



LAUREL LINES

Celebrating 51 Years!



Vol 52, Issue 3 - March, 2025

A PUBLICATION OF THE LACKAWANNA AND WYOMING VALLEY RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

D&H #1976 at Greenridge Yard, Scranton - March 11, 1978

Photo by Mike "Breezy" Bischak



The Chapter Meeting will be held March 13th, 2025
in the Iron Skillet Restaurant at the
Petro Truck Stop in Dupont, PA.

Meeting at 7 PM, program to follow.

This Month's Program:

Our Fearless Secretary Ken Kertesz
will show a program of
"Railroading in New Jersey"

Mission Statement:

Through fellowship, community and educational outreach to affect rail preservation and appreciation of railroad history focusing on Northeastern Pennsylvania

Presidents Message -

The experts are saying this is the coldest winter season in many years, but you will always have a very warm welcome when you attend a chapter meeting. At the February meeting, we extended that welcome to Jeremy Komasz, the new Steamtown NPS superintendent. With only three weeks on the job, he reached out to us to attend a meeting. His “Meet and Greet” and “Q & A” provided an insight into his vision for the park and hope for the future.

Things are quiet at the Moscow Station, but will soon be picking up as we prepare for the 2025 season. Spring clean-up of the grounds will probably be first on the agenda as the winter storms have done a job on the trees, with many branches down. Volunteers will be needed and as I have said before “Many hands make the work light” (see Moscow message on back page).

We had great program at the February meeting thanks to chapter member Oran Helbok. This is my oft repeated request: If you are willing to present a program, or know of someone who has an interesting program, please contact Neil Weinberg to set up a date. While I’d like to think everyone comes for my efficiently run meetings (smile) I know the programs are the real draw.

Vee Pauli, President

BRIDGE PROJECTS

From *The Scranton Tribune, March 21st, 1902*
Submitted by Bob Young

“Plans have been submitted for the enlargement of the Paradise tunnel on the Lackawanna Railroad and it is expected work will soon be commence on the job.

A new Richie testing machine for testing iron bolsters, brake beams etc. on cars was placed in the Lackawanna Railroad car shops yesterday. Its capacity is 2,000 pounds.

Superintendent Hixson of the Lackawanna Railroad bridges and buildings department expects to begin work soon on the remainder of the new Scranton round house. Twenty-two stalls have already been built and as many more will be erected before the entire building is completed

A temporary bridge has been built by the Lackawanna Railroad company across the Susquehanna river on the Hanover and Newport branch one mile below Plymouth, which is used in transporting coal from the Auchincloss and Bliss mines. The old wooden structure 662 feet long was washed away by the recent flood. Trains will be run over the temporary structure for the first time today, and work will be commenced immediately on the iron structure which will be put in at that point.”

SEASONAL REMINDER

If the Scranton School District is closed for a snow day or goes to virtual class because of bad weather the chapter meeting is cancelled.

Any questions please contact Vee Pauli at 570-344-9728.

**HUMOR ME**

St. Patrick’s is the one day when no one cares if you believe you’ve seen a leprechaun.

Minutes of the February 13th Monthly Chapter Meeting at 7pm Iron Skillet Restaurant, Dupont, PA

Chapter President Vee Pauli introduces the newly appointed Steamtown Superintendent Jeremy Komasz. Mr. Komasz provided his background and where he came from, but making it quite unique. He was not an NPS employee prior to this appointment. He is very approachable, admitting he has a lot to learn about the Park, but is a “fast study”. He desires to foster a working relationship with all “partners” of the Park, which is a completely departure from how we were treated by the previous “permanent Superintendent”. **Welcome aboard Jeremy!** We wish you well and look forward to a renewed relationship.

President Pauli led us in a Pledge to the Flag. Following, Vee called on Chapter Treasurer to make his report.

Treasurer Ed Zech provided balances and expenses to both the General and Special Projects accounts. All bills have been paid that were due. The Chapter remains in the black. Motion to approve the report by Ed Koehler, Jr. 2nd by Roger Szeliga. Passed without exception.

Moscow Station: Norm Barrett reports that the architect being used to draw up blueprints for the complete tear down and rebuild of the Freight House deck has completed the drawings. A complete material list is now being compiled. Next will be a presentation of the plan to Moscow Borough and the State, with Moscow assisting in the financial portion and the State approving the plan and securing funding. Completion is still over 2 years away.

Station Director Roy Pauli reported that this past December, the Station was defaced by graffiti. It was recorded by the security cameras in place on the premises. Those tapes were provided to the Moscow Police who have identified the perpetrator. Prosecution and restitution are now being levied. Roy also reports that trains arriving at Moscow in the spring are now in the works.

Calendar Committee: Chairman Jim Kilcullen reports that the pictures for the 2026 issue are due back from the digitizing firm this week. The Committee will then convene and begin to apply captions to the pictures chosen. The theme will center on Conrail from our area as 2026 is the 50th Anniversary of the creation of Conrail. These pictures will be treasured, as Conrail no longer plies the rails in the two Valleys.

Chapter Membership: Current membership who have renewed or joined for 2025 is 207 members and 37 family members. We have issued second invoice notices to 23 members along with 8 family. The Membership Committee will cut off renewals in the near future, which will terminate sending those the *Laurel Lines* newsletter and calendars.

We are proud to report that NRHS President Tony White has joined our Chapter! We do not know how many other Chapters Tony has joined, but we are very privileged to have him do so. Tony has a standing invitation to visit the Chapter and perhaps make a presentation. Those that attended the 50th Anniversary of the Chapter will recall Tony attending and offering very kind remarks regarding the Chapter and its rich history. **Welcome Aboard Tony!** You have lots of friends here at this Chapter!

NRHS Advisory Council Representative & Chapter VP Ed Fortuna reports that the NRHS requested an update of all Chapter Officers and the Chapter's NRHS Member Number is C132. In previous issues of *Laurel Lines*, we spoke about becoming a member of the NRHS. The NRHS no longer mandates membership in their organization in order to be a Chapter member, however, now that it is voluntary, it still is a great way to support the NRHS who promotes and supports Chapters across the US and Canada. In addition, the NRHS conducts Rail Camp in the US and provides supporting scholarships to deserving candidates. This Chapter was successful last year in getting 2 candidates awarded attendance at Rail Camp and they received scholarships to assist in offsetting the costs associated. For 2025, the Chapter has had 2 more student members apply to attend Rail Camp. We hope they are successful in this endeavor.

Good Luck to Alex Ferik and Eli Close.

Laurel Lines Newsletter: Editor Katie Bischak finished the February issue near the end of January. She strives to garner all information submitted and get it in the hands of the members in advance of the next Chapter meeting. Providing up to date information offers our valued members an opportunity to decide if they wish to attend the next meeting.

Remember, if you have something you want printed in *LL*, Katie must receive same 1 week after the last Chapter meeting.

Chapter Historian & Program Director Neil Weinberg reports that tonight's presenter is Oren Helbok, Chapter member who will feature "Photos by My Father, John Helbok". The March 13th Program will be by Chapter Secretary Ken Kertesz, who will show slides taken in NJ back in the late sixties and early seventies.

Webmaster Alex Strausser reminds all that he strives to keep the site up to date and interesting. Your submissions to him can only add to the quality of the site. Thank you Alex, who attends a local college full time and manages to make most Chapter meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

The Chapter has the sad duty to report that Henry Sommers, who many will recall made a presentation to Chapter a few short years ago on his "Ride with Me Henry" has passed away. He traveled the rails of many railroads and subways in NYC and Philadelphia with the thoughts of recording the history of the lines. He always invited several to join him. We learned he also used to fill in for some tower operators on the former Erie when they were sick, but was not a railroad employee and did it for free, simply for the enjoyment of it all! His program was enjoyable. Rest in Peace Henry.

NEW BUSINESS

Railfest dates are scheduled for August 29th, 30th and 31st, 2025. The Chapter is being offered an opportunity to host a Mother's Day Train via the Iron Horse Society. A Committee needs to be formed to formulate

ideas to make this venture worthwhile for the Chapter. The deadline to submit our desire to have this train must be in to them by the end of February.

Ed Koehler, Jr reports that there is a great Train Show on March 8th at the Scottish Rite Hall in Harrisburg, PA from 9am to 3pm.

The Taylor Train Show at the Taylor Fire Company #2 is scheduled for March 9th.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ken Kertesz - Secretary

HUMOR ME

A couple went for an afternoon drive and stopped for gas on the way. As the man filled the tank, his wife said she couldn't believe it costs money to fill tires nowadays.

"Why in the world do they charge for air?" she asked.

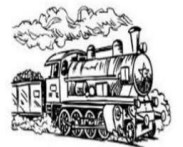
Her husband quipped - "Inflation"



2025 SPRING FLING TRAIN SHOW SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2025

Also: DIE-CAST TOYS
and RAILROAD MEMORABILIA

AT
TAYLOR HOSE & ENGINE COMPANY
614 UNION STREET
TAYLOR, PA 18517



TIME: 9:00 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M.
(DOORS OPEN AT 6:00 A.M. FOR VENDORS)

Admission \$3.00, Children Under 12 Years of Age Are FREE!

For Information Call Joe at: (570) 498-1998

Wheelchair Accessible and Great Food on Premises
New and Used Model Trains, Structures and Electronics
New and Used Toys Bargains Galore!

Future 2025 Train Shows:
September 20th, October 25th December 6th & 20th

MOSCOW LIGHTING REPORT

By Norm Barrett

MOSCOW PA – Late Summer / Early Fall – The Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley Railway Historical Society, Inc. received its special order of period light fixtures. The existing fixtures on the Passenger Station, which are estimated to be around 40 years old, were showing signs of wear and tear, one of which failed and fell off the building.

The new fixtures, made in the USA, are of a fitting design for the age of the station. They have a powder coated paint finish that replicates a weathered copper patina. They are equipped with LED bulbs which are energy efficient and will reduce electric costs, especially since they will be on dusk to dawn.

The Freight Station never had exterior lighting, so this required installing proper wiring along with mounting boxes over each door. The new light fixtures are of an industrial type, appropriate for a Freight Station. They are powder coated in a dark green that goes with the station colors. Like the passenger station they are equipped with LED bulbs and will operate dusk to dawn.

Of special note, the new MOSCOW station sign on the east end of the station will have separate lighting (it just needs adjusting come spring).

We were able to complete this lighting project THANKS to grants received from the National Railway Historical Society “Heritage Grants Program”,



, and The Scranton Area Foundation

“Steamtown Museum Association Fund”.



Night Photos taken by Jake Dennebaum

**Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley
Railway Historical Society, Inc.
Chapter, National Railway
Historical Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 3452
Scranton, PA 18505-0452**

**Non-Profit
Organization
PAID
Scranton, PA
Permit #245**

Change Service Requested

DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

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**Laurel Lines is published monthly except for July by the
Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley Railway Historical Society,
Inc. Chapter NHRS.**

Visit us online : <http://www.lwvrhs.org>

- MOSCOW RAILWAY STATION NEWS -

There are many, many large and small
branches down on the property which will need
our attention I am planning on a clean-up for
April 5th.

If you can help please let me know soon.

Thanks, Roy Pauli
570-344-9728

MARCH 2024 VOLUME 52 ISSUE 3 LAUREL LINES - L&WV RHS