



## **Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society**

### **LINES WEST – BUCKEYE REGION CHAPTER**

**\*\*\*\* Bulletin No. 2020-01 February 2020 \*\*\*\***

#### **February 2020 Chapter Meeting:**

The Next Lines West meeting will be held on **Sunday, 23 February 2020, 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm at the Hilltop Branch Library –**

**511 South Hague Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio**

The library opens at 1:00pm. The business meeting will start at 1:30pm.

The meeting program will be presented by **Bill Brubach**. He will be presenting a program on one of his favorite railroad branch lines, *The B&O Shawnee Branch*.



#### **Bring your models, photos and artifacts**

There will be space to display models, modeling projects and artifacts. Bring your modeling efforts, finished or in progress, for display.

## **News from The Lines West – Buckeye Region Chapter**

### **Chapter Election**

The Chapter election was held at the December 2019 meeting with the following officers elected and installed for 2020.

President – Al Doddroe

Vice President – Bob Flores

Secretary – Jim Kehn

Treasurer – Dick Briggs

### **PRRT&HS Annual Meeting**

The 2020 PRRT&HS Annual Meeting will be held May 14-16, 2020, in State College, PA. For more information visit [http://www.prrths.com/conventions/PRR\\_Annual.html](http://www.prrths.com/conventions/PRR_Annual.html) .

The 2021 Annual Meeting will be held in Columbus. The Chapter officers are already immersed in planning for 2021.

### **Future Newsletter Articles and photographs**

We are always on the lookout for newsletter articles and photographs!

Do you have the results of your research on some aspect of the Pennsylvania Railroad, its subsidiaries or successors that you can share? If so, please get in touch with Al Doddroe or Jim Kehn and they will help you get your work in print for our members to enjoy.



Along the B&O Shawnee Branch with Buckeye Lake to the right.

# Sanborn Maps

By Jim Kehn

It cannot be denied that the internet has changed life dramatically. At home on your computer you can search the world for information. For railroad buffs there is a ton of information and pictures floating out there in the ether just waiting to be explored.

One of my favorite passions is to search Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. Sanborn was a company that began after the Civil War and would map out a city or town showing types of buildings and the names of businesses existing at that time. They would come back to that municipality around every ten years and update things. Included would be railroads and their facilities, trackage, and spurs. It is really a time capsule of how communities grew back then. Listed are many companies and businesses that are long gone. Ever hear of strawboard? It was a form of cardboard, so I'm told. There were lots of companies that produced it and they were usually rail served.

Large cities, such as Columbus, have hundreds of maps and you can follow the changes, in say, the Union Depot area, where there once was a PRR freight house just west of High Street.

Don't neglect the smaller cities such as Newark or Piqua. I just discovered that the PRR once had a turntable near downtown Newark, and Piqua had PRR and B&O tracks running all over the place serving a variety of industries, including one that made marble dust.

In Ohio you can get Ohio maps by logging onto the Ohio Public Library network at:

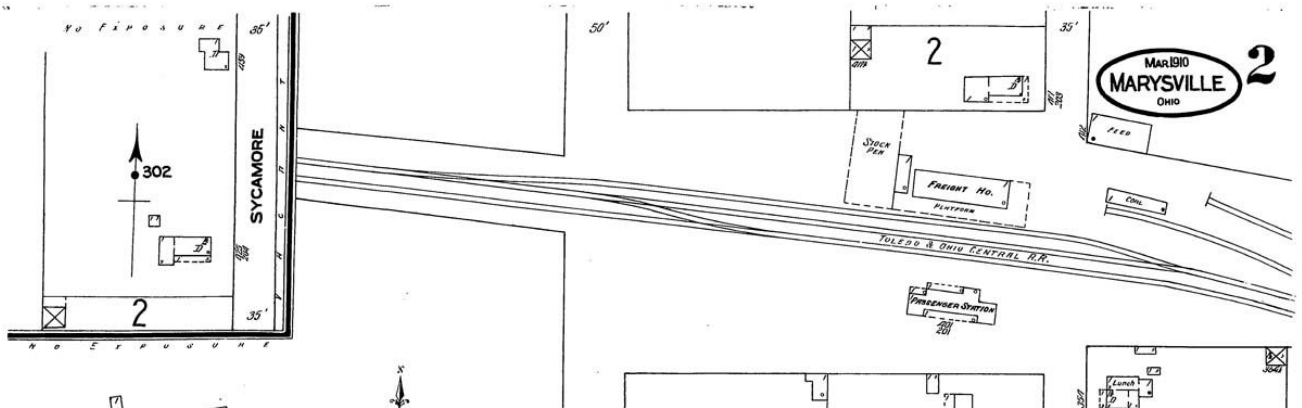
<http://ohioweblibrary.org/sanborn>

You will need a valid library card number to log in.

For other states you will just have to search for their sites. The Library of Congress, I believe, has all the states' maps.

Many municipalities still have the original maps in books (and they were in color) and include areas updated and corrected then pasted in the books.

Happy exploring!



Sample Sanborn Map.



## Remembering Ron Widman



The late Ron Widman, the Lines West-Buckeye Region Chapter newsletter editor, was a retired professional photographer. We remember Ron through his photographs of Pennsylvania Railroad bridges around Columbus Ohio. The reader will appreciate that Ron could be fearless in pursuit of a good bridge photo. He also had the professional's eye for composing a good photograph. The following photos were taken in 2013.



The PRR Little Miami bridge across the Scioto River in Columbus, Ohio. The camera is looking west toward LM Tower. The C&O (CSX) bridge is to the right.

This bridge was originally three spans long. After the great Flood of 1913 the Scioto River bed was widened necessitating the addition of two spans on the west end of the bridge.



The PRR Little Miami bridge across Spring Street looking west. The grassy field once held the Ohio State Penitentiary.

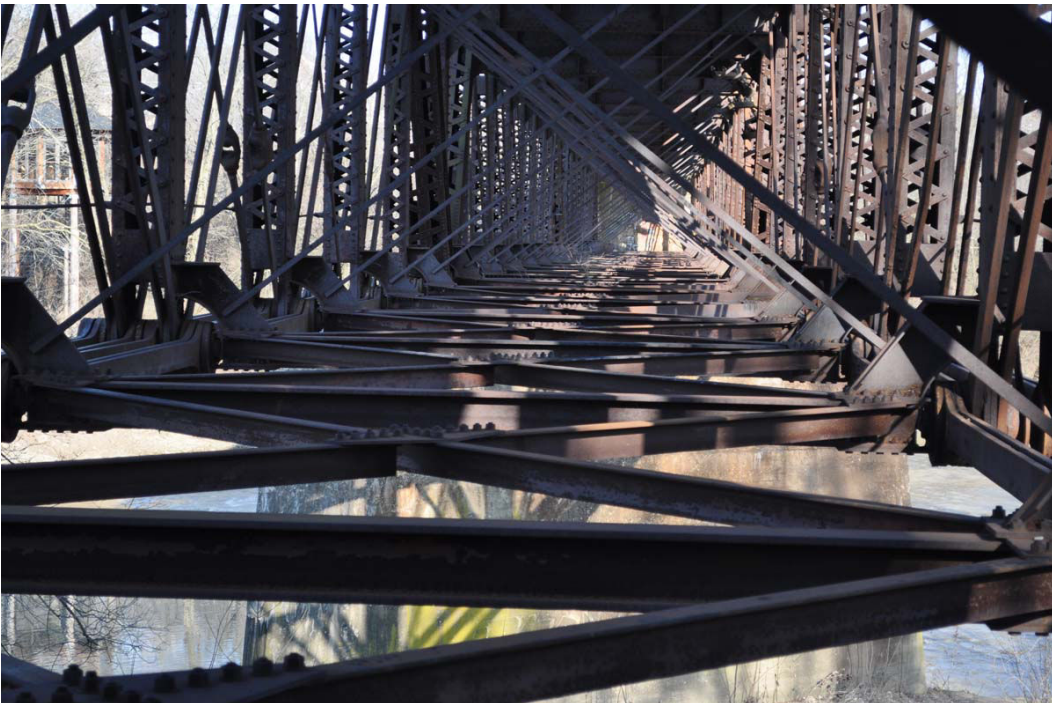


A close up of the PRR Spring Street bridge.





The PRR Bradford Line bridge across the Scioto River looking east. This bridge abutment was heavily damaged during the Great Flood of 1913. It was repaired and 107 years later still stands.



A closeup of the same bridge





During the rebuilding of the eastern railroads following the bankruptcy of the Penn Central Columbus had a rail plant that took surplus 39-foot stick rail, cut off the ends and welded them into ¼ mile ribbon rail. That's how it came to pass that 131 lb. ribbon rail marked as 1941 was laid on the PRR Bradford line bridge over the Scioto River.



The PRR Panhandle line bridge over Alum Creek east of Columbus.