



THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 45 Number 2

MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM
Where "I've Been Working On the
Railroad" Becomes a Reality

November
December
2012



Once again the Christmas season descends onto the museum grounds which is transformed into the station stop of North Pole.

Photo Courtesy David Berndt



THE CONSIST

Volume 45 No. 2

November-December

Observation Platform

A Reflection of 40 Years

The Back Shop

The Steam Generator Car

New Engine Radios

The equipment Repair

New Shop Lathe

IC Diner 4112

The handicap Railcar

The Timetable

Richard P. Stair Tower

The Last Run

Carl L. Brown William K. Dunbar
David S. Mann

LCL Less Than Carload

The Switchstand Lamps

The Milmine Tool House

The Frog Repair

The Train Order

The Polar Express

Lunch With Santa

Arrivals & Departures

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	Bill Crisp	Vice President
3	Neal Grant	Board Chair
	Syl Keller	General Manager
4	Doug Butzow	Treasurer
5	Derek Kouzmanoff	Secretary
5	Donna McClure	Registered Agent /Com. Affairs
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THE OBSERVATION PLATFORM

By Dale Jenkins Editor
"A Reflection of 40 Years"



History is composed of an event, a time frame, people and the opportunity to review this sum total. As in this case, a 40 year span of history is shared with the reader from the prospective of this member, who was much younger at the time (and had a lot more hair). It was the summer of 1972, and I was employed by the Illinois Terminal Railroad as a Special Agent, based in Springfield, with a territory stretching east of Champaign to the C&EI Connection at Glover. Interstate 72 has not yet come into existence, and Illinois Route 48 would parallel the Illinois Central. It was at this junction just north of Monticello that what appeared to be a railroad scrap yard sprouting out of the weeds: a variety of freight and passenger equipment.

On investigation I would discover the Monticello & Sangamon Valley Railway Museum with what appeared to be a group of rag-tag dedicated rail enthusiasts who would invite me to come join them. Unknown to them (and a lot of folks who knew me) I had always wanted to be a passenger train conductor, but reality dictated that my destiny was to be a rail cop. This by-chance encounter would defy this mandate as the museum was operating a passenger train and I could be part of the crew. Hanging in my closet at home was my passenger conductor's uniform which until now was just an IT artifact, but now could be placed in service.

This was my first day of a 40 year adventure when I arrived on the property, in full uniform (and polished shoes) to fulfill this life's ambition. This is when I met the museum's seniority roster's number one conductor and life long friend: Charlie Inman. The little 0-4-0, operated under the watchful eye of Charles Daigh, would pull the Rock Island Coach and the IC caboose out of the combination mud-weed loading area northward, passing Nelson's Road crossing, the IC connection switch to a point at the base of the hill. We would then back up to Nelson's Crossing, reverse direction and return to the base of the hill, then return to the point of origination. As I recall, we made 3 or 4 trips on the weekend and the coach was full! Every weekend I would drive over from Springfield and work as the flagman for Charlie. Of course to know Charlie, with his quick wit and dry sense of humor: fun was had by all. On one memorable occasion, I had a button operated box which, when pressed, would ring a set of telephone bells. Inside my jacket I had a telephone receiver with the cord attached to the inside pocket. Keep in mind; this was before the invention of the cell phone. Leaning against the edge of a seat the sound of a telephone ringing filled the coach. Not only in the amazement of the passengers, but to Charlie as well, I pulled out the telephone receiver and engaged in a conversation, then handed the receiver to Charlie who looked as if it was going to squirt water on him. Not missing a beat, he answered the phone and replied "Yes, she is right here" and handed it to an unsuspecting lady passenger.

This is an example of the camaraderie that the members shared which was the force that built this museum. In time the former IT right of way would now host the museum's main line up to the top of the hill (projected to be built to White Heath) and a siding was built for the engine to run around the train to pull it back to what is now No. 1 track of the yard. On an adjacent track the RPO car served as the combination ticket office and gift shop. A small wooden chicken coop would give way to a Quonset hut to work on the equipment.

As with progress, the museum would continue to grow with the acquisition of the Illinois Central main which opened the line to downtown Monticello and the subsequent addition of the Wabash and Nelson Crossing depots. The museum collection would continue to grow and buildings to house them would spring up from the mud which would give way to rocked surfaced roads and manicured grounds. The roster of train crews would increase and a level of professionalism would become the hallmark of the museum. Today we are a world-class museum, with dedicated volunteers who carry forward the mandate of 40 years ago to be a force to build a railroad museum. And for myself, I have fulfilled my life's dream of being a passenger train conductor.

Dale Jenkins, Special Agent IT/NS, Retired



(L to R:) Fireman Mike Pfister,
Engineer: Bruce Pryke,
Flagman: Dale Jenkins,
Conductor: Charlie Inman

Camp Creek Yard, 1972



THE BACK SHOP

By Kent McClure
Chief Mechanical Officer



The summer of 2012 has been busy with maintenance of equipment. Most notably our ex-CN steam generator car. During inspections, a leak was discovered in one of the coils of pipe that make up the boiler portion of a Vapor-Clarkson OK-4625

steam generator. This required the disassembly of the unit to isolate which coil was leaking, and then to remove the offending part for repair or replacement. We found the leak in the inner coil, the final wind before it heads into the steam separator, and then on to the train. We attempted to repair the source of the leak, which was at a factory weld. Unfortunately, the repair was not successful, requiring us to purchase a new inner coil from Vapor Corp. (Yes, you can still get parts for these, they'll even build you a new one if you want!) The new coil arrived in good order, the boiler reassembled and tested again, with no leaks, with the car ready to supply steam for our fall events.



Paul Nelson has been busy with electrical gremlins in our IC GP-11, #8733. They don't prevent its operation, but we would like it to work as it is supposed to. The museum also purchased a NEW, clean cab, narrow band two piece radio from JEM Communications of Colorado Springs, CO, for installation in our Wabash F7A #1189. It was installed shortly after its arrival. This being a two-part radio, the radio itself is in the nose of the locomotive (as was the original), with an operating head in the cab. While it cost

somewhat more, this arrangement takes up less space and is much less intrusive, allowing us to maintain more of the original feel of the cab and controls. A regular "clean cab" radio would have required more substantial in-cab modifications to fit it in, something we'd like to avoid, particularly with this unit.





This winter will see work on Wabash caboose #2834, with center plate inspections, side bearing work, and swing hanger inspections, all requiring the car be jacked up and trucks rolled out. (This is some of the same work accomplished last winter on NKP 1907, our ex-Nickel Plate flat car-turned open air car.) We also plan to remove a leaf spring from ex-Milwaukee Road NW-2 #1649 as inspection uncovered a broken spring band. This is in addition to the annual inspection work required on Southern #401 in preparation for its operation in May.

In the unexpected developments department, this past fall a good sized metal turning lathe became available to us out of the blue. Member Mark Weckel stumbled across a machine being retired at U of I, and after quick consultations, purchased same for use at MRM. Mark graciously agreed to store the machine on a trailer in his shop in north Urbana, until after our fall events were over. The machine is a 1941 Axelson Lathe, with a 24" swing and 72" center-to-center distance, meaning it can hold a piece of work that is 24" in diameter, and 6 feet long. This makes it the same size as the old, flat belt, cone head machine that we have had for many years, but... the Axelson is FAR more massive, weighing in at 16,350 lbs., making it more capable of heavy duty work. In fact, MRM's 10,000 lb capacity crane was able to pick up and carry the old lathe, but the new one was another matter. Many Thanks to Seevers Farm Drainage for coming out with their big tracked backhoe, and lifting the new machine off the truck and placing it in the door of the building, something we didn't have the equipment to do.



The only downside to this machine, is it would not fit in the same space used by the previous machine, requiring an extensive rearrangement of the machine shop equipment, which of course required moving many electrical items around to accommodate new machine locations. Two machines were removed to make room for the new one, our old 24" lathe went, as well as our old Gould and Eberhardt shaper (which had never been used at MRM, except as a vise...) Both of these machines were harvested for any usable parts or accessories, and then hauled to the scrap yard, netting us slightly more than half the cost of the Axelson. All of this began shortly after our fall events ended, and is still being finished up as this is being written.

Continued page 6



Among other things, work to do over this winter includes much more work on IC diner #4112, with hopes of having it in service for Polar Express 2013, adding 40 seats per train to that event. Completion of this car will also free up car shop space for other projects. Please come out and lend a hand, there is always much to do!



**STAY ALERT AND
DON'T GET HURT**

THE HANDICAP-ACCESSIBLE RIDE

One of the popular events is Railroad Days that offers attendees the opportunity to ride on motorcars. However, due to the design of the motorcar, people with limited mobility could not ride until now! From the shops of Jeff Davis of Chillicothe, Illinois, he has built a ramp-accessible trailer to be pulled behind a motorcar during the event. Using discarded trailer parts from Rick Harper, John Downy, Dale Jenkins, and structure steel from Luke Alexander, he designed and built the car. Seats were donated by First Student Bus Service. The car was successfully used this year.



The Timetable

Illinois Terminal R. R. Company

Illinois Traction Division

14

TIME TABLE No. 14

EFFECTIVE
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1948

At 12:00 P.M.
Central Standard Time

Respecting All Previous Time Tables

This Time Table is for the Government and Information of Railfans only, and the Company assumes no liability for any loss of or damage to property which may result from any error in this Time Table. Please contact the Company for any corrections or changes in this Time Table.

NOTE: CAREFULLY OBSERVE INSTRUCTIONS ON PAGES 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, AND 23.

F. L. DENNIS, General Superintendent St. Louis, Mo.
H. G. DENNIS, Superintendent Springfield, Ill.
H. G. DENNIS, Asst. to General Supt. St. Louis, Mo.
R. HOFFERMAN, Train Master Springfield, Ill.
H. B. HILL, Asst. Train Master Decatur, Ill.
E. F. HENDERSON, Asst. Train Master Decatur, Ill.
G. C. HENDERSON, Chief Dispatcher Springfield, Ill.
R. YATES, Terminal Train Master St. Louis, Mo.

Illinois Terminal R. R. Company

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R. YATES, Terminal Train Master St. Louis, Mo.



THE RICHARD P. STAIR MEMORIAL TOWER



In 1967, Gibson City Towerman Joe Wallace poses next to the levers which will be used in Stair Tower. Note that the lever handles are shiny, due to the responsibility of each leverman to use emery cloth to polish an assigned number of levers each shift.

Dale Jenkins Collection



Left: A view from the second story looking south over display tracks number 1 and 2 at Nelson Crossing.

Lower Left: View of construction of Stair Tower Below; The second floor will house the levers from Gibson City Tower and offer a birds-eye view of the Nelson Crossing Complex.

Photos courtesy Dave Marshall



Work on Stair Tower is moving along. ICRR Leverman Joe Wallace seen in the accompanying image would feel right at home in Stair Tower. At this time the building is framed and the roof sheeting is being nailed down and will be fully enclosed and ready for museum volunteers to begin the task of finishing the interior. Once the building is up, the next task of assembly and restoration of the “machinery” of a lever interlocking plant will be underway.

Richard P. Stair was a life time member of the museum and an operator-leverman for the ICRR at Champaign Tower. He was a mentor to many U of I students and railfans and carried this passion to the museum and its volunteers.



**THE
LAST
RUN**

Carl L. Brown Age 85

July 17, 1927—December 9, 2012

Carl Brown was a life member of the Monticello Railway Museum and served in train service as an engineer and conductor and held the position of Superintendent of Transportation. Carl worked for the C&EI Railroad as a telegrapher and later was the Postmaster of Findley, Illinois.



William K. Dunbar Age 87

March 11, 1925—November 5, 2012

William “Bill” Dunbar was a member of the Monticello Railway Museum and would welcome guests into the display cars, in part demonstrating his proficiency of operating the telegraph display. Bill started his railroad career in 1944 with the Alton Railroad as a telegraph operator and retired from the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad in 1984 as a Chief Train Dispatcher. He was past president of the Morris Telegraph Club.



David S. Mann Age 80

December 15, 1932—December 17, 2012

Dave Mann had been a life member of the Monticello Railway Museum and was a founding member of predecessor SPUR and has served as past President of MRM. Although his passion was track work, he was instrumental in the acquisition of the former Illinois Central line between White Heath and Monticello and equipment. Dave was an airplane mechanic starting his career with Ozark Airlines of St. Louis and retiring from A. E. Staley: company jet chief mechanic.



In Memoriam

“At the cemetery , Amtrak whistled nearby as we filed into Bill’s mausoleum and several mourners remarked on the appropriateness of the passing train. We closed the cemetery service singing “This Train is Bound for Glory”

Jack Keefe

“ Dave Mann was involved in the museum practically forever”

Syl Keller

Dave’s dry sense of humor was a sure bet that he would have you laughing with the unexpected remark”

Dale Jenkins

(L C L*)

LESS THAN CARLOAD



Lighting the way...switchstands are now equipped with switchlanterns that are equipped with mini-solar panels that power a bright LED light fixture inside the lamp. At night the light is visible for indication of the switch position. *John Sciutto Photos*



Efforts to continue improving the property has resulted in the overhaul of the former Wabash Milmine Tool Shed (insert photo) into the transition of an IT tool house adorned with vintage advertising posters of that time period. *John Sciutto photos*

A little bit froggy.....would best describe the work to replace the fog in the IT Main Line-Yard Lead switch. All the bolts of the elf-guarding frog were worn or broken were replaced after extensive pounding to get the bolts out. Additional welding was done on the guard face and on one point. *Tim Crouch photos*



This year, come out to the museum and see the improvements made of YOUR museum!!

THE TRAIN ORDER

ILLINOIS TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY

Order No. 37 Date: 9-19

To C. & M. Train: 285 Chicksville

Train Car and Train Car will meet at

274 285 and Train 203 1604 will meet at Loverden

274 285 and Train 97 301 will meet at Carpus

Train Car and Extra will meet at

Extra and Extra will meet at

Extra and Extra will meet at

Motors 274 and 285 run on lot and 2nd 76 Chicksville to Est Belt all have fire at Chicksville have arrival at 2:00

CONDUCTOR MOTORCAR TRAIN COMPLETE BY

Byron Beckler 285 274

Form - 011 012 Form 34

POLAR EXPRESS 2012 LUNCH WITH SANTA

Another season has closed at the museum with the arrival and departure of the Polar Express on November 23, 24, 25, 30 and December 1st, and Lunch With Santa on December 1-2. Both trains were the most popular with the public with 3,800 Polar Express tickets (sold out) in under 10 hours. The Lunch with Santa sold out with the sale of 2,400 tickets. To make these trains successful takes a magnitude of personnel to deliver the special service that makes these trains a demand to ride. Here is a look behind the scenes to make the magic happen.....

Photos courtesy David Berndt, Stan Rankin Dale Jenkins



Passengers young and old who believe



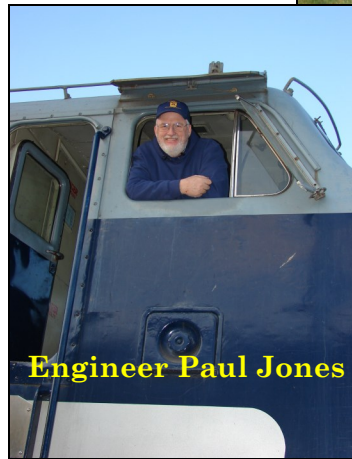
The Polar Express Train



The cook serving hot chocolate



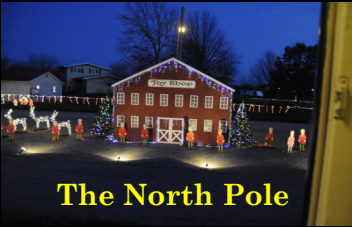
Have to Have Santa!



Engineer Paul Jones



Passenger Participation



The North Pole



Ticket Agents On Duty



Debbie's Dance Studio dancers DANCE!!



Welcome Aboard!!

The Train Crew



The Polar Express Story



Conductor Meets Hobo



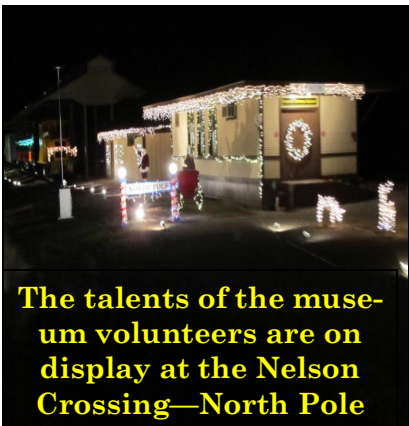
Dance...Dance...Dance ..



The Reasons for the Polar Express



The Hobo Camp



The talents of the museum volunteers are on display at the Nelson Crossing—North Pole



Making memories for young and old



Pajamas Optional

MONTICELLO
RAILWAY MUSEUM
P O BOX 401
MONTICELLO, ILLINOIS 61856



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM



ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

STEAM SCHEDULE

May 18th—19th	June 22nd—23d
July 20th—21st	August 17th—18th
September 21st—22nd	October 12th—

- [Throttle Time](#) - April thru October
- [Throw Mamma On The Train](#) - May 11-12: Mom rides FREE when accompanied by their children.
- [Fathers Day Weekend](#)—June 15-16: Dads rides FREE when accompanied by their children!
- [Fireworks Special](#) - July 3: Ride the train from downtown Monticello to watch the Fireworks.
- [Railroad Days](#) - September 21-22: Come ride our vintage passenger and freight trains on the former Illinois Central and Illinois Terminal trackage.
- [Ghost Train](#) - October 19-20, 25, 26, 27: ALL ages can enjoy a train ride through Camp Creek Hollow with a stop at Cemetery Road... but only the BRAVE should check out our Haunted Boxcar!
- [The Polar Express™](#) - November 29, 30, December 1, 6, 7 : Read along with the story as the train makes its round-trip journey to the North Pole.
- [Lunch on the Train With Santa](#) - December: 7-8 A train ride and lunch with Santa!!