

French Creek Valley Railroad
Historical Society

P.O. Box 632 Meadville, PA 16335

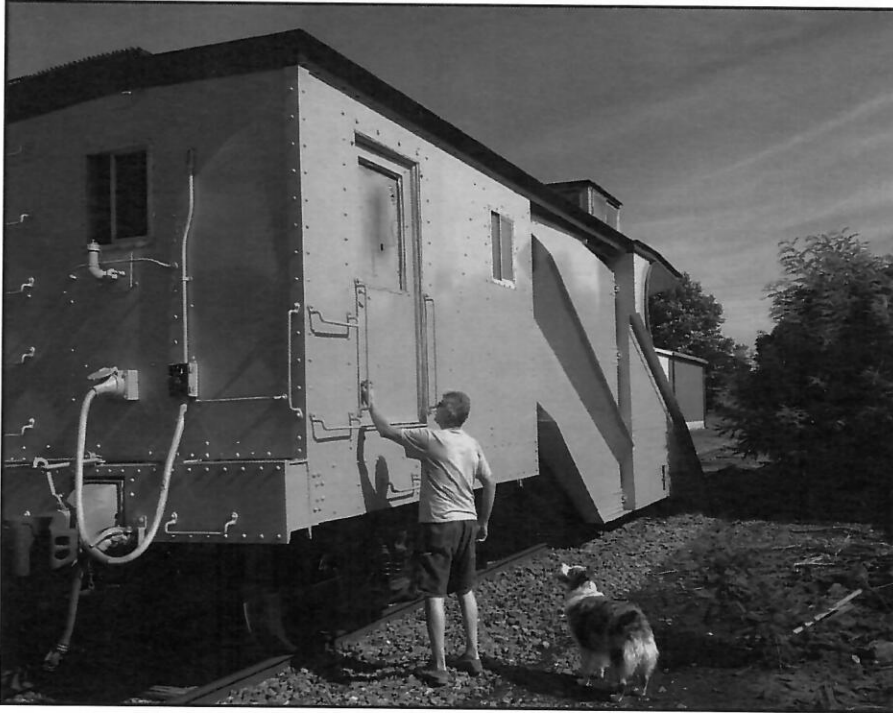
FALL 2018

Newsletter of the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society

Volume 13 Number 2

VALLEY EXPRESS

The SNOWPLOW Finally Arrives!



FCVRRHS President Bernie Hanmore prepares to unlock the door of the former Lackawanna Russell Snowplow. The WNYP delivered it July 20, 2018

After two years, 10 months and 5 days since the Russell snowplow was donated to the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society, it finally is in Meadville. The former Delaware Lackawanna & Western Railroad snowplow #95904 rode on the back end of a Meadville-bound freight on July 20. It actually was within 2 1/2 miles the night before, but the crew had to outlaw before Stan Road, north of Meadville. What started as a donation from the Growth Resources of Wellsboro (PA) in September 2015 proved with time, patience, and the ability to raise funds, the FCVRRHS would not give up until the 73 year old snowplow got to Meadville. Transportation of the unit was the biggest problem. Several attempts to have it hauled over the road by trucking companies were thwarted by the expense or availability of the proper trailers. Originally, the FCVRRHS planned to have it hauled over Norfolk Southern and the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroads, but a snafu with the NS ended that until a second attempt to arrange transportation with the aforementioned railroads succeeded. The snowplow was loaded at Wellsboro by Williamsport Crane on a TTX-owned flatcar, transported to Corning by the Wellsboro & Corning Railroad, then hauled to Buffalo by the Norfolk Southern. While in

(continued on page 5)

Baggage Car Sold

The French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society has sold its baggage car.

A deal with Mr. Allen Maples of the Everett Railroad was officially approved by the board at a special meeting on August 9. The former Pennsylvania Railroad class B60b #9035 last was owned by the WNYP Railroad and Conrail before them. Conrail used it in their maintenance of way department as a tool car in Oil City, PA. The FCVRRHS had planned to restore it as Conrail #64658 and paint it m-o-w yellow to go with the snowplow. It became impractical to keep this car due to circumstances beyond control of the board. Mr. Maples is planning to restore and operate the baggage car on the Everett Railroad. The Everett Railroad is a tourist line that regularly runs between Hollidaysburg and Martinsville, PA, and operates ALCO-built 2-6-0 #11.

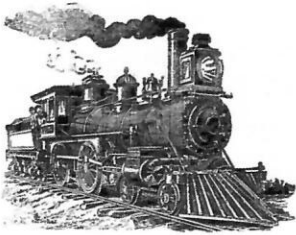
Announcements of Everett Railroad excursions have graced the back cover in several issues of your *Valley Express*.

- Carl Timko

B&LE Freight Station

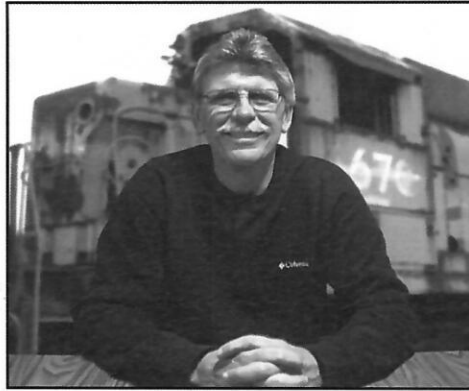
According to the minutes of the August 16, 2018 membership meeting, the status of the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad freight station, most recently the Meadville Farm & Garden, is still in limbo. The trustee is asking a slightly lower price since the dispersal auction this summer. There were no qualifying bids to purchase the station and surrounding property, though the

(continued on page 5)



From the Stationmaster's Office

We finally have the snowplow! It took a long while, but we persevered, despite all the red tape and frustrations endured. It speaks volumes about the perseverance of the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society and its members. We are not as fortunate as other area railroad historical societies that can afford to do all the things we would love to do to preserve the railroad history of Crawford County. But, we are not done yet.



First, we need to get the snowplow on display as soon as possible. As of this writing, that hasn't happened yet, but may have by the time you read this. Second, our next focus is on the Bessemer and Lake Erie freight station. This would be a fantastic boost to our public image. The work to secure this structure seems almost insurmountable, but we have the ability to overcome obstacles as we have proven before. The station would need a new roof among some other major repairs. We will need to secure grants and accept donations should we be fortunate enough to land the station. If not, there is a possibility of building a small structure in the area of where the snowplow will be displayed. But, here again, we need everyone's help, whether it be by donations, media coverage, physical labor, even word-of-mouth to get more people on board to help. If you have ideas on how to help, please submit them. These always are huge battles, but if we persevere, we can succeed.

Bernie Hanmore

CONTRIBUTIONS & GIFTS

- Acutec
- John K. Howell
- Richard Meuer
- David Christoph
- Rick Rowlands
- Ed Cronin family
- Carl Ferguson
- Bernie Hanmore family
- Dan Higham family
- Scott Ladner family
- Lloyd's Rentals
- Mike Vickey
- John Nagurney
- Terry Martin family
- Bill McComas family
- Dennis Mead and family
- Nicholas Ozolak
- Ron Stafford
- Stan Niwa
- Jack Sheets family
- John Snyder family
- Carl and Vanessa Timko
- Youngstown Steel Heritage Foundation

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



French Creek Valley Express

A Publication of the
French Creek Valley Railroad
Historical Society

Officers

President - Bernie Hanmore
Vice President - Dennis Mead
Treasurer - Ed Cronin
Secretary - Carl Timko

Directors

Bill McComas
Jack Sheets
John Snyder
Stan Niwa
John Nagurney
Ron Stafford
Nick Ozorak

Webmaster

Dianne Jones

Editor

Carl Timko

Assistant Editor

Dennis Mead

Contact Information

P.O. Box 632
Meadville, PA 16335

Website: www.fcrrhs.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 & Finance

The French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society has submitted its entry for Trains Magazine Preservation Award. The award would defray costs of setting the DL&W Russell snowplow on display on a lot across from the railroad display site in Pomona Park, Meadville, PA. Costs include materials, such as gravel and ballast, and services such as crane operators and equipment to lift the snowplow onto the display track. Rick Rowlands, of the Youngstown Steel Heritage Museum, has offered his and his crew's services, at no charge, to build the display track.

The winner of the Preservation Award is to be announced November 10th.

- Carl Timko

Although we had unexpected income from the sale of the baggage car, we had other unanticipated expenses this year for moving the snow plow and it still is not on the display track. Expenses to date for the snow plow total \$13,796. We still have about \$1,000 for display track preparation and \$4,000 for crane service to place it onto the display track.

We would appreciate any donations the membership cares to make.

- Ed Cronin

History & Archives

The FCVRRHS received a donation of a yard switch indicator lamp, such as used by the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad. The Depot at Doolittle's of DuBois, PA made the donation while Jack and Linda Sheets visited the museum. This museum recently acquired two former Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus converted passenger cars.

- Carl Timko

Membership

As of September 20, only one third of the FCVRRHS members have renewed their membership. Notices will be sent to those that are still behind in renewing. We have received a few new members thanks to the successful show at the Kmart building and the excitement the snowplow had generated amongst

railfans.

Dues and donations are the main source of income for the FCVRRHS. It is what pays the bills and funds all our projects. We have plans for more projects to preserve the railroad heritage of Crawford County. To fund them, the FCVRRHS depends on your membership dues and donations. So, if you haven't renewed, please do so soon, and feel free to recruit new members.

- Carl Timko

Model Railroad

The organization has a new model railroad club designed specifically for kids that are between 13 and 18 years of age. Nick Ozorak was instrumental in starting the Meadville Model Railroad Club. The plan is to admit up to five young people to devote two hours per night, after school, once or twice a week to learning the nuances of building a model railroad layout. No fees are charged as the endeavor is sponsored by the FCVRRHS and those that wish to donate materials and funds to support the program. Classes are beginning October 2 at the CoWorks, Parkside Commons in Meadville. The Parkside Commons is the former Meadville Junior High School located between Liberty St. and the Diamond.

- Nick Ozorak

Time is getting short to build a new layout for the holiday season. This is due to the sale of the two layouts that operated at the Kmart building last winter. Plans are in the works to build a sectional layout that is easy to tear down, set up and transport. More information will be reported through emails and word of mouth as it comes in.

- Carl Timko

Museum

Progress on the Trolley Station continues. This year 132 roof rafter tails were replaced and painted, a new floor was installed in the back room, a contract was signed for the installation of new gutters and downspouts, and we are preparing a contract for the large multi-paned window in the back room to be replaced. A new storage building was purchased from the Crawford County Career and Technical Center and

moved to our property. Quiring Brothers Paving has marked the location for a new paved parking lot on the west side of the building.

The Trolley Station was open Saturdays from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM. Seven docents took turns staffing the building and also were available to open and close the station for special events.

Regular organizations that use the space include the Cambridge Springs Kiwanis Club twice a month and the National Model Railroaders Association for general meetings and board meetings.

A number of private parties and a high school class reunion were held at the Trolley Station this year.

The Heritage Partnership Annual Meeting was held on Monday, September 17, at the Trolley Station. C.L. Siebert, Jr. received (Posthumously) the 2018 Anne Stewart Historical Researcher Award for his work writing Northwestern Pennsylvania Railway. The award will be sent to his son, Dr. Karl Siebert. Kenneth Springirth was the meeting's featured speaker.

New merchandise is now for sale including conductors' hats and wooden trolley car kits that include paint. Should you want a personal tour of the station or are interested in using it for a private function please call Dan at 720-4869 or Sandy at 282-6449.

The former Meadville Farm and Garden building has not sold. The Heritage Partnership with FCVRRHS currently have the highest offering but the seller has not accepted it.

- Ed Cronin

Property and Equipment

A lot has happened since the last issue of the Valley Express. The snowplow has arrived, but has yet to be placed on display. Work is progressing to do just that. The lot was graded, with a dirt and gravel base added on September 14, and a first layer of ballast was spread on the 20th of September. Another layer will follow soon. Members of the Youngstown Steel Heritage Museum will travel to Meadville to build the track panels for the snowplow. Ties, rails and all the necessary hardware is being gathered to have it ready to

build.

The Bessemer and Lake Erie boxcar restoration is almost complete. The west side door has been rebuilt, and painted, while some areas on the side have been painted with primer. A quick final coat of paint and lettering on the doors should complete the project.

The headlight on the #518 was wired up by Terry Martin, who at last report was in the hospital. We are all thinking of you, Terry. Get well soon.

As reported on the front page, the baggage car was sold. Due to all the projects currently in progress, it wasn't feasible to keep it, restore it, and move it onto the display track with the snowplow, which had to be done soon. Fortunately, Mr. Allen Maples of the Everett Railroad was interested enough to purchase it.

The caboose is still in need of interior electricity and a good exterior washing and waxing. The need for electricity stems from hot summer days during the tours and a possible trick-or-treat night at Halloween.

-Carl Timko

Public Relations & Education

It has been a busy summer with the arrival of the Lackawanna snow plow. Volunteers have been finishing the Bessemer boxcar, and placing electricity on the Erie 518 so it may have an operating headlight. All the while preparations were being made to place the plow on display at our property in Pomona Park. Completion of this work should be done by November, leaving fencing and other details on the site to be completed next year.

All this work has come at a cost for the Society, so we are looking forward to the next model trains show at Rainbow Gardens, Erie, on November 4th, 2018. We are also solicitating model train and accessory donations for selling at our tables this time, donations that will also be featured at our Christmas display. At this time there are no given dates or location for the holiday display. We will keep you posted.

Calendars will return this year. Currently, we are coordinating with Michael Vickey in North East on assembling the new edition. You won't be disappointed with 2019's pictures.

If you plan to attend the Erie Train Show, be sure and stop by the table, or even take a few minutes of your visit and help out by selling our merchandise.

-Dennis Mead

The caboose tour turnout was very low this year. An average of 3 or 4 folks per day is all that visited, with a couple of days with no visitors at all. Sales were minimal, unfortunately.

-Carl Timko

Special Events & Programs

Plans are in the works for a Railroad Authors Day to coincide with the dedication of the Russell snowplow, possibly in the spring of 2019. The event would feature authors of railroad books that are familiar to the membership, and possibly one or two that may not be familiar. Authors will have their books to sell on site and also autograph them for the purchaser. The FCVRRHS plans to ask the authors to donate a portion of their sales as a fundraiser or a straight donation.

It has not been determined as yet where the holiday layout display will be. We do know it won't be at the Kmart building, as it has been confirmed that the building is due to be demolished in October or November. This was an outstanding venue for the FCVRRHS. We hope the next one will be just as successful.

-Carl Timko

On The Side Track

The Extra 3639 North Project

The Youngstown Steel Heritage Foundation is pleased to announce that an agreement has been reached with the Virginia Museum of Transportation to purchase former Erie Lackawanna SDP45 diesel locomotive No. 3639, currently painted as Conrail No. 6670, currently located at Roanoke, VA.

The YSH has initiated a fund-raising drive with an initial goal of \$20,000 to purchase and secure the locomotive. Additional fund-raising will take place in 2019 to move the locomotive to the Marter Yard Railroad Museum operated by the Mahoning Valley Railroad Heritage Association.

After arrival at Marter Yard, the SDP45 will remain in Conrail paint for a period of time before finally being repainted as Erie Lackawanna

No. 3639.

After years of watching this locomotive sit in the yard, now is our chance to provide it with a better future and bring it back to northeast Ohio, the former hub of the Erie Lackawanna Railway.

The locomotive is in generally good condition despite missing several major components including the main generator, traction motors, and air compressor. An operational restoration is a long term goal of the project.



Conrail SDP45 #6670 at Roanoke, VA
- Rick Rowlands photo

Extra 3639 North pays homage to the former Extra 2200 South locomotive news magazine and describes the goal of this effort, to move No. 3639 about 300 miles north from Roanoke to Youngstown.

In June, the YSH filmed video of our initial inspection of the No. 6670. It can be seen through the following link: <https://youtu.be/L2igD7rEz3k>.

Members of the FCVRRHS may be familiar with this locomotive, as it is the same locomotive that the Northwestern Pennsylvania Railroad & Tooling Heritage Center (now the Northwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Partnership), of which the FCVRRHS is a partner, attempted to acquire.

Donations can be made to the Extra 3639 North Project through the website at www.extra3639north.org. A link to the fund-raising site, is included, as well as links to the social media websites.

- Rick Rowlands



Conrail SDP45 #6670 in newer condition.
- Rick Rowlands photo

Snowplow Arrives

Buffalo, the snowplow was tagged with graffiti, which was later removed after its arrival in Meadville. The #95904 was then hauled to Salamanca, NY by the B&P. The WNYP picked it up and transported it to Olean, where crews off-loaded at their shops.

It currently sits on a siding in Meadville, waiting for day when it is placed on display across from the display site in Pomona Park. That day will be soon, as circumstances dictate the immediacy to have it placed on display.

The French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society extends its thanks to Ferlin Patrick and G.R.O.W. for the donation of the snowplow, Bob Whitmer and the crews of the Williamsport Crane for loading the snowplow, and all the personnel involved from TTX, the Wellsboro & Corning Railroad, the Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad, Norfolk Southern, and the WNYP Railroad. We also thank all the supporters of the FCVRRHS and the members of the FCVRRHS that were instrumental in helping get the snowplow home to Meadville. We truly appreciate everyone's help.

-Carl Timko



Ed Cronin showing youngsters a switching layout at Meadville Model RR Club Open House at Parkside Commons, Meadville. - Meadville Tribune photo



Dave Ellis talking with a young model railroader at the Meadville Model RR Club Open House - Meadville Tribune photo



The Russell Snowplow being loaded onto a TTX owned flat car by Williamsport Crane at Wellsboro, PA - Dennis Mead photo



Looking at the front right side of the snowplow as it brings up the rear of a WNYP train on July 19, 2018. -Casey and Dan Pfeiffer photo

FCVRRHS Russell snowplow taking up the rear of a WNYP westbound train, July 19

- Casey and Dan Pfeiffer photo

Former DL&W Russell Snowplow #95904 along side WNYP C424 #435

- Casey and Dan Pfeiffer photo



NS Testing Rebuilt Loco on WNYP

Norfolk Southern has been testing a rebuilt GE locomotive on the WNYP recently. NS AC44C6CF #8520 was a Dash 9-40CW that was converted from DC to AC. This locomotive is hard to miss, as it is gray with black lettering on the long hood, and red and black with white lettering on the cab. It has been testing on the WNYP's old Pennsylvania RR line from Olean along with NS C40-8.5W #8501 and #8513. Both of the latter units were also rebuilt. It was reported at the September membership meeting that the WNYP has no interest in these locomotives, so ALCO fans, you can sleep better at night.

-Trains Magazine

B&LE Freight Station

(continued from page 1)

FCVRRHS and the North-western Pennsylvania Heritage Partnership submitted a bid. It is hoped that this station can be saved as it is well over 100 years old, possibly over 125 years old. The plan is for the Partnership to be the titled owner and the FCVRRHS the lessee. Use of the station could be for meetings, train shows and events, and a railroad museum, which has been needed in Crawford County for a long time.

- Carl Timko

FCVRRHS Merchandise

Members, we have ordered more shirts to replenish our stock. We will have most sizes from Youth Small to Adult 4XL. If we don't have the size, we can order it for you. Also, we will be getting our 2019 calendars in soon. See us at the Erie Train Show to pick up yours. We are still selling copies of Pete Gifford and Bob Ilsevic's book on the Atlantic & Great Western.

-Carl Timko

