

VALLEY EXPRESS

Logging Railroads

Logging has always held a place in the Crawford County, PA economy. In the beginning, logs were cut and hauled along what loggers referred to as a tram road. This was done using horses, mules or oxen (Fig. 1). As they went deeper into the woods and further away from the mill, it took too much time using teams alone. So if there was a creek nearby, the logs were floated as close to the mill as possible. But this depended on high water - usually occurring in the spring after a winter of heavy snowfall. Because of this seasonal disruption, sawmills operated only part of the year; and after the winter cut of logs was sawed into lumber, the mills closed. Lumbermen, therefore looked for other ways to transport the logs.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

It is believed that track was first laid on saplings used for ties, while rail cars loaded with logs were again hauled by draft animal teams (Fig. 2). A brakeman rode on the car to control its speed. In a hilly area they could unhook the teams and let the car roll downhill with the brakeman on board. This dangerous job led to use of the phrase "Wildcatting". This practice kept mills running longer in the year; but, as production went up, mills got bigger and more logs were needed. Again, lumbermen had to find a better way to move timber. By the 1880's, steam engines had proven to be the way to go; and so, in America the logging railroad was born (Fig. 3).

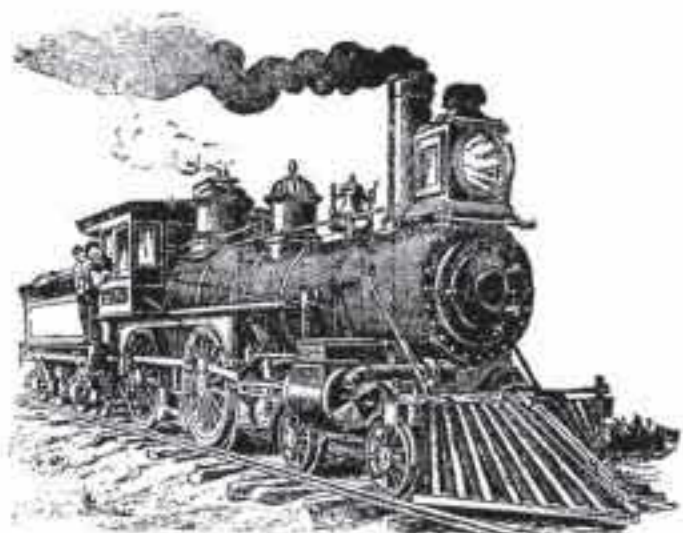
(continued on page 5)

Local Rail Activity

- The Meadville Tribune recently reported that the proposed "Track Loop", to be built to service a planned grain elevator at the former Keystone Ordinance Works, would be expanded to accommodate some 85 cars, versus the originally planned 75 cars.
- The Erie Times News recently announced that GE's Erie plant had rehired 120 laid off workers and was still looking for professional testers / painters. In addition, some 200 laid-off machinists are to be rehired at Grove City's Engine manufacturing and Re-manufacturing plants. These rosy reports are welcome news to the area and are believed related to a reported \$700-million deal to build 233 Evolution Series locomotives for TransNet, a South African rail, port, and pipeline company.



Fig. 3



From the Stationmaster's Office

From the inception of "The Valley Express" back in 2006, Bill McComas has done an outstanding job putting the newsletter together out of bits and pieces from the meetings and events of our area. Thanks to Bill, Pipp Graphics & Design and Staples, this newsletter has been a valuable source of information for our members as well as the general public. It is an excellent public relations tool, which is achieved through excellent management of all the articles and columns. Bill is stepping down as the editor. Congratulations, Bill for a job well done. Taking over for Bill is Carl Timko, our secretary, archivist, and editor of the "Second Section".



Thank you to everyone that has worked at the display site, painting the 518 and the caboose, and readied the ground in front of the S2 in preparation for the B&LE boxcar. Thank you to Kebert's Construction for delivering a load of gravel at a moment's notice, Frank Duda for his assistance with dumping the old sod, and Meadville Plate Glass for installing the glass in the 518. It is really taking shape down at Pomona Park. Thanks also go out to all those who have participated in our scrap metal drive. This has helped us get some needed funds. The program will continue, so if you or someone you know wants to get rid of some old scrap metal, please take it to Lincoln Metal in Meadville and donate the proceeds to the FCVRRHS. If you need someone to haul it, contact one of our board members to arrange a pick up.

Bernie Hanmore

CONTRIBUTIONS & GIFTS

- Weber Electrical Supply
- Staples Copy & Print
- Lloyd's Rental & Sales
- Crawford County Historical Society
- Tom's Train Terminal
- Western New York & PA RR
- Susi Building Supplies
- US Bronze Foundry & Machine
- AC & J Railroad, Jefferson, OH
- LakeShore Railway Historical Society
- Pipp Graphics & Design
- Specialty Fabrications & Powder Coating
- Bob Bingham family
- Bill McComas Family
- Scott Royer
- Carl Timko Family
- Jan Grayson / Perfect Coat
- Tom Collard Family
- Ed Cronin Family
- Seco/Warwick (Sheet Metal)
- Jack Sheetz Family
- Anderson Enterprises
- 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



French Creek Valley Express

A Publication of the
French Creek Valley Railroad
Historical Society

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Webmaster

Dianne Jones

Editor

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Assistant Editor

Dennis Mead

Contact Information

P.O. Box 632
Meadville, PA 16335

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.

Budget and Finance

President Bernie Hanmore and the board of the FCVRRHS established a fundraising program based on a suggestion from Tom Stewart to find scrap metal and exchange it for cash. Since July 1, the program has netted over \$500.

We are willing to pick up any metal you may have, so please email or call one of the board members to arrange a pick up date.

Recently, Mr. and Mrs. David P. Miller learned of our fundraising dilemma of raising money to move the B&LE boxcar from the Lake Shore Railway Historical Society to Pomona Park in Meadville to complete our static display. They promptly stepped up and pledged \$10,000 for the project. Our organization is most grateful for their generosity – thank you David and Janet!

-Ed Cronin



Membership

Dues were to be in by the end of June. If any member wishes to keep their membership active, please send in your remittance as soon as possible.

-Carl Timko

Our Museum

The Northwestern Pennsylvania Railroad & Tooling Heritage Center:

In early February the Heritage Center became the new owners of the Cambridge Springs Trolley Station. Dan Higham is the Committee Chair for the Trolley Station Project. While it was hoped to have the renovations completed by now, things have been slower than expected. The grand opening will be next spring with an art show featuring many of the 700 paintings

we have in storage that were created by Mr. Melvin Townley.

Maryann Martin was successful with her two grant applications which she filed earlier this year for the Trolley Station. One was to pay for the HVAC system and attic insulation. The second was for wall insulation. The new HVAC system has been installed and is operational. The attic has been insulated and the walls will be insulated before the end of September. **Well done, Maryann and team!**

● On February 13, 2014 we installed our first movable exhibit in the lobby of the Crawford County Career & Technical Center (Vo-Tech). These exhibits will be placed in local school libraries and other public spaces and will be replaced every 6 weeks. They feature our industrial history and current businesses as well. Since then six additional exhibits have been built or are under construction. FCV members are planning an exhibit that features the early years of railroading from 1850 to 1900.

● Thanks to help from Corinna Morton Moore of Erie Insurance in Cambridge Springs, we received funding for two exhibits that will be located in the Trolley Station. In addition, the NTMA has agreed to fund two exhibits and Sarn Tool and Acutec are also building an exhibit each.

● On Monday, June 9, the Heritage Center had its annual meeting at the Trolley Station with over 125 people attending. Dale Docter, President of the Cambridge Springs Heritage Society was the featured speaker. Not only did Dale present a fascinating essay on the history of the Trolley Station but he also contributed a trolley bell for our collection! **Thank you Dale!**

● At the Heritage Center annual meeting Maryann Martin was recognized as the Volunteer of the Year for her grant work and financial expertise and Beth Rekas and the Crawford County Historical Society was recognized as the Partner Organization of the Year for making it possible for the Heritage Center to become the new owner of the Trolley Station. **Congratulations to all!**

● Our Fundraising Committee is refining the approach to raising the money required to purchase the property at 789 Bessemer St. We are convinced it is the best possible location for the Heritage Center and with French Creek adjacent to the property, it offers more possibilities than we first imagined.

-Ed Cronin

French Creek Model Railroaders

The French Creek Model Railroaders have made significant progress on the N Scale railroad laying roadbed and track. Due to availability and quality control problems with Atlas turnouts, the club has converted to PECO turnouts made in the UK. Progress continues on the HO Scale railroad with much planned for the fall and winter seasons. Scenery continues to be added to the TT Scale layout albeit slowly. However, the TT railroad has added a new EMD SW9 switcher purchased for the club by one of our members. This is the first new ready-to-run American prototype TT locomotive produced in many decades and, to the best of my knowledge, they are only available in one US train shop that is conveniently located in Meadville. The units are DCC ready, another first for a TT American prototype. They were manufactured in the Czech Republic and imported into Canada.

If you haven't heard, Carstens Publications went out of business on August 22nd. The last issue of *Railroad Model Craftsman* and *Railfan & Railroad* was for June, which actually reached the newsstands and hobby shops in early August. Fortunately, it has been picked up by White River Productions in Bucklin, MO which also publishes *Model Railroad News*, a monthly magazine dedicated to new products and very well done. White River also publishes *The Railroad Press*, a favorite for locomotive fans. Both will be available at the same Meadville train shop. Carstens book publication has also been picked up by White River.

-Tom Collard

Special Events / Programs

The ELHS is considering the Cambridge Springs area for their 2015 Fall meeting site in late September. Reservations would tentatively be made at the Riverside Inn. It is expected that 50 or more ELHS members would attend. Activities would be held at the Inn and Trolley Station, with layout tours or a possible excursion trip at the OC&T being held on Friday, followed by dinner. Suggested after-dinner speakers for Saturday might include Dale Doctor on railroading in Cambridge Springs, Pete Gifford on the A&GW, Sandy Porter on the Keystone Ordnance Works, and Nate Clark on the arrangement between the Erie RR and B&LE to reroute trains during the 1920's.

-Dennis Mead

Property and Equipment

Jack reports the roof of the Combo Car, sitting under the Smock Bridge courtesy of the WNY&P, has now been repaired.

Stan has welded pilot steps to the front of the 518, which looks great. The "firecracker" antenna has been mounted on the roof, and the metal light rim for the rear cab light remains at U.S. Bronze. Jack and Carl painted most of the 518 cab, in preparation for installing the window glass.

The Hough family's Industrial Truck and Crane Company (ITC), located in Vernon Township, has agreed to shift the historic Erie boxcar from Lake Shore Historical Society in North East to Pomona Park next spring, thanks to the aforementioned \$10K donation. The move will be effected after an additional 20 feet of rail has been installed in front of the 518 engine.

Extending Track

To that end member volunteers temporarily removed the fence in front of the 518 and cleared away a 20 x 6 ft strip of topsoil, with Terry manning his front-loader, in preparation of extending the existing track. We then ordered a 2RC dirt/stone mix delivered to provide a base for new ballast stone, which we

plan on applying later this fall - once compacted - and rail sometime next spring.

We were also delighted to have Jason Ferguson join us and attach masking tape to the caboose to allow touch-up spray painting.

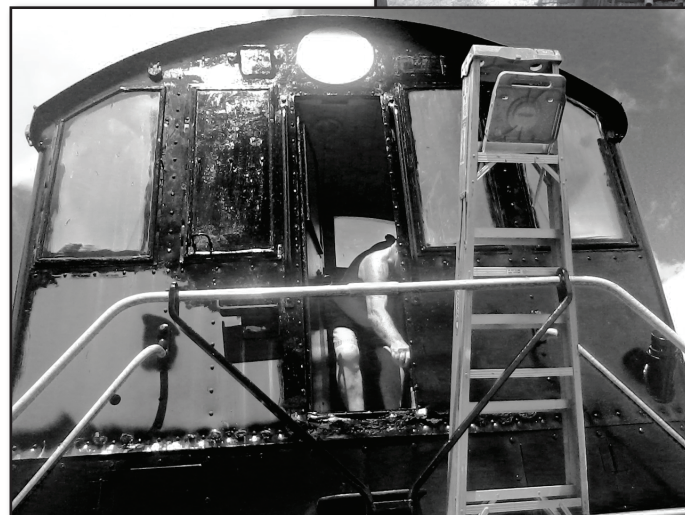
Terry Martin grading and removing the sod in front of the 518 with his front loader.



Kebert's Construction dumping a load of 2RC gravel for a base for the track panel to rest on.



Masking of the caboose in preparation to touch up the gray band on the end of the caboose.



Jack Sheets painting the cab of the 518.

Public Relations

This past September the Erie Lackawanna Historical Society accepted our invitation to host the 2015 Annual Meeting. The dates proposed for the event will be one of the two last weekends in September 2015. There will be lots of work ahead of the event for our organization.

The meeting calls for a schedule of three days, starting with check-in at the Riverside Inn in Cambridge Springs on Friday. During that day there will be several speakers giving seminars throughout the afternoon, as well as vendors' tables present. There will also be a chance for members to take self-guided tours of the Tri-State area. The Trolley Depot will be open for viewing during this 3-day event.

On Saturday, the visitors will be offered a variety of venues, including a train ride on the Oil Creek and Titusville RR, as well as continued seminars and vendors selling their goods. That evening we will host a dinner, followed by additional speakers.

On Sunday visitors will have a chance to visit model railroad displays, as well as the caboose site before heading home.

I hope several of the FCVRRHS members can volunteer their time during the weekend, as there will be many things to do. There will be several projects scheduled to finish before the September weekend as well, such as work at the caboose site. I know we can make this happen. Here is a chance to show what our Society is capable of doing.

A reminder: the Rainbow Gardens Train Show will be happening again on November 2, 2014. If you can help man the Club table, let me or Carl Timko know.

-Dennis Mead



History & Archives

Local Mason and former Meadville native Paul Stafford and wife Margo, who now reside in Wooster, OH, have kindly donated Erie wall signs/emblems and nostalgic postcards/Pix for our preservation and enjoyment. Paul and Margo are actively involved in the historical preservation of 19th century livelihood in Smithville, OH.

-Bill McComas

(continued from page 1)

These steam logging railroads were a narrow gauge - usually 36 inches. The railroad bed followed the creeks, valleys and hillsides of Crawford County. The ties, again, were saplings laid with wooden rails, or steel if it could be had (Fig. 4). The flanges on the log car trucks and engines were wide so logs could be used as rails. The steam engines used included the popular Shay, Heisler or Climax locomotives. The Climax was invented by Charles D. Scott of Spartansburg in Crawford County (Fig. 5) and was used at the Beaver Lumber Company of Springboro, PA.



Fig. 4

According to the *Hardwood Record*, Vol. 32, p. 9, the Beaver Lumber Company in Springboro was owned by E. G. Cafilisch and boasted 75 employees. The mill was located west of Springboro at the corner of Spring and Beaver Roads next to the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks. It was a 40' x 120' 2-story building equipped with band-saws. These band-saws had a capacity of 30 - 50 thousand board feet per day. It was reported in the periodical *American Lumberman* that in 1910 they sawed 20,000 board feet per day.

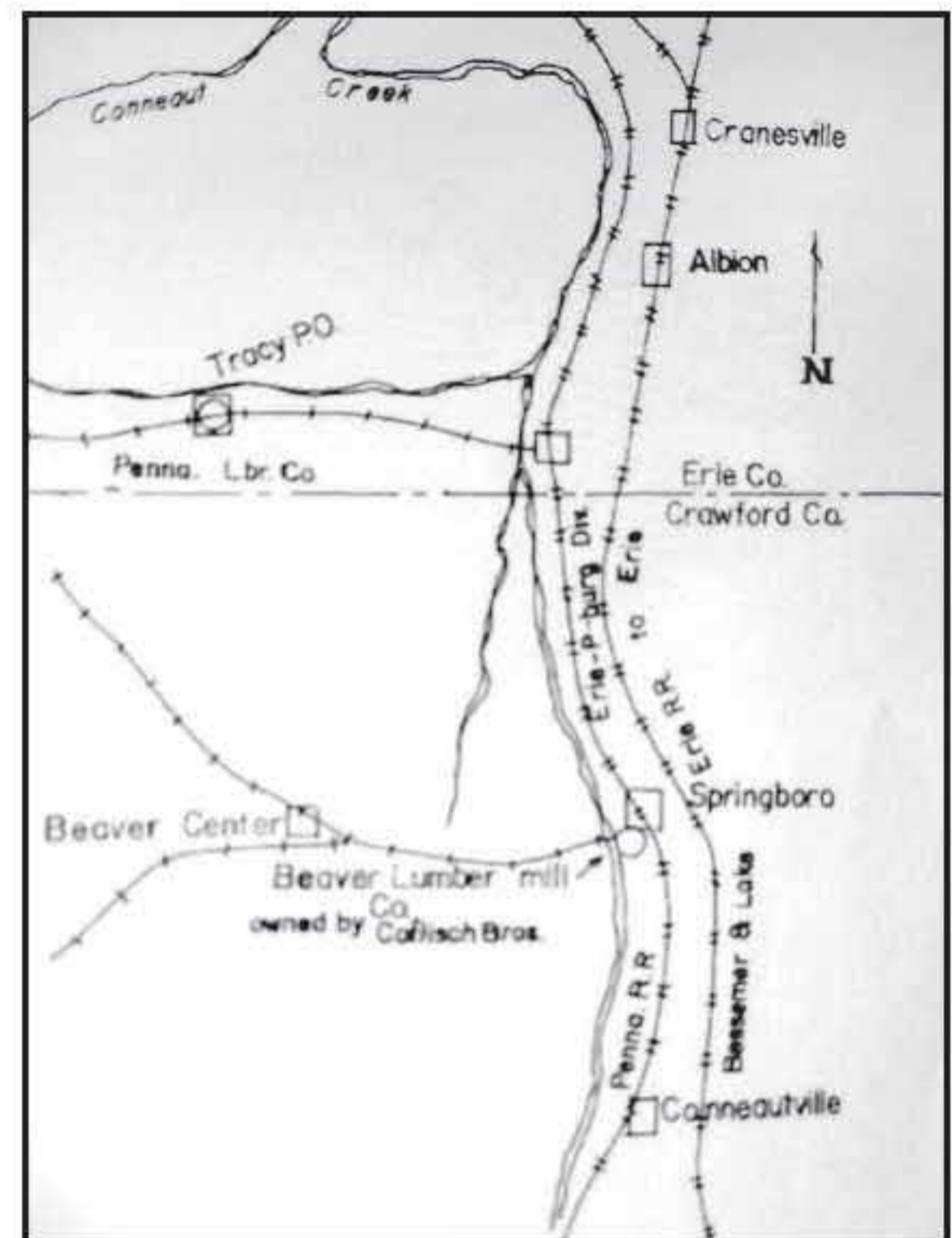


Fig. 5

The engine was a Climax B 22-ton locomotive, built in 1905 for the Beaver Lumber Company. The engine hauled a log loader and cars for the logs and ran on 10 miles of 36-inch narrow gauge track from the mill west to Ohio. Logging being a dangerous job is just one misstep away from an accident. It was reported by a William Holden that one day as the engine came down the hill to the mill, the Engineer lost control and the engine ended up on its side in the mill pond. The train Foreman was a fellow by the name of Ray Mitchell. The Beaver Lumber Company in Springboro closed in 1911 and the engine was sold. I have tried to find out who purchased the engine but thus far have been unsuccessful. The Climax Company used a tracking number of x221 for this engine.

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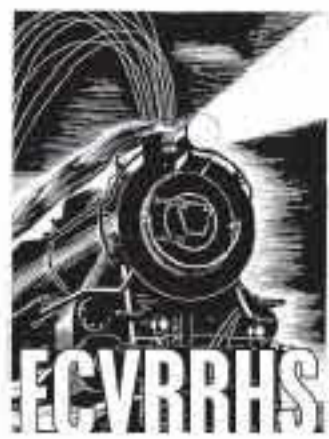
I have been unable to find much information about this company, let alone any pictures. The photos used for this article are of other railroads, mills, etc, and most were from the book *Allegheny Valley Logging Railroads, Book II*, by Walter C. Casler; 1977.



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-Tom Stewart



French Creek Valley
Railroad Historical Society
P.O. Box 632
Meadville, PA 16335

Alco S2 #518



**French Creek Valley Railroad
Historical Society
Program & Events Schedule
Fall 2014**

October 4, 5

The Great Berea Train Show

Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds, Berea, OH

*Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Respectively*

November 1

Cleveland o Scale Two-Rail Train Show

Kirtland, OH

November 2

Erie Train Show

Rainbow Gardens, Waldameer Park

Erie, PA

November 1, 2, 8, 9 and December 6, 7

Youngstown Model Railroad Club

751 N. Four Mile Run Rd.

Austintown, OH

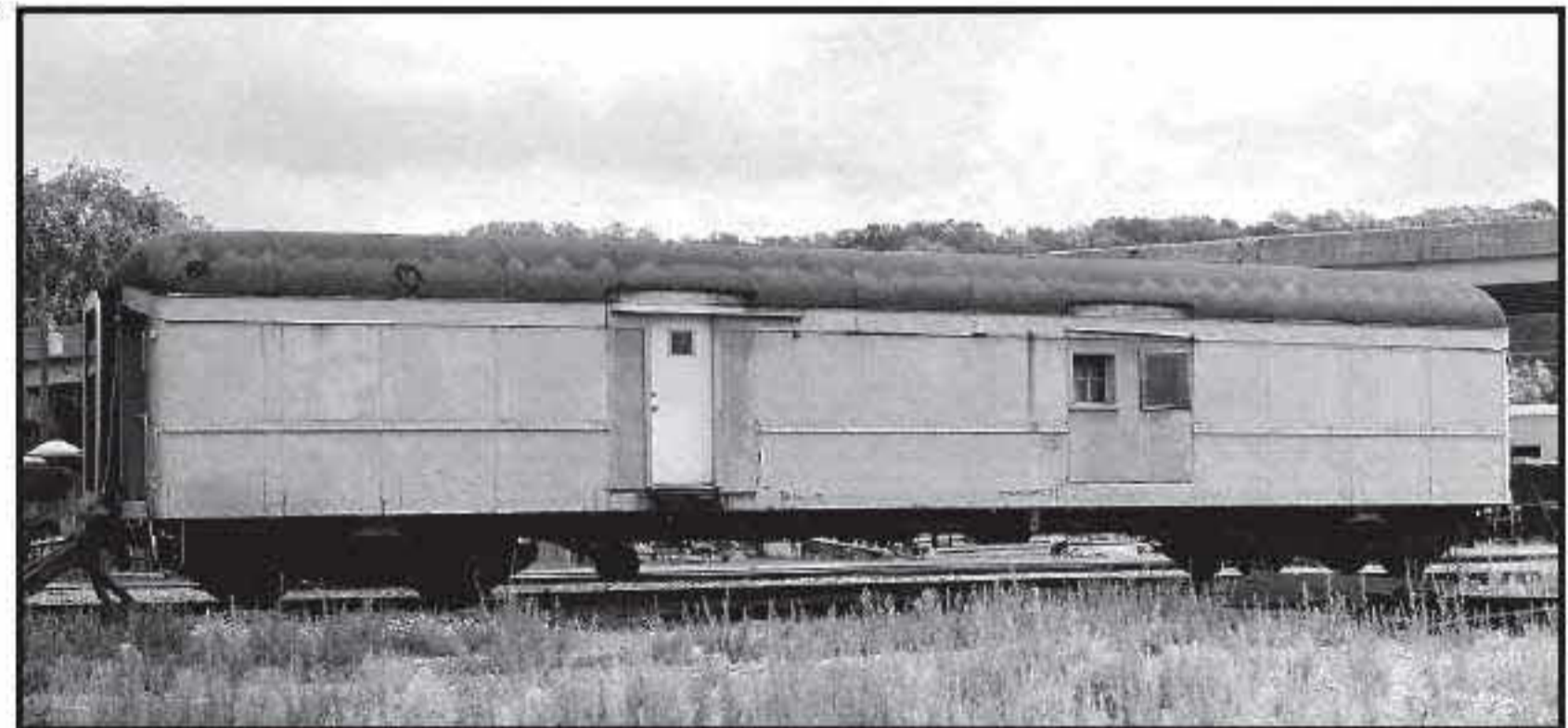
Noon to 6pm

November 23

Christmas Train and Toy Show

Lakeland Community College

Kirtland, OH



Tool car (former PRR baggage car) when it was in service on the
WNYP in 2006.

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HOURS: Wed. - Fri. 10:00am - 4:30pm
Saturday 10:00am - 4:00pm

(Meter Feeder Participant)