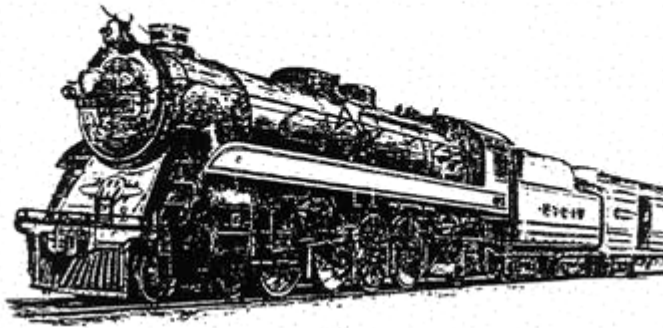


THE MOUNTAINEER



Volume XIX Number 3
September 2008



A letter to the membership...

My fellow members,

I am writing this letter to bring you up to date on a situation that affects some of you directly, and the Society as a whole. As you may know, the Ontario & Western Railway Historical Society has had quite an evolution since its inception in 1963. Originally being formed as the Ontario & Western Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, it later merged with the Ontario & Western Technical Historical Society in order to consolidate the interest both groups had in the NYO&W Railway. This group continued on as a chapter of the NRHS until 1978 when it changed its corporate name to the present name as listed above, and identified itself as an "affiliated chapter" of the NRHS. We do not know the reason for this change.

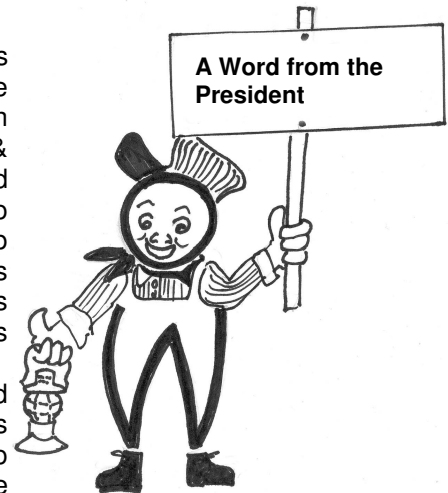
As a separate and standalone organization, the O&W RHS continued for thirty years to offer membership in the NRHS, and to collect and process dues on their behalf right up until present day. This we have done for no gratuity or benefit, and have willingly and graciously done so for the sake of railroad history preservation. After all, isn't that what we are all about?

As you may or may not know, the O&W RHS has been, and is, a group run entirely by volunteers. These passionate and enthusiastic members volunteer their time and talents to attain Society goals. We have all come to enjoy the publications, web site and yearly events that membership affords at such a reasonable cost. This can only be achieved by those members mentioned above. For this, I am truly grateful.

The O&W RHS has accomplished many things in its life, and has grown by leaps and bounds. The quality of our products speaks for itself, and many of the society's core and active members have experienced a level of fraternity, if you will. Unlike the O&W RHS, the NRHS has not had the good fortune of willing volunteers to work in the various fields of its operations. This is a sad occurrence, one that has forced the NRHS to outsource some of its services. Most recently, as early as the fall of 2007, the NRHS contracted out its membership services to a firm known as Fernley & Fernley, located in Philadelphia, PA. This firm is now paid by the NRHS to process its dues.

For the past twelve months, the O&W RHS and the NRHS entered into a transition period, which was agreed upon by both parties. From our standpoint, the transition period was rough, to say the least, with many problems and difficulties experienced by our Membership Chairman, Ray Pinglora. Ray has served in this capacity for many years, and has stepped up in many areas to take care of our Society's needs. Ray was good enough to give this some time to work itself out. However - with Fernley & Fernley in control of the NRHS membership - stipulations, deadlines, duplicate and triplicate work and computer software were unfairly demanded of Ray. Ray finally reached a point where he could no longer continue a working relationship with Fernley & Fernley, and asked to be replaced.

Unable to replace him, I, as President, could not allow an outside Society to influence the operations of the O&W RHS, nor could I stand idly by while a valued volunteer such as Ray became increasingly upset and frustrated with the work he so graciously volunteered to do. (By the way, Ray is the recipient of the 2006 John Hobbs Chryn award, which is given to the Member of the Year.)



In the spring of this year, I reached out to the senior officers of the NRHS, in hopes of rectifying this situation, and in order to work out an agreement between the two societies by which we could continue to collect membership dues on behalf of the NRHS. Ray and myself put forth a proposal, or compromise, that would work for both groups, thus allowing the O&W RHS to continue to offer its members the opportunity to join the NRHS. After many weeks of consideration, the NRHS and Fernley & Fernley refused to make any concession. Therefore, a decision was reached by the O&W RHS Board of Trustees to discontinue accepting memberships for the NRHS.

What does this mean to you? Well, if you are not a member of the NRHS, nothing will change; if you are a member of both the O&W RHS and the NRHS, very little will change. The option to join the NRHS through the O&W RHS will no longer be available. The membership dues we process will be for O&W RHS membership only. The NRHS will now bill you directly. By now, you should have received a letter from them, notifying you that your NRHS membership status will change to "At Large". There will be no change in the dues structure, as there was no discount for maintaining dual membership. Your dues to the NRHS will simply be sent to them directly.

The Ontario & Western Railway Historical Society is disappointed in the rigid approach of the NRHS, and deeply regrets that a working relationship could not be achieved. We have, and will continue to support the preservation of railroad history, and promote railroad travel. If you have enjoyed your membership in the NRHS, then I encourage our dual members to maintain that membership.

To all of my fellow O&W RHS members, I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. I hope you can appreciate the efforts that were made by our Officers and Trustees in avoiding this outcome, but I trust this change will not affect your desire to maintain your membership in the Ontario & Western Railway Historical Society, Inc. We are nearly 700-strong, and we will continue our dedicated commitment to provide to you the quality membership experience you have come to know.

Sincerely,
George S. Shammass - President, O&W R.H.S., Inc.

A word from the editor

Joseph N. Myers

As you may have noticed, this issue of the *Mountaineer* is in your hands later than my typically-kept end-of-summer timeframe. My sister passed away in mid-August, and dealing with that put the newsletter project on hold temporarily.

In other news, in order for me to be a little bit less confused when checking my own personal email, there is now a new *Mountaineer* email address; this will also make it easier to transfer the "Mountaineer Editor" title to another individual if the need arises.

Please email MountaineerEditor@gmail.com with any articles, memories, events, or news items you'd like to add to an upcoming issue; **remember, this is the society's newsletter, not mine.** The *Mountaineer* would not exist without **your** continued submissions and support.

The *Mountaineer* is now available online, in the "Members Only" section of owrhs.org.

The restored Napanoch Railway Station

The beautifully restored station is open for visitors on the first Sunday, and the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. The hours of availability are 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM each day. The station is on the correctional facility grounds, and if you arrive on a different day or at a different time than when the station is open, the officers at the Napanoch prison will be visiting you.

Additional information is available at (845) 647-7400. Should anyone wish to volunteer at the station as a trained tour guide, please contact Mr. J. Rubin at this email address: jrubin@webtv.net

Archives report

Art Robb

A new computer has arrived and is being installed by Ron Vassallo and Jeff Otto. Along with the new scanner, the archives will have much better ability to reproduce documents and photographs.

A filled-in 1921 dispatcher's sheet has been donated and is available for study.

Jeff Otto again prepared a display for the 3rd Annual Convention - an excellent blown-up photo of a V-class locomotive in its final lettering scheme.

A few thoughts on a roadbed

Robert McCue

Walk down a mountain railroad right-of-way with its path winding its way through rock cuts and trestles high over mountain streams and it's easy to imagine sounds akin to the hammers of hell as giant steam engines snort out great masses of steam, smoke and sand as they battle the elements to get the cargo in their charge over the next summit. On the other side of the coin, a walk down a right-of-way meandering through rolling countryside can conjure up images of Gingerbread-style stations and mixed trains of freight, mail and milk cars pulled by smaller, veteran steam engines that were once the star performers of mainline service.

Mountain- or country-side, you could walk down the same right-of-way for twenty years and no two trips are ever going to be alike, whether it be for reasons of nature or otherwise. Fall covers as many relics of the past as it reveals. Deep snow reminds us of the railroad's battle against the elements. Spring lines the side of the roadbed with skunk cabbage and trout lilies. Summer brings out the hikers, the dog-walkers and the rollerbladers to the roadbeds that have been taken under the wing of the rails-to-trails movement. But those who have hiked the same trails for many years realize that as they change over time so does the right-of-way they thought they knew like their second skin. Storms reveal elements that may have been covered for years. And familiar buildings that had stood against the elements for a hundred years finally have to give way.

Walk a right-of-way for the first time and it will instantly give away as many secrets as it hides. Overgrown sections of track left intact out in the middle of nowhere. Mile markers and whistle posts that in their simple former purpose speak volumes of distance from railroad points long vanished. Finding the occasional boxcar shell that spent its last days in railroad service as a section house only to be left behind, ignored by the scrapper's torch when the rails were pulled, speaks volumes of generations that came before. In life the railroad's battle against the elements was relentless; in death the roadbeds left behind are still in a constant battle against the elements and progress. Some will be left intact as trails for all time while others will succumb to the needs of the next generation to come along. That the world must move on is a given, to move on without respecting what came before is a tragedy. No new highway, no housing project, no new mega-mall is built today on virgin land. Whether it was railroad bed or farmer's field, someone in the past put their sweat, blood and maybe even their life into that land to have something to pass onto the next generation. If you put a handful of the past in your hand, either farmer's sod or brick from an abandoned building, someone from the past is holding it with you.

Summer trails looking for O&W rails

Doug Barberio

Well, I have had a summer to remember. By that, I mean how little time I had for any activities, with my daughters working and needing Dad to chauffeur them throughout the day. If you recall the old Dunkin Donuts commercials, the man making the donuts finally opens the door to leave for work - only to see himself entering his home from having made the donuts!

First, I went to see good friend John Taibi at his Munnsville depot in late June. The gathering was very nice and it was a chance to speak to some friends and meet some new ones. I had the great pleasure to meet Bruce Tracy and Herb Trice. Bruce co-authored *When the Railroads Went to the Beach* with John Taibi. He has also contributed to some other works including *The Gangly Country Cousin* by Herb Trice - a book about the Lehigh Valley's Auburn Division. Does this ring a bell? Yes, a portion of this division - namely the Elmira, Cortland and Northern - runs on the NYO&M's former Auburn Branch. Also note that this branch line of the Lehigh Valley crosses the O&W at Sylvan Beach at the bridge over Fish Creek. It was great to have a chance to discuss with them the Lehigh Valley in the Finger Lakes region. I highly recommend this book and *Lehigh Valley Memories* by David Marcham. Much of this part of the Lehigh Valley is quite similar to the O&W Northern Division. Had I known that both of these gentlemen would be there I would have made sure my books were with me for them to sign!

On the return trip with Carl Ohlson, George Shammass and Joe Senese, we stopped at Bouckville, Hamilton, Earlville, Norwich and Lyon Brook to look for the remains of the O&W. Well, at Norwich we were looking at the DL&W depot and freight house. The next day as the three "Hardware Heroes" and I went to various antique dealers we were always near the former D&H main line. It was fun to see these three guys act just like me to run about to catch a photograph or two of the traffic going by. It may have been modern power, but that did not stop me from thinking it could be a Challenger or 4-8-4. Heck, I would have taken a lightning-striped RS3 or PA! On the back end of the trip we stopped at Cadosia and Fishs Eddy and rode the right-of-way to East Branch. We made our final stops at Cooks Falls and Roscoe before going our separate ways.

Lastly, Middletown Day was a very good success. Ray Kelly did a wonderful program entitled "Then and Now on the Middletown Branch from Cornwall to Burnside". Ray had a number of excellent images taken in the last few years along the line with contrasting views of the same locations from various times when the O&W was in service. John Taibi also did a fine program on the Railroads around Oneida. The O&W movies also were shown and that always gives you the feeling the NYO&W is alive and still running. My program on the Erie Main Line from Suffern to Port Jervis went well. I have to admit though that my show was not finished by day's end, so check out the Calendar in this issue of the *Mountaineer*. At the January and February society meetings I will try to run it again showing all the slides, as a number of them never made it to the big screen. The fall season is beckoning. Soon we will have a much easier time to follow the fall trails of O&W rails.

Events Calendar

Friday, October 3

Membership meeting program: O&W Northern Division - by John Taibi

Saturday, November 8

O&WRHS Annual Convention (more information below)

Sunday November 9th

Poughkeepsie Railroad Show - O&WRHS sales table will be present

Friday November 14

M&NJRHS meeting - 7:30 pm at the First Presbyterian Church on Roberts Street

Friday December 5th

Membership meeting program: New York Central Company movies, filmed by the late Fred Beach

Sunday December 7th

Albany Train Show: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center, Albany NY, just off of I-87.

Admission is \$5.00 for adults, children under age 12 free when accompanied by an adult.

For more information contact: Great Train Extravaganza, P.O. Box 544, Clifton Park, NY 12065 (514)-371-9164

Friday January 2nd

Membership meeting program: Erie, Suffern to Goshen - by Doug Barberio

Friday February 6th

Membership meeting program: Erie, Goshen to Port Jervis - by Doug Barberio

NOTE: All dates and times are subject to change. Please refer to the website (owrhs.org) and our Yahoo Discussion Group (<http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/owrhs/>) as the events draw closer in order to verify schedules and any changes.

ONTARIO & WESTERN RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

45th Annual Convention & Dinner

Saturday, November 8th, 2008

at

Orange County Community College Dining Hall

South Street & East Conkling Avenue,
Middletown, NY 10940

Admission, dinner included, \$32.00

Without dinner, \$27.00

Mail check by October 31, payable to **O&WRHS**, to:

O&WRHS c/o Allan Seebach

33 Route 303

Tappan, NY 10983

O&W collectibles, models, dioramas and photo displays.

Models, collectibles and prototype clinics.

Door prize, raffle, cocktail hour and dinner.

CONVENTION SCHEDULE

12:00 noon	OCCC Open for Registration At OCCC Dining Hall
12:30	<i>The O&W in "AV"</i> Power Point Program by Doug Barberio
1:30	<i>Modeling:</i> Mal Houck, Joe Bux, Bill Schneider, Blake D. Tatar, and others
2:30	<i>Laser Cut Kits and Model Photography,</i> Bill Schneider
3:00	<i>New O&W Movies:</i> Ron Vassallo
4:00	<i>Passenger Equipment Power Point Program,</i> Malcolm Houck
5:00	Displays Open Cocktail Hour - Cash Bar
6:00	Dinner
Announcements	
7:00	Awards
Dessert	
7:45	Displays Re-open, Informal discussion groups
8:30	Adjournment

RAFFLE PRIZES

HO SCALE MODELS - Donated by Allan F. Seebach, Jr. of the Old & Weary Car Shop

GRAND PRIZE –

Bachmann 4-8-2 “Heavy Mountain” locomotive lettered “NYO&W No. 455”. **\$225 value.**

2nd PRIZE –

Bachmann combination heavyweight coach and observation car, in O&W Green Scheme. **\$180 value.**

3rd PRIZE –

Stewart Hobbies F-3 A-unit No. 501. Super-detailed. **\$120 value.**

4th to 10th place prizes

Wood Chemical Industry, book by Dan Myers

“#451 with Plow”, framed and matted by Carl Ohlson

O&W in the Diesel Age, book signed by author R. Mohowski

The Long Life & Slow Death of the O&W, by William Helmer, 1st printing

The Final Years, by Krause & Crist

\$1000 NYO&W gold bond

1913 O&W rule book

DOOR PRIZE

“The Mountaineer on Iona Trestle” full-color print

...and a few surprises!

Registration Form

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____ Telephone # _____

E-mail_____

Is this your 1st Convention? yes / no

Tickets for Convention:

With dinner - \$32.00 each, x____

Without dinner - \$27.00 each, x____

Raffle fare (prices below) \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Ontario & Western Railway Historical Society, Inc.

Mail registration to: Allan F. Seebach, Jr. O&W Car Shop, 33 Route 303, TAPPAN, NY 10983

Please provide your phone number or email address for confirmation.

(You will not receive a snail-mail confirmation.)

RAFFLE TICKETS - *You don't have to be present to win.*

1 for \$3, 2 for \$5, 5 for \$10, 10 for \$18 - or all 24 on page for \$30

Mail or hand the ticket sheet in, along with your registration form. Fill out all information on paid-for tickets.

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