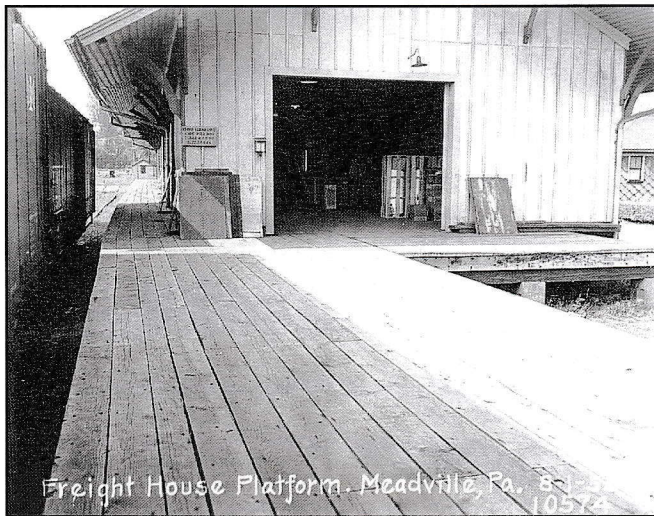


VALLEY EXPRESS

Meadville Conneaut Lake & Linesville Railroad Part 2 - Company Buildings

by Carl Timko



View of the north end of the Meadville Depot August 1, 1955.
Note the two water heaters inside.

In this issue, the discussion will be regarding the buildings of the Meadville Conneaut Lake & Linesville Railroad, not including the businesses it served.

Some of these structures may have been mentioned in articles on the Meadville Railway and the Meadville & Linesville Railroad. If it is repetitious, accept my apologies. Buildings on the Vallonia Branch, north of Mead Avenue in Meadville, also will not be mentioned here.

Starting in Meadville, our own now-named Meadville Railroad Depot. Built in 1881 for the Meadville Railway, it was originally 100 or so feet long, with no side additions. In 1907, an additional 50 feet, plus a ramp, were added on to the north end, along with two small additions on the west end. The ramp accommodated delivery trucks to and from the station. There may have been one or two outbuildings. A 1916 track map showed two buildings north of the ramp of the depot's north end.

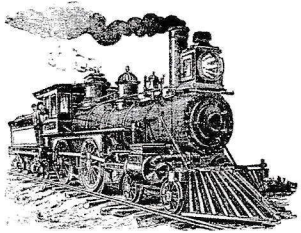
The next MCL&L buildings were at Kerrtown, where the engine facilities were until just before 1922. On the north side of Hope Street was a wood handcar shed, measuring 11 or 12 feet by 12 feet. It stood across from the 63 foot turntable which came right up to the edge of Hope St. It is surmised that the engine house was no longer needed when the Bessemer & Lake Erie was supplying the engines to serve the MCL&L. The 3-stall engine house was brick with wood framing, measuring approximately 42 feet at the entrance and 65 feet across the back, and approximately 65 feet deep. According to Sanborn maps, it stood 12 feet high about three fourths of its length. Remember, the MCL&L had three small steam locomotives. The author still questions if this is really correct.

(continued on page 5)

Local News WNYP's Recent Acquisitions

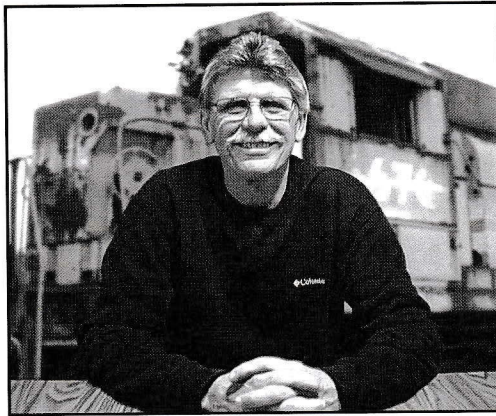
Recently, the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad acquired four former Union Pacific Railroad GP15-1 locomotives. The four locomotives will be numbered #1501 through #1504. The #1501 was built in July 1977 for the Missouri Pacific as their #1594. It became UP #1594 when the UP took over the Missouri Pacific, then UPY (Union Pacific) #594. #1502 was built in 1977 for the Missouri Pacific as #1606, became UP #1606, then UPY #606. The #1503 was built in February 1982 for the Missouri Pacific as their #1677. It then became UP #1677, and then UPY #677. The #1504 was built in March 1982 as MP #1709. It became the UP #1709, then UPY #709. A report mentions the WNYP will be receiving two more UP GP15-1's, but it is not known when they will come, or what their former roadnumbers are. Since the six-axle ALCO and MLW locomotives were sold or scrapped, there wouldn't be enough motive power to cover the light duty service along the WNYP lines. There is limited traffic on the Olean to Driftwood former Pennsylvania Railroad line because the fracking sand delivery has been taken over by trucks. Conrail had several GP15-1's back in the day, some even making their way to Meadville. It would take three of the GP15-1s lashed together to come close to the power of one WNYPs GE AC4600CW's.

(continued on page 5)



From the Stationmaster's Office

The summer is now over, the last public viewing days are upon us, yet, now is when the fun begins. The last day is Saturday, September 28th, but we have the NMRA Division 12 over the following Saturday. We will still schedule private events in the Multi-purpose room until mid-November. On November 21, we will gather to decorate the Depot for the Holidays and have a membership tureen dinner.



The Holiday Train Show and Sale will begin on Friday November 29 and last until December 21. We plan to have our usual train raffle and 50/50 raffle.

Currently, the O-scale layout is shut down while Diane Frampton and Kevin Parsons work on painting the wall over the layout in the "train room" where the A&GW #5 model built by Meadville's Erie Railroad shops in 1938 is located. The layout should be up and running by mid-November.

We want to thank Arden Hibbard and Dot Waite for everything they did for the FCVRRHS, the membership and the Meadville Railroad Depot. The Depot would likely not be ready to open by June 2022, when we did. Arden put a lot of hard and dirty work to get everything just right. He also kept us entertained with his recollections of life on the railroad. Dot, with her dedication to the organization when it came to the festivals and parties that were at the Depot. We said our goodbyes-til-next-time with a dinner at Perkins. We look forward to seeing Arden and Dot again. A big thank you to the both of you.

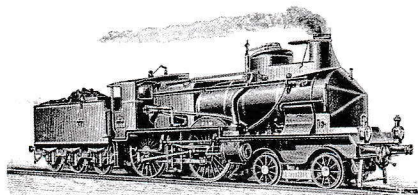
Bernie Hanmore / cjat

CONTRIBUTORS (Includes Crawford Gives Donors)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ● Anonymous | ● Pete Gifford |
| ● Deanna & Paul Attardo | ● Bernard Hanmore |
| ● Carl Belke | ● Arden Hibbard |
| ● David Boyd | ● Diane & Lance Johnson |
| ● Mark Bruns | ● Rhonda & Joseph Kaye |
| ● Huntington Christie | ● Kelli & Kevin Kraeling |
| ● Ed Cronin | ● Joyce & Scott Ladner |
| ● David Ellis | ● D. Lynch |
| ● Embroiderers Guild of America | ● James Maccaferri |
| ● Barbara Ewing | ● Melissa Mancotti (x 3) |
| ● Dianne & Dennis Frampton | ● Mary & Mike Marley |

(continued on page 5)

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



French Creek Valley Express

A Publication of the
French Creek Valley Railroad
Historical Society

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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.

Memberships:

\$25 individual; \$40 family;
\$5 student under 18

The corporate Gold, Silver, and Bronze memberships and Lifetime memberships have been eliminated.

All members with lifetime memberships will not lose them.

Budget / Finance / Insurance / Compliance

The result of the **Crawford Gives** campaign of the Crawford Heritage Community Foundation showed that the **FCVRRHS** will receive at least \$10,171. Not a bad showing with the number of “competitors” that were registered. To all who donated, **THANK YOU!**

- Carl Timko

Historical / Archives

Carl Timko has been busily working on the cataloging of the donated artifacts. Most of this is being done by hand until an adequate computer and storage system is acquired. We do have an older computer that was donated, but the files Carl has on his storage devices will not transfer to the system at hand, due to the difference in operating system. Plus the old system doesn't like the Magnifier program that Carl needs to run the computer.

Carl has talked with Paula Brown of the Crawford County Historical Society about several things that the CCHS does to store their archives. Of these, acid-free archival boxes are needed to protect the smaller artifacts and documents. They are pricey, though.

- Carl Timko

Membership

Some members of the **FCVRRHS** gathered at Meadville's Perkins restaurant to bid members Arden Hibbard and Dot Waite adieu. They are moving to South Carolina. Arden was instrumental in renovating the Meadville Railroad Depot, doing construction work and plumbing which was mostly under the depot. He also regaled us with all of his interesting stories about working on the railroad. Dot helped in a big way with the Holiday decorating and refreshments and with food service during our grand opening and Depot anniversary shows. Even though they will be still a part of the organizing, Arden and Dot will be missed until they come back up to visit. Thanks for everything, Arden and Dot.

- Carl Timko

It came to the attention of the editor that a couple of members had passed away, but not recently.

Richard Biemer of Conneaut Lake passed in 2023, and James Glover of Meadville passed from cancer in 2022. Richard passed on September 12, was a veteran of World War II and the Korean War, a member of the Meadville Coin Club, and was a woodworker.

James passed on July 16, 2022, and was a Meadville fireman who was on duty when the Depot had caught on fire in 1973 as the Meadville Farm & Garden. He also was a tool and die maker and liked collecting antiques.

Clear signal ahead, Richard and James.

- Carl Timko

Model Railroading

A great resource for finding model train shows, railroad excursions and other information regarding railroads and model railroads has suddenly disappeared. RAILSERVE, that was located on the internet under the URL of www.railserv.com is nowhere to be found. Your editor last used it for the Spring 2024 edition of the *Valley Express*. Checking a couple of forums online found other modelers to be just as confused by the disappearance. Unless it is under a different name, it will be tough to find as thorough of a resource for trains shows as RAILSERVE was. Note: there is a website listed as www.railserv.biz, but that is not it.

- Carl Timko

Members Connie and Don Sitterley will have their G scale layout on display late this fall again. It will be at their residence, 124 Davenport St., Spartansburg, PA on Friday, December 6 and Saturday, December 7. The hours will be 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. There will be seven sets of G scale operating and one or two sets of Z scale operating. Scenes modeled are a logging scene, Christmas scene, Santa Land, and a scene depicting 1910 Spartansburg. There is no admission. The model trains are inside a two-car garage. Everyone is welcome!

- Connie Sitterley

Museum

There will be a Holiday decorating party at and for the Depot on Wednesday, November 21, starting at 12 noon. There also will be a tureen dinner. Members attending

are asked to bring a dish to share with everyone.

- Bernie Hanmore

The mural in the “Train Room” on the wall over the O-scale layout is progressing with the efforts of Dianne Frampton, Kevin Parsons and Mike Marley.

- Carl Timko

The 3rd Annual Train Station Summer Festival was held on Saturday, June 22. The event featured 16 craft vendors, a car show, a blacksmith, a period costume designer, the NMRA Division 12, and a food truck.

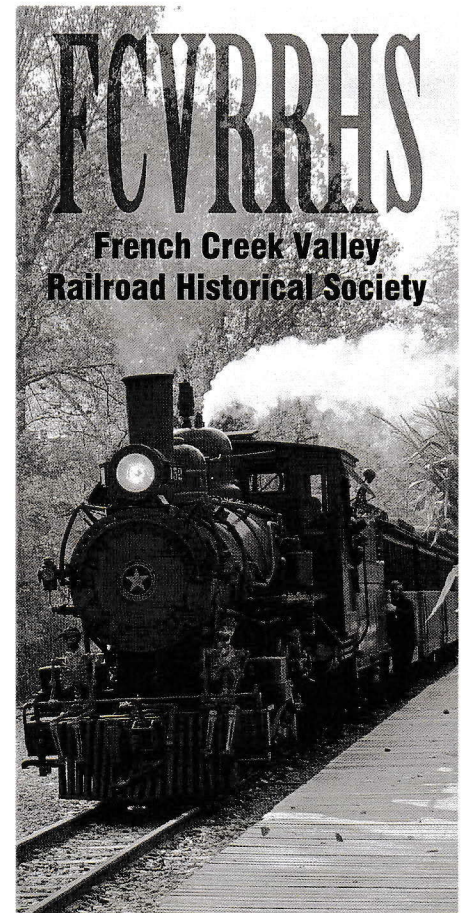
We had a nice sized crowd who seemed to like and appreciate the event. We hope the event will be even bigger in 2025. In case someone didn't try the food at the food truck, they had great tasting chicken tenders and garbage fries!

- Carl Timko

Property and Equipment

One of the things Arden Hibbard did before he left for South Carolina was donate a railroad crossing signal. It is now installed at the northeast corner of the Meadville Railroad Depot. Thanks, Arden!

- Carl Timko



FCVRRHS
French Creek Valley
Railroad Historical Society

Public Relations & Education

Our annual train show and sale will commence on “Black Friday”, November 29, 2024 and last until Saturday, December 21. We are expecting to have a nice selection of model trains for the show. The train show and sale will be open on Saturdays and Sundays, after Friday, November 29. The hours will be from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

- Carl Timko

The new website, www.fcvrhs.org, is now live. It was activated on September 18, as notified by Jennifer Lyker of Inksplash Designs. It replaces our old one, which could not be updated after our webmaster, Dianne Jones passed away. The old website is now deactivated. Some of the same features will be on the new website, such as the *Valley Express* newsletter, events, merchandise, and photographs. The merchandise will take a little more time to upload, as it will be sent to the webmaster in a spreadsheet along with photos of the merchandise. A big thanks to Jennifer and Melissa Cornwell of Wesbury.

- Carl Timko

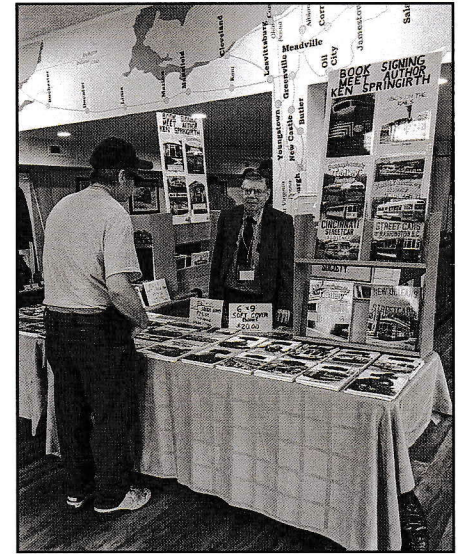
Special Events & Programs

Members of the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society welcomed the Allegheny Western Division 12 of the National Model Railroad Association on Saturday, October 5th. Division 12 presented part two of their slideshow “**The Bridges and Tunnels of the Jamestown Franklin & Clearfield Railroad.**” Part one was at the Meadville Railroad Depot several months ago and was very interesting. Part two also generated great interest. There were photographs of the various bridges being built, bridges in use and now long-since abandoned. The mystery of Tunnel #4 was intriguing.

- Carl Timko



Allegheny Western Division 12 of the National Model Railroad Association displaying and educating the public on the hobby of model railroading.



Ken Springirth selling and signing the books he writes and sells. He has 48 different titles to choose from.



Rolling Roadhouse Food Wagon. The chicken and fries were great!



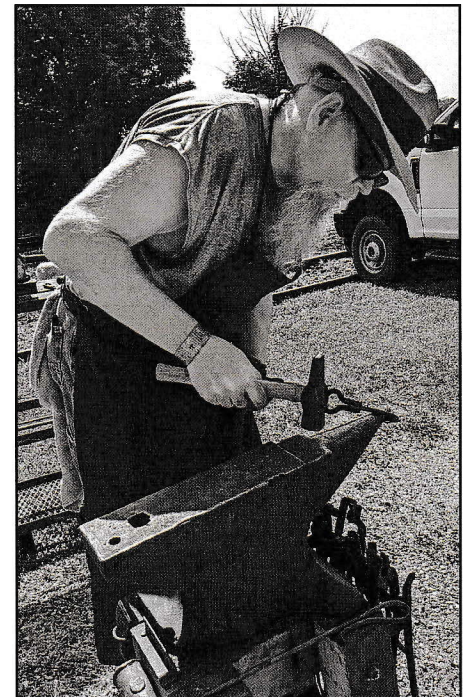
Setting up displays in the Multi-purpose Room of the Meadville Railroad Depot. Included were arrowheads and period clothing.

Images from the 3rd Annual Train Depot Festival

photographs by Woody Dixon



Some of the vehicles of the car show on display at DeSantis Janitor Supply



Bending hot iron - the art of blacksmith Leon Briggs.



Craft vendors of the festival.

MCL&L - Part Two

(continued from page 1)

At the time of the 1922 map, there still stood a water tower, an oil house, a sand house, the one-story structure that was attached to the engine house and a 2-story dwelling with a one story entrance. Nothing was mentioned about what that structure was used for.

On down the line, past what was Route 82 (now U.S. Route 322), was a wye that may or may not have had a structure that tended to the two turnouts.

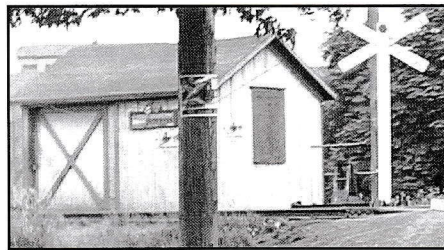
The next structure would be at a point known as French Creek or French. This was an interchange with the Erie Railroad where the Erie would detour trains over the MCL&L to connect with the Bessemer and reconnect with Erie tracks in Shenango, just south of Greenville. Most times the detoured traffic was due to the congested track on the Erie. A tower named FC (for French Creek) stood here. This area is where currently Ernst Trail meets up with the Norfolk Southern's form Erie RR track. No photos have been found of FC Tower. In a conversation with fellow member and historian Dennis Mead, he found a small foundation during an exploratory walk in the area. The "tower" may have been a one-story building such as the "AK" tower at Conneaut Lake Park. It would have controlled both turnouts - one for the detouring traffic from the Erie Railroad and one for entering the MCL&L.

An old MCL&L timetable shows a point labeled French Creek, likely mentioned for timekeeping purposes.

The next building was the "station" at West Union. It was a small one-room shanty that was located on the south corner of Vernon Drive and Franklin Street. The station was closed on January 15, 1928.

An MCL&L timetable mentions a stop at Mercer Pike. It is not known if there were any kind of buildings at the road crossing.

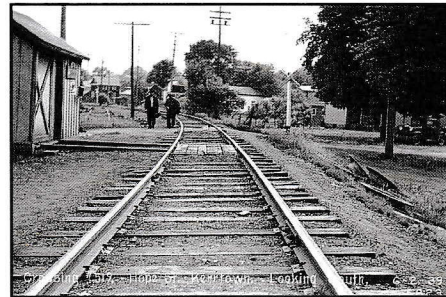
Watson's Run had two buildings - the small station and a handcar shed next to it. The station had a bay



Hope St. handcar shed.
Photo courtesy of Scott Woods

window section, but in photos it could not be determined if it had another room on the other side of the bay window. It was located on the west side of Bailey Road, on the south side of the tracks. It was closed on September 25, 1932.

West Vernon station was the first station east of Conneaut Lake, located on McMichael and Brown Hill Roads, southwest of West Vernon Road. It closed on September 30, 1928.



Side view of Hope St. handcar shed.
Photo courtesy of Scott Woods

This article on the buildings of the MCL&L will continue with the next issue.

Bibliography:

- "Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad - 1869-1969" by Roy C. Beaver
- "Pennsylvania Lines West- Erie & Pittsburgh Branch" by Alan Buchan
- "Ghost Rails XIV- Hallowed Grounds" by Wayne Cole
- "Poor's Manual of Railroads" for the years 1892 through 1897
- <http://www.west2k.com> by Dan West, featuring history summaries of area depots

Many thanks to Scott Woods for use of the Meadville Conneaut Lake & Linesville Railroad Minutes book and the use of the photos of the MCL&L right of way. Thank you to Dennis Mead for his wealth of historical information.

Thanks to the Crawford County Historical Society for any information

that was used.

Also used were the author's own files, the B&LE archives of the FCVRRHS, and Sanborn Maps of various years of the Meadville area.

WNYP #630

(continued from page 1)

WNYP still has two of those GE-built locomotives, with the rest being sold off.

- Carl Timko

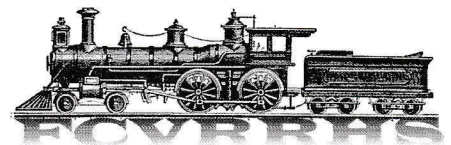
In other WNYP news, the WNYP has been delivering Amtrak Acela sets to their Olean, N.Y. Yard from the Alstom facility in Hornell, N.Y. So far that is known, there are six sets in the yard.

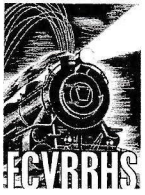
- Carl Timko, Roger Durfee

CONTRIBUTORS

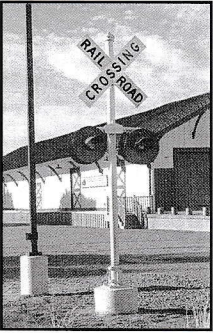
(continued from page 1)

- Sharon Marr
- Kathy & David Masters
- MASH class of 1952
- MASH class of 1959
- MASH class of 1962
- MASH class of 1967
- Meadville Painters
- Jen Mohtasher
- NMRA Division 12
- Elizabeth & Peter Oven
- Kevin Parsons
- Casey & Dan Pfeiffer
- Pitts Construction Food Truck
- Carol & Craig Powell
- Rose Botanicals
- John Sheets
- C. Sippola
- Lawson Smart
- Nancy & Rob Smith
- Lynda & John Snyder (x 3)
- Barbara & Samuel Spencer
- James Stephenson
- Charlotte & Christopher Thomas
- Vanessa & Carl Timko
- Roxanne Tonn
- Larry Weigel
- Marjorie Weigel





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



**Crossing signal
donated by
Arden Hibbard**
*Photo by Kevin
Pipp*

**French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society
Calendar of Events
Fall 2024 to Spring 2025**

Nov. 2, 3 - 42nd Annual Cleveland O-Scale Meet
UAW Hall, 5615 Chevrolet Blvd. • Parma, OH
Hours: Sat. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Admission **\$10**

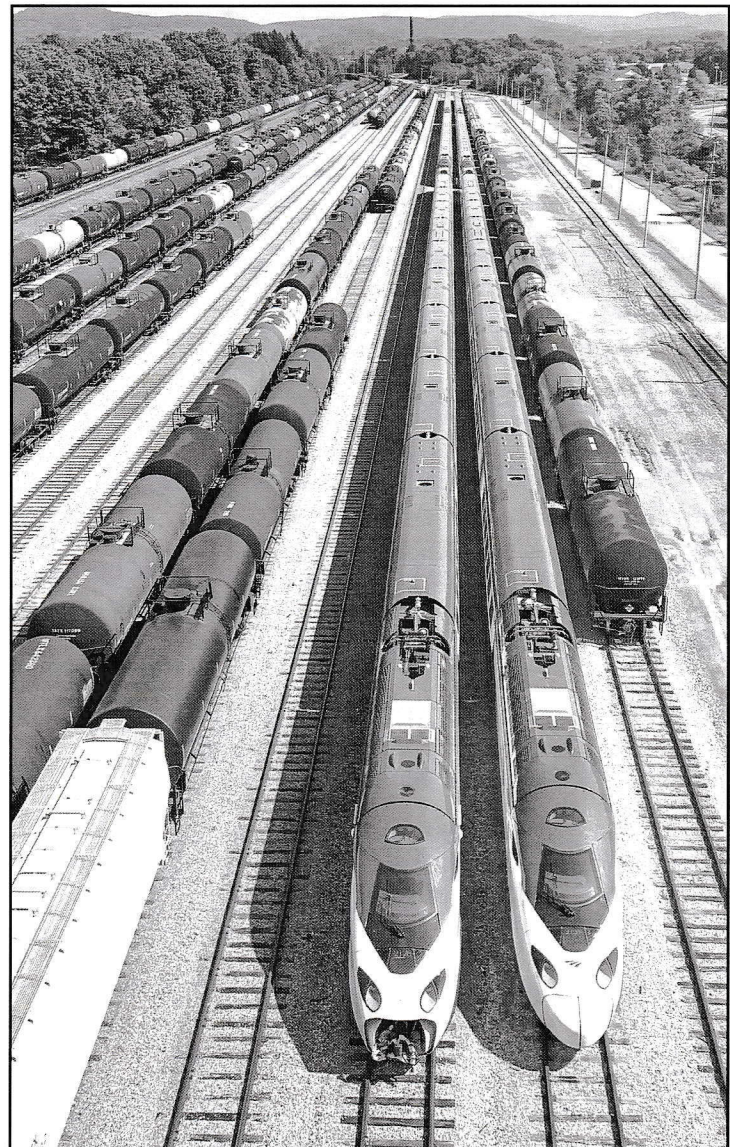
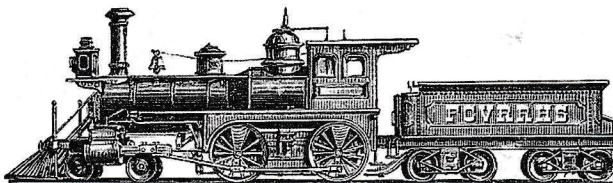
Nov. 23 - Beaver County Model Railroad & Historical Society
Monaca Turners, 1700 Brodhead Rd. • Monaca, PA
Hours 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Admission **\$5**, children under 12 admitted free

Nov. 30 - TCA Thanksgiving Train Show - Lake Erie Chapter
UAW Hall, 5675 Chevrolet Blvd. • Parma, OH
Hours 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission **\$6**,
family **\$10**, under 18 admitted free

Dec. 15 - TCA Fort Pitt Div. - Pittsburgh Shriners Center
1877 Shriners Way • Cheswick, PA;
Hours 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Admission **\$5**
Children under 18 admitted free

Jan. 5 - Snow Dogs Train Show – Emidio & Sons
Expo Center, 48 East Bath Rd. • Cuyahoga Falls, OH
Hours 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Admission **\$6**
children under 12 admitted free

Mar. 15, 16 2025 - Railfest – Lakeland Community College, 7700 Clocktower Dr. • Kirtland, OH
Hours 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Admission **\$9**,
2-day pass **\$14**, family (couples) **\$14**



Amtrak Acela sets stored at Western New York & Pennsylvania's Olean, N.Y. Yard after bringing them from the Alstom plant in Hornell, N.Y. Photo also shows the size of the yard in Olean.
Photo by Roger Durfee, used with permission.