



THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 50 Number 1

MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM
Where "I've Been Working On the
Railroad" Becomes a Reality.

May
June
2017



At your service.....Engineer John Sciutto stands in the gangway as Student Fireman John Crawford is seated in the fireman's window seat of the 401, which is on layover at the Monticello station. After 40 years of railroad service as a conductor, John fulfills his dream of firing a steam locomotive.

Photo Courtesy Dale Jenkins

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**THE
OBSERVATION
PLATFORM**

The President



July 2017

As usual, there's been a lot of activity and improvements made in the past few months at the Museum. While there's no way I can cover all of them, here are a few highlights:

The demonstration interlocking and signal system at Stair Tower is approaching operation. This is a culmination of years of work and contributions, and should be an interesting and unique experience for our visitors and a useful operational tool for more complex train movements like Railroad Days. With the acquisition of the Duvall/Rambo house, we've moved the crew bunk facilities from the bottom floor of the office/archives building to the house, and repurposed the bottom floor as additional archive space. Ken Kane and Kirk Reynolds have continued to make good progress cataloging and organizing the archives, and have begun planning and utilizing the new downstairs space. 2016 was our biggest Polar Express year yet, with over 10,500 riders. Public support has continued to be incredibly strong for this event, and feedback from our customers is as always very positive. 2017 is our 10th year of PEX trains, and we have 30 runs scheduled. Over 5,000 coach tickets sold out in minutes when tickets went on sale the first Saturday in June. Looking forward, we are still looking for ways to increase capacity for the event. Acquiring and restoring new coaches, finding additional sources for "cast members", and other options are all being considered. PEX continues to be the most important source of operating income for the Museum, and as such we all need to do everything we can to continue to make it a success. Many thanks to all of you who have put in many thousands of hours of work on this event in the past 10 years.

The last few years have also featured continued physical growth of the Museum as we've continued to acquire various real estate; this has all been based on opportunities that have come up that we've been able to act upon due to our good financial position. In 2015 we acquired the VFW building next to the Wabash Depot, primarily to safeguard our ability to use it for Polar Express. In 2016 the old Duvall house by Nelson's Crossing went up for sale. The house and garage have been very useful, and we're able to use the grounds as a public area for events like Railroad Days. In addition, the Hodge Car track has been expanded and moved over to the grounds just east of the exhibit car, which is a much nicer and closer location than the previous one. In March 2017 we were able to acquire all the farmland by Camp Creek Yard and Nelson's Crossing (everything back to the trees) up to the air park. This includes the air park road, including the section by the Piatt County Museum facility. This was purchased to maintain a buffer around our facility and prevent any residential development from occurring there, as well as providing future expansion space. The property will continue to be farmed for the foreseeable future. Also, we were able to purchase the 21 acres of grass and trees alongside the Central Division mainline north of the IC Junction switch up to the houses by County Road crossing. In addition to being directly by our right-of-way, this area is the "post-North-Pole" part of our Polar Express trip and as such it benefits us to have control of it and prevent any future development.

Again, we were able to take advantage of these opportunities due to our good financial position and generous contributions. A large part of our organization's success and general stability is the fact that we own all our property, and with these purchases we're ensuring that we will maintain ownership and control of the area around our core facilities as well. The Museum continues to be in an excellent financial position, with good cash reserves and income, both from operating revenue and contributions. Due to the property purchases of the past few years, we do have some debt that we will be paying off moving forward, but compared to our yearly revenue our debt load is still quite low. Nevertheless we will be looking to reduce this as quickly as possible. Continued success and growth of Polar Express will be a key factor in allowing us to do this quickly. In conclusion, things are very positive for the Museum, and we are working on and finishing things that I genuinely believe many people never thought they'd see happen. Many thanks to everyone who is contributing; ultimately this is your organization, and I believe everyone should be proud of what we're accomplishing with it.

Brian Downing



**THE
BACK
SHOP**

By Kent McClure

Chief Mechanical Officer



Wabash F7A #1189 is in the back shop at the time of this writing receiving new windshield gaskets and windshield glass. The old glass, in addition to being badly scratched, was due for gasket replacement, and the left windshield had cracked along the bottom. With all the factors added together, we decided to get new glass for both sides. Paul Nelson has been cleaning up and repainting the steel that is under the rubber gasket to prevent future corrosion of that part of the body, something that was badly corroded, and mostly gone in the lower corners on the E8, hence our desire to take good care of the F7's, as it is still in good shape in those areas. 1189 is also undergoing a bi-annual air brake servicing and general inspection.

CN FPA #6789 has also underwent a bi-annual inspection and air brake servicing. It returned to service in time for the July 3rd fireworks train. Many thanks to Paul Nelson and Al Strange for their work in getting the locomotive ready for the fireworks trains.



IC GP-11 #8733 Paul Nelson has installed a cab fan to improve crew comfort in the summer months. He and Al Strange also repaired a badly rusted handrail stanchion by cutting out a portion of the front deck tread plate, needle scaling the rust away, removing the years of piled-on weld, and replacing that portion of the tread plate removed with new material, and reattaching the handrail stanchion. Paul also installed a "Head of train" device (HOT) MRM acquired. We have no plans to use "End of Train" devices (EOT's), but the HOT device also provides the engineer with a distance counter, as well as an accelerometer, both of which are handy things for train handling.

Southern steam locomotive #401 passed its federal annual inspection late in April, after much work by Doug Capuder, Travis Atchison, Lee Evans, Andrew Magosky, Andrew Wodziak, Lee Evans and Matt Kluge. They spent a couple of days cleaning out the front end, cleaning flues, and otherwise helping get all the little details of the annual inspection done.

The new Armstrong Oiler axle lubricators are working well. Well enough that we have also purchased two spares, and a pair for use in the lead truck cellars. The new Teflon seated check valve is functioning well, inasmuch as it doesn't leak, but the replaceable teflon seat does not hold up very well. An inspection of the valve after only seven operating days showed it to be getting fairly worn so a new one was installed to head off any problems while we work with a different material. As a reminder, the reason for experimenting with new seat materials is due to the need to regrind the bronze checks frequently through the season to keep them leak tight.



IC Diner 4110 is currently having body filler applied and sanded, as well as interior paint stripped and walls/ceiling cleaned as prep for repainting. Wire has been pulled for the electric heating system as well. Jeff Tillman swapped out the overhead steam heat coil for a new surplus Amtrak unit, which required far more fabrication and modification than we would have cared to have to do, but we did not have anything on hand that would fit or work any better. Jeff also took the opportunity to clean out the evaporator while the heating coil was out of the way. Jeff ran new 1" conduit under the car to carry wire for the heating system around battery boxes to new junction boxes used to distribute



Bruce Backus seam seals diner 4110 after the first application of body filler during Spring Fling.
Kent McClure photo



Kirk Reynolds, Dennis Slone, and Paul Bundy work at dry ice blasting aluminum trim, and residue from the chemical stripper.

Kent McClure photo

well. (Waukesha Ice Engines are a flat-head, propane fueled, four cylinder engine, driving a four cylinder Frigidaire refrigerant compressor.) These things are, while interesting as a unique method of making air conditioning on a passenger rail car, are generally an additional nuisance to maintain as an operational machine. No sooner do you fix a problem on the engine side of them, the compressor side will decide it wants some attention too. They require their own, on board fuel supply as well. (Not to mention the fuel being used on the power car to create the electricity to power the rest of the car.)

Mark Weckel, Jeff Tillman and Tylene Crouch stripped, cleaned, and reassembled the windows for the car, and the hallway windows were reinstalled to get some light into the hallway to assist in the work in that space. We re-used as much of the existing glass as we could, some of it still marked "ADLAKE", which likely means it is original to the car. Glass that was not responding to cleaning, or was beginning to de-laminate, was discarded and replaced with new material. Mark Weckel and Jeff Tillman also mounted 33 new electric heating elements in the dining room and hallway, along with the conduit that will carry the power to them.

the wiring to heating elements. He has also run two lengths of 2" conduit over the truck on the dining room end of the car for head-end-power cabling. That job turned into more than he wanted it to be too, but is now done!

4110 is also the impetus to create a new air conditioning condenser/compressor assembly which will fit in the space formerly occupied by the Waukesha Ice Engine, and look like it as well. This is requiring much work on a Waukesha frame, most of it so far by Jeff. It will also require new condensing coils. This effort will also allow a duplicate unit to be created to use on IC Coach 2612, replacing its troublesome Ice Engine as



Interior wall with chemical stripping applied.
Dale Jenkins Photo

IC Coach #2612 was due for air brake work this past winter, with all brake cylinders rebuilt, and intermediate brake pipe hoses replaced, as well as the truck-to-body hoses. This job was undertaken, along with the same work on IC Combine #892 by Doug Capuder, with the help of Bill Lygros, Andrew Magosky, Andrew Wodziak, Will Barbour, Lee Evans, and Matt Kluge, all of which are U of I students, or recent graduates. We're very pleased to have their help!



IC Combine #892 along with IC coach #2612 above, also underwent a full air brake servicing, with all brake cylinders rebuilt, fresh valves installed, and the old solenoid valve pack attached to the relay valve removed and blanked off. The solenoid pack was a relic relating to the car's past life with American Steel Foundry as a Brake Test Car, and were part of an electro-pneumatic braking system. We also removed some other surplus equipment that was no longer in use under the car. Many thanks to Doug Capuder and his above named crew for all their work!

Wabash Office Car #6 Rebuilt window shades for this car are on hand, but have not been reinstalled as yet. As part of Spring Fling this year, Lin Smith went through a set of marker lights MRM acquired for the car, rebuilding sockets, bead blasting the bodies, and installed new cords. They are complete, and installed on the car, bringing the car one step closer to complete as last used by the Wabash RR..

Thank you to all of you for your help with the maintenance and restoration of the equipment, it makes a big difference

Kent McClure

CMO





THE CREW

“The passenger ticket style joins Kay in longevity as serving the public from the very beginning of operation.”

KAY GOODLING: SENIOR TICKET AGENT

Within the Monticello Railroad Museum are individual groups of members that go about daily activities that make the museum function. These tasks range the broad spectrum from rebuilding a steam locomotive to manicuring the grounds. There are those who remain in the shadows to perform duties such as restoring railroad signals to those in the public eye as a conductor (complete with a rubber chicken).



The first direct contact a visitor to the museum will encounter is the ticket agent at Nelson Crossing depot. Efficiently handling assigned duties, the ticket agent conducts the transactions to sell the passenger tickets in a combination of adult and children, gift sales and answer the phone, all the while the line of pending passengers grows. Within this narrow band of members is a ticket agent whom has earned the coveted position “*Senior Ticket Agent*”: Kay Goodling.

A native of Champaign, Illinois, Kay joined the founding organization SPUR in the Fall of 1971, so her husband Ray could help work on steam locomotive no. 1, in downtown Monticello across from the Heritage Center. Ray’s interest was in steam operated equipment, in particular the Bates & Rogers steam crane. As well, her family was also involved as her son John helped Ray and daughters Annie and Cindy helped Kay. With acquisition of ground, the museum was organized and moved out to Duvall’s crossing (Nelson Crossing) there was just the right of way with no track, so Ray helped build the track. The first building on the property was a chicken coop with a pot belly stove and was dubbed the Inman Center.

On the first day of operation, a flat car had a band on it, people singing railroad songs, and guest speakers. When the train first started running in 1972, the track only went to Duvall crossing with no 1 pulling a caboos and later the Rock Island coach. It was during this time that a group of wives got together to help by selling tickets to buy coal for no. 1. This woman’s “auxiliary” consisted of Kay Goodling (Ray), Pricilla Scott (Tom), Earline Inman (Charlie) and Marla Young. Tickets were sold out of the baggage section of the Nickel Plate Road Rail-Post Office car, setting on no. 2 yard track. Inside, tickets, watch fobs, caps and patches were sold, in addition to a soda pop and candy machine. Access to the RPO was on wooden plank walkway, setting over muddy ground.

As the train operation expanded with the addition of more track on the former Illinois Terminal right-of-way, reaching the top of the hill at County Road, a siding was placed in service so the steam locomotive could run around the train. Because no. 2 track was now required to be clear to permit the run-around operation with the arriving train in Camp Creek Yard, the RPO was moved to the IT main line. Now setting on the IT main, south of the driveway the gift selection grew and a Nickel Plate baggage car was added to the consist to house the display car with member Dick Stair explaining the displays. To the north, across the driveway, was a Chicago & Alton car being used as a diner serving sandwiches.

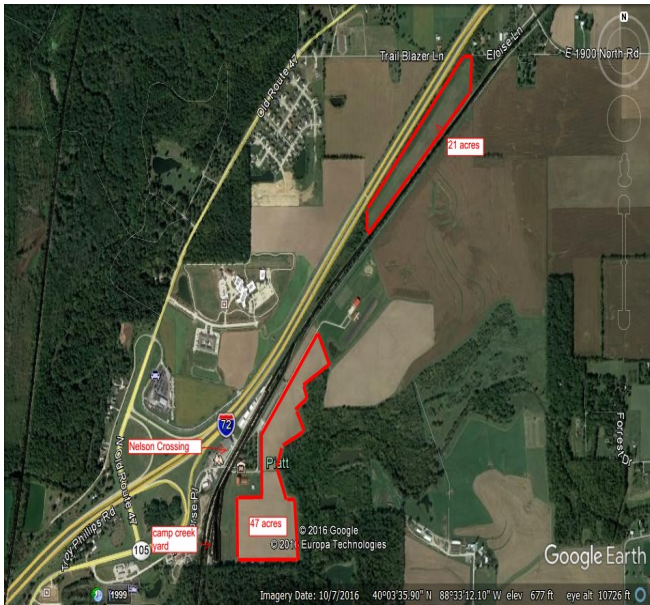
In 1980 the Deland depot was trucked into Nelson Crossing and the Rail Post Office car and baggage cars were moved to the area of the depot and continued being used as the ticket/gift shop and museum display cars. In time, the depot was placed in service with an expanded gift shop and ticket office. The passenger ticket style joins Kay in longevity as serving the public from the very beginning of operation, and continues today as *the* dedicated ticket agent.

(L C L *)

LESS THAN CARLOAD



PROPERTY PURCHASED



In the previous Second Section, we told the membership that the Railway Museum was the successful bidder on approximately 47 acres of farmland adjacent to the Museum. This farmland belonged to the late Scott Wiegel. On June 01, the Railway Museum purchased an additional 21 acres from Jake Lieb – a local farmer. This land is located between our tracks and I-72, just south of County road 1900 North. Several years ago, Mr. Lieb planted trees and grass on the land and it enrolled in a conservation program. The Museum intends to maintain the enrollment in this program, and maintain the trees and grass. The Board has also executed a cash rent agreement with Mr. Lieb to farmer the 47 acres for 2017. The attached photo, taken from Google Earth, shows these pieces of property highlighted in red. As the photo shows, these properties provide the Museum with the opportunity to expand our facilities and protect our Museum.

CROSSBUCK RESTORED

The former Illinois Terminal crossbuck that guarded the Nelson Crossing had stood as a silent sentry through the years, becoming totally weathered and void of any lettering. MRM member Mark Barnett has completely restored the sign to its original condition and once again it proudly warns travelers of approaching trains.



Dale Jenkins photo

2017 SCHOOL DAYS



Ted Lemen photo

School kids posed for a photo with the on-board crew of the School Days train on Tuesday, May 2. Students from all over Central Illinois rode the train, saw an Operation Lifesaver program and toured the exhibit cars under the trainshed. Each Spring the museum host School Days to area schools to offer the opportunity to a new generation to experience the fun of riding a train. History comes alive as a guided tour of the display cars explains what railroading is.

STAIR TOWER UPDATE

Right: Signal 14 is now assembled and standing in the air. This signal protects southward movements over the south exhibit lead switch. It is comprised of a pair of H5 searchlight signals recovered from Gibson City many years ago. Signal 14 is to the right of the Illinois Central 8733 .

Center: The model board is in place with lights installed and wired. Remaining work is to connect the model board to the signal system. The board lights indicates activity within the plant and the numbers identifies the signal and lever numbers.

Below: The upper semaphore has been completed restored and is ready to be placed in service in the upper right quadrant of the northbound ICRR main home signal of Stair Tower. Plans are to have both the upper and lower signals with lunar light in service by Railroad Days of 2017.

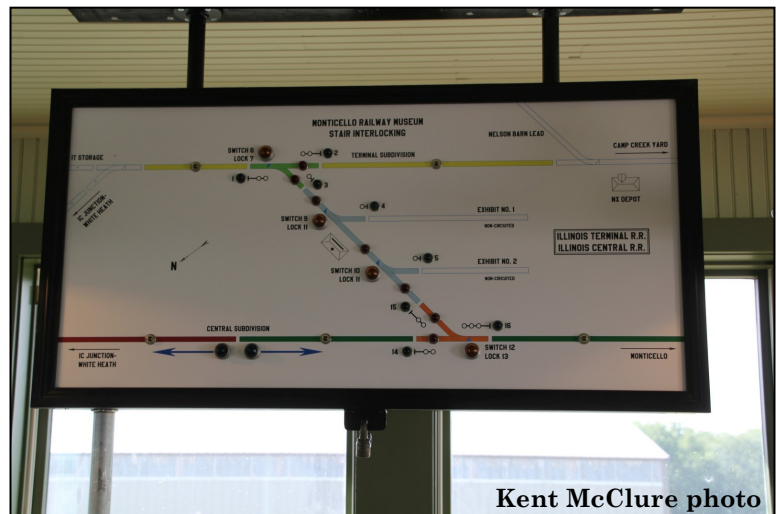
Work continues in the tower, recently Dave Marshall made adjustments to some of the mechanisms in the lever bed to resolve some binding issues and now the the levers are freed and moving smoothly. Dave and Syl Keller have also been working on the restoration of signal heads, hoods, and background targets.

Relay placement has begun in the tower and two of the three relay cases. Today these are placeholders to make sure we have adequate room for relays to develop the circuits needed to control the plant.

One of the next tasks is to purchase insulated joint material and develop some track circuits to enable the plant to function properly.



Ted Lemen photo



Kent McClure photo



Dale Jenkins photo



IC 4044 Update

Reinstallation of the locomotive air brake piping in the cab and the independent and automatic brake stands has been completed. Pressurizing the main reservoir with shop air found a few leaking connections. Most just required tightening, but a few proved to be more of a challenge. Kent ran a leak test on the system and it passed. The last access hole you see in the locomotive cab side has now been closed off and welded. The reconditioned cab heater on the fireman's side has been reinstalled. Once the new cab windshields have been installed, IC 4044 will be ready for its trip to town to be turned on the "Y". But first, 12 years accumulation of stuff under the locomotive must be dealt with.

NEW WINDOWS FOR DEPOT

It is a never ending task to maintain the building on the museum campus, and the Monticello Depot, being one of the oldest structures, requires a constant monitoring of its condition. Recently, new, modern bathroom windows were installed to replace the aging and well worn wooden windows. However because of the unusual shape and size, custom windows had to be ordered.





Above: The museum signal department recently received former Wabash searchlight-style signals from the Norfolk Southern, which is replacing the obsolete signals with the new led style signals.

Right: Brian Downing is testing the controls of the new addition to the equipment roster. The man-lift will serve in different functions in equipment restoration and building rehabilitation.

Below: The baggage men stand by to handle the chairs and coolers of attendees that will board the Fireworks Special to travel to IC Junction to view the fireworks program from Lodge Park.



Right: The concrete floor has been poured for the new shop complex inside the car storage building. The track has been extended into the shop area for convenience of working on a piece of equipment.



MONTICELLO
RAILWAY MUSEUM
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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES



STEAM SCHEDULE

[401 in Steam](#): Ride behind our restored 1907-vintage steam locomotive!
July 15th & 16th August 19th & 20th October 21st & 22nd

2017 REGULAR SCHEDULED EVENTS

Throttle Time: You can be the engineer of our train! Saturday, November 4 and Sunday, November 5. Many Saturdays from April 30 through October 29.

Railroad Days: Come enjoy UNLIMITED rides on our vintage passenger and freight trains and motor cars running on our former Illinois Central and Illinois Terminal trackage, enjoy kids' games and more! Saturday, September 16 and Sunday, September 17.

The Polar Express™: Read along with the story as the train makes its round-trip journey to the North Pole. Dates: To be announced by the end of April.

Lunch with Santa on the Train: Enjoy a visit with Santa Claus while eating a kid-friendly sack lunch. This event is hosted by the Monticello Chamber of Commerce. Saturday, December 2 and Sunday, December 3.