

Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society

LINES WEST – BUCKEYE REGION CHAPTER

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The President's Corner

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Lines West Chapter Newsletter. Unfortunately, we are still mired down in the Coronavirus pandemic with restrictions still in effect on group sizes for meetings which prevents us from getting together. Hopefully we will be able to schedule something for Springtime if the pandemic gets tamped down to the point that the authorities begin to relax the meeting restrictions that have been imposed on us to date. I see some signs of improvement as the predicted spike in infections after the holidays did not happen and the infection rate in Ohio has actually started to decline. Once vaccinations become available to everybody the virus should be under control. The more people we can get vaccinated, the better off we will all be, and then can begin to get together to socialize!

In the meantime, since there has been no opportunity for our normal meetings, we have decided to waive the dues requirement for this year. Once we can have regular meetings again, we will reimpose the dues structure.

The PRR T&HS annual meeting that we would be hosting in May is not going to take place. We are in the final steps of canceling the meeting this year. We are negotiating an agreement with the hotel to move our meeting to May 2023. When the agreement is finalized, we will have achieved a large reduction in penalties we would have incurred by an outright cancellation. We settled on 2023 because next year's meeting is already set for Altoona, then we will host the next year.

I want to give a big THANK YOU to Alex Campbell, Kenton Loy and Jim Kehn for contributing articles for this newsletter. We need more stories like that. If you can, please consider contributing material that the Chapter can use. It is all about contributing our railroad history. Until next time, please enjoy what we present.

Al Doddroe, President
Buckeye Region Chapter

Chapter Officers

Al Doddroe, President
Bob Flores, V-President
Jim Kehn, Secretary
Dick Briggs, Treasurer



Email your comments to
Alex Campbell
columbusrr@att.net

BUCKEYE CHAPTER ZOOM MEETING

We have an opportunity to conduct Chapter meetings on line using the NMRA MCR Zoom account. If there is enough interest, we will pursue the possibility. For those of you not familiar with Zoom or other internet virtual meeting platforms, its easy even Kehn and I can use it. If you are interested let me know by email at →

rbriggs261a@aol.com.

Let me know your preferences for time and day of the week so the Zoom call can include as many as possible.

Dick Briggs, Treasurer
Buckeye Region Chapter

PRR RESOURCES – The Columbus Railroads' Accident Reports

Columbus Railroads has posted descriptions of 62 steam railroad accidents in Central Ohio dating from 1860 to 1967. 30 of the accidents involved the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Newspaper articles give the human interest and human toll of the accident. Interstate Commerce Commission reports provide a technical description of railroad operations and what specifically caused the accident. Together the accounts are a window into the railroading of that time.

The Steam Railroad Accident Index –

http://www.columbusrailroads.com/new/?menu=05Steam_Railroads&submenu=73Accident_Accounts

There is also a library index page for interurban and streetcar articles.

The Interurban Accident Index –

http://www.columbusrailroads.com/new/?menu=04Interurbans&submenu=53Accident_Accounts

The Streetcar Accident Index –

http://www.columbusrailroads.com/new/?menu=03Streetcars&submenu=72Accident_Accounts

BUCKEYE YARD

Local Columbus photographer Kenton Loy recently stopped by Buckeye Yard located on the west side of Columbus, Ohio to document changes taking place at the once busy facility.

Buckeye Yard was envisioned by the Pennsylvania Railroad to replace multiple outdated, labor intensive yards scattered around Columbus. It was built in the early Penn Central era, 1969. Capacity was included to also replace the New York Central's West Columbus Yard.

It was decommissioned as an active hump yard around 2008. What Loy found in early January 2021 was a crew busy taking up the 40-track, 2060 car capacity classification yard. The more recently upgraded Van Yard located on the east side of Buckeye Yard stays.

Rail yards can be a challenge to photograph. The photographer needs a good camera, some height to gain perspective and an eye for composition. In the old days they were often hazy from locomotive coal smoke. And, of course the owners don't want you on the property. Hats off to Kenton Loy for bringing back and sharing these photos of Buckeye Yard in decline.



Also included is a photo by David Reid taken around 1990. You can see more of David Reid's photos of an active Buckeye yard by clicking here →

http://www.columbusrailroads.com/new/?menu=05Steam_Railroads&submenu=46Rebuilding_1980-2000

When Buckeye Yard was new in 1969 Penn Central provided their employees with the *Buckeye Yard Operating Practices*. It's a thorough description of Buckeye Yard as originally envisioned. Click here for the manual →

http://www.columbusrailroads.com/new/?menu=05Steam_Railroads&submenu=75The_Steamroad_Library



2021 – The heart of Buckeye Yard, the Classification Yard, is being taken up. Photo by Kenton Loy.



Circa 1990 – A busy Hump and Classification Yard during the Conrail era (1976-1999). Photo by David Reid.



2021 – The Diesel Service and Repair Shop. Photo by Kenton Loy



2021 - The Car Repair Facility. Photo by Kenton Loy



2021 – The Yard Office and Hump Tower. Photo by Kenton Loy.



2021 – The North Tower. Photo by Kenton Loy.

I HATE GRAFFITI!

By Jim Kehn

I saw enough graffiti on freight cars when on the Indiana & Ohio Railroad. I'll admit some of the artistry is terrific, but it is still vandalism, especially when it covers the reporting marks-which some artist made an attempt at staying away from.

Which reminds me of a story

Back in the mid-90s when I was conductor on the I&O we were sent up to Parsons to pick up a train of 33 cars. It was a hot day that summer and as we were tooling along down alongside Rt 33 towards Lancaster, the engine shut down due to low water. Engine 63 was notorious for losing water. After opening all the engine compartment doors, the engineer stuck a flag between the low water button and the side wall of the engine compartment and got the engine going again. We struggled up Carroll Hill and as we were getting close to Anchor Hocking afternoon shuttle time - a MUST be done job - I decided we would leave the train of cars at the yard board, hustle downtown to get water at AH Plant 1, and hustle back to the AH Distribution Center to do the shuttle.

Did I mention it was a hot day? Anyway, we pulled up lite to the switch at Collins Road. Then a van pulled into the area near the switch and a guy popped out and wanted to ask a question. Ok, ok a railfan (GERF) I thought, what do you want to know.

"Do you know that you have a car in your train with a NAKED WOMAN painted on the side?!", he said accusingly.

I was dumbfounded!

"You have a car with a NAKED WOMAN painted on the side and kids can see it from the road! What are you going to do about it?!"

I was pissed and told him we didn't have anything to do with that. Did I mention it was a hot day?

"Who owns this railroad?!" he demanded.

"Go look for yourself!" I said angrily, knowing that all the engine doors were open and he couldn't read the name Indiana & Ohio.

Frustrated, he climbed into his van and drove off yelling that he was going to call the sheriff.

He was the least of my worries at present. Well, we got 63 watered and barely got the PM shuttle done before we outlawed at 500PM. On the way back I called our office in Logan and told him about the encounter. Ernie, the chief clerk, dispatcher, and bottle washer, told me that the sheriff had called and wanted to know what we could do. Ernie said about the only thing we could do was paint panties on her. The sheriff just laughed.

It wasn't until the next day that I actually saw the car with the picture. It had been near the end of the train and was a small CSX sand hopper. Sure enough, there was a crude painting on the car of what I originally thought was a dog's face with floppy ears. Closer inspection showed it to be a view of a female with legs bent. And you had to use your imagination to see that much into it!

Nothing ever came of it except a good story to tell.

News from the Past:

Railroads and Railroad Property in Columbus

(Columbus Gazette, November 11, 1859) - In our peregrinations about the city, last week, in search of curious, instructive and interesting items, we accidentally stepped into the Roundhouse belonging to the C., C. & C & L. M. & C. & X. Railroads¹ north of the depot, and we there found the gentlemanly and accommodating clerk, Mr. T.N. Cotant, who kindly furnished us all the information we required. Our stock of knowledge, it is well known, is by no means limited, but in railroad matters, a brakeman on a freight car had forgotten more than we ever expected to learn.

In the Round house we found a number of locomotives undergoing the process of cleaning, scouring and brightening, as much care being taken by the Engineers of those powerful iron horses, as a groom would take with a favorite racer. Every locomotive has its own Engineer by whom it is run, and under whose especial care it is kept; and it is strange to see the attachment that almost invariably springs up on the part of the officer to the powerful fire-eating machine that too often carries him to destruction.

We have even heard it said that the wife of one of the Engineers on the C., C. & C. Railroad grew so jealous of the attention paid by her liege lord to his black pet, that she threatened him with a divorce, and knowing as we do the fickleness of the sex, we have no doubt of the fact.

Thirty-nine locomotives and three ponies or small engines, are owned and kept by the two companies at this point and when broken or out of order, they are left at the Roundhouse to be repaired. Thirty of these were built at the Cuyahoga Works in Cleveland, three in Cincinnati and six in Boston. The ponies, which are used exclusively for moving and shifting cars on the road, were built in Cleveland where the main repair shops are located. A locomotive weighs from 25 to 27 tons; and usual cost is from \$7,000 to \$8,000.

Laborers are kept constantly on hand to clean up the engine, to rub up the brasses, and to keep it in good condition. For this service they are paid a dollar a day, cleaning an engine being considered an ordinary day's work.

TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE →

<http://www.columbusrailroads.com/new/pdf/articles%20newspaper/article%201859%201111.pdf>

¹ Cleveland Columbus & Cincinnati; Little Miami; and Columbus & Xenia Railroads. The Little Miami; and Columbus & Xenia Railroads refer to the same railroad.