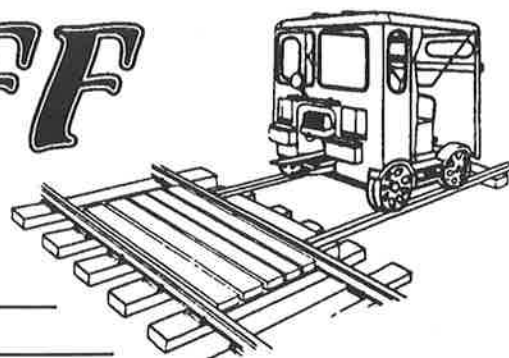


# THE SETOFF

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

Spring 1993



*Above, the motorcar lineup at Frostburg, MD, the end of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's line, after a run up the mountain from the Cumberland station on May 2, 1993.*

Photo by Wray Dudley

*At right, Henry Herrman's MP M19 after going through the Northern Central line's Howard tunnel in Pennsylvania on November 15, 1992.*

Photo by Jeff Herrman



## Editor's Notes

By Gene Tucker

It has been an extremely busy spring and therefore this issue of *THE SETOFF* is a little late. We'll do better the next time, but extend apologies to some who sent in meet notices whose schedule we didn't meet.

We'll remind you of some editorial changes:

1. Photos sent for publication in *THE SETOFF* cannot be returned. Please send us duplicate photos for publication. We are then able to reprint issues at future times using the original photos.

2. Send ads, meet stories, and other articles directly to me.

3. Meet announcements should go to either Dick Ray or Hank Brown. Other

association business should go to Joel Williams (membership renewals, membership rosters, etc).

4. We prefer that meet stories and articles be printed (if you compose them on a word processor) or typed. This makes it easier for us to scan them into our computer. Ads and meet notices we can handle in handwritten form.

Finally, we appreciate all the information and stories you send us. Occasionally, we get little tidbits, like this one from Mike Billet of York, PA, who sent along a reprint of an article in the March 1943 issue of *RAILROAD MAGAZINE*, which stated that a motorcar operator could be fined fifty five cents for failing to have his rulebook handy at all times . . . How times have changed!

Deadline for the Summer issue is August 1st.

## A Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

We have observed a trend in the past couple of years toward increasingly faster speeds at some of the motorcar meets we have attended or have heard about. We feel that constant speeds above 20 or 25 m.p.h. are unsafe for the conditions of many of the railroads we have visited.

We were at a meet recently where the average speed was about 30 m.p.h. throughout the day. At one point, when we were stopped for a few minutes, a guy two cars back came up to us and said, "Can't you go any faster?" We were a bit disturbed by this remark, especially when we later looked back at this gentleman to see him traveling again at about 30 m.p.h. and no more than 10 feet behind the car in front of him--and on rain-slick rails.

We were told of a meet earlier this year where a cruising speed of 30 to 40 m.p.h. was maintained and encouraged in order to reach the destination on time. On this run, one motorcar was thrown over the track and down an embankment by a twig thrown up on the track by the preceding motorcar. Fortunately the operator was not seriously hurt; unfortunately, nobody slowed down!

Why are we going so fast? One reason for faster speeds may be that we are trying to cover too many miles in too little time. It may be also that as operators become more adept at repairing and maintaining their equipment, their motorcars can go faster. Just because we can go farther and faster doesn't mean we have to.

NARCOA was organized to promote and facilitate the safe enjoyment of track car operation. Through the efforts of NARCOA and its members, we have been permitted access to more and more track each year. Let us not abuse this privilege by ignoring basic safety precautions. Meet organizers and participants alike must adhere to reasonable safety standards--including prudent operating speeds for the conditions.

Let's slow down and enjoy a safe ride!

Ronnie and Deanna Baird  
Arlington, VA

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION  
OF ARTICLES, ETC., FOR THE  
SUMMER ISSUE OF *THE SETOFF*  
IS AUGUST 1ST**

## *A Letter to the Editor*

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to Ron Zammit's "An open letter to the motorcar community". I have been associated with this hobby since October 1987. In that time I have been on or set up over 65 motorcar meets in 28 different states. Some were very exciting and some were "ho hum" meets. But at every one, the enthusiasm was always high and the fellowship was great.

I have always encouraged members to speak with their local railroads and if they need support, I was always ready to support their efforts. I think it's great to have all these local groups. They are the backbone of this hobby. I hope there is a proliferation of at least one motorcar group in every state.

However, like Ron, I strongly support the need for a strong, democratically guided national organization which will serve the needs of its members.

When I worked with the MCCA in the early years, and now with NARCOA, I had no problem opening doors to the railroads when I mentioned I worked with a national organization. It adds credibility to everything we do in this hobby.

I have read in MOW the need for rules. There are six rule books and another one coming soon from the Mississippi Valley Division of NARCOA. Every rule book that I have read includes the basic need for safety and most of the rules are the same. Do we really need seven rule books?

How long will it take for us to realize we need to work together?

The National Model Railroad Association has a strong national image. People not even connected with it recognize what they do and how they function. Within the national, there are regions, divisions, and clubs that support the local efforts of model railroading. Their board of directors fight, curse, and don't always like what is jammed down their throats, but they all remember why they are at their board meetings and they work together to better their hobby. Why can't we do the same?

Only when we end the petty jealousies, turf protection, and ambiguities of rules and regulations, and begin to work together toward common goals will we achieve the recognition of national status from the railroads. After all,

without them we have expensive lawn ornaments.

How long will it take for the railroads to say "No more meets" because three or four people from different groups keep banging on their doors? There needs to be some coordination of meets so we don't overlap.

This year, I will travel in 17 different states to ride my motorcars and I will try to encourage hobbyists to think nationally and act locally. It will benefit everyone connected with this hobby.

I will continue to carry the torch for a national organization which is supportive of its members and works towards improving the hobby. I hope those that read this letter will do the same.

Hank Brown  
Cottage Grove, WI

# ***THE SETOFF***

Volume 7 Number 1

Editor .....	Gene Tucker 1004 N. Kentucky St. Arlington, VA 22205
Co-Editor .....	Deanna Baird 2700 S. First St. Arlington, VA 22204
Contributing Editor .....	Dick Ray (East Coast) 5 Hemlock Pl. Randolph, NJ 07869
Contributing Editor .....	Doug Leffler 622 Pawnee Jackson, MI 49203
Contributing Editor .....	Brett Tallman (West Coast) 3354 Fuchsia St. Costa Mesa, CA 92626
NARCOA Roster .....	Joel Williams Coordinator Box 82 Greendell, NJ 07839

*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. Membership in NARCOA, which includes a subscription to *THE SETOFF*, is \$10.00 per year, and is available from Joel Williams, Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839.

## Meets

*Members who have organized meets are encouraged to advertise those events here. We will publish all notices received. Send materials to Dick Ray, 5 Hemlock Place, Randolph, NJ 07869, to Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527, or, if time is short, directly to the Editor.*

**July 30 - August 1:** Ride three railroads in three days in the York, PA, area . . . a night run on Friday, July 30th, on the Maryland & Pennsylvania RR Preservation Society's track in Muddy Creek Forks, PA (16 miles round trip), plus a run over the Northern Central line from New Freedom to Hyde, PA (34 miles round trip) and over possibly York Rail or the Maryland & Pennsylvania RR in York on July 31st and August 1st (exact itinerary to be determined). Gene Tucker is leading the July 30th run, and Henry Herrman is leader for the Northern Central run. Send SSAE to Mike Billet, 46 Woodside Drive, York, PA 17402.

**August 6:** Ft. Eustis, VA. Ride this rare trackage at the home of the U.S. Army's Transportation Corps. See the excellent museum (complete with steam locomotives). Motorcar owners are encouraged to display their motorcars for the post's annual Open House, then operate over the base's system in the afternoon. A.A.R.O. insurance may be required (uncertain at press time). Send SSAE to Hugh Cain, 510 Austin Street, Norfolk, VA 23503.

**August 14:** Almost Heaven (in a Fairmont, F-M, Northwestern or whatever)! Year No. 5 - South Branch Valley RR, Moorefield, WV. This is a 100-mile round trip run from Petersburg to Green Spring through the beautiful valley of the South Branch of the Potomac River; \$30 per car, advance registration only, please. SSAE to Wray Dudley, 1116 Vickilee Road, Richmond, VA 23236.

**September 4 - 5:** Ride the Susie Q Motorcar Meet on Labor Day weekend, September 5, 1993. Over 100 miles round trip on both the NYS&W and former Lehigh & Hudson River Railway trackage. Featuring welded rail, beautiful scenery in northern NJ/NY, on the first NARCOA trip since rail service was restored in the late 1980s by the Delaware Otsego Corp. \$100 per car. Opportunity to see stack trains, and the "new" Chinese steam locomotive #142 in operation. Trip runs from Butler, NJ, to Warwick, NY, via Limecrest/Sparta Junction, NJ, and return. This track is an active, heavy duty freight and passenger line (yes, the railroad charges are expensive, but due to the

operating characteristics of the line, etc., they are realistic and fully worth the cost). A.A.R.O. insurance required. No towed trailer cars. Full NARCOA safety rules apply. Includes a commemorative dash plaque and other unique mementoes. Also may include both rail and non-rail activities on Saturday, September 4th, depending on response. This trip is a unique opportunity to experience today's bigtime railroading in a rural setting with plenty of time to socialize. Motel info sent after payment received. Don't delay, registration is expected to be heavy for this trip. Please send payment to: Walter M. Matuch, P.O. Box 742, Bayonne, NJ 07002. Send SSAE for confirmation.

**September 25 - 26:** The Cuyahoga Valley Line hosts a work/run meet. Work will consist of litter cleanup, brushcutting, and light track maintenance. This line runs through the scenic Cuyahoga Valley National Recreational Area, near a historic canal and other sights in the Cleveland and Akron areas. Cost is \$10 per car. For information and a registration form, send SSAE to R.R. Hixenbaugh, P.O. Box 141, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221-0141. Phone (216) 923-0298.

**November 6 - 7:** Attend the fifth annual Handcar/Steamcar Meet on the Wilmington & Western RR. No conventionally powered cars permitted. Test your strength, fortitude and mettle! Send SSAE to Gene Tucker, 1004 North Kentucky Street, Arlington, VA 22205.

**Ongoing:** NARCOA has reopened discussions with the National Park Service at the Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton, PA. They are interested in right-of-way cleaning and beautification prior to the start of their excursion season in July. We will be cleaning the 13-mile section between Scranton and Moscow. Invitations will be sent to the local enthusiasts and the semi-local diehards. Those unsure of their status are requested to send a SSAE to Dick Ray, 5 Hemlock Place, Randolph, NJ 07869 for an invitation. There will be no charge. We plan multiple events of 10 to 20 cars each.

The FIRST IOWA DIVISION of NARCOA sponsors the following events. Contact Tom Sharratt, Trip Coordinator, 4023 Shawnee Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50310, for additional details.

**Date TBA:** Fremont and Elkhorn Valley RR in Nebraska. July or August. Will probably include a night run.

**Date TBA:** Appanoose County RR in Centerville, IA, to include new mileage being purchased from NS to Albia, IA, and Iowa Army Ammunition Plant ride in Middletown, IA. This

will be a Saturday and Sunday meet, probably in July or later. Date pending ICC approval of NS sale.

HOOSIER RAILCARS sponsors the following meets. For information and registration, send SSAE to Stan and Ruth Conyer, Hoosier Railcars, 9333 State Road 46W, Columbus, IN 47201.

July 3 - 4: The Firecracker 300. Approximately 300 miles round trip from Indianapolis to Evansville, IN. A new run through southern Indiana. A.A.R.O. insurance required. Cost is \$30.

August 14: The Thoroughbred. Kentucky RR Museum, 34 miles round trip. Steam locomotive #152 will be operating this weekend. Cost is \$10 per person, \$7 per child.

September 18: Towpath Express. Ride 44 miles round trip on the Whitewater Valley RR. Set on south of Connersville, IN. Cost is \$10 per adult, \$5 per child.

October 16: The Red Devil Express. A 34-mile round trip over the Indiana Railway Museum's track from French Lick to Duboise, IN. Includes a 2,200-foot tunnel. A.A.R.O. insurance required. Cost is \$20 per car (\$10 if Museum member).

October 17: Hills of Crane. Ride 33 miles round trip over the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center's trackage southwest of Bloomington, IN. Cost is \$20 per car.

The MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION of NARCOA sponsors the following events. For a copy of their newsletter, "The Extra Board," or meet information, send SSAE to Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527. (Some of the meets listed below are also sponsored in conjunction with the First Iowa Division and with Wilderness Tours.)

June 28: Central Montana Rail: 164 miles, Hanover to Geraldine, MT. A.A.R.O. insurance required.

June 30: St. Maries River RR: 142 miles, Bovill to Plummer, ID. A.A.R.O. insurance required.

July 1: Royal Slope RR: 50 miles from Royal City to Othello, WA. A.A.R.O. insurance required.

July 3: Tillamook Bay RR: 144 miles from Banks to Tillamook, OR. A.A.R.O. insurance required.

July 7 - 8: Nevada Northern RR: 300 miles from Ely to Shafter, NV. A.A.R.O. insurance required.

July 9: Heber Creeper: 52 miles, beginning at Heber, UT. A.A.R.O. insurance required.

July 17 - 18: Escanaba & Lake Superior RR. The dates are tentative, but are expected to be confirmed shortly. No itinerary is known at this time.

August 14: Wisconsin & Michigan RR, Ironwood, MI, to Mellon, WI. Send large SSAE to Mike Paul, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904. Phone (414) 235-2607.

August 21: Badger Army Ammunition Plant, Baraboo, WI. This is a first time ever meet over the plant's track. Trip will run 27.5 miles. Craig Bluschke is Meet Coordinator, phone (608) 437-4419.

September 4 - 7: Algoma Central Railway. "Do the Line II," 666 miles from Sault Ste. Marie to Hearst via Wawa. There may be slots available for this popular run.

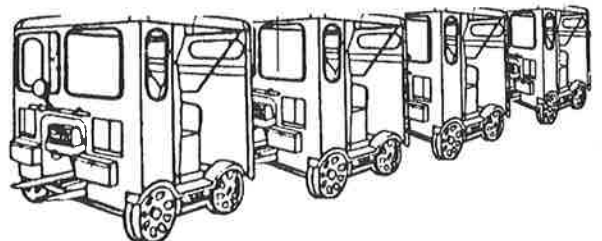
MOTORCAR OPERATORS WEST (M.O.W.) sponsors the following meets. Send SSAE to addresses listed below. M.O.W. may be contacted at Motorcar Operators West, 8672 Fairmont Way, Fair Oaks, CA 95628.

August 21 - 22: Santa Cruz, Big Trees and Pacific RR. No car limit. Cost is \$35 per car, plus \$5 per person above two riders per car who are not family members. A.A.R.O. insurance required. Deadline is August 10th. Send SSAE to Don Breitbarth, Coordinator, 688 West Fernwood Circle, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

August 28 - 29: McCloud River Railway. Plus night run! A.A.R.O. insurance required. Cost is \$115 per car. Deadline is August 9th. We will try to set a new record for 80 cars on the Lake Britton bridge. Come be a part of history! Trailers by advance registration only. Send SSAE to Don Connelly, 5850 Anderson Road, Forestville, CA 95436. Group will be split up and run as trains with train orders.

September 4 - 5: Nevada Northern Railway. Railroad Festival, East Ely to Shafter, NV, and camp overnight, with return the next day. Contact Ron Zammit, 469 Campana, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420.

October 16 - 17: Port of Tillamook Fall Color Meet. Cost is \$130 per car, no trailers please. A.A.R.O. insurance is required. Contact Bob Church, 11508 Green Road, Wilton, CA 95693.



## THERE'S BEEN LOTS OF WINTER ACTIVITY ON THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RAILWAY IN NORTH CAROLINA

By Hugh Cain

What a difference ten weeks and a severe winter storm can make on a mountain railroad.

Tom Johnson invited a dozen or so interested motorcar owners/operators to Bryson City, NC, for a motorcar run on January 2, 1993. The prior evening was spent organizing the Virginia-Carolina Association of Motor Car Operators, Inc. (VA-CAR AMCO).

Early Saturday morning, the eager operators lined up at the Bryson City depot for a safety lecture and flagging rules. If everything went according to schedule, they would cover as much of the 62-mile-long railroad as the short daylight permitted.

The group departed the Great Smoky Mountains Railway on Sunday after having ridden about three-quarters of the available line. A second organizational meeting was called for Spencer, NC, in February.

By March, VA-CAR AMCO had volunteered to assist the GSMR in cleaning the right of way of trash and junk. Several dates were established for March and April. This would have the work completed before the line was opened for the tourist season.

This was where Mother Nature stepped in. On March 13, the snow started falling. By the time it was all over, the railroad was covered in 24 to 36 inches of snow and had drifts up to 5 or 6 feet deep in places. Thousands of trees fell across the right of way, either pushed out of the ground or broken off, both because of the heavy snow. At least three weather-related rock slides



*At the Nantahala Outdoor Center during a rest stop April 3, 1993.*

and one small dirt slide occurred.

All in all, this was "The Worst Storm of The Century". Plans for the work session on March 20 and 21 were hastily cancelled. The railroad had to open their line for freight traffic first; we would get involved later. Eventually a work session was held on March 27 and 28 in less than desirable weather.

That was to change however. Early on the frosty Saturday morning of April 3rd, we met at the Dillsboro, NC, depot to conduct another work session. The weather was crisp; warm weather was promised for the afternoon. At least it wasn't snowing or raining. At about 8:30 a.m., Tom called for a safety briefing, flagging instructions, cleaning assignments and cleaning gear issue meet.

The participants were standing around drinking hot coffee while attired in the latest cold weather gear they could find. The briefing was short and to the point. GSMR timetables and complementary folders were handed out to the group.

"And they're off" was the call. The 16 cars spread out over the line between Dillsboro and Bryson City, performing a very badly needed task. When the whole group congregated in Bryson City for lunch, the landscape behind us was dotted with orange bags filled with cans, glass, plastic and junk. Several small piles of old tires and other discards were piled up, awaiting the GSMR crews on Monday.

After lunch we planned to ride out to the foot of the Red Marble grade to survey other storm damage. Trees were down everywhere. The slides were evident, too. We turned our cars and headed back to Dillsboro. Tomorrow we would be back.

Daylight savings time and Sunday morning arrived early. Another crisp departure. This time there would be no sunny afternoon either. Rain was predicted. Tom held another safety briefing and "away we went." Our plans were to get lunch at Murphy, NC, 62 miles distant.

The ride to Red Marble grade was easy. Once there, Tom had the smaller cars couple up with a larger car for the ascent over the near 5% grade. Quick Carlson and Dottie were on their beautiful M-9, just behind the car I was on. I



*At left, the April 4, 1993, lineup at Dillsboro, NC, on the Great Smoky Mountains Rwy., with Tom Johnson's A-3 at the head of the pack.*

*Below, trash detail at Bryson City.*

Photos by Hugh Cain

had begged a ride with Jim Baird, on his M19AA, another fine car. An easy connection was made between the cars and we began our assault on the grade, double-headed.

We made a short stop at the top of the grade, Topton, NC, near the site of the former interchange with the Shay-powered Graham County RR. Couplings released, away to Murphy. We rolled into the ex-L & N yard at noon.

Our riders quickly overwhelmed the small Hardees in town. They were already serving their regular customers when our hungry droves arrived. Lunch took about 30 minutes. Afterwards, we turned our cars in what had been the Southern Railway and L & N interchange yard. Jim and I scouted out the remains of the motor-car shed that once held the MT-19 I now have.

While the remaining cars were being turned, Jim and I gassed the M19AA. We had used a good portion of the four and one-half gallons on board. All cars safely turned, includ-



ing the A-3 owned by Tom, we were off to Dillsboro.

We made good time getting back. Plus we had daylight savings time on our side, too. All in all, we had performed a needed service for the railroad, had ridden about 200 miles, had good weather and good company. What more could you ask for?

Thanks to the Great Smoky Mountains Railway for letting us assist them, and thanks to Tom Johnson for the idea of VA-CAR AMCO and a personal thanks to Jim Baird for the ride.

## FLORIDA CENTRAL RAILROAD HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL MEET

By Jack Whitt

Friday evening, April 23, 1993, 16 motorcars and two passenger trailers, set on at Wooten Park in Tavares, Florida, rode to Mt. Dora and dined at Don's Restaurant. We then continued on to Sorrento, turned and returned to Tavares.

Saturday morning after a safety meet at 8:00 we left for Umatilla. The Lake County Sheriff's office had two deputies stopping traffic on busy highway 441. Their assistance had been requested earlier; usually we set out a flagger with a red flag, but blue flashing lights demand more attention than just a red flag.

The trip through Eustis around the lake-shore by the beautiful homes was a view not seen very often from railroad tracks in town. We turned on paved crossing before Umatilla and returned to Tavares. The deputies were waiting for us and had traffic stopped as we approached 441.

After a brief stop in Tavares we continued on to Plymouth, home office for Florida Central, then on through Apopka to Torronto where we had to back onto a siding to get onto the main line going to Winter Garden. We had a welcoming committee from our Central Florida National Railroad Historical Society Chapter to greet us. It was really the chapter members having a work day, but it was nice being greeted anyway. After

enjoying the hospitality and restroom of our chapter we returned to Plymouth where we were hurriedly greeted and waved on by Ben Biscan, General Manager of Florida Central. We had to beat a train headed our way to a siding half way to Zellwood. We made it with minutes to spare. I guess I should add that the two-way radio our most capable Train Master, Steve Torrico, had could have stopped that train if we had needed more time. After resting up a bit and making reservations at the Green House restaurant on old 441 in Mt. Dora, we cranked up our motorcars and dined out for the second night.

Sunday morning we still had 14 motorcars left and we rode again to Sorrento. The first trip was at night and our first timers wanted to see what the countryside looked like in the day time. It was a gorgeous day, cool with plenty of sunshine. They were having a sailboat regatta on Lake Dora and our friends from out of state could not believe we had such beautiful sights in central Florida.

We had about 40 people enjoying three wonderful days riding 140 miles on the rails of Florida Central Railroad. We will always be indebted to Ben Biscan because without his permission none of this would ever have happened.

A big thank you Ben; we do appreciate you.



*One of the  
many  
beautiful  
views along  
the Florida  
Central RR.*

Photo by  
John Meier



## A SPRING RUN HELD ON THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA RR TRAVELED THROUGH BAYOUS AND COTTON

By Hank Brown

After spending three fun-packed days in New Orleans, listening to great music and eating ourselves into a coma, we arrived in Clarksdale, Mississippi, a town built around the cotton industry with a population of 14,000 located in the northwest part of the Mississippi River delta.

It was overcast and threatened rain as we walked into the offices of the Mississippi Delta Railroad looking for the general manager. I expected to find a man in his later 40's or 50's running the railroad. It was a pleasant surprise to find a young man in his early 30's with a broad smile coming up to meet us. He is Travis Jenkins, the GM.

After introducing the rest of our crew, Travis said he regretted that he would be unable to join us but that we were welcome to ride from Clarksdale to Swan Lake where the railroad inter-

changes with the Illinois Central Railroad.

We left the office and headed to the "set on" crossing near an antique store. When everyone was set, we opened the throttles and headed southeast. As we were in the delta region, the land was incredibly flat. There were a few bayous but mostly there were cotton processing

plants everywhere, and most of the cotton companies had railroad spurs.

We arrived in Swan Lake where we met Ron Zammit and John Taylor who had driven up from Baton Rouge that morning. They set on and we were off to Webb City for lunch. And what a lunch!! The woman who ran the restaurant treated us to one of the best "Soul Food" meals I have ever eaten.

After lunch we took a leisurely ride back to the yard in Clarksdale where we had a chance to visit the engine house and watch some switching.

Every railroad upon which I have had the privilege of riding always has had something unique and interesting about it. This one had cotton fields and wonderful hospitality.

Our thanks to Travis Jenkins for his support and generous hospitality.



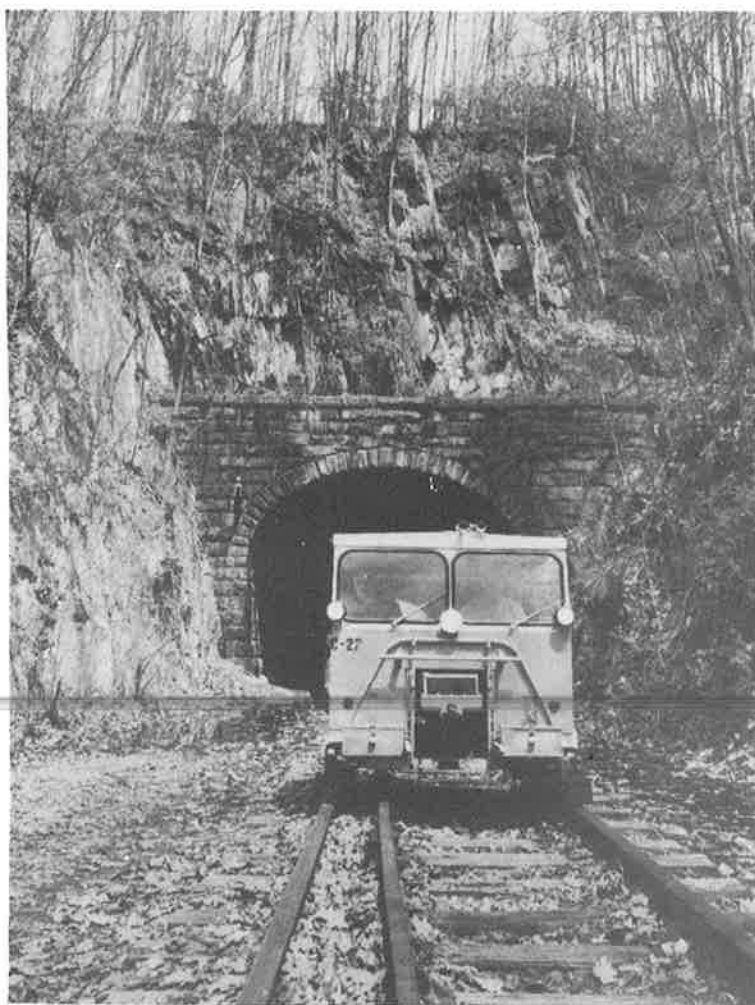
*John Taylor of Baton Rouge, LA, shows off his new M19 next to Bill and Melony Evans' MT19 on the Mississippi Delta RR.*



*Left, on the Northern Central RR at Hyde (York), PA, April 25, 1993.*

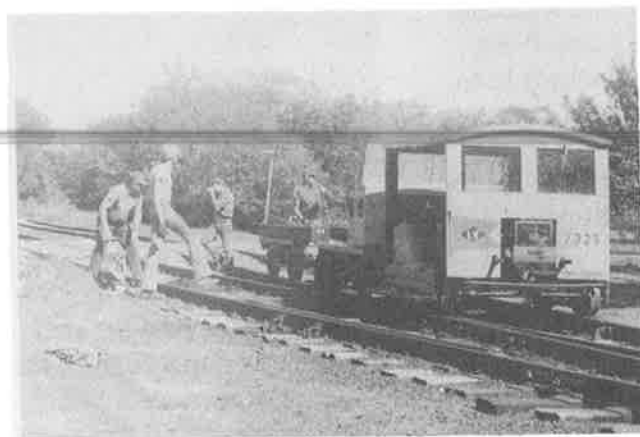
*Below left, Jeff and Henry Herrman in their Fairmont M19 on the Northern Central on April 25, 1993.*

Photos by  
Wray Dudley



*Below, the track gang of the Wanamaker Kempton & Southern, a four-mile steam tourist road operating out of Kempton, PA, was caught on film while changing out switch timbers on the passing siding at Wanamakers, PA, on October 2, 1982. The ex-Lehigh Valley Railroad 7325 is a Fairmont ST-2, delivered in May 1944 and equipped with a LVRR-made cab. It is owned by a WK&S volunteer on loan to the railroad.*

Photo by George Legler

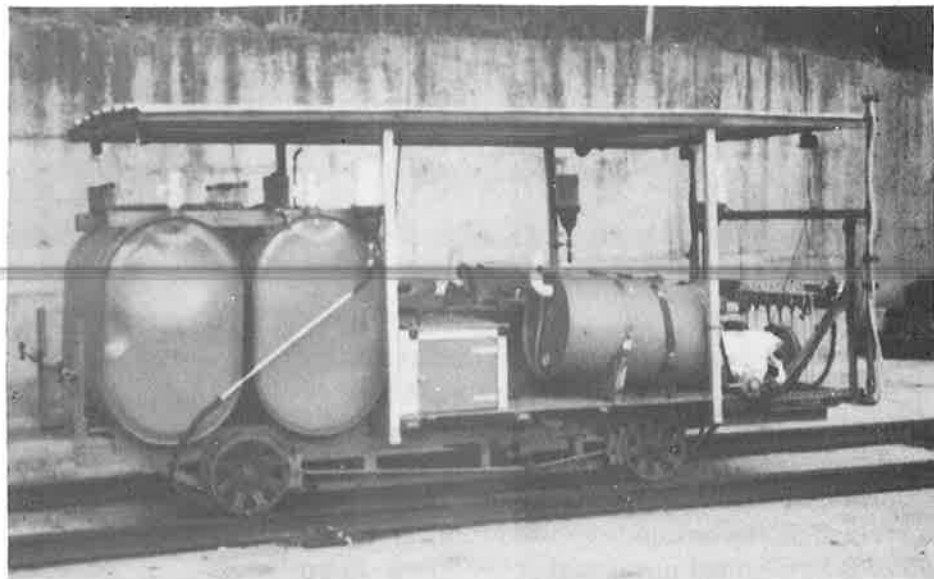




*Bob and Ginny Spurgeon of Okeechobee, FL, own the M19 shown at left which is from the Seaboard Coast Line and, behind it, an M14, which they display in their yard when they aren't being used on the rails. Below left is a view from the front of the M19. Needless to say, the display probably attracts quite a lot of attention.*



*Here's what the Great Smoky Mountains Railway uses to spray weeds along their tracks. Hugh Cain took this photograph at Dillsboro, NC, December 31, 1992.*



## FROM SNOW TO SWAMP TO FOREST, AN ADVENTURE AT THE OUACHITA RAILROAD

By Hank Brown

The morning we left for our March southern trip it was snowing so hard we couldn't see the driveway. We slipped down our steep hill and set the cruise control at 60. Soon the snow turned to rain and eventually stopped by the time we arrived in Jackson, TN.

Although it was cloudy throughout the trip it didn't dampen our spirits for riding on a great little shortline railroad called the Ouachita Railroad (pronounced "Wash-a-tah") in El Dorado, AR.

We met Ron and Kay Zammit, John Taylor, Bill and Melony Evans, Bill Pollard and his son, and Bradley Martin and his crew from the Fort

cals for firefighting equipment. The base product is Bromine, from which the smell of rotten eggs (Hydrogen Sulfide) filtered into our senses. We were told that the chemicals were so caustic that the plant has to be rebuilt every three to five years. The plant had a seven- or eight-track holding yard filled with "shorty" tank cars which were filled with Bromine.

We continued south through the bayou country. Swamps were everywhere. Eagles soared overhead while turtles slipped from their logs into the water as we passed by. It was like going back in time when there were no humans in the area. It was untouched. It was cool so the snakes were easy to spot. One of our members found a 4-foot king snake and had to show us. Poor guy was sleeping soundly beside the tracks. He was freed and slithered under the bridge.

Eventually we climbed out of the swamps and into the properous forests of the Georgia Pacific Company. The railroad runs out of track in a five-track yard in Lillie, LA. Here, the railroad's only other customer, a fiber board manufacturing company, ships many box car loads of fiber board all over the south.

We turned our cars and headed back to El Dorado. Upon arrival we inspected the locomotives, two EMD switchers from the Burlington Northern and some other origin. They both had Bill Robbins' logo on the sides: "OUCH" 64 and "OUCH" 63.

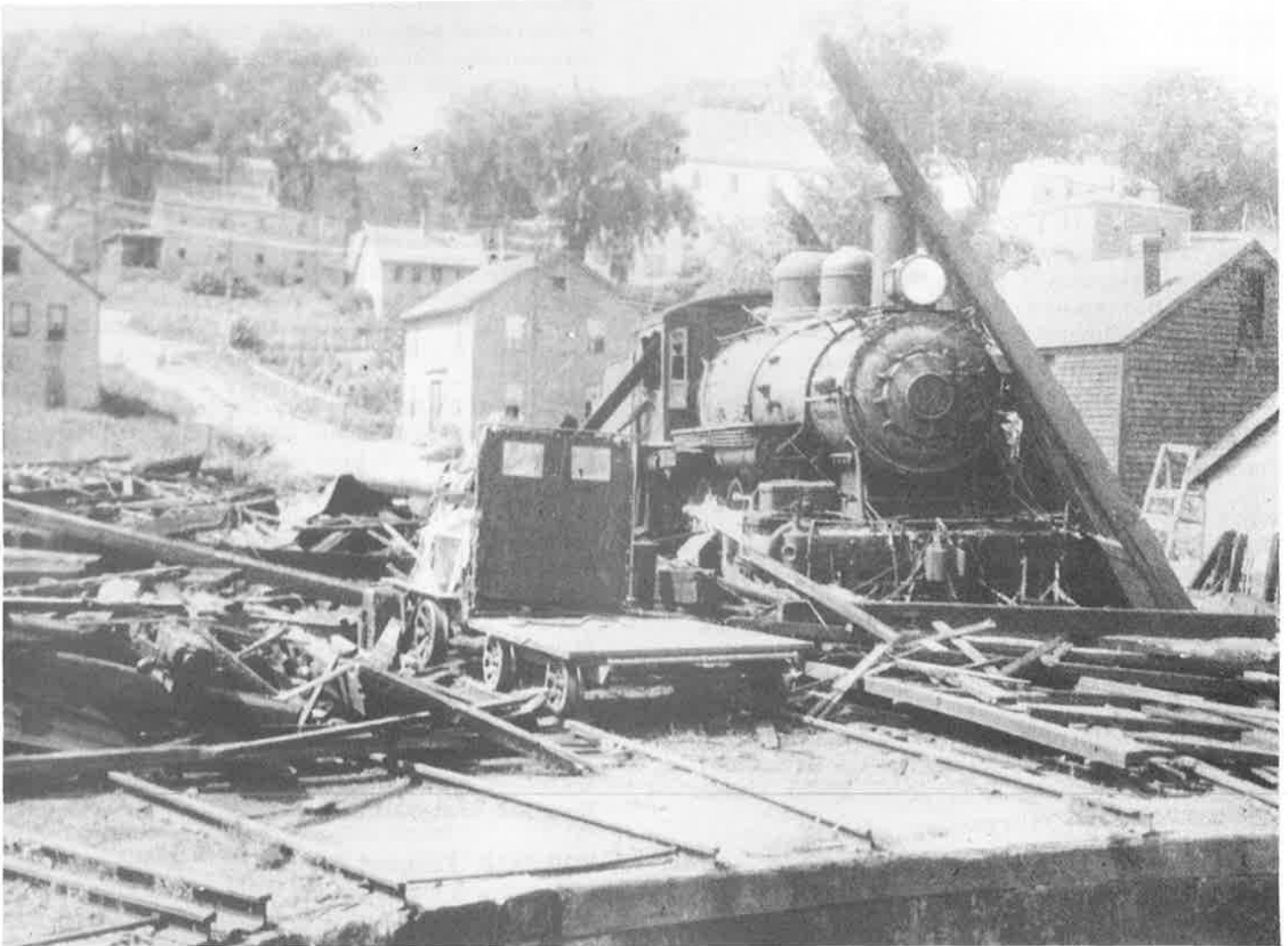
Our thanks to Bill Robbins of the Ouachita Railroad, and especially to Bill Pollard for helping to arrange this meet.



Smith Trolley Museum at the rail yard. Bill Robbins, the owner of the railroad and recently featured in *TRAINS* Magazine, arrived with instructions and safety tips for the meet.

After signing waivers we headed south from El Dorado toward Lillie, LA. About 7 miles out we arrived at the prime revenue producer of the railroad, a chemical plant which produces chemi-

*Above, Bill Pollard and his son inside the car pictured in the yard of the Ouachita Railroad in Lillie, LA, in March 1993.*



## *Nostalgia!*

*These photographs were submitted by Walter Matuch of Bayonne, NJ. The one at left is dated October 9, 1943; the one above is undated.*

## 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. Thank you!*

**FOR SALE:** Kalamazoo Model 27W motorcar, Serial #5089, dates from the late 1940's, with fixed side steps, riveted wheels, and Hercules 4-cylinder gasoline engine. Good drive train, wheels, and brakes. Needs engine work and wood replaced. Price reduced, \$675.00. Contact Dave Williamson, 333 Lancaster Avenue, Apt. #204, Frazer, PA 19355. Phone (215) 296-5584.

**FOR SALE:** Surplus parts not needed for car projects. Send LSSAE for parts list. Contact Dave Rose, 202 Center Street, Elmer, NJ 08318. Phone (609) 358-3409.

**FOR SALE:** Reproduction parts. 10" hand gongs (Jenkins), \$85 ppd.; MR39626 Fairbanks Morse brake shoes, \$60/set ppd.; 23020 Kalamazoo brake shoes, \$60/set ppd. **TAKING ORDERS FOR:** Fairbanks Morse 40-B gas tanks, \$85 ppd.; Fairbanks aluminum lift handle ends, price negotiable; Sheffield velocipede gear sets, price negotiable. Contact: Dave Rose (see ad above).

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont M19 parts. Send list with large SASE to Rockfish and Pender Railway Co., Attn: Carey Boney, 1605 Powers Road, Wallace, NC 28466. Phone (919) 285-7489.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont MT14 Milwaukee Road Tomah Cab. Good car, needs floor, \$700. Also would like any info, copies or original on Sheffield or Kalamazoo velocipede cars. Contact: Joseph Deverell, 347 4th Avenue, N., Onalaska, WI 54650. Phone (608) 783-6850.

**FOR SALE:** Wheel thickness gauges, similar to Fairmont calipers, color-coded scale indicates maximum and minimum tolerances for wheel or flange thicknesses, lightweight aluminum, \$10.00 plus \$1.50 shipping each. Know the status of your wheels before the safety check at the next meet! Contact Craig Bluschke, 10916 Spring Creek Road, Blue Mounds, WI 53517-9633. Phone (608) 437-4419, evenings until 10:00 p.m.

**FOR SALE:** NARCOA flags made of heavy yellow material with black and red graphics and printing. Each flag is 12x18 with double-stitched hem and cotton webbing reinforcement and brass grommets for display. Cost is \$13.50, plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling. Contact: Warren Chiesa, P.O. Box 436, Naperville, IL 60566. Phone (708) 370-4231.

**NEED:** 4 good wheels (tires), part no. 11404K1, 16" x 1/4" x 4 1/2" Fairmont 19. Contact Marsh Proctor, 256 Old Bass River Road, S. Dennis, MA 02660. Phone (508) 398-3330.

**WANTED:** Steel portions of a Fairbanks Morse 40-B friction wheel assembly, that is, the spoked wheel and retainer ring. Contact Terry Meiley, Rt. 2, Box 198, Pine Island, MN 55963. Phone (507) 824-2228, nights or weekends.

**WANTED:** Side wheel for velocipede, metal spokes, 14" diameter. Contact: Ron Zammit, 469 Campana, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420. Phone (805) 489-5724.

**WANTED:** A ride on a railcar (for a NARCOA member who has no railcar) at a meet, or otherwise, within driving distance. Contact: Arthur W. Sweeton, Canton Center, CT 06020. Phone (203) 693-4027.

**FOR SALE:** Ex-Southern Rwy. Fairmont M19 with front and roof, ODB engine, \$950; Ex-Southern Rwy. Fairmont MT19 with front and roof, onan engine, 2-speed transmission, \$1,250; Ex-Canadian National Fairmont MT19 and MT14, full fiberglass cabs with doors, onan engine, 2-speed transmission, \$1,000-\$1,950 each. Contact Mike Billet, 46 Woodside Drive, York, PA 17402. Phone (717) 741-4196.

**FOR SALE/TRADE:** Ex-N.K.P.U.S.& S. "R" signal with short mast, \$300; crossing signal, 4-light, with relay, etc., \$350-\$450. Contact Dave Verzi, 10059 Aldridge, Columbia Station, OH 44028.

**WANTED:** Motor to fit Fairmont M9. Contact Dave Verzi (see ad above).

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont S-2, RO-D engine, restored like new, yellow & black, lettered Seaboard Air Line 27 w/ decals, \$1,795. Contact R.W. Logan, 307 Ott Street, Branchville, SC 29432. Phone (803) 274-8355.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont MT-14 and MT-19 track motor cars. Former CN cars with and without closed cabs. Send stamped, self-addressed envelope to Paul G. Yorkis, 24 Kimberly Drive, Medway, MA 02053 or call (508) 533-1222.

**WANTED:** Photos or slides of New York Central passenger car 2902, Boston and Maine milk car 1907, and Boston and Maine caboose C-86, 186, and 486. Contact Paul G. Yorkis (see ad above).

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont Class S2-H Section Car (Ex-NKP #1572), half restored and in primer. The new features are as follows: brake system, steam condenser, air filter, rail sweeps, carburetor, fuel line, gas tank, exhaust system, weatherproof timer, information plates, windshield wipers, windshield wiper motors (6V), crank holders, drive belt, ammeter, light switch, have all receipts from Fairmont and other businesses to verify. Have \$2,000 in restoration, also have low body single-axle trailer specifically built to haul motorcars valued at \$800. Will let it all go for \$2,500. **MUST SELL.** Contact: Pat Lemons, 1796 Arrowhead Drive, Columbus, OH 43223. Phone (614) 871-1911 (after 6:00 pm EDT).

**WANTED:** Pump handcar in any condition. Also want four 16-inch wheels with axles. Please call or write John L. Uher, P.O. Box 383, Coshocton, OH 43812, phone (614) 622-4000.

**FOR SALE:** Pressure-sensitive vinyl decals. Authentic C.M.St.P. & P., The Milwaukee Road, and Hiawatha emblems, made of highest grade 3M exterior Scotchcal stock, from railroad drawings, with colors matched to railroad specified Dulux paint samples. Three monograms in two sizes: C.M.St.P. & P. - 7.62 x 10 inches and 3 x 4 inches; The Milwaukee Road - 7.62 x 10 inches and 3 x 4 inches; Hiawatha Leaping Indian - 8-inch oval and 3.25-inch oval. Rectangular decals: Large size \$5 each; small size \$2.50 each. Oval decals: large size \$6 each; small size \$3 each. Postpaid. Contact Roger Sackett, 4501 169th Avenue, S.E., Issaquah, WA 98027.

**FOR SALE:** Concrete whistle posts. Contact Ron Schlatter, P.O. Box 601, Francesville, IN 47946. Phone (219) 567-2278.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont S2-F. Have original service instructions, parts list and sales order. Rebuilt carburetor, excellent running condition, \$1,200. Contact Dan LaGrange, 2047 N. Genesee Road, Burton, MI 48509. Phone (313) 744-0882.

**FOR SALE:** Restored Fairmont M-14-E, ex. BAR 135, with snowmobile trailer and supplies, \$2,500. Contact Brian R. Dame, P.O. Box 19, West Chesterfield, NH 03466-0019. Phone (603) 256-8133.

**FOR SALE:** MOTORCARS - A-3's, A-4's, A-5's, ex-Canadian MT-14's and MT-19's. LSSAE for list. Contact Hugh Cain, Southeastern Rail Service, 510 Austin Street, Norfolk, VA 23503. Phone (804) 588-6579.

**NARCOA-WEAR now available!!** Multi-color NARCOA t-shirts and sweatshirts in both adult/child sizes, caps, and now lightweight windbreaker jackets are for sale. Fairmont, Kalamazoo, Buda, Northwestern, Sheffield, and related maintenance-of-way theme NARCOA-Wear available now, including safety items - ear plugs, NARCOA red flags, etc. For full flyer describing all items, please contact Walter M. Matuch, P.O. Box 742, Bayonne, NJ 07002, or look for the NARCOA-Wear Company Store at a motorcar meet this summer!!! Mail orders accepted.

**FOR SALE:** Binders for THE SETOFF now available!!! Specially screen-printed durable binders to file all those issues of THE SETOFF. Mail orders accepted. Contact Walter M. Matuch (see ad above).

**FOR SALE:** Motor Car Meet Videos now available!!! A limited selection of NARCOA and other motorcar meets are now available on home video. Tapes run 60 minutes to nearly 2 hours and feature all/most cars on each meet, runbys, and other cinematic surprises. Tapes are edited and include narration of trip highlights, meets

with railroad trains, etc. Send \$25 plus \$3 postage for newest tape available: May 1-2, 1993 "RIDE THE WILD MARY" trip on former Western Maryland Rwy. For complete listing of available tapes, send stamped, self-addressed envelope to Walter Matuch, P.O. Box 742, Bayonne, NJ 07002.

**FOR SALE:** original 6-volt Fairmont Coil (also a 12-volt version available), traditional wood box construction, manufactured periodically, depending on demand. Cash or COD (no credit cards), \$33.10 plus shipping. Contact Pontiac Coil Co., 5385 Perry Drive, Waterford, MI 48329. Phone (313) 674-0456. (Submitted by Larry Moe, Marion, IA.)

**FOR SALE:** Milwaukee Road 1946 Cadillac limousine with flanged wheels. Comes complete with many extra parts and authentic paperwork, and is offered to serious parties for \$11,000/firm. Contact Anderson Steel Railroad Equipment Company, Attn: David J. Thebodo, P.O. Box 2019, 700 West Grimes, Fairfield, IA 52556. Phone (515) 472-2020.

**FOR SALE:** Rare Montana Rail Link (via BN) MT19As with custom cabs and heaters, and Milwaukee Road tomha cab MT19As. All in very good condition with manual. Also, KCS S2 with manual, ATSF MT19As and A3s, plus as many CP and CN MT 19s, 14s as you could possibly want, and four M9s and M19s, to boot. Contact Anderson Steel Flange Railroad Equipment Company. (See ad above).

**FOR SALE:** At last! A high quality Speeder Tee Shirt to call your own. An ATSF MT19A (yellow) in logo stating the truth: "Real Railfans Ride Railcars." Printed on both sides, only \$12.00. Yes, even for you XXL-sized beer drinking individuals from Milwaukee and elsewhere. Contact Anderson Steel Flange Railroad Equipment Company. (See ad above.)

**FOR SALE:** Real rolling stock from A.S.F.R.R. Equipment: Harriman ex-UP "Irvington Flyer" coach car, only \$6,500/OBO, ex-CNW wooden baggage \$4,500, ex-CB&Q baggage \$4,500. Also several cabooses (CNW, ATSF, SOO, MW and others). We also have boxcars (\$1,200 and up), flats, and gons. We invite serious inquiries. Contact Anderson Steel Flange Railroad Equipment Company. (See ad above.)

**WANTED:** F6 carburetor for Fairmont QB engine. Contact Joe Shaffer, 35166 Jason Drive, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Phone (216) 353-0764 (until 10:00 p.m.)

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont C5 carburetors carefully rebuilt and refinished to perform and look like new, \$200 (for comparison, a new carburetor from Fairmont is \$448.50, and the repair kit is \$108.70); please include \$6.00 U.P.S.; many other parts available. Contact Doug Heinmuller, 115 West Street, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. Phone (207) 288-4332, after 8 p.m.

## MOW'S "AROUND THE WEST" TOUR '92 PART II

By Karen Dohler and Ron Zammit

(Continued from last issue)

The next day, Monday, dawned clear and smokey, although the fire was smaller. Most of the motorcars and operators had left, but for the diehard tour members, two plus days of driving were in store to make Denton, MT (to ride the Central Montana Railroad) by Wednesday afternoon. Some of us went via Spokane and northern Idaho, others went through southern Idaho. More smoke was encountered along the way from large fires in southern Idaho.

On Wednesday night, we met for dinner with the railroad people in Lewistown, MT. Carla Allen, general manager of the Central Montana Railroad, was there with her husband along with Bud Knedler (one of the directors of the RR) and his family. The CMR is a grain carrying line, and is old Milwaukee track in excellent shape.

The next morning was clear and cool. We set on at CMR's Denton shop. The shop is cleaner than most, with spotless floors and shiny engines. The railroad had donuts and coffee waiting for us. Does this make them a Class 1?

We traveled north to Geraldine with Carla and Bud accompanying us. The track passed through wheat fields and pasture land. About 8 miles out, we began a descent into a river valley. Great photo opportunities were to be had: stunning rock formations, and arroyos, with the majestic Square Butte in the distance. The rails

wound down to the valley floor, crossing a wooden trestle over the riverbed, now dry. We "horseshoed" back and followed the riverbed out of the canyon for about 5 miles.

We spotted deer, antelope, owls (they sleep under the trestles), and golden eagles. Cattle slowed us down several times. The rails skirted the huge and wooded Square Butte, which gave us visual treats for 20 of the 40 miles into Geraldine.

The town of Geraldine greeted us with painted cartoon figures (Snoopy, Goofy, etc.) on the station building and its fences. (Geraldine and Denton are really quite tiny, with one place to eat and one service station each.) After lunch at Mike's Diner, we returned to the station where Ron Zammit discovered a large rattlesnake coiled up beside his motorcar. It was not in a very good mood, its coiled stance and rattling convincing Ron to use the other side of his motorcar.

We returned to Denton and, after a short break, headed southeast toward Lewistown. This leg of the run took us through Old Sage Creek tunnel, across four spectacular steel trestles reminiscent of the Milwaukee main in Idaho's Bitterroots. These are very high and long crossings of Sage Creek, Indian Creek, and twice over the Judith River. The river valleys were lush and green, some cultivated, some sporting deer and antelope.

On the return to Denton, Carla and Ron in the lead car startled a young bald eagle from a trestle railing. Approaching Denton at about 8 p.m., we were thinking of food and knew the Denton Cafe closed at 8:00. Near the town, Carla left the lead car to go to a trackside house and call the cafe. They stayed open for us and we stuffed the place; then they stuffed us with the best food of the trip--all you can eat chicken on Thursdays!

The tour group said goodbye to some of the cars that had joined us in Denton--we had 19--and headed for South Dakota's Black Hills. Two small runs were scheduled for Saturday, August 29th.

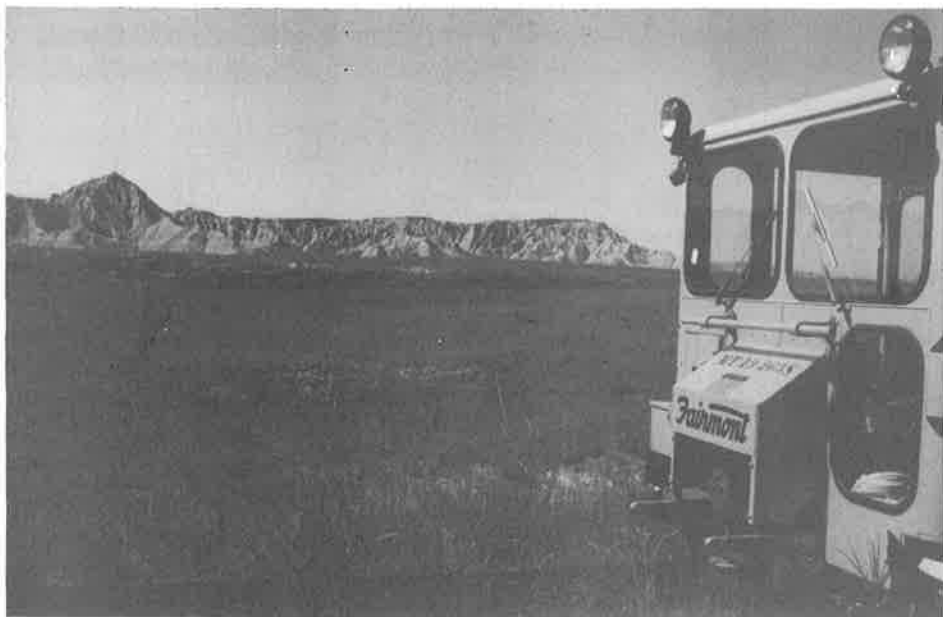
The first was the 6-mile (now dormant) Deadwood Central. Twelve motorcars set on at 7:30 a.m. in downtown Deadwood on a sunny, cool, breezy morning. The southbound rails followed a small creek through a residential



*One of four large trestles on the Central Montana RR (Indian Creek).*

Photo by Nancy VanLoo





### ***South Dakota's Badlands.***

Photo by Ron Zammit

neighborhood, a commercial section and, finally, into woods. We followed the creek up into a canyon and saw the large tailings pile from the gold mile at Lead, which is still active.

Near the end of track, the dew weeds, and a steep grade combined to make traction impossible. We slipped to the point of no forward progress, then pushed for 40 to 50 feet. The rails ended unceremoniously and unannounced over a creek near a large coal-fired power plant. CB&Q once serviced this plant and Deadwood from the south, but that right of way now only has a hiking trail. Some of us repeated the run, some checked out Deadwood and its legal gambling halls, and others went to Mount Rushmore.

In the afternoon, we drove 40 miles south to Hill City, and set on at the Black Hills Central, ex-CB&Q Keystone branch. The tourist steam train had just returned from its last run of the day and the track was empty. For 10 miles we climbed into the scenic Black Hills through woods, pastureland and country settlements with numerous grade crossings and lots of wandering livestock.

For much of the run, a two-lane paved road followed the track and crossed it many times. We reached the end of the line at a large cut and turned the cars at a paved entrance to a small campground where the natives were not too friendly. Our return was smooth and the cross-

ings in this direction were more manageable with better visibility. We reached Hill City at dusk and enjoyed a late dinner in the converted diner car-restaurant at the railroad.

The following day, Sunday, we traveled out of the Black Hills to Kadoka, SD, for a run into the Badlands. The state of South Dakota owns about 160 miles of track from Mitchell to Rapid City. The western part of this, Kodoka to Rapid City, is out of service. However, Don Lemmon has a lease to operate motorcars west of Kadoka to Interior. He has cleared about 12 miles of troublesome "mud-outs," rails covered with mud,

that plague the Badlands section.

With Don leading the way, 24 motorcars headed west through pastureland toward the Badlands. The only major crossing was a 55 m.p.h., two-lane road, where the rails were paved over, so we had to push most motorcars across.

The further west we traveled, the more weeds we encountered. Some plants were nearly as tall as the motorcars, and the brakes became packed with weeds requiring frequent stops to clean them. Grasshoppers were all over the cars.

When we reached the end of the first 12 miles, we decided to do some digging for Don and go further. Shovels were quickly put to use, and we ended up digging out various gravel crossings and mud flows for the next 8 miles. At one gravel crossing, a snow plow had pushed one rail in an inch or so. This created a very tight gauge and most cars popped out. We had to go very slowly and run one flange on the railhead for a few feet using muscle to keep the cars centered. Some fell off, but there was quite a crowd available for lifting. One of the cars was an A-7!

All the work was worth it, though. We rode on track that hadn't seen wheels for 18 years. The rails skirted 50-foot-high Badland dunes, and presented great views from that height. We were originally to be gone for only a couple of hours, but we didn't get back until past dark.

Our next rail journey presented a quandary. We had about 120 miles of track between Cham-

(Continued on next page)

## TOUR WEST 1992

(Continued from previous page)

berlain, west to Kadoka, operated by the Dakota Southern. The track was free of all traffic, but very rough and since most of us could only operate for one day, we felt a one-way trip was in order. So the next morning, Monday, we left Don Connelly's large motorhome in Kadoka, and drove with our motorcars on trailers east to Chamberlain. We would motorcar from Chamberlain to Kadoka all day Tuesday, take the "bus" back to Chamberlain that evening and return for our motorcars the next day, Wednesday.

Monday night we arrived in Chamberlain in time to host the Huff brothers, Alex and Dick. They run the Dakota Southern and told us of the problems with the track. The winter had been late last year and the ground had not frozen when they had full elevators on the line and had to run the first grain trains. In places, the track was pushed deep into the unfrozen goo that makes up the roadbed. With a map of the dangers, we departed and went for a night run. Twelve motorcars made the run across the large (just short of a mile) truss and trestle bridge across the Missouri River. About 16 miles west, we turned at a crossing and returned. This was a very long day, with most not getting to bed until midnight.

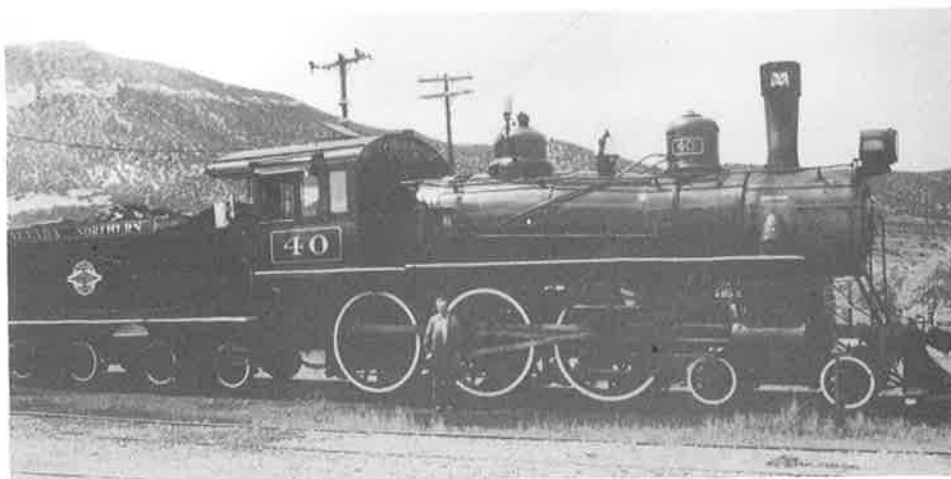
The next morning, we divided into two groups: the lead group would make the one-way 120-mile trip to Kadoka, the trailing group would turn around at Murdo and return. Wind and rain, sometimes heavy, would be with us all morning. The day's trip retraced the route of the night before, across the Missouri, through the river breaks and into farmland--miles of grain. Hank Brown and Fred Furminger made a surprise visit and joined us for the trip across the river.

For the Dakota Southern rails, "parallel" was only a memory. This track was rough!

After lunch and further west, we spotted a small funnel cloud, not touching down, and went through its associated rain storm near Draper. At Murdo, the second group reversed direction

*Below, T.J. Lani, engineer, poses next to #40 at the Nevada Northern Railroad Museum.*

Photo by Ron Zammit



and went through the rain again.

The one-way folks headed west to Kadoka with much better track. Weeds were high and flangeways filled, as this section had not been used in weeks. The lead car hit a large rock in the weeds, but was not damaged.

We pulled into Kadoka with the sun shining at about 6 p.m. We left the motorcars on the track and took Don's "bus" back to Chamberlain. Since the motorhome had a VCR, we watched videos of the day's run. What a way to go!

The next day, we headed west to load our motorcars. On the way, we saw Hank with a flat tire on the freeway (he was headed for GA and the CSX ride). After loading our cars, the group again split up heading for Ely, NV. The crosswinds at the Salt Lake were serious. Once we entered Nevada, civilization fell away mile by mile. One has to drive to Ely to realize how isolated and remote the town is.

By Friday afternoon, most of the 29 motorcars set on in the yard at the East Ely depot of the Nevada Northern Railroad Museum. The museum operates about 30 miles of ex-copper company track (two branches) with operating rights on the 128-mile mainline to the north. There are two active Alcos, and a 4-6-0 high drivered passenger steamer. The museum uses the branches only, leaving the mainline free for motorcar use, although there is to be a freight operation starting soon on the mainline. That night, we took the museum and its RR crew out to dinner at the Jailhouse Casino.

Our run coincided with the Ely Railroad

Festival. At 8 a.m. Saturday, we lined up the motorcars at the depot for viewing. The Alcos were out along with the active steam engine. A freight engine under restoration was pulled from the shops, its first appearance in (partially) restored condition. Only a few festival attendees showed before we had to leave. Next year, we'll have to change our schedule to be a larger part of the events. (Bob Mahan did stay behind with his S-2 and donated rides for the museum. This was a big hit!)

Divided into two groups, we departed the yard and headed north. The first group was to stay the night at Currie while the second would camp at the ghost town of Shafter.

The first group headed straight out for Currie, while the second stayed behind to explore the McGill Branch. This line was used to gravity feed ore to a copper concentrator, now removed. It climbs into the eastern mountains for eight miles. The rails now end just short of the old concentrator site. Only a smokestack remains. A good view of the Steptoe Valley and the towns

of Ely and McGill is afforded from this spur.

The mainline from Ely to Shafter twice crossed Highway 93, then led past a huge heap of concentrator waste, about 15 feet high and miles long. After a marshy area with lots of waterfowl came mostly desert valley flanked by hills. Cherry Creek (a water tower and signal, the depot was moved to Ely) and Currie are the only "civilization" on the line. The tracks had especially rough joints, and in places grapefruit-sized rocks between the rails made turntable-equipped cars ring. Cherry Creek was a meal break for both groups, separately. At another stop, we checked out an ingenious, although badly deteriorated, gravity coal hopper that allowed trains to load their own tender coal from hopper cars.

We passed through another marshy area just before reaching Currie, our lunch and refuel stop. Currie has a general store, snack bar, gas station, pool room and bar, all in one building. This is a tiny place. There is only one phone, a

(Continued on next page)

## HOW TO VIDEOTAPE YOUR NEXT MOTORCAR MEET

By Hugh Cain

Have you ever thought about videotaping motorcar events? You probably have, but just haven't given it much thought since. Bill Holdren and I have, though. Presently Bill has four or five events taped, I only have two so far.

What do you need? Of course, you'll need a videocamera or camcorder. You'll also need several rechargeable batteries for the camcorder. Another item, a battery recharger for the field trips and, of course, videotape.

Figure about an average of 45 minutes to an hour on each battery for recording time. Use a better quality tape for your "master". Also use a slow recording time.

Batteries are fine. However, you'll soon learn they are very costly. Another option is the automobile cigarette lighter adapter, usually sold as an option with the camcorder. Bill and I use them. We have lighter plugs on our cars and everything works well.

A note of caution, always use a fused outlet. Never hook the camcorder directly to the battery. Always use the proper amperage fuse. Don't substitute!

How do you carry the camcorder in the car? Bill tried a hard point mount on the front windshield of his MT-19. Boy, did the picture have the shakes. For now, we let our passenger do the taping, camera on his shoulder, while we operate the car.

Some helpful hints. Don't zoom in and out while riding the car. The picture starts getting jittery and shakey. Get a low lux camera, good for night shots and when running through tunnels. Both make for interesting viewing later. Restrict your sweeping from side to side. Instead use a view out the front of the car. An occasional sweep might be acceptable.

Give a narrative of the account. Nothing worse than watching two hours of crosstie after crosstie and knowing nothing about the event. For your record purposes, either use the self timing/dating feature of the camcorder or announce the time/day/year.

Most of all, make the tape interesting. Edit out unwanted scenes or otherwise erase them before showing the final product.

This is just another way we can record the present for the future. Happy taping.

## MOW TOUR WEST 1992

(Continued from previous page)

pay phone with no dial, and no phone number. To call someone in Currie at this phone, one must call the Reno operator to get it to ring!

The Currie group reached Shafter first, turned the cars, watched 70+ m.p.h. UP action, and waited for the second group, which arrived at about 6:00. They then returned to Currie (a great 40-mile night run with clear skies and a moon) to spend the night in rental cabins. An antelope barbecue was waiting and after a pleasant evening, the motorcar group retired early. The Currie locals partied until 4 a.m. and were still able to get up the next day to open the kitchen for breakfast.

The Shafter group pitched tents and built fires. After dinner, Vic Neves posed the group for a timed exposure lit with firelight. Mike Raposa spelled out "Shafter" with his flashlight, over everyone's head. The night was cloudless, cold and starlit. The wind wrestled with the tents and sleeping bags. Several freight and Amtrak trains passed in the night, including a saw-by meet.

The next morning, both groups separately set out for Ely at around 8:00. Just as the Shafter group arrived at Currie, a small plane made an emergency landing in the middle of Highway 93, and taxied up to the gas pump.

The Currie group returned to Ely at about 3:00 after a quick hop up the McGill branch. They waited for the passenger train to clear the yard, then arranged the cars to leave again.

When the Shafter group arrived, the whole set of motorcars headed west on the Keystone branch, and the line's only tunnel. This is the branch on which the open pit copper mine is located, although it can't be seen from the railroad. Rumor has it that the pit may soon be reopened and rail shipments could resume. Returning at dusk, most cars were loaded for the last time.

The western tour was over, with most of us having driven between 3,500 and 4,000 miles and riding our motorcars about 1,000 miles with no major trouble. Believe it or not, by the end, most of us had gotten our fill. But now that our senses have returned, we're ready for this summer and a tour with Hank Brown and some folks from the east.

The following made the entire trip: Don, Donna, James, Kerry and Shawn Connelly, Karen Dohler, Cary Norman, Gil and Janet Dominguez, Vera Martinez, Mike Raposa, Doug and Rich Stivers, and Ron Zammit.



*An abandoned hotel at Currie on the Nevada Northern RR.*

Photo by Ron Zammit

# THE SETOFF

Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839

POSTMASTER: IF UNDELIVERABLE, PLEASE RETURN TO SENDER.