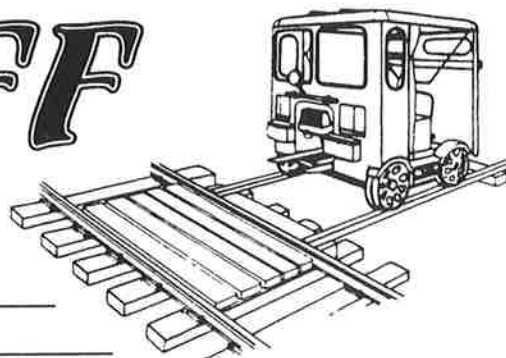


THE SETOFF

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

Fall 1994



Ronald Zammit, of California, is Elected President of NARCOA's Board of Directors at the Fall Board Meeting in Indianapolis

By Rose "Rusty" Hines

From September 9 to 11, 1994, Indianapolis, Indiana, found railroad motorcar enthusiasts from all over the country converging upon this city to discuss the organization of this unique hobby. You'll read of the meeting's minutes elsewhere in this issue, along with the names of the attendees.

Stan Conyers of Indiana was responsible for the meeting point and for setting up the facility. Philip Childress of Indiana took care of the details for the special meet on Sunday from Spencer to Mooresville, Indiana, and then from Spencer to Worthington, Indiana.

Sunday's meet drew about 23 motorcars and people from many locations, including California, Wisconsin, Montana, New York and New Jersey. The weather was spectacular (Indianapolis is known for "spectacles in racing") and the 65 miles round trip from Spencer to Mooresville proved to be great.

A note of acknowledgement and thanks is extended to the NARCOA members who made a special effort to participate in this national meeting. Its importance was emphasized by a comment Joel Williams of New Jersey made during the motorcar run on Sunday.

Joel said (not verbatim) that most motorcar owners need an organization to be able to utilize their motorcars. So simply stated that the reality had been overlooked! This is not like bicycling or boating where paths of roadways and waterways are available to the public. Most of us have no way to ride the railroads unless we are part of an organized meet! Our motorcars would sit and

rust into oblivion without the time, efforts, expense and desire of the organizer, the organization and the obliging railroad owner.

Therefore, hats off to each and every person who was willing to meet to discuss, clarify and refine the organization of motorcar owners!

Be sure the read more about the new, reorganized NARCOA inside this issue of *THE SET-OFF*. Pages 6 through 10 covers it all beginning with a statement from the new President followed by minutes of the Board meeting.



Ron Zammit, of Arroyo Grande, California, was elected President by NARCOA's newly-elected Board of Directors in September. Ron is shown above on Indiana Southern rails at a meet held the day after NARCOA's Board meeting and election.

Organization News

By Joel Williams

I'm a NARCOA member. Why am I not listed in the NARCOA roster?

This question is one I get right after the Roster is published every year. I have tried to explain this in the past, but maybe not well enough. The Roster predates the formation of NARCOA by about five years. It is a list of motorcar owners and their motorcars. In 1985, it was used to invite motorcar owners to the first motorcar meet ever held, the First Annual NARCOA Motorcar Convention on the Southern Michigan Railroad. A copy was given to Mark Mayfield in 1986 so he could solicit members for his publication, *The Speeder*.

Today, it is still published for the same purpose, to list motorcar owners and their cars. It is NOT a NARCOA membership list. If you want to be listed, you must send me your motorcar information. Sometimes people write and say, "I just got an M19 and I'd like to join NARCOA." That is all that's needed for me to list them. Naturally, more information would be helpful, but I make the best of what comes to me. You don't have to have a special form to send me your car information. Just look in the present roster and see the typical listing. You can send it any time. The deadline for the next roster is April 15, 1995. I appreciate all corrections and additional information. Handcars are also listed.

Good news for our Canadian members! Tom Norman, our newly-elected treasurer, has found a bank in Montana that will cash checks from Canada without an excessive charge. Remember to make out your check to U.S. funds so we get the proper exchange rate when cashed. All membership dues still get sent to Greendell, NJ.

Some interesting facts about our organization: NARCOA's membership recently passed 900. Our membership has grown by about 100 members every year for the past five years. There are about 50 complimentary copies of each issue of *THE SETOFF* sent to railroad officials. Back issues of *THE SETOFF* are available for \$2.00 each. All issues are in stock. NARCOA sends about 4,500 pieces of mail every year. I receive, on average, 15 pieces of NARCOA mail every week of the year and have received as many as 60 in one day.

NARCOA gets its money from your dues,

sale of membership and other plates, sale of badges, and interest from the bank on club deposits. The badges and plates are priced to pay for the supplies and postage. They return very little to the club as those programs are designed to break even. The cost of printing and mailing four issues of *THE SETOFF*, the Roster, the calendar, envelopes, membership cards plus miscellaneous minor expenses comes to \$9.69 for each member. When we increase the number of *SETOFF* issues, a dues increase will be necessary. In any case, the U.S. Postal Service is going to increase rates soon.

An Open Letter

I would like to thank the motorcar operators who registered for the August running of the Twin Cities and Western Railroad for their consideration. For those of you not familiar with this run, just a little over a week before the run was to take place, the insurer for the TC&W notified them that they decided against motorcars running on any railroad that they insure. (I was able to notify all the event participants by phone and/or letter that the run was canceled except Brad Black who was vacationing out of state and drove 400 miles for the canceled trip.) This was a reversal of their first agreeing to our running about six months prior to the run date. To compound matters, the insurance agent notified the mortgage holder of the TC&W that if they allowed us to run that they would yank their insurance policy. Dana Fuller and Hank Brown worked feverishly to try and win approval of our insurance policy (AARO), but to no avail. It should be known by all that the costs incurred by Dana and Hank for all the long distance phone calls were out of their pockets and not covered by AARO. Some operators raised holy hell with me about this cancellation as they don't understand the work and costs incurred by event organizers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hank Brown, Dana Fuller and John Nolan for the unpaid volunteer work done with the AARO insurance program. If not by most, then by me, please accept my deepest thanks for the work you are doing. Without people like you in the hobby, we would all have "expensive lawn ornaments" as quoted by Hank. THANK YOU!

Mark Arnold

Stacy, Minnesota

Editor's Notes

By Gene Tucker

Our fall has been a busy one, with an enjoyable, productive and lengthy trip to Israel and Jordan to sing in Bethlehem and in Amman for the King's birthday celebrations. Along the way, we noted that the Hijaz Railway in Jordan still has setoffs and uses motorcars (line is meter gauge--39.24 inches between the rails).

Now that the trip is over, we can finish this issue of *THE SETOFF* and get it to you, along with some important news items:

Calendar photos: We have received some photos for the calendar which are lovely, but we could still use some more. Kindly send them to me not later than December 20th. Particularly valuable would be shots of motorcars in various seasonable or unusual settings.

Dealing with NARCOA: If you have ads to submit, memberships to renew, etc., it will sharply reduce the time it takes to deal with your requests, etc., and also reduce the workload for various NARCOA personnel if you will send your ads, renewals and so forth directly to the individual concerned:

- Ads and materials for *THE SETOFF* should be sent directly to the Editor.
- Membership renewals and inquiries should be sent directly to Joel Williams.
- Meet information should be sent to either Dick Ray or to Hank Brown, or, if the time is short before a deadline, directly to the Editor.

Special supplements to *THE SETOFF*: In 1995, we are planning to reprint and issue a supplement having to do with motorcar maintenance. We will also publish a safety supplement. If you'd like to contribute articles for either or both, send them to the Editor.

***THE SETOFF* will be published six times per year:** We've had many requests to publish *THE SETOFF* more often, and NARCOA's Board of Directors has approved publishing every other month. Henceforth, the deadline for publication will be the 15th of each odd-numbered month (January, March, May, etc.), and the issue should be in your mailboxes sometime early the following month. We think this publication schedule will make the publication more timely and, therefore, more valuable to the membership.

We wish you happy holidays and a happy New Year riding the rails!

Guidelines for Submitting Materials For Publication in *THE SETOFF*

1. Our editorial policy is to cheerfully publish in *THE SETOFF* all materials received, although they may be subject to editing for space considerations.
2. Photos and materials submitted for publication in *THE SETOFF* cannot be returned.
3. We cannot publish copyrighted materials such as: photos, posters, cartoons, or articles without written permission from the author or publisher. Written permission must be provided by the sender at time of submission.
4. Meet stories, technical articles and lengthy submissions should be typed or printed.
5. Ads, meet notices, and short articles may be handwritten.
6. Photos should be either black and white or sharp color photos. Photos print best when the subject of the photo is large. A picture of a motorcar sitting atop a bridge, for example, where the image of the motorcar is very small, or blends in with the background of the picture, doesn't print well. Please label the back of the picture as to its subject matter and who took the picture. Please do not send slides.
7. Finally, send materials to *THE SETOFF* editor by the deadline, the 15th of each odd-numbered month (January, March, May, July, September, November).

THE SETOFF

Volume 8 Number 3

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THE SETOFF is published quarterly by the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) to promote safe operation of railroad motorcars, and to encourage fellowship and exchange of information among motorcar 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, or to Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527. If time is short, send them directly to the Editor. Thank you!

December 31, 1994: HOOSIER RAILCARS sponsors a run on New Year's Eve. Set on at Titusville and run to Noblesville, IN and return. Contact Stan Conyer, 9333 West State Rd. 46, Columbus, IN 47203, (812) 342-0565 for details. HOOSIER RAILCARS will also hold their annual meeting on January 8, 1995, in Indianapolis.

January 1, 1995: The MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION OF NARCOA sponsors a run over the Badger Ammo Plant at Baraboo, WI. Contact: Craig Bluschke, 10916 Spring Creek Road, Blue Mound, WI 53517 for details.

December 17 & 18, 24 & 25, 31, and January 1, 1995: The NORTHERN CENTRAL RAILCAR ASSOCIATION operates over the scenic 18.5 mile section of the Northern Central Railway from New Freedom to York, PA. Contact Mike Billet, 1010 Felton Road, Red Lion, PA 17356 for details.

January 1, 1995: Start the New Year right: on the rails . . . Walkersville Southern RR invites you to join them, snow or shine, for a New Year's tradition. Meet in Walkersville, MD (six miles northeast of Frederick) at the railroad station at 10:00 a.m. for a day of fun and fellowship. Handcars, velocipedes, and motorcars invited. Contact: Walkersville Southern RR, P.O. Box 651, Walkersville, MD 21793-0651, or phone (301) 898-0899 (M-F 9-11 a.m., EST).

April 21-23, 1995: Florida Central RR at Wooten Park in Tavares, FL. Safety meeting will be held at 8:00 a.m. Saturday. AARO membership required. Total run is 146 miles. Turning points: Friday Afternoon: Sorrento; Saturday: Umatilla and Winter Garden; Sunday a.m.: Mt. Dora and Sorrento. Dining out Friday night at the Green House Restaurant and a catered dinner at the Depot in Mt. Dora on Saturday evening. Sunday breakfast will be on the porch at the Lake Side Inn in Mt. Dora, dutch treat. All transportation via motorcars. Advance registration is

requested. \$50.00 per motorcar includes \$40.00/ motorcar with 10 car minimum to Florida Central RR and \$10.00/car to cover expenses and the \$100.00 insurance registration. Pay when checking in. NARCOA Rulebook will be the guide for motorcar inspection: wheels, brakes, lights, fire extinguisher, first aid kit and red flag. No grounded axles. For information contact: Jack and Susie Whitt, P.O. Box 356, 8023 Bloomfield Avenue, Yalaha, FL 34797, or phone (904) 324-3868.

A Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

The past two issues have had items with which I do not totally agree. These mainly concern the column, "Why It Won't Run," particularly as it concerns automotive coils, spark plugs and fuse blocks.

I have been in the hobby for five years and have over 4,000 miles to my credit. Three trips were run on the Algoma Central and most runs used Fairmont ROC engines.

I run automotive coils and have no trouble with fouling plugs. With few exceptions I am able to run 37 m.p.h. and, yes, the engine reverses even using the ignition switch! The problem most have with an automotive coil is not the firing of the coil and plug, but instead is a timing problem as to where the plug fires in relation to the piston travel in the stroke. Since the auto coil fires when the points are open, whereas the buzz coil fires when the points are closed, I do not disagree that the auto spark is retarded.

What I do say is that this can be overcome simply by lengthening the timer lever by two inches thus allowing the timer to travel the complete arc until it comes up against the opening in the crankshaft housing. I did this and the engine's performance dramatically improved. I run a high performance coil from J.C. Whitney which puts out 60,000 volts. To check this out, simply move the timer to full advance and then disconnect the linkage and see if you can move the timer more forward. If you can, then the timer lever needs to be lengthened so the throw is greater.

(Continued on next page)

As far as plugs go, I ran D21 spark plugs and have not had excessive fouling. The D21s are a hotter plug and so have a somewhat self-cleaning effect. A friend of mine went over 1,200 miles on the same D21 type plug (AC equivalent and he runs an automotive coil). I have since switched to D23s (the hottest they make) and have had good results.

The things that can cause plug fouling are too much oil in the gas, using straight 30-weight as listed by Fairmont, too much two-cycle oil in gas by using Fairmont specs (use 20 to 1), excessive idling (which is the single most common cause of plug fouling as two-strokes tend to load up on oil when they idle for long periods of time). If you are stopped longer than two minutes, shut it off—you'll save on plugs. Also, too small of a gap can cause fouling. I use .030.

Now about fuse blocks. The author of the series is apparently one who thinks that if it ain't Fairmont, it's no good. He explains that if your wiring is "perfect" then you won't have problems. Well, licensed electricians have perfect wiring and put in fuses. And auto makers also do this. I found out the hard way that "Mr. Murphy" is always hanging around ready to ruin your day. I didn't use fuses at first either, and then while checking my car out by running it in the back yard, shorted it out causing 60 percent of my electrical wiring to go up in smoke right up to the ground wire on the battery. If I had fuses, that wouldn't have happened and a three-hour wiring job could have been avoided. If you put every item on its own fuse and label it, it doesn't take long to find the blown fuse and replace it. Every now and then a fuse will be defective and break inside the metal, but those are relatively rare. The blade type are more immune to this and J.C. Whitney has circuit breakers available.

Now, concerning the reference to the grade crossing accident. I was on that particular run, and the auto hit the motorcar not the motorcar hitting the auto. Since crossing gates don't go all the way across the road but are staggered, one gate protecting its own lane so that the auto had to approach the tracks at somewhat of an angle before heading back to its own lane. This shortened the distance between it and that motorcar. Those that try to beat rail traffic around gates usually step on the gas to get across more

quickly. The operator had reacted quickly as the auto made contact with the lift handles and if the auto had been going slower, this practically near miss wouldn't have happened. Even with the car stopped, the operator has no idea what path the moron in the auto is going to take around the gates.

I find it irritating for someone who, to my knowledge, was not on that run to give an opinion implicating partial blame on the part of the motorcar operator. Wheel shunts to activate gates and signals are useful in getting traffic to slow down and even stop but are not a cure-all to some idiot who can't wait 15 seconds for rail traffic to clear. I am also concerned about autos that are already stopped as these are the ones that will most likely run out in front of you suddenly when their patience has expired.

One last thing. You can soup up an ROC by shaving .040 off the head and an overbore of .020. You'll still have plenty of clearance for the plug. Standard automotive rings of 3.075 are available from any auto shop that sells engine parts and moly high performance rings are recommended if you do the modification as these stand heat better and cut down on warping. The increase in power and speed will surprise you.

Dave Stroebe

Muskegon, Michigan

Editor's Note: We appreciate readers sending us information about modifications they have made to their motorcars. However, we recommend caution in implementing some of the recommendations made that do not conform to generally accepted motorcar use and maintenance practices. Even though an automotive coil may work, better performance is obtained with the proper buzz coil. With an automotive coil, the spark is only momentary and there is no dwell to it, whereas with a buzz coil, the dwell angle can be set as the manual indicates for approximately five inches of flywheel travel, thereby allowing a longer spark for more complete combustion and also reduced fouling of the plugs. We also would not recommend using a D23 spark plug as it is generally considered too hot for use in a motorcar. With the use of the proper buzz coil, a cooler spark plug, such as a D21 or D16, would do just fine.

A Statement From NARCOA's President:

By Ron Zammit

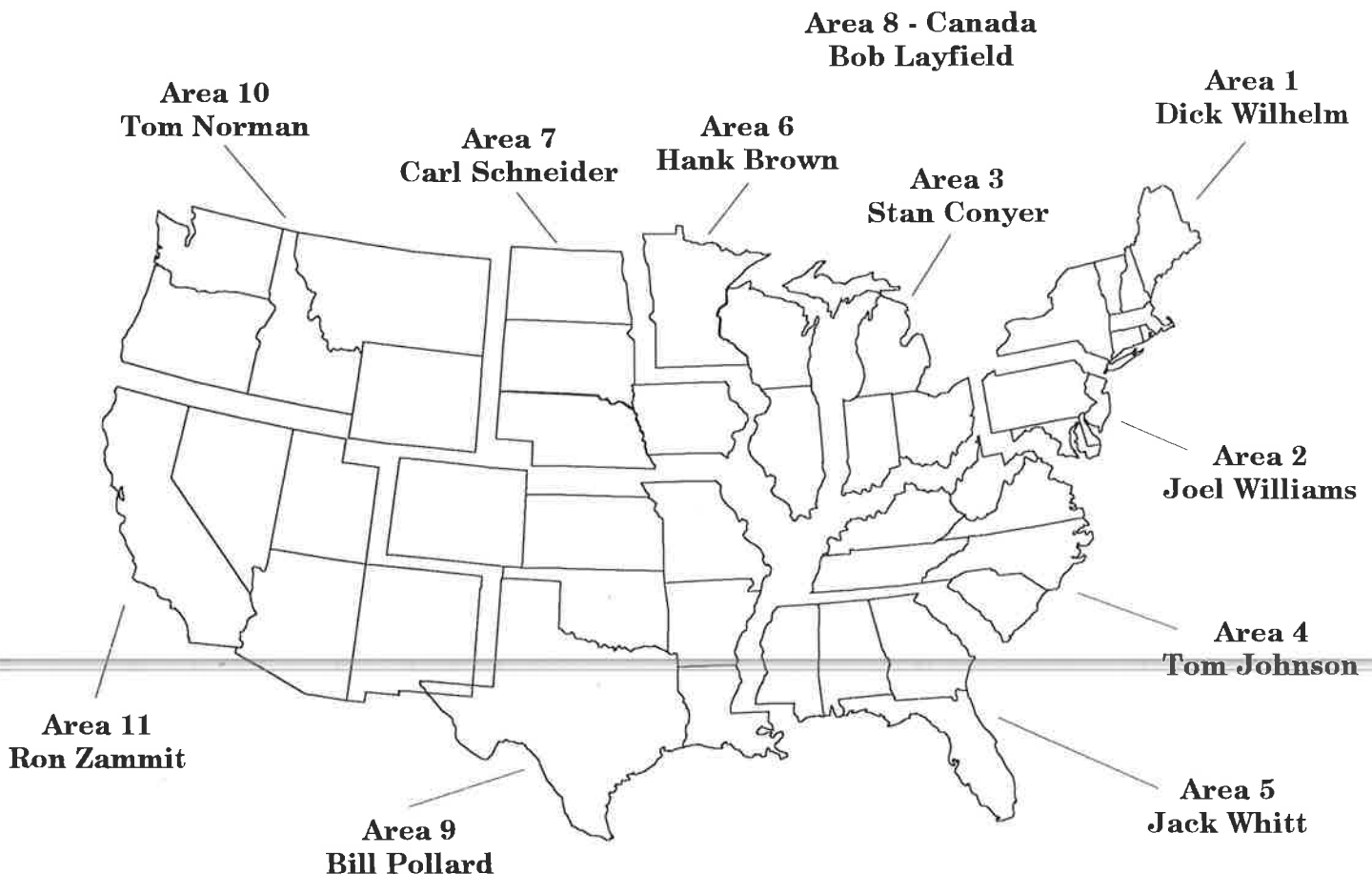
Welcome aboard the new NARCOA. That's right, the newly elected Board of Directors had its first meeting in Indianapolis in early September. The meeting was graciously hosted by Stan Conyer, of Hoosier Railcars, and member Phil Childress coordinated a motorcar meet the Sunday after our meeting on the Indiana Southern, so we were able to have some fun. Thanks to them both.

To begin, I intend to write about the changes in NARCOA, and the reasons behind those changes in future columns. Not enough information has been getting out to you, the member, and I will try hard to rectify this.

Who makes up the new Board? Well, by referring to the map below, by zone, the Directors

are: 1. Dick Wilhelm, 2. Joel Williams, 3. Stan Conyer, 4. Tom Johnson, 5. Jack Whitt, 6. Hank Brown, 7. Carl Schneider, 8. Bob Layfield, 9. Bill Pollard, 10. Tom Norman, 11. Ron Zammit. This Board adopted a new, democratic set of bylaws for NARCOA (more on this later) and elected officers: Ron Z., President, Stan C., Vice President, Joel W., Secretary, and Tom N., Treasurer. Mike Paul and John Nolan are Directors at Large (Director without vote) and Mike Paul is Recording Secretary. All of the above were present in Indianapolis with the exception of Bill Pollard, making for an outstanding turnout for our first meeting.

The Board members are to have four-year terms, with half the Directors' terms expiring every two years. To set this in motion, half the Board was to be assigned half (two-year) terms. However, since mistakes were made in carrying out the election, all Directors' terms were shortened by one year with the even numbered zones given the one year terms and the odd zones given



This map shows the geographical areas of the U.S. and Canada that comprise the new NARCOA organization, along with the recently-elected Directors from each area.

three-year terms. Therefore the even zone Directors will have their terms expire in 1995 and the odd zone Directors in 1997. From then on, all Directors will have 4 year terms.

As to the election, all involved were doing their best to make for a fair and timely process. However, the complexities of running a democratic organization were underestimated by the steering committee, the group that met in Chicago earlier this year. I apologize to those that felt left out of the process; that was not our intent. Those elected seem to be genuinely interested in the betterment of our hobby, and I urge you to work with them at this crucial time.

Now let's explore why we are doing this. As the hobby has grown, many groups have formed around a single or small number of individuals. While these may work well for small numbers of members, a democratic organization is needed with large groups, especially for national issues. We need to all get together, and we need to do this soon.

I know, the usual responses. "Just let us ride our motorcars." "Leave my group (me) alone, but make sure those other guys are doing the correct job so they don't lose it for all of us." The Directors understand these statements and others like them. Our intent is not to over-regulate the local groups, nor take over their functions. There are more important problems to deal with.

For example, most of us depend on AARO's insurance to get track time. The larger the railroad, the more important insurance is. Do you realize there is no base line rule book for railcar operation with AARO's insurance? A motorcar group could possibly operate without flagging rules or any of the other standard rules we use. If you value AARO, then you realize this is analogous to you leaving your automobile in the supermarket parking lot with the keys in it, hoping that those who use it will return it unharmed.

Regardless of insurance, safety issues are the most important since we will not be able to continue to operate if we are not doing everything possible to prevent accidents. Additionally, we must be able to document that we are working to prevent accidents, not just talking about it. Coupled with the knowledge that this is a dangerous activity in many ways, we must also be prepared to adequately deal with accidents when and where they occur.

So I am working with the following in mind:

1. Motorcar excursions operate in a potentially dangerous environment, the railroad.
2. Safety is the fundamental consideration to insure our enjoyment of the excursions, and insure their continuation.
3. Despite all preventative measures, accidents will happen and we must be prepared to provide proper emergency responses, and follow up with a learning process that educates us all for prevention of repeating accidents.
4. Legal releases are crucial in protecting the railroads and ourselves. They are crucial to our continuation of offering excursions.
5. Local groups are connected nationally by two things: the FRA and the insurance industry. What we do as part of a local group will affect all the groups via these two. (Even if we all had separate insurance policies, the insurance industry for railroad coverage is a very small part of the overall insurance community, and they do communicate within. The same is true for the FRA.) Both know we exist, they know some good and bad about us. Do we know what they are thinking and doing? In general, no. We need to know. And we need to show them, as honestly as possible, our good sides.

So what is my vision for NARCOA? I see a national organization that works to provide a safe, stable operating environment for us all. It sets minimum safety and operating guidelines for motorcar excursions and lets the locals decide how, where, and when to hold excursions. It communicates well between its members and Board, and with the insurance industry and FRA. If you are in a competent group right now, and most of us are, you will notice little or no difference at the local level. My feeling is that if people can jump out of rented planes (skydiving), land on rented property, and every so often one of them is hurt or killed (with the FAA's knowledge), then we have the right to ride the rails of railroads that want us. We just have to do things correctly.

Regardless of your feelings, I urge you to get involved. Write your Director. Come to our meetings. Write the membership via *THE SET-OFF*. Let your ideas be known. (The next Board meeting will be in Chicago in February, arranged by Hank Brown. Sorry, no excursion is planned!)

With due consideration, the Board has worked out some committees. I've asked those

(Continued on next page)

From the President:

(Continued from previous page)
involved to communicate to you via *THE SET-OFF*. Here's the committees and their tasks:

Bylaws Committee: Right now Mike Paul is working on this task. The bylaws need minor work and then we'll submit them to the state of Delaware where NARCOA is incorporated to replace the old by-laws. If you would like to know more about the new bylaws, please contact Mike. (See page 10 for more information.)

Rules Committee: Stan Conyer is in charge with members Phil Childress, Tom Johnson, Eric Schwandt, Bruce Frye, Carl Anderson, Mark Arnold, and Tom Norman. Their task is to formulate a guideline set of rules from which the local groups may build their rule books. (See page 10.)

Insurance Committee: John Nolan is in charge with the local AARO representatives members: Hank Brown, Tom Norman, Jack Whitt, Jean O'Dell, and Doug Stivers. I've asked John for an AARO financial statement to be published along with explanations as to how AARO works and what insurance coverage we have. Additionally, they need to hear from you as to any additional coverage you want, such as major medical.

THE SETOFF: We all must use *THE SET-OFF* to communicate more efficiently. The Officers and Board must tell you about what is being done, and why, plus deal with safety and insurance issues in an open forum. Gene Tucker has done an outstanding job as Editor. Deanna Baird produces the camera ready copy, Ernie Jeschke does the printing, and Hank Brown does the mailing. Dick Ray, Doug Leffler, and Brett Tallman have served as contributing editors. These folks have been doing an outstanding job.

As we expand NARCOA and get more people involved, *THE SETOFF* is going to grow. Joel Williams, Tom Norman, Rich Stivers, and John Simms have agreed to help. I would like to see a six-issue-per-year schedule, with material due to Gene by the 15th of each odd month (Jan., March, etc.). The newsletter would be in the mail three weeks later. This will help make the excursion and want ad announcements arrive in a more timely manner. (As an aside, the \$10 dues just barely pays for four issues; therefore dues will be raised when the number of issues increases.)

Nominating Committee: (This committee will also run the election next year.) This is one of the few committees required by the by-laws and its members' selection process is specified: the Chair is appointed by the President, two members are elected by the Board of Directors, and two members are elected by the general membership. In the above order, the people serving on this important committee are Mike Mitzel, Carl Schneider, Bob Layfield, Carl Anderson, and Dennis Madden. This committee is to take nominations for candidates for the even numbered zones, and run an election next summer to be completed before the fall Board meeting.

Operations Committee: This committee is to provide guidelines for operation of all aspects of an excursion except operator rules. Topics to be considered here are meet coordination, emergency response, liability and legal issues, releases, fees, mechanical ideas, operator qualifications and training, mechanical and inspection standards, and misconduct during operation. Chair of this committee is Hank Brown with members Doug Stivers, Dick Ray, and John Simms.

Safety Committee: This committee is to work with the Operations Committee and Rule Committee on safety issues. Besides those not mentioned above, there are emergency medical and first aid considerations, plus accident investigation and reporting. Reporting is to be done to the general membership via *THE SETOFF*. Chair is Mike Mitzel with members Dick Wilhelm, Eric Schwandt, Bob Layfield, Walter Ozanick, Hugh Cain, and Phil Childress.

That's about it for now except for a few odds and ends. Tom Norman (Treasurer) has been asked to do a financial statement to be printed in *THE SETOFF* and to file for non-profit status and register with the IRS (and Delaware if needed). I'll do an annual report to the membership (required by the new by-laws) early next year.

One last important item. Most local groups are not incorporated. Legally (liability wise!) this is a big gamble for the members. I urge all such groups to join NARCOA as a chapter, to fall behind the "corporate veil" on liability issues. I'll explore liability and related topics in future columns. Joining as a chapter is easy and is free, just contact Joel Williams.

To all of you who have helped put this together and get started, my thanks. Until next issue, keep the wheels shiny.

MINUTES OF NARCOA ANNUAL MEETING

Date of Meeting: September 10, 1994
Place of Meeting: Airport Days Inn, Indianapolis, Indiana

The annual meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. The first order of business was to ratify the election results and announce the new Board of Directors, and their subsequent election of the new officers of the association:

Area	<u>Director's Name/State</u>	<u>Officer Position</u>	<u>Note</u>
1	Dick Wilhelm - NY		
2	Joel Williams - NJ	Secretary	
3	Stan Conyer - IN	Vice-President	
4	Tom Johnson - NC		
5	Jack Whitt - FL		
6	Hank Brown - WI		
7	Carl Schneider - IA		1
8	Bob Layfield - Canada		
9	Bill Pollard - AR		
10	Tom Norman - MT	Treasurer	2
11	Ron Zammit - CA	President	
	John Nolan		3
	Mike Paul		3, 4

- 1 - Nominated by election committee upon Dave Pratt's notice that he did not desire to be a candidate.
- 2 - Ballots were inadvertently not mailed to Area 10 members. The two other nominees for that area provided notice that they did not desire to be candidates, leaving Mr. Norman as the only candidate for Area 10. Since no write-in names were possible, Mr. Norman was the only person who could have won the Area 10 election if ballots had been mailed as his name would have been the only one on the ballot. It was therefore decided that Mr. Norman could legitimately be named the Director for Area 10, even though he received no votes.
- 3 - Director-at-Large (non-voting position)
- 4 - Recording Secretary (non-official position)

The following motions were moved, seconded, and passed by the Board of Directors:

- 1) That the new draft bylaws, yet to be adopted, be amended as follows:
 - a. Name of organization: Delete "Motorcar Operators of America" and replace with "North American Railcar Operators Association".
 - b. Article 2: Amend first sentence to delete the listed rail vehicles, and replace with the list of rail vehicles in Article 3, Section 1 of the existing bylaws.
 - c. Section 13: Add a period to the only

existing sentence. Have Mike Paul add to this section a precise timetable as outlined at the meeting for all the actions that are required to be taken by the responsible agencies (i.e., nominating committee, *SETOFF* editor, etc.) for the process of electing Directors.

2) That the following Committees be established: Bylaws (Mike Paul, chairman), Rules (Stan Conyer, chairman), Insurance (John Nolan, chairman), Newsletter, Nominating (Mike Mitzel, chairman), Operations (Hank Brown, chairman), Safety (Mike Mitzel, chairman), and Membership (Joel Williams, chairman); and that members are encouraged to contact the appropriate committee chairmen if they have any inputs.

3) That the Bylaws Committee draft an article to be published in the next issue of the *Setoff* soliciting general membership inputs on the new draft bylaws.

4) That Directors from even-numbered Areas will initially serve a one-year term and that Directors from odd-numbered Areas will initially serve a three-year term. Thereafter, each Director would serve a four-year term.

5) That all paper ballots relating to the election of the new Board of Directors be destroyed, since there is no further need to preserve them.

6) That the eleven distinct and non-overlapping NARCOA Areas defined for the recent election of Directors be redefined as follows: the upper peninsula of Michigan is moved from Area 6 to Area 3 so that the whole state of Michigan is in one Area (thereby making it easier for computer identification of members by undivided states), Minnesota is moved from Area 7 to Area 6 so that Area 6 closely approximates the Mississippi Valley Division, and Nebraska is moved from Area 9 to Area 7 so that Area 7 will be coincident with the area to be redefined as the First Iowa Division (See 7) below).

7) That the First Iowa Division be expanded to include, along with the state of Iowa: Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The name of this division will be changed to reflect the expansion of its geographical area.

8) That the next meeting of the Board of Directors will take place in Chicago during February, 1994 and that Hank Brown will pick the date, place, and time, and provide those details to the Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Mike Paul, Recording Secretary

NEW NARCOA RULES COMMITTEE SEEKING RULE BOOKS TO STUDY

By Stan Conyer

The Rules Committee has been given the task of regularly reviewing the NARCOA rules and regulations governing the use and operation of track cars. The committee consist of Tom Norman, Phil Childress, Tom Johnson, Eric Schwandt, Bruce Frye, Carl Anderson, and Mark Arnold, and is chaired by me, Stan Conyer. This was a very popular committee and if I missed anyone or anyone else would like to join please let me know.

The committee will take a look at the existing rules of NARCOA and any other appro-

priate set of rules to see if any additions need to be made to our rule book. The overall opinion expressed at the Board meeting was that this rule book should contain the minimum safety standards to be followed at all NARCOA and AARO-sanctioned events to insure safe operation of track cars. The committee recognizes that different regions of the country may require additional rules to cover conditions in their regions. We also recognize the amount of work and expertise that went into the variety of rule books that have been written around the country. We hope to draw on this information to improve the NARCOA rule book but we do not believe that the rules need to be overly restrictive as to detract from the reason we are all in this hobby, which is to have fun.

I intend to provide the members of the committee with as many rule books as possible to review. I currently have rule books from NARCOA and MCCA. Tom Norman has agreed to furnish a copy of his MOW rule book, but we need help from any member who can furnish rule books from other motorcar groups or railroads.

Our committee has a big job ahead of it and will be working closely with the Operations and Safety committees to give our organization safe guidelines to insure safe motorcar meets and to protect our insurance thru AARO. We welcome input from all NARCOA members.

NARCOA'S NEXT BOARD MEETING IS PLANNED FOR FEBRUARY 25, 1995

NARCOA's general membership is invited and encouraged to attend Board meetings. NARCOA's next Board meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 25th, at the O'Hare Days Inn on Manheim Road in Chicago. There will be a social gathering on Friday evening, the 24th, beginning about 6 p.m. The Board meeting will begin at 8 a.m. the following morning.

If you want more information or desire an agenda for the meeting, contact Hank Brown, the meeting's organizer, at 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527, (608) 839-4939. You can also get in touch with Joel Williams, NARCOA secretary at Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839, or Ron Zammit, NARCOA president, 469 Compana, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420.

MEMBER INPUT IS BEING SOUGHT ON PROPOSED NEW NARCOA BY-LAWS

By Mike Paul

The NARCOA Board of Directors has recommended the adoption of a new set of draft bylaws for the association. The Board seeks membership input before any new bylaws are implemented. Any member desiring a copy of the draft bylaws must send a check in the amount of \$2.50 (to cover photocopying, postage, and handling expenses) to the chairman of the Bylaws Committee: Mike Paul, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904. Member comments on the draft Bylaws must be received by Mike no later than Jan. 3, 1995, so that the comments can be compiled for presentation to the Board of Directors at its next meeting in February, 1995.

HOOSIER RAILCARS HOST NEW NARCOA BOARD AT MOTORCAR MEET ON THE INDIANA SOUTHERN RR

By Stan Conyer

On Sunday, September 11, many of the NARCOA board members rode about 100 miles on the Indiana Southern Railroad at a meet sponsored by Hoosier Railcars.

The folks from Indiana are accustomed to hosting folks from out of state at their meets and recognize sometimes they are not accustomed to the way we run our meets. One fellow forgot to bring his AARO membership card as proof of insurance. The women at the registration table were not impressed when he told them that it was alright to let him ride because he had started the hobby years ago. Fortunately, a check of the AARO membership list found Joel Williams' name and he was allowed to run his car.

Another out of town guest slipped past the safety inspectors and made the run wearing Birkenstock sandals. Ron Zammit was asked to

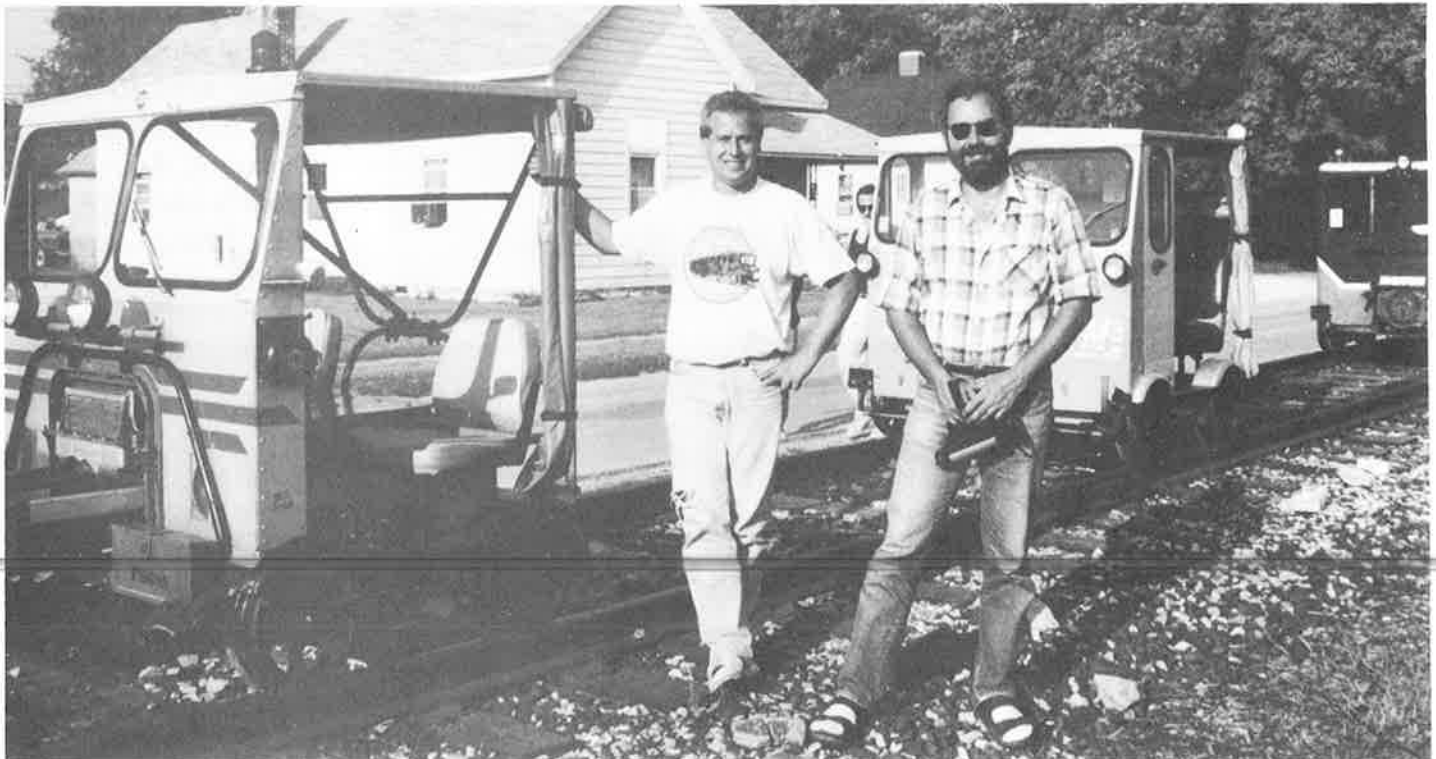
please wear appropriate footwear at the next meet.

Tom Norman did not bring his car all the way from Montana but made the run with Joel Williams. He convinced Joel to let him run the car part of the day so he could stay in the points race in Hank Brown's "Run a car in all 50 states" competition.

Twenty-four cars made the trip from Spencer to Mooresville, Indiana. An Indiana state police officer rode in one of the cars and phoned ahead to ask for police assistance at two of the busy grade crossings. However, the local police never showed up and all cars were safely flagged across in the usual fashion. The group ate lunch at a cafeteria in Mooresville and returned to Spencer three hours behind schedule.

About half of the group took the optional 20-mile trip on to Worthington, IN, and returned to Spencer after dark. Stan Conyer's car ran out of gas on the return leg of the trip and was rescued by Red Richardson who is always happy to render assistance with a minimum of harassment.

A good time was had by all, and the meet was the perfect ending to a very productive weekend.



Above, Mike Mitzel, at left with his Indiana Central M9, and Ron Zammit on the Indiana Southern RR run after the September Board meeting.



At left, John and Susan Cease's ex-N&W MT19 makes its debut on the Wellsboro and Corning on October 8, 1994, in dress reminiscent of a Pennsy diesel.

Photo by Wray Dudley

At right and below, photos of a restored Fairbanks-Morse 40B belonging to Victor Cross of Weaver, IA.



Don't put those cars away yet! Winter is coming. We dug out the snowy picture below sent to us by Don Elliott of Durand, MI. That's his M19 on the CMR in early 1992.





Above left, the motorcars of Jeff Levensgood and Bob Hixenbaugh lead a W&LE hyrailer during a stop on the Labor Day run of the Carrolton branch of the W&LE. At right above, Dave Verzi's M9 pauses at the W&LE Osnaburg depot.

Photos by Dave Verzi

Above, Wray Dudley's 49-year-old ex-C&O M19 is ready for a run on the Walkersville Southern rail in Walkersville, MD, on a foggy June 18, 1994. The car is pictured in front of the Walkersville Southern depot just recently acquired by the railroad from a nearby business.

Photo by Wray Dudley



At right, Dan Hiller's ex-CN Rail MT14 never looked better in Santa Fe War Bonnet silver and red.

Photo by Stan Conyer

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA WEEKEND INCLUDED RUNS ON THE NORTH SHORE RR AND THE SHAMOKIN VALLEY RR

By Larry Maynard

Sunshine, rain, thunder and lightning, good track, 46 motorcars, three dogs and 105 happy speeder people. This is the mixture for a weekend of fun and fellowship along the Susquehanna River in Central Pennsylvania.

The North Shore Railroad and the Shamokin Valley Railroad were covered from end to end on July 23 and 24. Railroad owner Dick Robie and General Manager Wayne Laepple were our gracious hosts for the weekend. They generously supplied each car operator with an official North Shore Railroad hat which was proudly worn. The SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority, a municipal authority that owns the tracks, gave each car a mile-by-mile list of the historical aspects of the line such as location of locks on the old canal, previous owners, long gone industries and stations, and other interesting facts.

There were cars from eight states in attendance. Mr. Robie gave prizes to the car traveling farthest, nicest looking car, most interesting car and the car with the best overall "railroad" appearance. Unfortunately, no one thought to record the winners' names.

The day started with the usual obligatory paperwork which took place in a Pennsylvania Railroad

caboose owned by one of the railroad's employees. My wife Carol and future daughter-in-law Kristie handled this important matter in their usual efficient manner and everyone was found to be "legal." The car inspection was taken care of by several members of the Bellefonte Historical Railroad. Thanks to all who helped.

The busywork done, it was time for the safety meeting. General Manager Wayne gave the safety talk stressing adequate following distances due to wet rails, flagging crossings and general rules and regulations.

Everyone loaded up and headed for our first town, Danville. There are several road crossings in Danville, the first of which is Rte. 54, a four-lane highway with quite a bit of traffic. The cars were placed into groups of five and with some heavy duty flag work, we all got across safely.

Mill Street, the main street in downtown Danville, is very interesting to cross in a motorcar. The railroad comes out between two buildings with very little clearance on either side, crosses the street and goes between two more buildings. As luck would have it, there was also a craft sale in progress on the sidewalks. We created quite a stir when 46 motorcars all came putting and honking right through the middle of town.



The lineup at the end of the Shamokin Valley Line.

Photo by Larry Maynard

Just on the other side of Danville is Danville State Hospital, a mental institution. We passed Asylum station, the stopping off point for many patients in passenger train days.

We passed through a lot of beautiful farm land en route to our next town, Rupert. Rupert is little more than a crossroads, but in years past, it was a very busy place. The Reading Railroad and The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western met at this point. During WWII as many as 4,000 cars a month were interchanged here.

Next we approached Bloomsburg, the home of the Bloomsburg Fair, the largest in the state. A "mother nature" stop was made on the other side of Bloomsburg as well as some quick purchases of munchies.

We headed northeast and on to the second longest section of straight or, in railroad terms, tangent, track in Pennsylvania. Lots more grade crossings, under Interstate 80 and on towards Berwick, the home of the Bulldogs who were ranked as the number one high school football team in the United States last year.

Entering Berwick yard we noticed a string of tankcars on a siding. Wise Foods has a plant in Berwick and makes thousands of bags of Wise potato chips every day. The tankcars were full of cooking oil for frying all those healthy chips.

Another interesting highlight of the Berwick yard is the track going to the BIDA Complex. The track branches off to the left and seems to go uphill at an angle too steep to believe. Somehow the train climbs the hill and gets back down without derailing.

We were now only a short distance from our destination, the Susquehanna Steam Electric plant, which is a polite way of saying nuclear power plant. The track here is owned by the state and sees very little traffic. They allowed us to use their restroom facilities and tables for a nature/lunch break. Some brave young couple decided to have an outdoor wedding also in the park and were quite surprised by the appearance of a string of motorcars. The lunch and the wedding both were hurried considerably by the sudden appearance of a thunderstorm complete with very close lightning and very heavy rain. Picnic baskets and bridesmaids both disappeared in a hurry.

Following lunch we retraced our steps to Northumberland. Approximately 40 hearty souls accepted the invitation of the Central PA Chapter of the NRHS to come to their very lovely station in White Deer for the evening. A large cake with a motorcar on it was waiting along with all kinds of other food, videos, slides and, best of all, cabooses rides. The members had hooked their two cabooses up to the 1944 GE locomotive and gave several rides on their short but interesting line. They also had tours through their Pullman cars and other exhibits.

Sunday morning found 38 cars setting on in



Just like the old days! Cleaning a truck crossing above Shomokin, PA, on the Shamokin Valley Railroad.

Photo by Dick Ray

Sunbury for a ride on the Shamokin Valley Railroad. This line is part former Reading and part former Pennsy. In the 40's and 50's it saw very heavy iron ore trains with two huge steam engines pulling and two more pushing. We passed through several small towns and arrived in Shamokin and encountered 11 busy grade crossings. Once again, we made it through without too many problems. The local police watched us and made sure we obeyed the local speed limits. Many local citizens were on the sidewalks watching the parade through their town on a quiet Sunday morning. We crossed Independence Street, the busiest street in town, on a crossing that cuts across the street diagonally. It made for an interesting morning.

We passed through the former Shamokin Yard, the destination and servicing point for many of the Reading Ramble steam excursions just prior to the demise of the Reading. As we left the yard, we could feel the grade increasing as we began to climb to Locust Summit. We traveled to the end of the Shamokin Valley tracks at Excelsior. From here on the tracks belong to the Reading, Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad. We ate lunch and began our return trip.

The weather was beautiful for the entire trip, almost. Just as the cars were almost back to Sunbury, mother nature decided to cool us off a little. It rained buckets for about five minutes and then the sun came back out! Those in open cars got pretty soggy real fast.

Central Pennsylvania Weekend is now a pleasant memory. It appeared that everyone had a great time and want to do it again next year. Good Lord willing and with the cooperation of Mr. Dick Robie and staff, we will do it again next year.

LONDON. PARIS. BEIJING. NORTHUMBERLAND?

The most unusual railcar at the North Shore Railroad run in July (see pages 14 and 15) was Tom Troxell's Model A Ford. One of his initial outings with the car is described in the article reprinted below from the local newspaper, The Morning Call.

By April Peterson

A car that came to fame for its ride around the world crossed a new frontier yesterday with a ride along the railroad tracks from Lansdale to Quakertown.

Tom Troxell of Coopersburg originally piloted his 1929 Model A Ford Woody Wagon from England to China in the 9,700-mile London to Beijing Motoring Challenge road rally in 1990, completing the trip in 52 days as part of a caravan of more than 60 cars.

But the car and Troxell were ready for a new challenge. Since the road rally, Troxell has had little occasion to use the car on the road, he said. In keeping with a new interest in rail cars, he had the Model A fitted with rail wheels used by railroad companies to run maintenance vehicles and other cars on tracks. The result: a bright red rail car with wood sides that seats seven.

"There are going to be some strange dinner conversations over the dinner table tonight," Troxell said yesterday, imagining onlookers' explanations of seeing his car.

He supplies the lines to the imagined conversation.

"I don't care what you say, I saw a Model A Ford come down the railroad," he imagined some might say.

"Sure," would be the reply, Troxell said.

Troxell and a crew of four from SEPTA started on their journey about 9 a.m. in Lansdale. Traveling at approximately 20 m.p.h., they hoped to reach

Coopersburg in an hour or so. But dense overgrowth on the line just beyond California Road near Quakertown changed their plans, Troxell said.

Near Sellersville, Troxell and his crew discovered a half-mile curved tunnel.

"It was a little scary. It gets very dark in there," Troxell joked.

The Model A's maiden rail voyage provided a track inspection. According to Troxell, SEPTA had been interested in restoring passenger service on the line. He and his passengers found the line clear except for the thick vegetation beyond California Road.

The trip also helped further Troxell's new hobby. He is a three-year member of the National Association of Railcar Owners and Operators, an organization whose members travel stretches of railroad throughout the year.

Chugging down the tracks, its headlights blazed underneath overcast skies, the car passed the old Quakertown station at Front Street about noon, catching the attention of Milton Weil of 9th Street, Quakertown. Weil said a buddy of his came to see him yesterday morning and asked him if he wanted to see the car. Weil, who once owned a Model A, accepted the invitation.



"I like to see that," he said of the antique car's trip past his post on the sidewalk near the train station. "It's a lot of fun watching them," he said.

Weil was among the many admirers Troxell and his car encountered. The Model A picked up one admirer near Sellersville, Troxell said, who beat the rail car to every crossing to California Road just to get a picture. And then there was the bus driver, Troxell said. A SEPTA bus driver saw the Model A pass at a crossing and looked on, surprised. By the time the car had made it to the next crossing, the bus was waiting to cross the tracks again. The driver waved them through, smiling.

"He just shook his head," Troxell said.

Submitted by Dick Ray
Randolph, New Jersey

Photo by Larry Maynard
New Columbia, PA

A SPRING RIDE ON THE MOHAWK, ADIRONDACK & NORTHERN AND THE LOWVILLE & BEAVER RIVER RR IN PICTURESQUE NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK STATE

By Dick Ray

The first official motorcar meet on the MA&N (ex-New York Central) trackage got underway on April 30th at 7:00 a.m. Most people were on the track in the yard at Lowville on Friday after signing releases and getting wheels checked. Jeff Mast also checked wheel gauge and we found out why as we traversed the 16 miles of the LIT (Lowville Industrial Track) through the swamp to Carthage. For once 15 m.p.h. seemed too fast.

The GVT president, David MonteVerdi, General Manager Jeff Baxter and Pete Gores of the Lowville & Beaver River were with us, of course, because they are motorcar people from long ago. Guess whose cars broke down!

We turned the cars on a crossing in Carthage and swapped tracks so we could start the 45-mile run on good track to Newton Falls, inside Adirondack Park. Evidence of the long winter was abundant, with lots of ice and snow patches remaining in the shade. We stopped to collect everyone up at Harrisville, took pictures, bought T-shirts at the local gift shop/pub, and then continued on.

The track here runs through the woods with lots of curvature, few grade crossings, and good rail. The next "scenic view" was of the Benson Mines, long abandoned, but the pit and mountains of rubble remain.

The end of the run was at the paper mill in Newton Falls which is the reason the railroad came here and still exists. We parked in the parking lot and walked up to the rustic Newton Falls Hotel where organizer Fred Furminger had arranged a buffet luncheon.

The 61-mile return trip back to Lowville went smoothly with Mike Woodburn leading. However, our day was not done because we turned and ran the 11 miles east to Croghan on the L&BR.

This has been a short line since its inception in the early 1900's and summertime excursions

still operate, sometimes behind a light two-truck Shay. Groups of motorcars were turned on the "Armstrong turntable" and then backed the last few yards to the main street end of track. A few people persuaded the famous Croghan Sausage store owner to open up so they could buy one. The rest of us had ice cream from the wood-floored, old-time-style ice cream parlor on the corner.

We were back in Lowville before dark after an enjoyable 143-mile day which did not seem that long. Clearly the good organization, realistic schedule, and steady (not fast) pace made it work out.

On Sunday, we set on at a siding near the firehouse in Lyons Falls, 14 miles south of Lowville. We had lost about half of the group who either got cold or had a long drive home.

With Jeff Baxter leading in his hyrail truck and another of our members flagging the crossings (thanks Mark) we made good time for the 45 miles south toward Utica on the other section of the MA&N. We stopped at Snow Junction, which is the southern terminus of the Adirondack Railroad.

The 118 miles north through the wilderness from here to Lake Placid was once Motorcar Heaven but a series of washouts and the inevitable takeover by the brush put an end to it after a too short 12 years. The unlucky attendees who never got to tour it just looked on with longing, while the rest of us observed a moment of silence.

At Utica we turned on a dirt crossing in the yard and backed down to the MA&N enginehouse. The busy Conrail main was only 50 feet away and we watched several trains roar past. A sudden cold front came through bringing wind, rain, and a sharp drop in temperature so we quickly scurried north with a refreshment stop at the village of Holland Patent.

The day ended as planned with our arrival at 2:00 p.m. so that all could get home safely. Way to go, Fred!

AN ITCH THAT HAD TO BE SCRATCHED: HOW I GOT MY FIRST MOTORCAR

By Frederick H. Fisher

One day, a friend and I were talking about railroads and related items. He mentioned that he had seen this thing on the rails going past his house one Sunday. It was a small, yellow, motorized inspection car with a yellow flashing light on top and it made a put-put sound as it went by.

Well, this got me thinking. What my friend had described sounded like a track speeder. I knew that these things existed, I had seen a string of them in Nevada once. I did not realize that people owned these things for their own use. OUCH!! Something just bit me.

Skip ahead a few years.

TRAINS magazine, flipping through the pages . . . Whoa!! Wait a minute. There is a picture of some track cars, the caption says something about a convention of track car owners. I scan the rest of the issue for more . . . nothing. Where do I get more info, where can I get one, who makes them? What is NARCOA? That old bug bite starts to itch again.

Skip ahead. Conversation with fellow railfans. Talk gets around to track cars. The question comes up, where do you get on? Answer. The railroad, where else. Who do you talk to? Don't know. Call someone and ask. I just can't seem to find the time to go through the tedious task of writing or calling. Besides, they are only probably going to sell me some piece of junk from the heap out back.

Skip ahead again. *TRAINS* magazine again. This time the ad's in the back. Someone has listed a track car for sale. Wait. There are two ads, send \$2.00 and get a picture and info, send a buck and get a picture and more info. Back in the mail comes the stuff. One is a picture of a real neat looking car; the price is a little out of my league at the moment. The second envelope comes in the mail. Maybe this is the one, there are a lot of pictures here. What do we have, old B&O track car, B&O track car, no belt, engine seized, no carburetor, broken axle. Where am I going to get parts? How does this thing go together? I have never seen one of these things up close in my life! Wait a minute . . . I want a track car to ride on, not spend my life repairing. Besides in both cases, the big problem is they are a day and a half away and how do I get them home. That old bug bite is really getting nasty looking.

Skip ahead again. NRHS chapter meeting, November 1988, talking to a guy who works on a short line railroad in South Jersey. Once again the subject of track cars comes up. "Call this guy over in Elmer, he knows something about track cars." The next afternoon I give this guy in Elmer a call, blasted answering machines. "Hi, This is Dave Rose..." So I leave a message, "I am interested in getting a track car . . ." The next day this guy Dave calls me back. "So you want a track car . . ." He tells me where he lives and invites me to stop by and see what he has. A couple of weeks go by and one Saturday evening I find myself in Dave's neighborhood, I give him a call and by the time I get over to his house, it's dark. As I pull up in the street my headlights play across something in his back

yard. What is this some kind of junk yard? I don't pay it much attention. So it's up to the door and knock. "Yeah. Can I help you?"

"Yes. My name is Fisher. I called you a while ago about a track car."

"Well, what kind of car are you looking for?"

"I'm looking for a track car." (What's he think I want, an old Buick?).

"What kind?"

"The kind I can ride on."

"Do you want a Fairmont, Fairbanks-Morse, or Kalamazoo? Do you want a windshield, a cab, or do you want an open car? How much work do you want to do? Do you want it running? Are you going to paint it or do you want me to restore it?"

"I would like a cab."

"What kind of motor do you want? Do you want a single- or two-cylinder, or do you want a four-banger?"

A puzzled look comes over my face. "I don't know?"

He grabs a flash light. "Come on out back. It will be easier this way"

Wooo, this must be the place where old track cars come to die!! No wonder I couldn't find a track car. This guy Dave has them all. Well, by the dim glow of the flashlight he showed me all the different models that he had, M19, M9, M19-AA, S-2, 40B. Some with cabs, some without. Some cars had just windshields, some cars had nothing. Dave described each car and what was wrong with it. I was getting a little leary about this after seeing the condition of some of these cars, they were all in some degree of disrepair. Oh, who am I kidding, some of these cars were just plain junk. By this time I am foaming at the mouth and that bug bite is driving me nuts.

I had decided a while ago that I wanted a car that had a cab. I figured that its not always going to be warm and sunny when I wanted to go riding. It didn't have to be in perfect shape but it would have to be running when I got it. I am not a wizard with a crescent wrench, I can maintain an engine, I can't perform miracles.

"I have one more to show you," and into the garage we went. There in the middle of a couple of piles of parts and other assorted stuff was this car, it wasn't perfect, it just needed paint. That was it. The car I dreamed about. All I had to do was take her out, plop her on the tracks and away I would go, roaring off into the sunset.

"That's my car, here's the one." Dave said as he motioned to something in the back.

What!! This isn't it, I want this one. But behind Dave's car was another, she was not quite as complete as Dave's, but she had just as much. Don't get me wrong now, she wasn't in plop down condition, but she was a damn sight better than what was outside. I had found the car I wanted. She was an M19-AA with a cab. She was painted yellow with a silver roof. Her side panels were banged up and there was a big crease right across the front panel. The glass was either missing or broken. And the biggest problem was the front axle wasn't there.

"It's pretty beat up, isn't it?" I said, trying hard to control my enthusiasm.

"No problem, I can fix it."

"You sure? It looks kind of rough."

"Positive."

"Okay, I'll take it."

We went in the house to negotiate the terms of the

sale. The price seemed reasonable enough. But would he get it running, or was I going to have to perform some kind of mystic ritual in order for this thing to start.

"Half now, half when you get the car."

"And you're going to fix it."

"When you get the car, she will be all there, running. All you will have to do is paint it."

"I have never ridden on one of these things before, how do you start it?"

"Lessons included."

"When will she be ready?"

"In a couple of weeks."

Well, now comes the really tough part. Waiting. All this took place in December. Dave had given me the number off the engine and told me to call Fairmont Motors in Minnesota and get a history card for that number. That came two days before Christmas along with a service bulletin that I ordered. I spent the next couple of days in the 'Home Library' pouring over that little green book.

The history card showed that the motor came from an M19-AA that was sold to The Milwaukee Road in 1962 and came with a windshield and canopy, not the cab that was on it now. The number from the water hopper came up as an MT14 that was sold to the SOO Line in 1967. It seems as though my car is a mutt, such is the life of a motor car.

Over the next couple of weeks I made a trip or two to Dave's to see how things were progressing.

"When do you think?"

"Couple of weeks."

"Are you sure?"

"I got to finish up a few things first. Don't worry, by the time the riding season gets here you will have it."

A couple of weeks came and went, and still nothing.

The beginning of February rolls around, and there is a message on the old answering machine. "Your car is almost ready, should be next weekend." Needless to say I was like a kid on Christmas Eve all week. Finally Saturday was here. I was going to meet Dave at his place and then we were going to a short line that we had made arrangements to use. Well, let me tell you. When I pulled up to Dave's house and saw that car loaded on the trailer I broke into the biggest smile I have ever had. She was all that I wanted. She needed paint and a few finishing touches, but she was it.

Off to the railroad. Dave unloaded her and we stowed the gear we brought along. He started her up. WOW! I could feel myself smiling from ear to ear.

"Let's go."

My car ran great. Dave had done what he said. We spent the day running up and down about eight miles of railroad. The lesson not only covered running a track car but how to start the motor, how to reverse the motor, and how to use the timing lever and mixture knob. How to flag a crossing, what shoes to wear, what equipment to bring. And how to turn the car at a grade crossing.

When we got back we loaded her back on Dave's trailer. He showed me how to drain the crank case of fuel mixture so that the next time I started the motor the old mixture would not foul out the plugs.

Dave decided there was some adjustments to be made to correct some problems and he would bring the car up to my place the next week end.

The following Saturday, Dave brought my car to my place of business. We unloaded her into the elevator, and

up we went. I own a three-story brick building and the third floor is used for warehousing. This would be the home for my track car for the next twelve weeks.

Little did I know that this would only be the beginning of a new and exciting hobby. The model trains have been left to collect dust in the closet and magazines are piling up next to the reading chair. The work bench has carburetors and timers and coils all over the place. There has been the addition of six more motorcars to the collection.

On my first solo ride I remember thinking as I heard the sound of steel wheels on steel rails and the put-put of the little two-cylinder engine, "THIS IS GREAT!" Nothing can beat the thrill of getting into your own car and heading off down the tracks. It is something that has to be experienced.

Funny thing. That bug bite? It's gone.



Before . . .

Frederick Fisher and son Christopher take the first ride on their M19-AA, shown here before restoration in February 1989 at Collins Lakes, NJ.

Photo by Dave Rose



. . . And After

Fred Fisher took this picture of his sons Christopher and Douglas beside restored #219 on the Black River & Western RR in Lambertville, NJ.

A CANADIAN ODYSSEY TO RIDE THE ONTARIO NORTHLAND

By John Sims

On June 9th, 1994, I began a trip to Canada to ride the Ontario Northland Railroad. Sounds like a simple trip, but that's where the simple ended.

Let's start at the beginning. This last spring, Hank Brown offered a trip on the ONR with a limited number of spaces. It took me a few days to clear the dates with my boss. When I got my money to Hank, I became the first alternate. It didn't look like I was going to Canada this year and I started planning other trips.

Then two weeks before the trip, Hank called. There was an opening but I had to move fast. The next day I got the dates cleared again and sent Hank my money. Canada, here I come. This trip is special because it will be the first time my son would visit Canada and, as a red hot hockey player, he sees this as a trip to the promised land.

As the days to go are counted down, Stan Conyer calls and tells me of a trip he is going on two days after the ONR trip. He said there were still openings on the Algoma Central trip. This was a three-day run and, seeing as I was in Canada, this was a good time to do the trip. I called and got on the list that night and sent my money.

I work for a hazardous material clean-up company and we are on call 24 hours a day. My big fear was a spill the day I was to leave that caused me to stay over to finish up. The day before, it happened, and looked like I might not

go. But the job went well and I was free to leave. My son is nine years old and a veteran of many trips. He was busy at home loading the suburban with what he thought was the important gear, hockey cards, potato chips, candy, and his pillows. No clean clothes, no food, no money, no maps. He was ready.

That night we loaded and unloaded the suburban ten times. To keep the ball rolling, when the final items were on we left town. We stopped at a truck stop two hours later to sleep; we were on the road. The next day we drove to Niagara Falls, not a bad drive from Indy. My son was very impressed with the Falls.

Now for all you people that plan to visit Canada, a word of advice. If you are taking your child to Canada but only one parent is going, have the other one write a note that it is okay. I never thought of this and was unaware of what was to happen next. The Canadian officials stopped me and sent me to the inspection station. I was told to unload the truck and every inch was checked top to bottom. Next my son was asked if anyone knew he was with me and that we were in Canada. He was taken off to the side to be questioned. What great crime had we done? My driver's license was taken and held for about an hour. The Canadian people were very nice, but I was confused what was going on. At last they told me that there were many cases of children being taken by the non-custody parent out of the U.S. I was a man with a child leaving the states, this and that funny looking thing I was towing. Border officials said, "What is that thing anyway?" When I told them about the trip they looked at me and said, "You're doing what?"

The next day was great. We went to Toronto to see the CN Tower, but could not find

An Algoma Central freighter passing us on the first day out.





Motorcars waiting for the Polar Bear Express to pass at Temagami, Ontario.

a parking spot with a towing trailer. My son saw a sign for the Hockey Hall of Fame. But again no parking. By now we needed to start north to North Bay. This is when I found a water leak in the truck radiator. The leak was very small and with spare water, it turned out to be no trouble. What next?

That night in North Bay my son found a card shop that had mainly hockey cards, surprise, surprise. I told the guy we were from Indy and my son thought that every one in Canada played hockey. I laughed. He looked at me and said, "So what's your point, hey." Maybe they all do play hockey?

The next two days were on the ONR with an overnight stay at Englehart. The next day back to North Bay we had a great new experience with motorcar runs, fire fighting. The ONR's Polar Bear Express was running south ahead of us, and it looked like sparks from its brake shoes had started grass fires. Now it was the job of the motorcar fire department, Canadian division, to save the Canadian woods. Like pros we jumped from our cars and stomped out the fires. We put out four fires, the last of which had gotten a good start on us and was getting pretty big when we got to it.

The remaining miles were a little slow for me as I fouled a plug and was pulled into town. I did not bring a spare plug with me and had never had this happen before. The next day I got spare plugs and was ready.

Now the ONR trip was history and I was off to Soo for the Algoma Central. The day started out with a big rain storm, at times so hard we had to stop driving. But by the afternoon the sky cleared and hot weather was setting in. The trip was to start the next day at the shopping mall in Soo. That night many of the riders met at the

motel for fun and check-ups. For the first time since the start of the trip my son found kids near his age. He was in heaven.

The trip started out as a simple run. But 20 miles into the run I burned up my key switch and my car was dead. I knew I could wire around it but it would take 10 minutes or so. The plan was to have the hyrailer pull me and I would make the repair. This worked out okay and I was back in business in about 20 miles. As it turned out I ended up pulling or pushing others four times on the trip. Some thought I ought to put "JOHN'S TOWING" on the back of my car. For those that lived, the great Canadian woods were fun. That is all but for the great national birds of Canada, the black fly and mosquito. I still carry the bite marks on my legs.

On the way back to the Soo I performed the classic dumb move. I planned out my fuel use to the gallon. I hoped to arrive back in the Soo with about two gallons in the tank to avoid buying the high priced Canadian fuel. I have on my car a gauge for my tank. But unknown to me the ground wire was loose and giving me bad level readings. With about 50 miles to go I ran out of fuel. My gauge said I still had a half tank. While I was being pushed, I found the true tank level--empty. The car pushing was Bob Brown, and at this same time his car quit; he had fouled a plug. Bob put gas in my car and as I was hooked to him I started to pull him while he made his repairs. Is this called tag team cars? You push awhile then I'll pull, save gas?

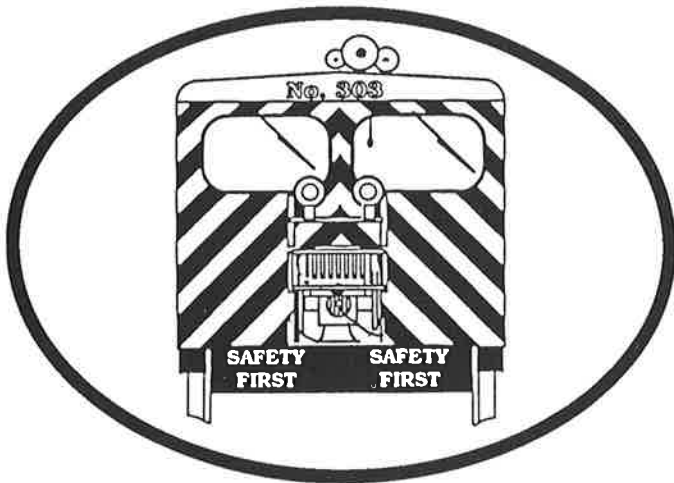
The balance of the trip was without any more action. We bought some tee shirts, pins, hats, hockey cards, took more pictures and headed for home. A total of 10 days, two motorcar trips, 1,000 miles on the rails, stops by border guards, leaking radiator, no parking, very hot weather, millions of flies and mosquitoes, fires, and hundreds of hockey cards.

I can't wait till next year!!

Want Ads

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE SETOFF is happy to print all ads received from the membership. Please send ads directly to: Gene Tucker, SETOFF Editor, 1004 North Kentucky Street, Arlington, VA 22205-2310. Thank you!

FOR SALE: Attractive solid brass belt buckles with a raised image of motorcar No. 303 in brass, with a black enamel background. Actual size is 2 1/2 X 3 1/2 oval. (See below.) A limited number are available at \$10.00 each from Fred Fuminger, 30 Lou Ann Drive, Depew, NY 14043. Makes a great Christmas gift!



NEED INFO on Kalamazoo # 56 with Onan engine CK-F16/82. Les King, 1835 Alabama Avenue NW, P.O. Box 164, North Lawrence, OH 44666. Phone (216) 833-2868.

FOR SALE: Fairmont MT14, ex-Maine Central M 201, built 1979. Onan powered, recently repainted. Excellent condition. \$2,850.00. ALSO ex Canadian National MT14 available. Phone (603) 473-2133, 6-8 p.m.

FOR SALE: Fairbanks-Morse/Sheffield 40B manual (reproduction), \$12.00 postpaid. Hollis Button, 1025 West Parr Avenue, Campbell, CA 95008. Phone (408) 378-0436.

WANTED: Fairbanks-Morse model 28 or 30 push start speeder, or parts. Hollis Button (see ad above).

FINDER'S FEE for Mudge direct drive speeder with one cylinder engine, parts or restorable complete drive unit. Hollis Button (see ad above).

FOR SALE: Ex-Canadian Pacific Fairmont M19 motorcars, various prices and conditions. Bob Layfield (519) 948-6467, or Bill White (519) 322-5963.

FOR SALE: Ex-Canadian Pacific Woodings CBI motorcars, rebuilt, with air horns, flashing lights, stop lights, 12V outlet. Good condition. \$2,000.00 Contact Bob Layfield (519) 948-6467, or Mike McCormick (519) 977-7756.

WANTED: Number plates, operating and parts manuals for Sheffield model 40B, and for 1929 Fairmont MM19. Also need for the Fairmont good 17-inch rims with or without the wheels and head gasket for PHMA 4HP engine, as well as factory fenders or any other good parts to make the Fairmont look like new. Contact Vic Cross, 3282 Old Quarry Road, Wever, IA 52658-9513. Phone (319) 528-4369.

FOR SALE: Fairmont M14 motorcar in excellent condition. Asking \$2,000.00. Set up for heater. Contact James K. Labounty, RR 1, Box 137, Derby Line, VT 05830. Phone (802) 873-3252.

FOR SALE: Motorcars, various makes and models. Send LSASE for current list. Southeastern Rail Service, 510 Austin Street, Norfolk, VA 23503.

WANTED: Turntable for MT14, operable or repairable. Tom Sharratt, 4023 Shawnee Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50310. Phone (515) 278-4881.

WANTED: One five-chime Leslie air horn. Contact Chuck Harrison, 5820 Mohawk, Las Vegas, NV 89118. Phone (702) 364-1962.

WANTED: Four 20-inch Fairmont demountable wheels in good condition. Will buy with or without axles and hubs. Please help! John L. Uher, P.O. Box 383, Coshocton, OH 43812-0383. Phone (614) 622-4000 (collect, late evenings).

FOR SALE: RAILROD II, 3HP Briggs engine, new seats and cover. Light weight, easy to handle. Transport on top of your automobile, \$800.00. FAIRMONT ST2, ex B&O, complete. Needs total restoration. \$800.00. Contact Fred Fisher, 6941 Walnut Avenue, Pennsauken, NJ 08109. Phone (800) 892-6688.

FOR SALE: Ex-CP Rail Woodings CBI and CBL motorcars with full fiberglass cabs and doors, 18HP Tecumseh electric start, drive shaft, leaf spring suspension, \$2,065.00 each, includes parts/service manual; Ex CP Rail FAIRMONT MT14-L motorcars with full fiberglass cabs and doors, 18HP Onan CCKB and 22HP Onan B48G electric start engines, \$1,750.00 each with parts/service manuals; Ex-CP Rail FAIRMONT M19, CR7, M9 motorcars, some with metal cabs, some with fiberglass cabs, some with fiberglass cabs and doors. ROC and ODB engines, \$1,175.00 each; Ex-CN FAIRMONT MT14-L motorcars with full fiberglass cabs and doors, 18HP Onan CCKB electric start engines,

\$1,000.00 and \$1,500.00. Contact Mike Billet, 1010 Felton Road, Red Lion, PA 17356. Phone (717) 244-0332.

WANTED: Fairmont 45566 cylinder head, cast iron (not aluminum). Must be in new or excellent condition (no paper weights, please), with all fins intact. ALSO engine stabilizer group/parts, unit # 58461. ALSO need side mounting brackets # 58469/58472 that I can reproduce. Contact Fred Lienhard, 895 Daniel Drive, Reno, NV 89509. Phone (702) 323-0928 (evenings).

FOR SALE: Pumpcar plans to build a replica Sheffield two- to four-man man pumpcar are available again. \$60.00 postpaid. IS THERE ANY INTEREST IN VELOCIPEDE PLANS? Bruce Carpenter, Carpenter Rail Design, 10241 Co. Rd. 25A, Wapakoneta, OH 45895. Phone (419) 738-5384.

FOR SALE: Four demountable Fairmont 20-inch wheels, part # M11401. Excellent condition, sand blasted and painted. \$75.00 each or four for \$250.00. Steve Richardson, 2 Maybelle Avenue, Auburn, MA 01501. Phone (508) 832-8136.

WANTED: Fairmont MT14 complete and running, or in restorable condition. Mert Williams, 1860 Nelson Lane SE, Rochester, MN 55904. Phone (507) 289-1594.

FOR SALE: Ex IC Fairmont S2/3, #7785. Asking \$1,000.00. FAIRMONT M19-F1 from CSTM&O Ry., \$1,200.00. One 20 man GANG TRAILER from Milwaukee Rd., \$900.00. WOLLERY TIE CUTTER with 10HP Wisconsin engine, runs. \$275.00. Contact Joe Moth, 2645 North Jackson Road, Pecatonica, IL 61063. Phone (815) 239-1383.

FOR SALE: Motorcar roofs and fronts for sale "cheep." S2, M14, and M19 peaked roofs, late styled rounded edge roofs and fronts for M19 and MT19, different conditions and prices--must be seen and picked up. ALSO aluminum frame for Fairmont M9, no axles, good start for a light trailer, \$75.00. Contact Ken Kurdt, Chelsea Valley Shortline Company, 118 East Caroline Drive, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590. Phone (914) 831-1170.

FOR SALE: Fairmont 0307 hyrail gear with rubber tread wheels and two sets of mounts for a late 70s to late 80s Ford trucks. Decent shape with some spare parts and manual, \$1,750.00. MOTOROLA MT500 railroad handie-talkie, five watt output, four channel with touch tone front and good battery, \$250.00. MOTOROLA MH70 handie-comm, one channel railroad portable, \$100.00. Looking for WABCO locomotive and portable radios, Motorola "lunch box" radios and railroad hardhats. Contact Joe Ginnane, 1180 Andrews Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44170. Phone (216) 521-0255.

FOR SALE: Build yourself a steam-powered rail car. Major components include frame assembly with wheels (with side rods), bearings, etc., two-cylinder steam engine, ASME code boiler and water tank. All for only \$1,200.00. Contact Jim Baird, P.O. Box 69, Bealeton, VA 22712. Phone (703) 439-3357.

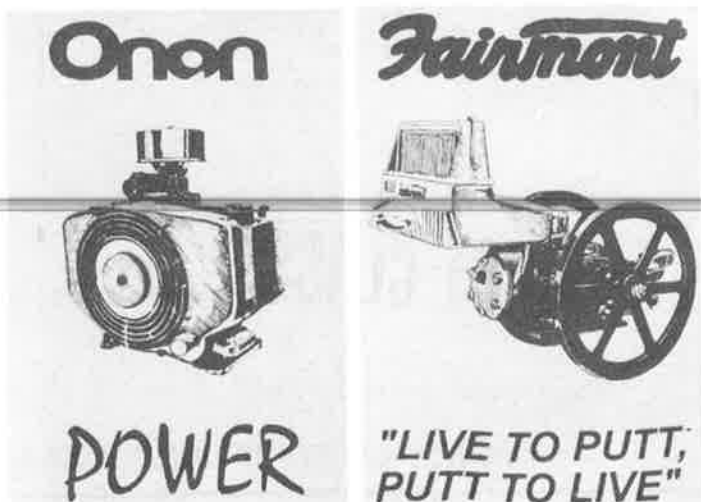
WANTED: Fairmont M9 motorcar. Also wanted is sales literature, parts books, instruction manuals and all running gear parts such as wheels (14"), axles, axle bearings, and other drive components. Contact Dave Sherron, P.O. Box 189, Fryeburg, ME 04037. Phone (207) 935-2000 days, FAX (207) 935-2989.

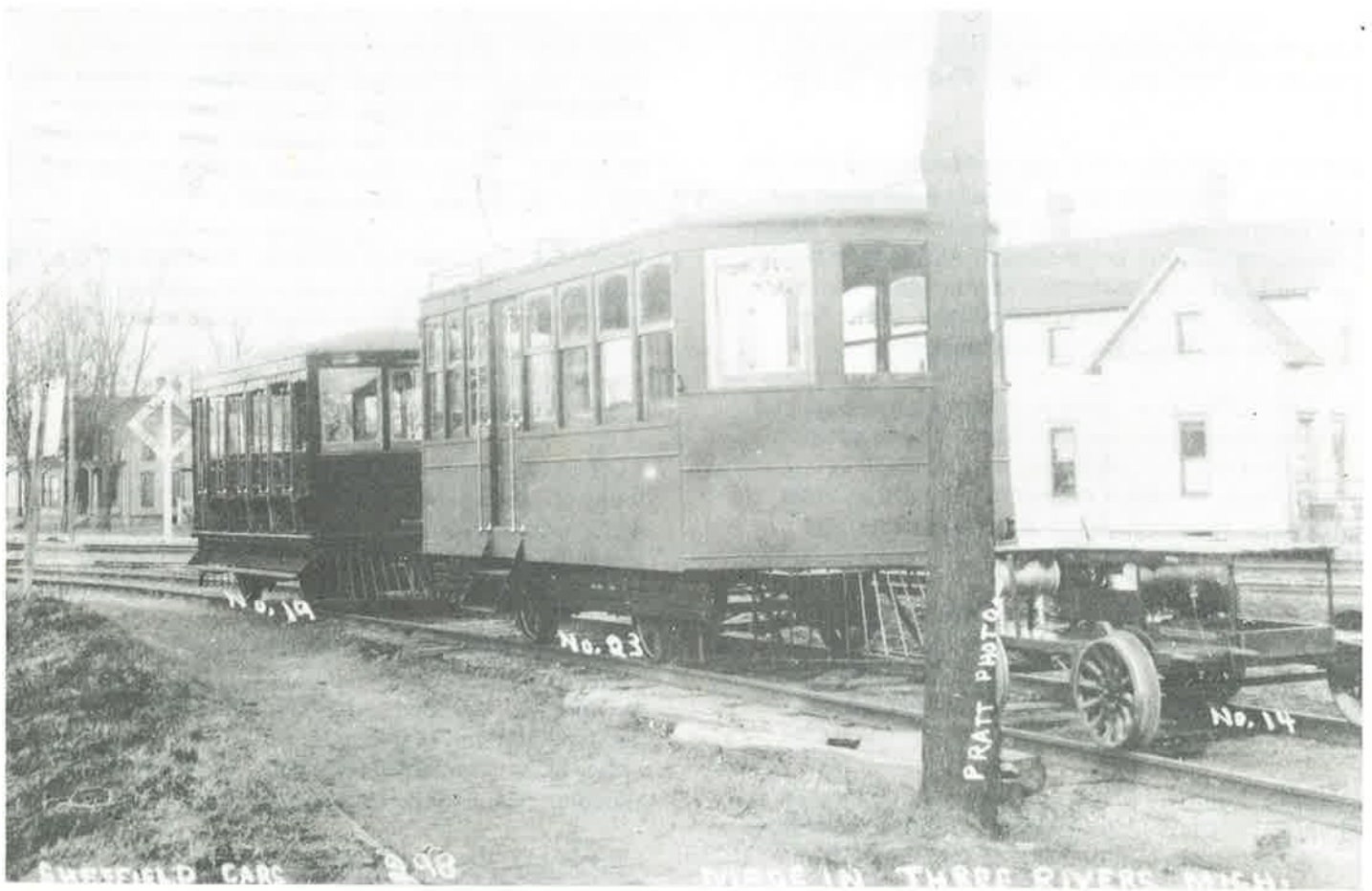
FOR SALE: Fairmont C5 carburetors, expertly rebuilt to look and perform like new, \$215.00. RO-C TIMERS \$65.00, both \$6.00 UPS. ALSO crankshaft rebuilding available. Doug Heinmuller, 115 West Street, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. Phone (207) 288-4332 (evenings).

WANTED: Parts for a Fairmont MT19-A1: seat and frame for right side, left Fairmont side curtain, springs for front and rear (heavy duty) for axle suspension, plastic "Fairmont" rear logo for seats, front windshield safety glass. Contact John Wilson, Rt. 1, Box 81M, Stoddard, WI 54658. Phone (608) 788-7305.

FOR SALE: Fairmont M19-D with cab, ex-Norfolk & Southern, totally rebuilt in 1992 to like new condition. Single cylinder ODB engine, fresh paint, horn, lights, strobe light, ready to set-on, perfect condition. \$2,800. Contact Ken Luckenbaugh. Phone (717) 225-0316.

FOR SALE: Fairmont and Onan Tee Shirts and sweat shirts. Support your favorite motive power! Shirts are gray, all cotton with blue printing. (See photos below.) Tee shirts are \$12.00 plus \$1.00 shipping. Sweat shirts and \$18.00 plus \$1.50 shipping. ALSO motorcar buttons with flashing LED headlight, \$5.00. Stan Conyer, 9333 West St. Rd. 46, Columbus, IN 47203. Phone (812) 342-0565.





David Verzi of Columbia Station, OH, submitted this reprint of a postcard of "Sheffield Motorcars" by an unknown photographer.

THE SETOFF

Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839



FIRST CLASS

DICK RAY
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