

French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society

P.O. Box 632 Meadville, PA 16335

SPRING 2016

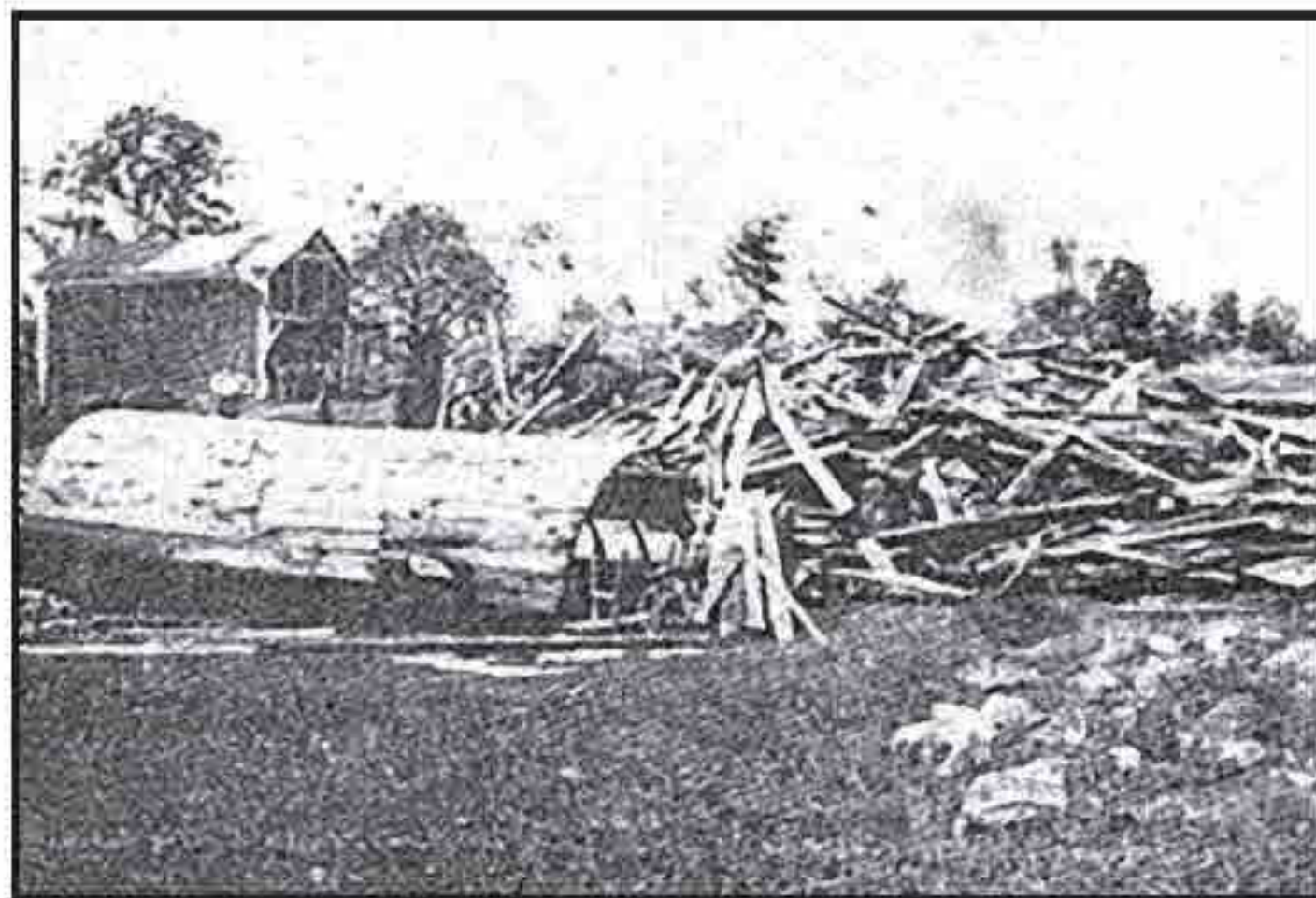
Newsletter of the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society

Volume II Number I

VALLEY EXPRESS

The History of Stony Point - Part Three

Stony Point, as we knew it then, was about to change as a community. On June 28th, 1924 at 6:30 PM, an estimated F3 tornado hit Crawford County, resulting in the destruction of Stony Point and nearby Geneva. The storm, the result of a low pressure system moving from Iowa towards Michigan and Ontario, crossed the area of western Ohio. Northern Ohio/Northwest Pennsylvania temperatures that day were in the lower 80's, common for late June readings. A tornado developed over Sandusky Bay late that afternoon and hit the city of Sandusky, OH resulting in the deaths of eight individuals, and destroying 100 homes. Then the storm moved east over Lake Erie, hitting Lorain, OH, and killing 80 people. Damage to the city was extensive to both residential and business structures. Additional tornados moved across Ohio hitting three additional counties before moving on through northwestern Pennsylvania. Three additional individuals died in rural Ohio and five died in Pennsylvania. In the aftermath Geneva rebuilt, but Stony Point did not. Because the community was a population mostly of railroad workers, most chose to leave the shanty town and move on. Almost overnight Stony Point ceased to be.



Geneva Tornado

But Stony Point was about to change importance in the next two decades. War was returning to Europe and although the United States tried to stay out of the action, it still found itself supporting its allies there. Then, on December 7, 1941 Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and we found ourselves right in the middle of hostile actions. Quickly, the government made aquisition of a large tract of land in Greenwood Township, east of Stony Point, and soon began construction of the Keystone Ordnance Works. Since the Erie Railroad would be serving the facility, track construction began at Stony Point to build an eight mile siding east to the site. Stony Point passing track was then rebuilt to handle the additional traffic into the facility. The eastbound siding was nearly doubled in length west, and a new storage track was placed along side of the extension.

(continued on page 5)

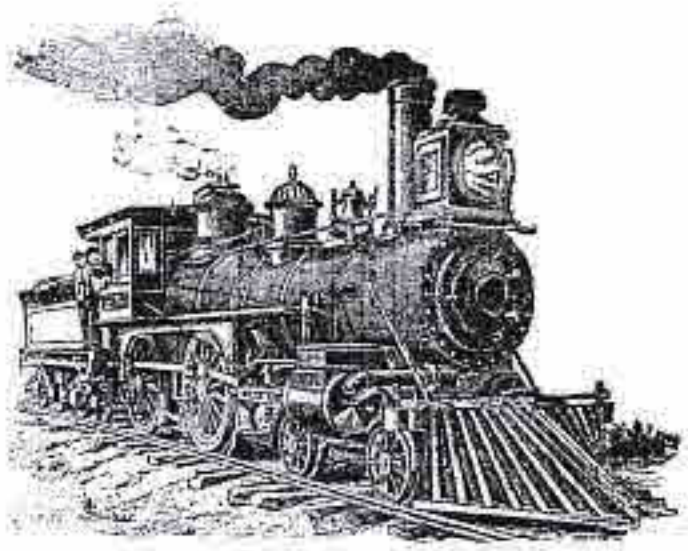
Local News

FCVRRHS Acquiring DL&W Snow Plow

The French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society, having received the B&LE 1908 wooden boxcar in October 2015, is now working on hauling a former DL&W Russell snowplow that was built in 1945. The snowplow is being donated by its owner, the Growth Resources of Wellsboro (GROW), PA. Ferlin Patrick, president of GROW, came to the membership meeting in February to discuss the snowplow. Mr. Patrick's organization owns the track and right of way that the Wellsboro & Corning Railroad and the Tioga Central (Scenic) Railroad operates on. The current operator of the WCRR is Genesee & Wyoming, which recently acquired operating rights from Trans-Rail America.

The snowplow was built in Ridgway, PA, the home of Russell Car and Snowplow Company until 1960, when they closed their doors. The plow was built for the Lackawanna as #95904, then was owned by the Erie-Lackawanna when the Erie and the Lackawanna merged. It did not get repainted in EL colors, but when Conrail took over it became CR #64568. It recently was repainted in maintenance of way yellow, but with no lettering.

The FCVRRHS is currently looking for grants and donations to help pay for its transportation to Meadville. Anyone willing to donate can contact a board member or go to our website (www.fcvrrhs.org) and click on the "Donate" button on the lower left side of the home page. A photo of the snowplow can be seen on page 6.



From the Stationmaster's Office

The membership is now in the process of completing the B&LE boxcar. We will be replacing the boards and staining the sides. We also need to finish painting and lettering the 518.

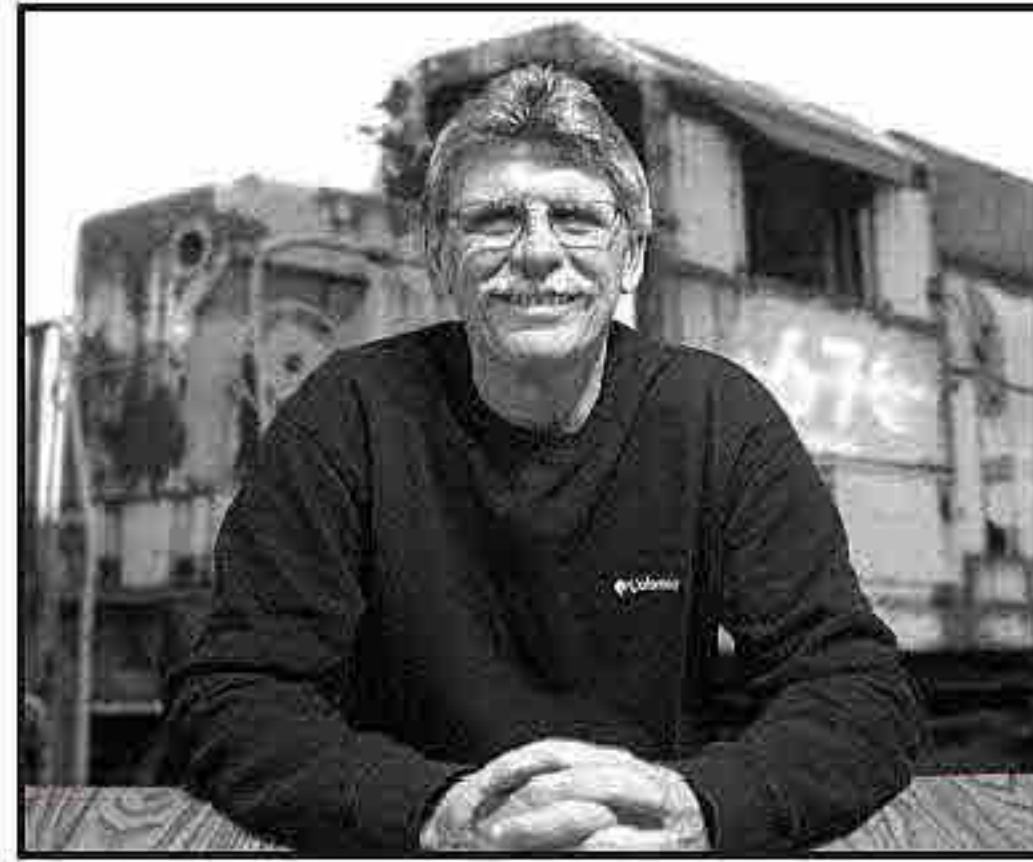
We need to get all this done so we can open up our display site to generate interest and income.

We also have work to do on the tool car, and once we have the title to a certain property, we will be getting that parcel ready for the Russell snowplow that is being donated by the Growth Resources of Wellsboro. We thank Ferlin Patrick for making this happen. We appreciate G.R.O.W. recognizing the FCVRRHS as a viable caretaker of this wonderful piece of railroad history.

Thank you to all the members who have taken the time to help out at the display site and to all those who have given their support to help make the FCVRRHS even better.

Condolences to fellow member, Wayne Brown, and his family on the passing of his wife in February. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Bernie Hanmore



French Creek Valley Express

A Publication of the
French Creek Valley Railroad
Historical Society

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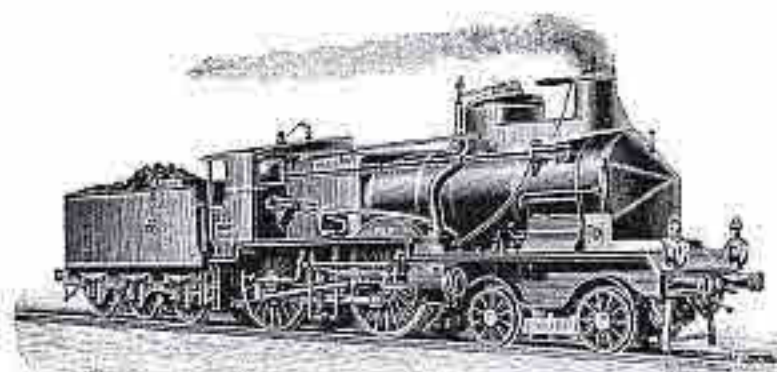
Website: www.fcvrrhs.org

French Creek Valley Express is published Spring and Fall. Those wishing to submit material must do so no later than 30 days prior to publication, i.e. by April 1st or October 1st. All submissions are subject to editing for length and clarity. Queries must include full name, address, and daytime phone number or e-mail address. Individual membership dues are \$20.00/year, family membership dues are \$35.00/year (\$1.00 for juniors to 18 years) for the period July 1- Jun 30. New member dues received after January 1 are good through the following full year period. Support from local businesses is welcomed: Gold, Silver and Bronze levels at \$500.00, \$250.00, and \$100.00, respectively, are available.

CONTRIBUTIONS & GIFTS

- Weber Electrical Supply
- Staples Copy & Print
- Lloyd's Rental & Sales
- Crawford County Historical Society
- Western New York & PA RR
- Susi Building Supplies
- US Bronze Foundry & Machine
- AC & J Railroad, Jefferson, OH
- LakeShore Railway Historical Society
- David P. Miller Family
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- Ed Fine
- Carl Timko Family
- Jan Grayson / Perfect Coat
- Tom Collard Family
- Ed Cronin Family
- Seco/Warwick (Sheet Metal)
- Jack Sheets Family
- D & M Tool
- Hafer Trucking

There's lots more information as well as interesting photos and stories on our website!
Check it out at www.fcvrrhs.org



Our Museum

Since last year the NWPA Heritage Partnership has been concentrating on completing the Trolley Station and getting it operational. Thanks to Vice President Dan Higham, exterior landscaping was completed last fall plus new concrete was poured for walks, driveways, and under the portico. Volunteers also laid paving bricks at the north end of the property where the trolley stopped. Sod was installed for the new lawn and plantings and mulch were installed too. A water heater was purchased and the drywall in the back room was completed.

We have applied for grant money to pay for two new overhead doors, finishing the walls and ceiling of the ticket office and kitchenette, and taping and finishing of the new drywall in the back room. Also we are planning to add two new columns to support the roof over the portico per the original design and a new concrete floor in the back room.

Remaining items include exterior lighting and signage, painting the back room and installing new flooring, cabinets, counter top, a sink and appliances in the kitchenette. A recent mailing to Cambridge Springs residents has yielded almost enough to pay for the items listed in this paragraph.

We have been delighted with our utility bills which are considerably lower than what was budgeted.

The NWPA Heritage Partnership Annual Meeting this year is planned for Monday, July 11, 2016 at the Cambridge Springs Trolley Station Museum. Details will be announced in the near future.

-Ed Cronin

Property & Equipment

As most of our readers know, the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad wooden boxcar arrived on October 13, 2015, on two trucks. The body was on a truck and trailer of Dailey Express, and the trucks came aboard a flat bed belonging to Hall's

Excavation. Crane services were provided by Industrial Truck and Crane. Since then, preparations are under way to replace many boards of the wood siding. Yellow pine boards were purchased from Frontier Lumber of Erie. Very soon, the boards will be delivered to a local miller to rout the tongue and groove joinery. Afterwards, the siding will be stained instead of painted. We deeply appreciate the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. David P. Miller for donating funds to help bring the boxcar to Meadville.



Ed Cronin receiving a check from Mr. and Mrs. David Miller. Bernie Hanmore presenting a certificate of appreciation.

The display of equipment will be growing, as a former Lackawanna Russell snowplow has been donated by the Growth Resources of Wellsboro, PA. Currently, plans are being worked out to transport the snowplow to Meadville. Preliminary plans are to place it across the drive on a parcel that is being acquired. The snowplow may share the new track, once built, with the PRR tool car. The snowplow, built in October 1945, will be a rather rare piece of rolling stock to visit.

Plans are being formed to repair the sides of the tool car and prepare it for painting. It may be awhile before work gets started on it, as current priorities are lettering the #518, repairing the boxcar, building track for the snowplow and getting the plow to Meadville.

-Bernie Hanmore

History & Archives

Research is being conducted for a possible new lead story on the snowplows of the Russell Car and Snowplow Co. of Ridgway, PA. The Elk County Historical Society sent some valuable information toward this effort. Many thanks go out to Mary Kalinowski of the Elk County Historical Society.

-Carl Timko

Special Events & Programs

The Christmas layout at the Downtown Mall proved to be a big success. We had lots of visitors and plenty of sales of merchandise. We thank the management of the Meadville Downtown Mall and Shirley Barnes for letting us use space in her site the **Local Artisans Shop**, which was a temporary seasonal store.

The Erie train show that was just held on March 6, was great for the FCVRRHS as well. Part of the success may have been the location in Rainbow Gardens. We usually were located on the far wall, but this year, because we had two 8 foot tables, we were just two aisles in from the main door. The other part was we had very nice merchandise to sell. We had calendars, Erie Railroad books, shirts, the new sweatshirts, and one new hat, plus the remaining stock from Tom's Train Terminal. Anyone wishing to donate their model railroad equipment can contact any board member. Upcoming train shows are on page 6. The 2016 NMRA Division 5 Railfest was March 19 and 20 and is not listed as this publication was not released in time. Events can also be seen on the FCVRRHS website and "The Second Section", a monthly newsletter for members only.

-Carl Timko



