had to be moved out three inches on each side to clear hubs on motorcar wheels.
8. Mount tongue jack.

9. At this point, I painted the trailer using rust resistant paint, \$30 per gallon.

10. Mount lights and junction boxes.

11. Wire trailer as desired. I did not wire electric brakes at this point; however, I left one conductor to wire in later if needed. I also used heavy duty male and female conductors to the tow vehicle, \$20.

12. Mount spare tire on trailer if desired.

13. My trailer has dropped axles. It is 18 inches to the top of the two-inch square tubing. You can use any means to mount your ramps; I used two-inch square tubing, four feet long. They are notched to fit in the end of the tubing welded to the trailer. I store the ramps inside the frame rails of the trailer during transport. The ramps are drilled, pinned, and clipped to keep them in place.



Ric Tritsch built the trailer shown above for under \$700. It has an estimated weight of 1,200 pounds empty, and tows true empty or loaded. It can haul two M19s and an M9 with room to spare. The only drawback thus far is the need to remove the trailer fenders for motorcars with side steps or brackets that extend past the width of the motorcar fenders.

Want Ads

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE SETOFF is happy to print all ads received from the membership. Please send ads directly to: Gene Tucker, Editor, 1004 North Kentucky Street, Arlington, VA 22205-2310. If you wish to run an ad for more than one issue, please note that information on your ad. Thank you!

FOR SALE: M19-F from P & WV Ry, has OD-B rebuilt engine, complete cab and top; \$950.00. M19 from Southern Ry, has RO-C engine, not running, has cab and top, \$700.00. Contact: Jeff Levengood, 436 Luzern Street, Sugarcreek, OH 44681. Phone (216) 852-4323.

FOR SALE: Fairmont S2-H, former IC #F8434. Paint and curtains are two years old. Car has 12 volt system and runs great. Must sell because of health. Asking \$1,500.00. STEEL FRAMED FLATCAR with 20-inch riveted wheels, real heavy hauler, asking \$175.00. BREAK APART RAILCART, very good condition, beats pulling heavy flatcar, asking \$150.00. Contact: Jerry W. Foust, Box 636, Venedocia, OH 45894. Phone (419) 667-4934 (before 11:00 p.m. EST).

FOR SALE: Fairbanks Morse 40-B, complete car, engine stuck, needs restoration, \$500.00. FAIRMONT ST-2, ex-Lehigh Valley car, built 1944, engine stuck, needs restoration, \$400.00. Contact: Dave Rose, 202 Center Street, Elmer, NJ 08318, phone (609) 358-3409.

FOR SALE: Cabooses and Fairmont motorcars. Shoppers send SSAE to: Anderson Steel Co., A.S.F.R.R., P.O. Box 2019, Fairfield, IA 52556. Serious buyers call (515) 472-2020.

FOR SALE: Fairmont M19s and parts, also other motorcar parts and complete machines. Send SSAE to: Hugh Cain, Southeastern Rail Services, 510 Austin Street, Norfolk, VA 23503. Phone (804) 558-6579.

NARCOA 1993 CALENDAR PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED

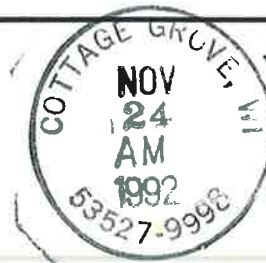
By Gene Tucker

We are still looking for a few good photos for the 1993 NARCOA calendar. To date, we've received about six of them, but need an equal number more to complete a calendar for the whole year. Deadline for photos is December 1st, and we will send the calendar to the printer shortly after that so you can have it in time to use it for the New Year.

Photos should be of unusual setting or interest (shots of cars on trestles, in tunnels, etc., are always great), and we especially encourage pictures taken at different seasons of the year (railroaders are all weather types, after all!). Finally, photos should be either black and white or sharp color shots, and should be sent to Gene Tucker, Editor, 1004 North Kentucky Street, Arlington, VA 22205-2310.

THE SETOFF

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