



THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 51 Number 2

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

November
December
2018



Reminisce of a time past, Monticello Railway Museum conductor John Crawford takes a break from the days activity. John is an Illinois Central veteran conductor and this scene is a true reflection of a time of another era.

Photo Courtesy Bill Crisp

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THE OBSERVATION PLATFORM

A Jurassic Conductor
By Dale Jenkins



January 2019

A recent observation was made on social media about the generational gap of volunteers and communication at the museum. It was noted that the national trend in today's demographics is the decline in participation by the younger generation in a voluntary organization ranging from the Masons to museums. The Monticello Railway Museum is no exception. The core membership which performs the various functions of restoration and operation are of an aging group.

An example, such as the brotherhood of uniformed museum conductors, are for the most part a group of gray/white hair gentlemen with a small smattering of youthful associates. I for one fall in this group as my membership dates back to 1972: nearing 47 years. In comparison, we are a group of Jurassic dinosaurs in the modern age: just as the traditional ticket punch has now been replaced with a hand held scanner. This dedicated group of members protect assignments ranging from charters to scheduled runs. The biggest event is the Polar Express, which financially stabilizes the museum, but extremely taxes the available manpower. Another example would be on the restoration side of the museum ledger. A multitude of talent with a variety of unique skills are essential in restoration and preservation. This could range from construction of a display to painting a passenger coach. It was also noted the lack of outreach in communications. The printed museum publications and Facebook are now considered for "old timers" and not up to date with electronic communications of the younger generation.

The question is how do you entice a younger generation to participate. I for one note that we are a world-class museum, which is a start. Although we tend to focus on the younger generation, what about those nearing retirement that want something useful to do (and not wanting to flee Illinois). You are reading this essay: do you have an interest that you would enjoy expanding to be more knowledgeable? Do you have a youth in your life that you would want to share your knowledge or passion with via a hands-on experience? Do you have a specific skill that you would enjoy applying to a specific project?

We are not a secret society nor a "members only" group. Open participation is for all, and the best way to start is to come out the museum and talk with an "old timer" or observe how something is done, along with asking questions, and of course the big question: *How can I participate?*





THE BACK SHOP

By Kent McClure
Chief Mechanical Officer

Wabash F7A #1189 This past year #1189 has been working without issue. Norfolk Southern, due to a change in upper management, determined they were not going to host their Santa Train out of Decatur, instead hosting it in Monticello. As of this writing, we expect this to be an on-going event. It does remove some pressure in regard to having equipment inspected and ready to go to Decatur right after Polar Express is over, which has been a welcome relief.

ALCO FPA4 #6789 has had no issues this past season. Paul is working this winter on some additional re-sealing/replacing victaulic coupling gaskets as many of them have reached the end of their useful lives.

Milwaukee Road NW2 #1649 This locomotive was used for random switching during the season, and was used for a month of regular service, as well as for its usual Railroad Days task of handling the “caboose hop”. The oil pressure when hot, while not where it would be nice to have it, is okay for our use. When above idle, the pressure comes up to more comfortable numbers. We will watch the oil analysis to see what happens to viscosity and fuel dilution to make sure we have the sources of fuel contamination taken care of. This spring will have us ordering a set of batteries for this unit, as the mixed set of used and not-as-used batteries have reached the end of their lives.



IC GP11 #8733 Our GP11 has been used this past season for any car storage moves required, and has alternated with the other units in the monthly locomotive rotation. It has had no issues of note, but we still need to replace the main generator at some point due to the companion alternator having three field coils bypassed due to grounding.

Southern Steam Locomotive #401 Passed its annual inspection in April, and has been in service as usual this year. It is beginning to have wear issues show up in injector tubes, and there are about three flues weeping, which is no surprise considering their age at this point, and the abuse they suffer under all the student firemen the locomotive has been training. They will get touched up with a roller this spring. 401 will, after the 2020 season, be due for it’s 1472 service day inspection. This will require removal of all boiler tubes, jacket, insulation, and any appliances otherwise in the way of a good external and internal inspection of the boiler, a ultrasonic thickness survey, and re-calculation of the “Form 4” which establishes operating pressure of the boiler. The 1472 service day inspection also encompasses a full inspection of running gear of the locomotive, but due to the low mileage since it’s initial overhaul in 2010, we do not foresee any need for running gear repairs at this time.



IC Coach #2612 This car was used during Polar as usual, and while we repaired one external leak in steam heat plumbing on the outside of the car, a new leak has appeared inside the car, as well as a new one outside, which has rendered the overhead heat non-functional. This past Polar season was moderate enough weather-wise for there to be no need for the overhead heat, but that will not always be the case. To get at the offending external leak will require jacking the car off the truck to access the piping, so we are also considering removing the overhead steam heat coil and replace it with the electric equivalent, as that would remove the need to deal with the balky steam control to the overhead, which would frequently stick open, causing the car to overheat. As I've noted before, parts for the steam heat components of the cars are no longer available, causing us to rob one car to maintain another, which of course, is an unsustainable situation.



Art Purchase photo



Kent McClure photo

IC Diner 4110 out of the shop for washing and A/C testing.

IC Diner #4110 Was finally, with some minor exceptions, completed this past fall, and placed in service on the Polar Express. It worked out well, with no issues of note during use. The minor items needed to complete it's restoration are the installation of door locks at each end of the car, and the repair of at least one additional refrigerator (and the cleaning of same refrigerator interiors) for use during polar, and for any charters for which the car may be needed.



Kent McClure photo



Kent McClure photo

ABOVE LEFT: New carpet for IC diners 4110 and 4112. This carpet was custom-made for MRM, to match original carpet in pattern and colors. Photo was taken just before cutting to the length and width need to install in 4110. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The new carpet installed in IC 4110, and the car partially decorated for Polar Express. The seats shown are also freshly re-upholstered, and the drapes shown are original to the car.

IC Combine #892 As noted previously, this car is getting new window sash and shades. Most of the sash are done with staining/clear-coating, but a few remain to finish up. Then glass will be installed in the new sash, and sash fitted to openings. Once that is done, jigs will be made to assist in locating the new sash hardware (sash stops and sash locks) on the new sash and sash stops. Polar Express prep and operation put a stop to all the sash work last fall.

This car has also developed an additional steam leak in the coach compartment. Like the previously noted one, the way the car is plumbed for heat, we can shut off that portion of the loop and not lose all the heat on that side of the car. Fixing the leak will be somewhat tedious, requiring removal of a number of seats and bases to be able to access the length of pipe that has failed. This car is lobbying to be converted to electric heat!



Art Purchase photo



Art Purchase photo

CN #15421 This past season we determined we did not have sufficient time to get the entire generator set swapped out for the new one, but we did get the electrical system rebuilt to handle the power output of the new genset. This required much work in the car, under the car, and in an old battery box. Jeff Tillman fabricated and installed new HEP end-of-car brackets, and ran new conduit were required over the trucks, and into the car to contain new wiring. He also pulled all the new 4/0 copper wire needed to handle the new genset, as well as connecting it to the new switchgear in the battery box, and connecting the new HEP connectors on the end of the car. Brian Downing them spent a couple of looonnnnggg nights hooking up

and testing the new control wiring for the new switchgear in the battery box. All of this was ready for Polar express, so this season we were able to run ½ of the 8-car Polar consist from the generator car, and ½ was fed electrical power from IC Diner 4112.

On the steam-end of the car, we acid washed and inspected the boiler this past fall, and also sized and ordered a custom-wound three phase transformer to build a proper DC power supply for operating the steam boiler. This is a typical Vapor Clarkson OK 4625 boiler that operates on 75 volts DC, as is found in a diesel locomotive. We have been using a single-phase arrangement that isn't quite right, and due to being single phase, causes an approximately 30 amp imbalance in the generator of the car. We really need to get the generator load more closely balanced, as that adds to the generator's longevity. We have a high-current, three phase rectifier on hand and will built the DC rectifier in-house to install in the car.

This winter will also see the modification of the roof hatch at the generator end of the car to allow removing the old and installing the new genset. We are also going to take this opportunity to replace the car water tanks as they are failing now, with one leaking slowly from the bottom all the time, and another with a good sized hole in the side which we had to plug on short notice when it failed with little warning. The tanks are original to the car, so at this point they are now 60 years old, and it should not be a surprise they have reached the end of their useful lives.



IC 100040 This car is now complete, re-lettered as GM&O 80129. We also went through the air brake system on the car, with fresh valves, new angle cocks, and a new cut-out cock to replace the original that was frozen in the open position.

In other projects, we converted an old Waukesha Ice Engine to a modern, electrically driven compressor/condensing unit, utilizing parts and a compressor we had on hand. This unit was installed on IC diner #4110. We did have to source new condensing coils, but the new coils have given us sufficient condensing capacity that the old sub-cooler, which is nothing more than an additional, small, wet condenser to supplement the condensers on the Waukesha

unit. One of our goals, was to build a unit that would, externally, look like it is still an Ice engine, but be far more reliable and not require yet another fuel to be handled every time we need to use the car in the summer months. It has proven to work well, so we will likely build two more units to replace the Ice Engines on two other cars that are used on occasion in the summer time.

We are currently installing a heating system, generously donated by John Downing, in the backshop. Since the building is un-insulated, this system will be something you turn on when you plan to work in that building. It should help immensely once both units are up and working, to make that space more tolerable when it is really cold outdoors. It would also make it possible to do annual steam locomotive inspections in the colder months. We are limited at this time as the annual inspections require filling the locomotive with water and pressure testing, then steam testing after. Needless to say, during freezing weather, this would require much effort just to keep this from freezing. It's just not really a practical thing without a heated facility to keep the shop temperature above freezing overnight.

The new woodshop space in the south end of the yard barn is now nearly complete, with only some dust collection plumbing to be completed in the smaller space. The larger space is being organized, and the CP snowplow and the CB&Q caboose, #14042, have been placed inside for assessment, and eventual rebuild work.

Many thanks to all those who helped with these projects this past winter/spring, much has been accomplished, and none of it could have happened without your hard work!

Kent McClure
CMO



Above: A Waukesha Ice Engine that isn't but looks like it is! After its conversion to electrical power, and application of new condensing coils, the unit was painted to match the rest of the underbody equipment, and hung under the car.

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LESS THAN CARLOAD



THE SIGNAL CORNER



First- Let's all get in the habit of not passing stop signals. It is ok if the signals are dark and the tower not manned, but when the signal system is on, the tower should be manned

and signal indications followed.

When the signal system is off, revert to the operation that we have always used looking out for switches properly lined and knowing that the route is established and clear. Second- If it becomes necessary to close the tower while trains are operating, communication between the tower operator and the trains must be made.

In Memoriam

Stanley J. Rankin

November 23, 1934

October 27, 2018



Jon Roma photo

THE
LAST
RUN

A life-long resident of Champaign, he went to school at Lincoln, Southside, Champaign Junior and Senior High and the University of Illinois, where he earned a BS in accounting and management in 1957. He then went to work for the university in the Government Contracts [Office](#). As his [career](#) progressed, he worked at the university architect's office; the Assembly Hall as the business manager; the Physical plant as director; the Computer Science Lab as manager; and eventually retiring as the business manager of the Computing Sciences Department. He was very proud of his time at the university and enjoyed sharing stories about working on many projects, such as installing the first supercomputer, participating in the building of the Assembly Hall and many others.

For 40 years, he was actively involved in the Arrowhead and Prairielands Council of the Boy Scouts of America, including being Scoutmaster of Troop 7, where he shepherded over 300 Eagle Scouts through their growth and development. He was recognized for his efforts with the Silver Beaver Award, Order of the Arrow and the James E. West Founders Award for his Scoutmaster work, as well as his 10 years as a Camp Robert Drake ranger and camp inspector, and for the many trips with his troops to Philmont Scout Ranch, the National Jamboree, and canoeing excursions in Canada and Utah.

He was also a devoted volunteer at the Illinois Railway Museum for 22 years, where he worked and was a motorman on streetcars and interurbans. He then found the Monticello Railroad Museum, where he became an active board member, conductor, car host for events such as the Polar Express and Railroad Days. He donated several rail cars and a building to the organization.

He enjoyed collecting and restoring antiques, including 38 "Hit & Miss" engines, 11 Ford Model T cars and one Ford Model A. He was a lifetime member of the Henry Ford Historical Society, founding member of the Illinois Traction Society, Illini Model T Ford Club and the Prairie A's Ford Club, a member of the University of Illinois Presidents Council, the Civil War Roundtable, the Antiques' Study Group, a Paul Harris Fellow and member of Champaign Rotary, 50-year member of First United Methodist Church in Champaign and a member of the Clan MacLeod Society.



Dave Marshall photo

NS SANTA EXPRESS AT MRM
 The 25th anniversary of the Norfolk Southern 2018 Santa Express was held on December 15th and 16th at the museum for the benefit of NS employees and their families using the equipment assigned to the MRM Polar Express. The Norfolk Southern management declined to provide the opportunity to operate the train over their rails and the museum accepted the request from the NS safety committee, providing equipment, track and crew. A grand ole' time was had by all!!



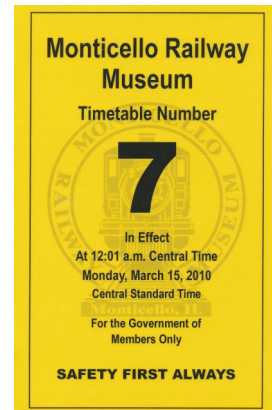
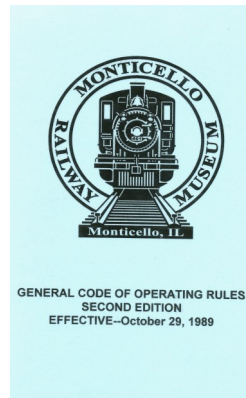
Above: The first set of insulated joints were placed in service on the IC Main, south of the IC Junction switch, for the home signal approach circuit.

Dave Marshall photos

Below; With the new wood shop now in service, the CB&Q 14042 caboose and CP 40065 snow plow occupy the repair track for evaluation and proposed reconstruction.



RULES & SAFETY CLASS APRIL 13th -14th



The annual Rule and Training Class will be held at the museum with the classroom portion being held on Saturday April 13th at the Wabash Center. Time to be announced. To serve in train service capacity or operate a motorcar on MRM, this rules class and qualification is mandatory. On Sunday, the 14th, time to be announced, classes will be held on the museum ground for hands on training of equipment.

More information will be provided to currently qualified operating crews by e-mail. If you are not on the crew roster and want to be, please contact caller@mrym.org. Your donation of time will help ease the burden on those who are the dedicated members and will offer you the "experience of a lifetime" to indulge in this "All-American" pastime of railroading. To obtain additional information or sign up for crew call notice, contact; caller@mrym.org.

ANNUAL MEETING SATURDAY APRIL 13TH

Railroad Days
September
15th—16th
Photos



The Polar Express

November 16th – 18th, 23d - 25th, 30th

December 7th-8th

John Grygiel photo



Dave Marshall Photo



Kent McClure photo



MONTICELLO
RAILWAY MUSEUM
P O BOX 401
MONTICELLO, ILLINOIS 61856

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES



STEAM SCHEDULE

401 in Steam: Ride behind our restored 1907-vintage steam locomotive!

May Saturday 18 - Sunday 19	June Saturday 22 - Sunday 23
July Saturday 20 - 21	August Saturday 17 - Sunday 18
September Saturday 21 - 22	October Saturday 5- Sunday 6
Fall Throttle Time Saturday	October 12

Throttle Time Saturday April 13th

Opening Weekend - Saturday May 4th

School Days – An opportunity for school children to ride a full-sized diesel-powered train.-May 7 and May 8

Mother's Day Weekend – Saturday, May 11 and Sunday, May 12: Make Mother's Day special by treating Mom to a ride with her family on our vintage train. Moms ride FREE when accompanied by their children!

Father's Day Weekend Saturday, June 15 and Sunday, June 16: Dads ride FREE when accompanied by their children!

Fireworks Special – July 3d See the Monticello fireworks without worrying about traffic.

Railroad Days – Saturday, September 21 and Sunday, 22: Come enjoy UNLIMITED rides on our vintage passenger and freight trains and motor cars running on our former Illinois Central and Illinois Terminal track-age, enjoy kids' games and more!

The Polar Express™ TBA 2019: Read along with the story as the train makes its round-trip journey to the North Pole.

Lunch with Santa on the Train – TBA: Enjoy a visit with Santa Claus while eating a kid-friendly sack lunch. This event is hosted by the Monticello Chamber of Commerce.