



THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 48 Number 2

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

November
December
2015



With a wink and a wave, Santa, standing on the steps of the Stair Tower sends a Christmas greeting to the passengers aboard the passing Polar Express eagerly awaiting for him to board the train for the classic visit.

Photo Courtesy Dave Berndt

THE CONSIST

Volume 48 No. 2

November-December

Observation Platform

A Glimpse into 2016 3

The Back Shop

CN FPA-4 No 6789 4
 MILW NW-2 No 1649 4
 WAB F7A No 1189 4
 SOU No 401 4
 RI No. 2541 4
 BOCT No C1735 4
 GATX 7297-36105 4
 Diner IC 4110 5
 Sleeper "Blackstone" 5
 Diner IC 4112 6
 RPCX 1827 6
 Wabash 2824 6

The Crew Board

Meet Stan Rankin 7

LCL Less Than Carload

Coach IC 2612 9
 Urbana Train Show 9
 Railroad Days 10

Arrivals & Departures

The MRM 50-Year History
 Book Announcement 12

John Sciutto President
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 Donna McClure Secretary
 Donna McClure Registered Agent /Com. Affairs

DIRECTORS

Travis Atchison Tylene Crouch Brian Downing
 Neal Grant Dale Jenkins Ken Kane
 Jon Roma Eric Schaffer Matt Weaver

Crew Caller: Jon Roma caller@mrym.org

Membership Secretary: Donna McClure donna.mcclure@mrym.org

(H) 217-762-2813 620 W. Main, Monticello, IL 61856

Ticket Agent- Throttle Time Coord: John Downing (H)
 217-762-9357 POB 69 White Heath, IL 61884
 john.downing@mrym.org

2nd Section-Yella Board Editor: Dale Jenkins
 (H) 217-423-ITRR 264 Victoria Ave. Decatur, IL 62522
 dalejenkins@sbcglobal.net

Chief Mech

Officer & Supvr Loco Engineers:
 Kent McClure (H) 217-762-2813
 620 Main St. Monticello, IL 61856
 kent@mrym.org

Gift Shop Managers:
 Syl Keller, Doug Butzow

Track Superintendent: Tom Hatchard
 7000 Jamieson Apt 1W St. Louis, MO 63125
 (H) 314-638-3958

Travis Atchison Supt. Of Transportation
 507 E. Washington St Monticello , IL 61856
 (H) 217-473-1782 travis.atchison@mrym.org

General Manager: Syl Keller
 POB 153, Carlock, IL 61725
 (H) 309-376-3361 © 217-493-1688

Supervisor Loco Engineers: Tim Crouch
 POB 92 White Heath, IL 61884
 (H) 217-762-7428 tcrouch@mrym.org

Signal & Communications: Neal Grant
 6 Carrollton Estates Mattoon, IL 61938
 (H) 217-258-8258
 neal.grant@mrym.org

Curator: Ken Kane

Advertising: Ted Lemen
 i_jeanx@yahoo.com



**THE
OBSERVATION
PLATFORM**



A Glimpse Into 2016

John Sciutto
President

December 2015

As we start the New Year, our thoughts are with museum member David Lawrence and his family. David suffered a very serious fall in early December while taking down decorations after our Polar Express event. David is a retired Champaign firefighter who has become actively involved at the museum over the past several years volunteering at various events as well as helping to set-up and tear-down Polar decorations as well as helping at the North Pole. His most satisfying contribution has been playing Santa on the Polar Express. We send David our collective thoughts and prayers on his continued recovery.

2016 is the 50th anniversary of the Monticello Railway Museum. Ted Lemen has taken the lead on preparations for celebrating the anniversary this year. At the December 2015 Board of Directors meeting, Ted made a presentation to the Board for compiling and printing a special 50th anniversary book for the membership. This project was unanimously approved. The custom printed book will feature a chronology of events and stories at the museum along with representative photographs. The book will be bound and consist of 40-50 pages. The book project is targeted for completion by Railroad Days 2016.

Additional anniversary planning is underway for the Annual Meeting in April and Railroad Days in September. Ted Lemen is planning special guest speakers for the annual meeting program. Bill Crisp is pursuing several ideas for inclusion in Railroad Days this year. Additional information and announcements regarding upcoming events will be sent the membership when confirmed.

Polar Express continues to be a phenomenon as far as popularity and growth at the museum and planning continues for the 2016 event.

The museum recently took delivery of 2 additional cars that were generously donated to the museum by the Pacific Railroad Society in San Dimas, Ca. Illinois Central dining car #4110 (Shadrach Bond) and Gulf Mobile and Ohio Pullman "Timothy Blackstone" were delivered by rail to the museum.

I have had numerous members asked: Why does the museum needs 2 dining cars and another yet another Pullman car? Both cars are ideal for our target of original Central Illinois railroad equipment. Additionally, the museum was seeking the 48-seat dining car as far back as 2000. At that time, the Council Bluffs was donated instead of the dining car. Both of these cars are in phenomenal condition, with virtually all original interiors intact. The primarily reason on condition is the care they received in California from members of the Pacific Rail Society and because they have been stored in California climate for over 35-years. The dining car will be a major revenue producer for the museum primarily at Polar Express and is planned to be used during the 2016 Polar Express. The premium "deluxe" and "First class" service our customers want are facilitated with our dining cars. For example, the revenue of just 1 dining car during Polar Express exceeds the entire revenue stream of 3-4 years of *Ghost Train*, revenue, alone. Additionally, the museum had significant revenue in 2015 from numerous charter trains using existing dining car #4112 and business car #7. Addition of a 2nd dining car will allow additional seating capacity for larger group outings. The Timothy Blackstone will be painted back in GM&O paint scheme and placed on the exhibit line replacing Pleasant Valley which is in need of much mechanical work and paint.

The 2016 operation season will be here before you know it. Only weeks remain until the annual meeting, spring rules class, throttle time and opening day. Come out and join us in another year of "Where I have been Working on the Railroad Becomes a Reality".



**THE
BACK
SHOP**

By Kent McClure

Chief Mechanical Officer

CN FPA-4 #6789 was out of service part of the season for body work, and was returned to service in time for the Christmas events. Lube oil was also changed this past December, and Paul Nelson and Larry Cardoza have begun more body work for this winter, starting by pulling the lower batten strips off the right side of the carbody, and cleaning them up for re-use. The small C-channel they attach to will have to be replaced for the whole length of the engine room due to corrosion.

This loco suffered a blown oil filter cover gasket this past December, which was corrected by removing the sharp edge from the gasket follower on the lid of the housing. The edge had become razor sharp from years of the lid opening and closing, slowly honing the edge as it scraped by the edge of groove it resides in. This sharp edge allowed the 80 psi oil pressure (ALCO spec.) to push the gasket up against this sharp edge, and simply sliced off the side of it, allowing oil to escape the housing. After taking that sharp edge off the follower, it appears to have cured the leaking from this source.

MILWAUKEE ROAD NW2 #1649 was back in service this past season, with only routine maintenance done. It is currently due for air brake work, so will be out of service until this is completed.

Wabash F7A #1189 performed reliably all season, and was subject to mostly routine maintenance this past summer. It is due for an oil change per the latest oil analysis, which will be done this spring.



Art Purchase Photo

Southern steam locomotive #401 has operated this past season without issues of note. The last annual inspection required removal of part of the firebrick to access the flexible staybolts in the backhead for testing. This was done with no issues found, and new brick rammed up and cured in time for the federal steam test. We also took the opportunity, while working in the firebox, to increase the total area of combustion intake air. This entailed removing the "air hopper/damper" on the bottom of the firepan, and opening up the bottom of the firepan, and building a new air hopper with two dampers instead of one. This was a success, allowing freer steaming, and much less drumming of the fire. It still seems a further increase in combustion air area would help, but to get there, will require more extensive firepan modifications which will not be done this winter due to other priorities.

Rock Island Commuter car #2541: Jeff Tillman removed and replaced approximately 30 feet of steel steam heat radiation in the car this past summer. The previous season a hole had opened up in the radiation on one side of the car. We had material on hand previously removed from a baggage car which fit this use perfectly. We also had to replace an under-car regulator due to a blow of steam in the old one. It appears simply age and mostly corrosion of the casting have created a situation that is no longer repairable so replacement was the only option.

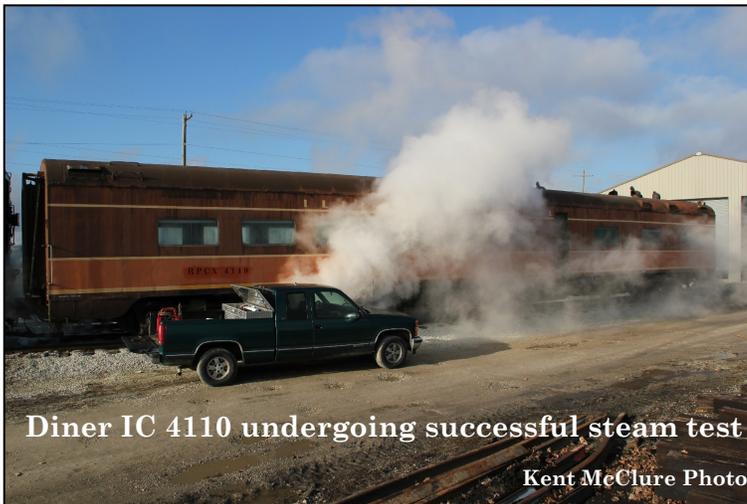
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B&O Chicago Terminal transfer caboose: This past summer, the B&O bobber caboose restoration was completed by Paul Bundy, Dennis Slone, Eric Schafer, Mark Weckel, Syl Keller, Brian Jones, and Dave Heyn. The car was lettered by Dwight Jones, a noted B&O historian, and we sincerely thank him for his assistance in making sure this car was correctly lettered. The car has been placed on display in Nelson Barn. We have also looked over the air brakes on the car ordered some parts, and if time permits will work it over with the possibility of some limited service during Railroad Days.



Kent McClure Photo

The two 20's vintage tank cars, GATX 7297, and what we believe to be GATX 36105 donated by ADM some years back, are still in the shop with work ongoing. Dennis Slone and Paul Bundy are the primary leaders on this project. They have been fitting new white oak lumber between the tanks and car frames, and cutting/fitting new running boards. The lumber was sourced from Craig Willenborg, of Heartland Hardwoods Inc., of Effingham. Very good progress is being made on this project. After the timber is seasoned and cut/drilled/shaped as required to fit the cars, it will be sent off for creosote treatment at the same firm from which we purchase our crossties. Final paint schemes of each car have not yet been determined, but research is ongoing.



Diner IC 4110 undergoing successful steam test

Kent McClure Photo

IC Diner 4110 and GM&O sleeper Timothy B. Blackstone both arrived from California in December, but due to delays in Decatur and Monticello, the Blackstone did not arrive on our property until the 19th of January. The diner was nearly immediately ensconced in our car shop with restoration work starting with a cursory inspection of the main steam conduit. The conduit was in very good condition, so we re-applied the steam couplings to the car, and tested the steam system with steam supplied by our steam generator car. The main conduit is tight, with one trap needing repair, and one pressure regulator requiring a new diaphragm. The only other issue noted was a leak in the hallway radiation condensate return under the car, which appeared to be in a reasonably accessible location for repair. The car was heating as it

should have while on steam, with no interior leaks. All this testing was to determine what work would need to be done to make the car serviceable for Polar Express of 2016. The next test was of the genemotor, then installing temporary wiring to operate the car's lighting system at 120 volts. The genemotor did work, but has a rather obnoxious vibration, so it was determined we will utilize a transformer/rectifier arrangement to operate the 64 volt equipment in the car, namely the ventilation system and heat control. The Museum BOD has set budgeted for the initial restoration of this car, that amount being what the car will net in one season of Polar Express service. Other work has also now begun, with windows coming out for rework or outright replacement, and electrical work ongoing. Research into seat recovering is also underway, as the seat cushions are shot, and the upholstery material is starting to get "sticky".

The Blackstone will be stored indoors shortly, but for now is outside the engine house so it may be seen by those who come by. This car was inadvertently moved from Kansas City to Decatur with the hand brake applied. This, unfortunately, badly flat-spotted both axles on the handbrake-end of the car. Also unfortunate, but part of the risk of moving things like this, is the contract used when moving passenger cars has the owner liable for this sort of damage regardless of cause, so we're stuck with it. I will cut them some slack, as the trap and vestibule doors on the handbrake side of the car had gotten closed enroute, likely by someone hitching a ride

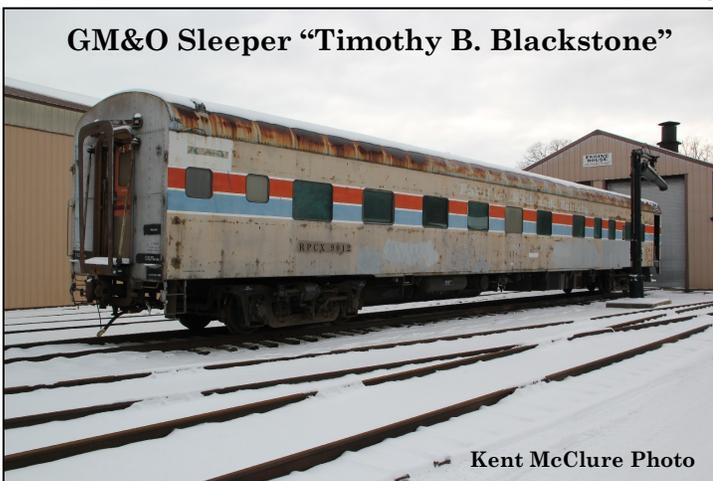


Interior Diner IC 4110

Kent McClure Photo

and not wanting to be seen. That made it really hard for a carman to see the handbrake at all, particularly since they are not familiar with this kind of stuff. Fortunately, both axles have fat wheels with plenty of material for grinding/turning. We have grinding shoes on hand, and it'll just take some time to grind them out. This car will require some body work before painting can be done, not to mention stripping of the current paint that is on the car. We will also want to do some careful sanding on the car prior to stripping, to see if the original paint is still under there, as it may be the only match we can find for the GM&O colors, or would at least be a test against what we come up with elsewhere. This car is in very good condition inside, though like most of this vintage, the seating has all become hard due to the foam cushions deteriorating.

GM&O Sleeper "Timothy B. Blackstone"



Kent McClure Photo



Kent McClure Photo

IC Diner 4112 has been in service for several charters this past season, as well as one while the car was at Decatur. The latter was a dinner provided by NS to about 15 NS mechanical department employees who have been working on locomotive modification projects at Decatur. They were impressed with the car, with the local agent and Superintendent quizzing John Sciutto if they could charter this car for other events/dinners, both on or off NS property.

The car has worked well, particularly after Brian Downing and John Sciutto solved the problem with the stove and kitchen ventilators not turning around until about 40 mph, causing the stove gasses to be forced down the stove stack and out of the fire box into the kitchen when reversing direction. This was promptly dubbed "Angry Stove Syndrome" by Bruce Backus. This was even a problem at Polar Express speeds (about 5 to 10 mph.) After Brian and John got done with their repairs, the ventilators swing around in the slightest breezes. The only other issue we experienced with this car was a broken upper diaphragm spring, which was replaced when found.

RPCX 1827, aka Pocahontas: Jeff Tillman installed the new window shades for this car this past summer which was a big help. The shades were rebuilt with new rollers, curtains, cables and shoes, and cleaned up aluminum parts, all done by Adlake of Elkhart, IN., the original manufacturer of them.

We also had a problem with the car after the first week of Polar, that being one of the blower wheels in the overhead AC/Heat blower began to disassemble itself, requiring a rush job of pulling the old one out of there, and getting a replacement installed before the next weekend. What was in the car was something out of a Grainger catalog, not a railroad grade blower assembly. We fortunately had a spare three phase railcar blower of the correct rating on the shelf, and it bolted right in. (Thanks Bruce Backus!) The transition boot from the blower to the evaporator was rotten, so that had to be made new as well. Much thanks to Charlie Inman for the batch of canvas he brought in a couple of years ago, as that was the perfect boot material for this project. As noted above, the new blower was a three phase unit, while what had been in the car was a pair of single phase blowers. So, this required also changing the electrical side of things to work correctly. It never seems to be easy, but one can't complain too much when the main component drops right in and bolts up!

Wabash Caboose 2824: The Wabash Historical Society has made great progress on caboose 2824, with this car being backdated to pre-NW, pre-radio paint and interior layout. They have had several work sessions to recreate all the things that were missing inside the car from the era they want it to represent. In some cases they have only photos to work from. This will be a very nice car for display when complete. The exterior was finally finished in new red/white with blue lettering/logo, silver roof, yellow handrails and flat red/brown for the trucks/end platforms. Clear coat topped all but the flat red/brown. It is currently in the barn in the yard as they complete their interior work. If we can get the time to do some truck work, it will also be a nice car for train service.



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Many thanks for all the help of all of you involved in the maintenance and restoration of the equipment, it would not happen if you were not here!

Kent McClure

Chief Mechanical Officer



**THE
CREW
CALLER**

STAN THE ‘RAIL’ MAN

“We encourage younger people to join as this is where the future of the museum is at as we are getting up in age “.
Stan Rankin



Stan “The Railroad Man” Rankin

The growth of the Monticello Railway Museum depends on the individual contribution of talent of its members. One such member is found in the contributions of Stanley Rankin. Stan was born in 1934 in the Burnham Hospital Urbana, Illinois, and is a lifetime resident of Champaign. In 1957 he graduated from the University of Illinois with two degrees: one in management and the other in accounting. After graduation he went to work for the U of I in a business capacity in the building programs, which included the

management of support services with the opening of the domed stadium: Assembly Hall. His last major project was in assisting with the logistics to bring online the Super Computer in 1988.

A lifetime railfan of electric interest, Stan enjoyed railroading, and as a youth of age 9, he lived a block and a half from the Illinois Central Railroad main line where he and his buddies would go down to the Green Street overpass to watch streamlined trains pulled by steam locomotives pass by. However, his real interest was with the electric cars, and was always fascinated by the Illinois Terminal, where he would take his bicycle to the station, and using the timetable schedule, he could coincide with the arriving trains. His great grandfather MacLeod help built the C&EI shops in Villa Grove, and managed the inspection of track on the Peoria Decatur & Evansville (predecessor to the Illinois Central) between Decatur to Evansville. His grandfather MacLeod was Illinois Central General Superintendent from Marion to Cairo, Illinois.

It was H. George Friedman whom worked in the same building as Stan that would go to the Illinois Railway Museum at Union, Illinois on weekends to run streetcars. In 1990, he invited Stan to go with him as a car host, which eventually would lead to certification as a conductor and then a motorman. In 1992, with retirement in hand, he would leave Champaign at 5 AM every Tuesday and drive 204 miles each way; between Memorial Day to Labor Day. While on duty, he was not only responsible to operate the streetcars and interurbans, but oversee the train dispatching, manage the ticket sales, book store, gift shop and concessions. At the end of the day, he would put the cars away and return to Champaign, completing a 408 miles round trip. In 2015, he was a 25 year member of the IRM and proud of his operating record as a motorman to have never bent a pole or have a derailment. The weekly trek was starting to take its toll on both him and his vehicle and the conductor he worked with retired, which would all contribute to the decision to retire. *Continued page 8*



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Because his dedication was with IRM, the Monticello Railway Museum was not of an interest at the time, but with his passion for trains still strong, the Monticello Railway Museum became a viable alternative. On visits to the museum, the welcoming atmosphere of the members and the invitation to join would lead to his involvement in 2002, noting that the distance of 44 miles vs. 408 miles was much more accommodating. Ideally, he was always available for service, particularly during the week for school days, charter runs, taking tours through the display cars, and talking about the museum itself. He enjoyed being a

conductor as he likes people and enjoy visiting with them. "To be a car host or a conductor, you have to like people. If not, you are in the wrong field" was the vision that Stan holds for that position. He notes with interest that passengers come from a long distance from other states to ride. "There is a difference of having to go to work every day, and doing something that you enjoy and that is what this museum offers" is an observation that Stan often refers to.

Stan would serve on the board of directors for two terms (six years) and is proud that he helped usher in the Polar Express program. He helped inaugurate the railroad program to help Boy Scouts to obtain the railroad merit badge. As a member of the Boy Scouts for 60 years, he worked with the Boy Scouts to host the Eagle Scout awards program on the property. The motorcars on the property did not have a dedicated facility for storage or they were left outdoors. He wanted to donate his motorcar "Casey Jones", but wanted it to be housed. He would work with a construction company to build a building with doors on one side for storing the fleet of motorcars. Due to his efforts, the motorcar building was named the Rankin Building. The Wabash office car no. 6 was offered to the museum for a substantial amount of money, but the museum was not in a financial position to meet the offer, and counter-offered at non-damaging budget. To the surprise of everyone, the offer was accepted. However the car could not move by rail on its own wheels and would require cranes to load the railcar on a flatcar. Once again, Stan stepped in with monetary assistance to make the car become a reality for the museum and was further instrumental in the restoration of the car. The car was built in 1911 for the Wabash Ry. and used as a parlor car until 1929 when it was brought to Decatur and steel plating was applied over the wood. The car would go into executive service for use by the Treasurer and was also used as a wine and dining car to promote on line customers. When passenger service was discontinued the car was taken out of service and sold to a private party. The car was painted in the Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range paint scheme and named the "Windy City" to be used for traveling on the DM&I.

Stan makes the observation that we are a group of volunteers who work together to do whatever needs to be done to make it work and whether you are the president or a brand new member, everyone makes it worthwhile and encourage others to have a very enjoyable railroad experience. The friendliness, the cooperation, the family atmosphere all contribute to attract the younger interests. "We encourage younger people to join as this is where the future of the museum is at as we are getting up in age, by giving them a responsibility by teaching them what they need to learn by experiencing it firsthand. The museum's success, in part, is welcoming our visitors and offer them a friendly atmosphere".

Stan has been very instrumental in structures on the property becoming a reality and he notes that one building that is missing is a pavilion: a memorial shelter (with a ceiling) with a couple of picnic tables, power, and water. The structure would be open to the public and have a display board listing the names of those members in memorial. He beams with pride when he tells someone that he is indeed part of a growing, world-class railroad museum.

Dale Jenkins, Editor



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(L C L*)

LESS THAN CARLOAD



In 1995, the Monticello Railway Museum acquired Illinois Central 2612 from the Wisconsin and Calumet Railroad to provide additional passenger capacity for the Norfolk Southern Christmas Train. 2612 arrived in basically serviceable condition, but looked rather the worse for wear. Her exterior paint job was in rough condition, and her interior was not much better, with paint peeling like banana peels off the lower walls, and seats which left gold colored powder on the floor every time someone sat on the cushions. With only a couple of weeks to get her looking more pre-

sentable before the Christmas train, Paul Yoos took several gallons of black house paint and rolled a plain but clean coat of black paint on the exterior. I tackled the interior. The weather was cold, and I had no way to heat the inside of the car besides Kerosene heaters. I peeled off all the loose paint that I could. That was all the time I had for preparation. There were places where the paint had peeled off to bare metal and it really needed to be primed, but it was too cold for oil based paint to dry. So I bought the very best quality acrylic house paint I could buy and painted the interior of the car with house paint to match the green and beige already in the car.

Since that time we have made improvements to the car. We have since sand blasted and re-painted the exterior in proper IC stream line colors, and we have re-upholstered the seats, but that same hastily applied coat of paint is the paint you have seen on 2612's interior ever since.

Last Christmas I took note of how shabby the coaches are looking, especially in light of how great 4112 looks. We decided that between 2920 and 2612, 2612 was more in need of a face lift. So this spring I began stripping paint off the fluted stainless steel trim, and sanding and scraping the walls and ceiling in the passenger compartment. There is paint on aluminum trim on the overhead rack and on all the aluminum window trim. I still haven't gotten it all off. I found a cream color that had been under one of the speaker covers, so I could be fairly certain that was an Illinois Central color, and not a color applied by the Wisconsin & Calumet. That is the color I matched for the interior. So when our customers see 2612 this Christmas, she will have a clean fresh coat of paint to present for Polar, Lunch with Santa, and Norfolk Southern.



Art Purchase photo

All..Abboard...and AWAY!!!!

On March 14-15, 2015, The Monticello Railway Museum participated in in the Midwest Central Model Railroad Club annual train show held at the Lincoln Square Village, Urbana, Illinois. In addition to the handcar being a centerpiece, the Hodge Cars provided the hands on experience for the young rail enthusiast to experience the thrill of riding the rail at full speed.

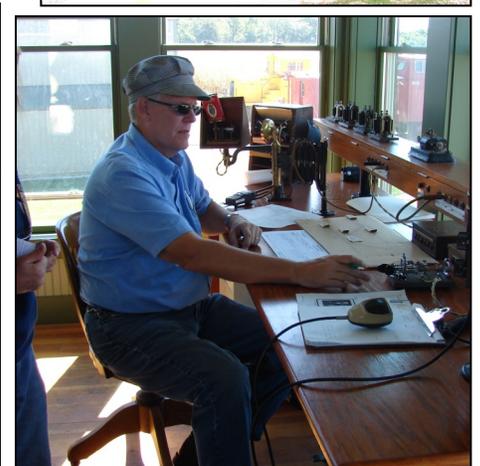


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Railroad Days
September
19th—20th
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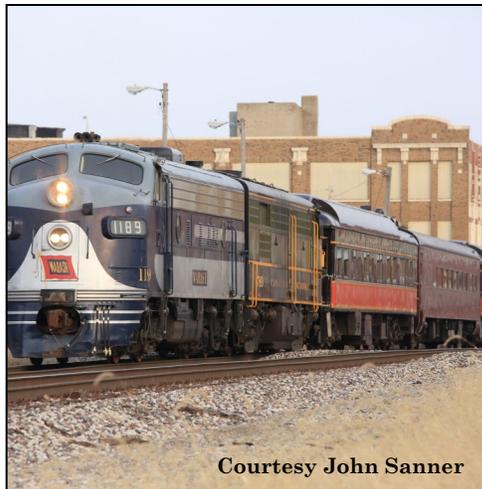
Railroad Days has something for everyone!



Polar Express

November 14th, 20th
21st, 27th 28th, 29th
December 4th-5th

Dave Berndt Photos



Courtesy John Sanner



**MONTICELLO
RAILWAY MUSEUM
P O BOX 401
MONTICELLO, ILLINOIS 61856**

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM



ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM 50-YEAR HISTORY BOOK TO BE PUBLISHED

At its December 2015 meeting, the museum's board of director's agreed to produce a soft-bound book about the museum's 50-year history, with release scheduled during Railroad Days, September 17th-18th. While some details are pending, it will likely be a 40-page edition in black and white, with an additional eight pages of full color photos in the center.

The book will have several sections that mark the milestones of the museum from its start on a steam excursion from St. Louis to Hannibal, Missouri in 1966 through its current status. The early years will cover the museum's history through 1971, with the next section covering the beginning in 1972 of train operations following the repairs made to the museum's first steam locomotive. Another section will begin with the museum's acquisition in 1987 of the Illinois Central trackage that paralleled the museum's original Illinois Terminal right of way. The following section will review the acquisition and repair of museum's rolling stock and locomotives, buildings and grounds through 2000, with a section reporting on the museum's historical restoration of Southern No. 401 and the amazing growth and expansion during the most recent years, as more equipment was restored and the new car barn and Stair tower were built. A final memorial section will recall those who labored during the first 50 years but no longer are with us.

A committee is currently researching the history and writing text for the book but needs your help. With a proposed copy and photo deadline of April 9, 2016 (the date of the museum's Annual Meeting), we are asking members with photos they think should be included in the history to bring them to the meeting so they can be considered for publication in the book. We are also asking anyone who would like to write a couple of paragraphs about the folks in our memorial section to do so, since it is not possible for the committee members to know each of those individuals personally. These write-ups or photos can be brought to the Annual Meeting or sent to committee chairman Ted Lemen at: i_jeanx@yahoo.com.