



THE SWITCHSTAND

Byesville Scenic Railway Newsletter

Volume 3 Summer 2009

The mission of the Byesville Scenic Railway is to preserve, restore, maintain and operate historic and vintage railway equipment and to provide scenic train rides featuring a living history of the local coal mines. To promote, create and maintain a railroad and coal mining museum and display site for the education and entertainment of the general public, to assist in the economic development of the area and to operate same as a non-profit 501-c-3 organization.

The Byesville SwitchStand

A publication of the
Byesville Scenic Railway, Inc.
www.bsrw.org

Publication Schedule is April, July,
October, January

If you have anything that you would like to put in the SwitchStand, articles, features, notices, photos, etc..., the deadline for submission is March 15, June 15, Sept. 15, and Dec. 15.

switchstandnewsletter@gmail.com

Byesville Scenic Railway 2009 Train Schedule

Steam Weekend and Coal Miners Festival

October 2nd 5pm

October 3rd 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm

October 4th 1pm & 3pm

July 11th & 12th 11am & 1pm
July 25th & 26th 11am & 1pm

September 5th & 6th 11am, 1pm & 3pm
September 19th & 20th 1pm & 3pm

August 8th & 9th 11am & 1pm
August 22nd & 23rd 11am & 1pm

Welcome Aboard New Members

On May 2, 2009, we conducted our FIRST Annual Open House Membership/Volunteer Drive. We had hot dogs, chips, drinks...etc..., and also a free train ride was part of the event for new members. SO WELCOME ABOARD TO THE FOLLOWING 5 NEW MEMBERS:

Jim Daugherty, Cambridge, O.
Edward Perry, Parma, O.
Paul Davis, Norwich, O.

Wayne Stottsberry, Byesville, O.
Edward Skerness, Westerville, O.

EDITOR'S LOG

Well, since the last edition of the "Switchstand", we have really taken some big steps forward. A brief summation of our meetings shows that at our April meeting, the highlight was the attendance of Mr. Wayne Troyer of Builtright buildings. Wayne, who had previously done work for Tim, came highly recommended by Tim, and he presented to us what he could do in the way of construction of what we wanted, which was our shelter, and the complete outside restoration of the old city garage.

The following week, the building committee met with Wayne, and he submitted the plans and cost, at which time we authorized him and his crew to proceed. And proceed they did. Hats off and great kudos to Wayne and his crew. They are definitely a throwback to the old times, or what I like to call "the days of common sense". They turned to and did a great job, and now we have a beautiful shelter and you would never ever know there was such a thing as "the old city garage". Also, our guys changed around the power boxes, we got water lines laid, and also to the former underwater rescue building, all this done inside three months is like I say, a throwback to the days of common sense.

And I have yet to mention, the strides we have made on our right of way. A buku amount of hard work by all those involved have us on the verge of being able to run almost half way to Cumberland. This is awesome !! This time last year, it seemed like an extremely large obstacle, just to get all the brush cut, but we have come such a long way. Inserting ties, plates, creepers, the spiking, and all the work of the placing of drain pipe, and re-configuring the roadbed, the loads of ballast that have been hauled in, the spraying, and now the places up to the second crossing on SR 146 that were washed out, are now ready for ties and rails, and we must give our local ODOT crew a big "thank you" for the work they did on the crossings.

During our May meeting, Tim issued a challenge to all to come up with ideas that we would be able to apply for grants to accomplish such ideas. There is money out there, please everyone, lets hear your

thoughts and ideas. If you so like, I'd be very happy for you to write them out, and to include them in this publication. I believe that on May 24th, was the final day of operation for our dear friends at the "Whistle Stop". We worked so well together, and their food was terrific. This is such a sad time for Byesville and most certainly the BSRW. We will miss them, and so darn sadly, that 50 or 60 years ago this would have been a thriving sure thing for years to come. I don't think any of us understand how things have come so un-raveled, especially, the last couple of years, but this has been gradually happening for a long long time. We are also now making preparations to renovate the interior of our building in phases, by starting to install restrooms, and our new meeting room. This, we will do ourselves, as we have some extremely talented people that can and will do this state of the art. In just a few weeks, we will be in the "meat of the season", the summer months. All indicators point to a good year with our tour buses and regular ridership.

We also recently purchased a practically new ice machine from when the Whistle Stop had to discontinue business. I saw this machine first hand shortly after the purchase, and Davey and Wesley Michael had that thing icing like a champ, less than 24 hrs. after we got it. This is and will be an immense help to us for years to come. Right Steve ? Finally, I almost forgot to refer to our June meeting. Who in the heck would not just simply love to have a steam engine based in Byesville? I think, in my opinion just a super grand idea and I most heartily support it, and also for us to acquire whatever type of security system we need to best keep it closely monitored. It would seem to me that we could possibly apply for some type of grant to house a piece of historical RR equipment (steam engine) in a facility on our property, during the off season. Then we could move it outside for display and occasional use during the running season. Of course, a switch and a track to the facility, a chain link on at least 3 sides of it, and who knows, maybe another job for Wayne Troyer for the facility. Just a thought.

ALL ABOARD.....Part I of II

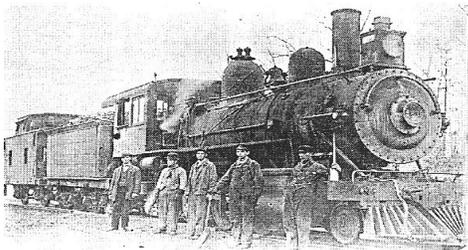
BY DAVE ADAIR

This article was written by Dave back in 1991, depicting an imaginary train ride aboard a Pennsylvania RR train from Cambridge to Caldwell. The first part will be from Cambridge to C&M Junction, and in the October edition will be the concluding part on to Caldwell. This was so magnificently done that after reading it in its entirety, I felt that I had actually experienced this wonderful ride, so WELCOME ABOARD and have a great ride!

Ever wonder what it may have been like to ride in the cab of a steam locomotive? Well climb aboard for this is such a ride. It will consist of a ride between Cambridge and Caldwell back in the "Good Old Days".

Come along and imagine what a real ride would be.....

Climbing up the steps into a hot dirty cab of a Pennsylvania Railroad steam locomotive, I introduced myself to the engineer and fireman as a reporter for a local newspaper and that I had permission from Mr. Minto, a railroad official to ride between Cambridge and Caldwell in the cab of their locomotive. They showed me where I could sit and then went about their chores. "Do you mind if I ask a lot of questions?", I asked the engineer. "If he doesn't know the truth he'll tell you a lie so good you'll believe it", shouted the fireman to me and we all laughed.



A typical five man crew who ran the trains back in 1915. Posed near their locomotive, tender and caboose are from left: Mr. Wagstaff, brakeman; Mr. Selby, fireman & Mr. McKee, engineer, conductor; Mr. Jackson, brakeman; Mr. Farrah, brakeman; Mr. Selby, fireman & Mr. McKee, engineer.

The Cambridge Shops of the Pennsylvania Railroad was a very busy place at the time of this writing which is Sept. 9, 1915 early that morning.

Near the round house and ready tracks I counted 19 locomotives as I walked to this particular one. They were all steaming, smoking, and making strange noises to remind me of a giant monster. The smell of coal smoke with a fine dusting of coal dust was everywhere and noise prevailed. The toots of the locomotives working in the yards, the banging of railroad cars together and the grinding, squealing sound of flanges over rails made it difficult to talk and necessary to shout. In the yards men with colored lanterns showing red, amber and clear communicated with each other using various hand gestures while clear and red colors let the engineers know how the track switches were lined.

"How many men work here?", I asked. Engineer McKee stated that "there were 65 five man crews on the regular call board, over 200 worked in the car shops and engine facilities while two section gangs each of 15 kept the tracks in shape here in the yards. An office force of 40 kept the records and more officials than you have fingers and toes tell us what to do".

Our train that day consisted of a freight class 2-8-0 wheel arrangement called by her crew an H8. She weighed in at 118 tons, her tender carried 14 tons of No. 7 coal and 18,000 gallons of water. Two box cars of freight, a tank car of coal oil (kerosene), 17 empty coal cars and a caboose stretched out over what the men called track 46.

It was 3:10 a.m., a mixed freight had just passed by heading south to Marietta and we were due to leave 20 minutes after it had left. Engineer McKee and our conductor Mr. Wagstaff compared watches and the correct time. Mr. Wagstaff and brakeman Mr. Jackson then started to walk back toward the caboose and disappeared into the dark. An additional brakeman, Mr. Farrah, was already at the

caboose. At 3:30 a.m., our conductor gave us the highball signal with his lantern as he stood on the caboose platform. Our engineer answered with two tugs of the whistle cord, they slowly opened the throttle. At once the big locomotive started to slowly move out of the yards pulling out the slack between each car until the caboose was also moving.

We crossed Woodlawn Avenue past the Pure Oil Company bulk plant switch, then the Oxford Tile Factory switch, and soon passed the city water works boiler house where a yard engine was pushing a loaded coal car up the incline ramp. At the left of our train which was heading south, two tracks led us into the Guernsey Earthenware Company which was running full blast. On the loading docks men with two wheel carts could be seen with the help of dim over head lights loading or un-loading box cars of raw material sacks or boxed finished dinner ware.

Adjacent to the earthenware company is located the vast works of the American Sheet and Tin Plate Company. Here hundreds of men worked everyday. Four tracks snaked into this complex from this railroad alone and all seem to be full of either raw material of finished galvanized tin. Over the noise of the locomotive I could hear the huge roller mills bending and fabricating the metal into shape within the many buildings. Here, the main boiler house like the water works has it's own coal dock trestle to unload the coal. The steel smokestack I am told is 185 ft. tall.

Just beyond the tin mill another track crossed Leatherwood Creek and led off to the Cambridge Glass Company, and the Gregg Lumber Company. By then the twenty odd tracks in the Cambridge yard dwindled to eight, four, two, and then one. We then crossed Wills Creek on a side deck girder bridge. Exhaust steam from our locomotive cylinders bounced off the sides of the bridge and shrouded the entire locomotive in white, while black smoke shot straight out of the smokestack into the early morning darkness. The water injectors were pumping water into the boiler while

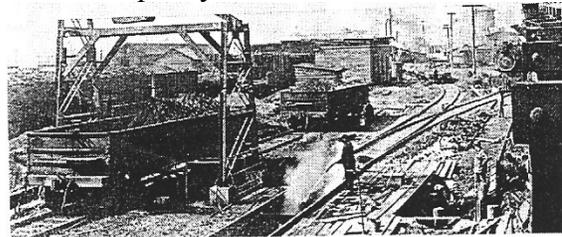
our fireman, Mr. Selby, was already throwing coal into the firebox in order to keep the steam pressure at 205 P.S.I.

Behind us the lights of Cambridge disappeared and the only light to be seen were the headlights of our engine, a dim cab light above our heads and the rear end marker lights on the wooden caboose 21 cars back. Each time our fireman opened the firebox door to insert a shovel full of coal the engine cab and surrounding area became a bright orange color. The orange light revealed mile post 56 as we passed it, we were now one mile south of Cambridge and running at 12 m.p.h.

We rounded a curve, crossed Chapman Run over a wooden bridge, when our engineer pointed out 300 yards away to the Nicholson Mine tippie which was illuminated as the made their own electricity there.

As I looked back over the firemans side of our boiler I received my first scare of the day. In front of us at approximately one fourth mile the light of a locomotive was shining at us. "Is that train on the same track", I asked? "No, he is on track 10 waiting for us to pass", said the fireman.

I soon learned that we were at Cambridge scales where all coal along the railroad mined between Caldwell and Cambridge was weighed prior to being sent to market. The train just mentioned was a heavy coal train awaiting on one of two ready tracks east of the scales. In the 10 tracks located here the car capacity was over 500 cars.



The Cambridge Shoops of the Pennsylvania Railroad were a beehive of activity back in 1915. This view of the ash pit is where the fires were cleaned after a run.

As we passed the scale house a friendly wave from a lantern within beckoned us a "good morning".

Our engineer answered the gesture with two blasts from the whistle.



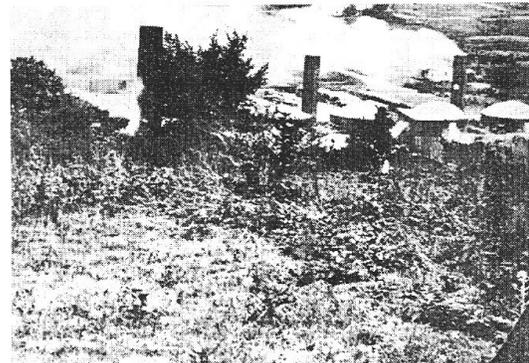
At the south end of the Cambridge Scales a five mile spur track reached Buckeyeville. Railroaders referred to it as the "Dogtown Switch". Along this track eventually 10 coal mines would produce over 250 cars a day. Pictured is the Harryette Mine near Buckeyeville.

Adjacent the scale house a depot type building stood where I learned several people worked billing coal to customers. A 50,000 gallon water tank stood nearby to quench the thirst of two locomotives working the hump yard which was over one mile long.

Traveling at a speed of 18 mph our engineer pointed off to a track in the dark. He shouted to me that it was the "Dogtown Switch". It traveled five miles to Buckeyeville and served seven coal mines along the way. "We bring out 150 cars a day from those mines" he stated. As he finished speaking I noticed a coal mine off to the right and asked of its name. "Vigo clay and coal, they mine both minerals" he stated. Back in the hill there are brick kilns where they make foundation tile for buildings. "Besides the coal we ship a lot of freight cars out of that place" he further stated.

Suddenly, the fireman tugged at my arm and pointed to a switch track running off to the left. "That's Ideal mine switch" he shouted, "we get 80 cars a day from there". Just then I was startled a second time when I turned to see a man climbing down the coal pile in our tender, toward us with a lantern in his hand. At first I thought he was a tramp, but when he held it up high I saw that it was

brakeman Jackson. "How did you get here from the caboose" I asked him. "Wasn't in the caboose, I was riding the top of the second box car back, enjoying the ride." he said Pointing out of the engine and off to the left he said, "We take siding here at Byesville and I have to switch us onto the side track". That's the way I wrote it down but Mr. Jackson talked in a railroad language that only another railroad man could understand. Would you understand if I had written exactly as he just described: "We go in the hole at BS, I gotta bend the iron to clear us of the main stem." The engineer slowly closed the throttle and our train speed slackened, meanwhile the brakeman had passed through a left front narrow door in the cab and was walking down along the boiler toward the front of the engine. Our speed dropped to about 7 MPH and I watched as the brakeman jumped off of the left front of the engine, raced forward to the switch track, insert a key into a padlock, unlock it and throw a lever which moved the rails to another



The Vigo Clay and Coal Mine produced hundreds of thousands of tile block used in the building of new homes. This is Guernsey County's only mine which extracted two minerals from the ground.

Just as our train reached that point and passed onto the side track the brakeman swung aboard and climbed up into the cab. He then crossed the cab floor, stood behind the engineer and leaned far outside his hands holding onto the handrails looking back. As our train passed down the side track the brakeman shouted "3 cars, 2 cars, 1 car, that'll do!" With that the engineer shut off steam

and our train which had just left the main track was now safely on the siding. I looked back along the train length from my side of the cab and saw the switch lamp turn from red to clear knowing that the rear brakeman had switched the tracks back to the main line.

“How long will we be here” I asked the engineer?, he pulled a pocket watch out of his overalls and said, “oh bout half hour”. He then grabbed a long neck oil can and climbed down off the locomotive. With the aid of a lantern he then began to oil the rod bearings of the locomotive. At about that time fireman Selby asked me if I was getting hungry. I said that I was, but asked him where we could find a place in Byesville at 4:00 a.m. “We eat here in the engine and you are welcome to eat with us” he said. He then pulled a coffee pot from his grip, threw two single handful of coffee grounds within, filled the pot with water poured from a glass jug and then placed the pot on the boiler backhead to brew. Within five minutes I could smell the aroma of coffee. He then did something I had never heard of. He took his shovel which he had just used to toss over one ton of coal into the firebox, wiped the metal scoop with lard and while holding on to the handle thrust the shovel into the firebox. Immediately it ignited, but he just rolled it over a few times then pulled it out. The lard had been burnt off and the shovel looked clean. He then asked me to hold the shovel being careful not to let it touch the apron (floor). Then, from his bag of tricks he pulled out a jar filled with thick slices of bacon, placed them neatly (12 slices) in the shovel scoop which filled it. I could not believe what I was seeing, but said nothing..With that he thrust open the firebox door, inserted the oversize frying pan and began to cook breakfast. “Hold this while I get the eggs” he stated “but hold it high so it doesn’t burn”. He then pulled out one dozen brown eggs, a jar of mushrooms, a large sliced onion and a chopped green pepper.

Soon the bacon was near crispy and our fireman cook carefully pulled the contents out of the firebox. As he held the shovel this time he directed me to put the bacon to one side and put the rest of

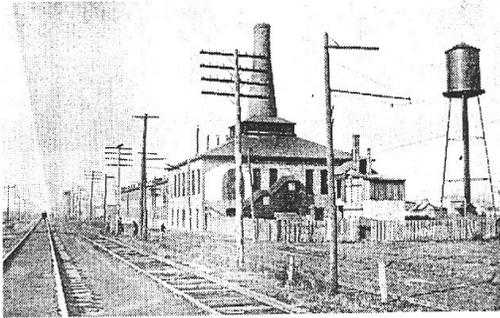
the concoction into the middle of the scoop-within the bacon grease which I did, after first de-shelling the eggs. In about 3 minutes out came the nicest omelet I had ever laid eyes upon. Six slices of bread were then dunked into the remaining grease to flavor the bread.

Out of the bag then came three tin plates with forks. The big omelet was then cut into 3 and divided between myself, the engineer and the fireman. Oh yes, the coffee was good but strong. A half gallon jug of pure milk was placed on the table which was my seat box covered with a newspaper. It was the most unusual breakfast I had ever eaten. Soon the scream of a whistle could be heard as the train which we had taken siding for crossed Depot Street (S. Second) in Byesville heading north. The second wail of the whistle announced that the train was crossing Main Street and by then I could see the headlight of that train while standing behind our engineer’s back. In a few moments the big locomotive thundered past us trailing 26 loaded coal cars and cabooses. It’s destination that morning was the scales.

By the time our fireman had walked to the front of our locomotive to reach the switch track and unlocked it so as to let our train return onto the main line. He gave our engineer the highball signal who in turn eased our train forward and off the siding. As we started to move engineer McKee pointed back to a large building on the firemans side of the cab and shouted that it was the Cambridge Glass Companies Byesville plant, and that the Lauer and True Lumber Co. was located on the same switch. Then pointing to his side of the cab he said the old Pioneer Mine track ran one third of a mile west, but the mine was now abandoned, but the railroad used the track to store old cars.

Mr. Selby, then yelled out “clear board”, repeated by Mr. McKee and we were soon in front of the Byesville depot and it’s signal semaphore, but the telegraph operator was standing out on the platform ready to hoop up(via a long stick) our train orders telling us what to do next. As we passed the depot

our fireman who had returned to his seat box leaned out his window and snagged the orders from the operators long stick. As our train crawled by the fireman read the orders out loud to the engineer. In part they stated that we had a clear track to Ava, where we were to leave a box car of machinery then proceed to the Noble Y track, turn our engine around and then proceed on into Belle Valley. Here we were to take siding where we would be overtaken by a passenger train also heading south.



This view looking north of the Cambridge Glass Company's Byesville plant shows it's location of Glass Avenue. The photo was taken from the Pennsylvania Railroad main track while the passing siding of Byesville is at right center. On Glass Avenue can be seen the electric interurban tracks.

As our train began to cross Depot Street our rear brakeman closed the switch, locked it and ran to catch the caboose. Upon reaching the rear steps and climbing aboard, by using his lantern he waved us a highball at which time our fireman saw the signal and shouted over to the engineer "highball". Our engineer then pulled out a couple of notches on his throttle and our train began to pick up speed.

It was now 4:45 a.m. and the dark showed no trace of daybreak. We soon passed the abandoned Central Mine and not much farther ahead a switch track off to the right was told me by our engineer to lead to White Ash, Eureka, and Little Kate mine a mile away. What was now interesting to note was that hundreds of coal miners were on their way to work in the 14 various deep coal mines surrounding Byesville, and that each miner had his carbide lamp illuminated on his cap, so as to see where to walk. Many were walking along the right of way toward Trail Run and Puritan. Undoubtedly many were riding the sides of our cars holding on to the

ladders as our speed was 12 mph.

Past the Valley mine switch at right, we then crossed No. 5 bridge, an overhead trestle and were soon on the straightest portion of the railroad between Marietta and Cleveland. Here for over 2 miles the tracks are as straight as a die and a place where engineers run fast in order to make up lost time. We would not run fast that morning for reasons being that we were on our scheduled time and that there were probably 30 to 40 miners riding the sides of the cars back there. We soon passed the Little Trail Run switch and then the switch to Trail Run Mines No.1 and 2. I was told that over 1000 miners toiled underground within these 3 mines. The entire switch tracks were aglow from carbide lamps all moving toward the tipples that morning. It was a sight never to be forgotten.

We had slowed our speed to 10 mph for the benefit of those departing our train as we soon steamed into Puritan, a town platted, but never developed even though a coal mine was located there. At left and paralleling our right of way since we left Byesville was another railroad track. It belonged to the New Midland Power and Traction Company. This line originated in Cambridge and ran out to the east end of that place before heading south to Byesville, Puritan, Derwent and Pleasant City, 14 miles by rail. This line has electric powered inter urban cars, one of which was rapidly overtaking our slow train. It would stop at each coal mine switch track, discharge riders then speed on to the next stop. At times it reached speeds in excess of 30 mph. One half mile south of Puritan was the Buffalo mine switch track. Occupying that track was an entire coal train such as ours except that it was loaded and backing toward the main line. "We often bring 90 cars a day from Buffalo mine" said our fireman with one hand cupped over the side of his mouth as he yelled to me. "Today, the inter urban car will beat him to the cross over track and you can bet your last cigar that motorman will wait a few extra seconds to delay the coal drag". As the fireman and I were looking back to the rear watching the inter urban car our train thundered across a double span deck girder bridge with the

village of Derwent not far off.

Pointing to an abandoned mine tippie I learned that it was the Imperial Mine closed during the 1913 flood. "Never to re-open", shouted the engineer. He further stated that when Wills Creek had broken through the surface during the flood the entire mine filled with flood waters and everything down in there would remain so forever. Our engineer then yanked on the whistle chord the standard road crossing of two long blasts, one short and followed by a long blast as we crossed the Old Clay Pike (Ohio 313).

To the left just prior to crossing the pike stood the Derwent depot, the clear light within the semaphore signal indicated that all was clear for us to proceed

on south, but the telegraph operator was standing on the platform none the less to watch our train pass, carefully watching for any overheated journals in the wheels.

Speeding right along the inter urban car soon again caught up with us and overtook the lead. As it passed, the illuminated car showed many smiling faces toward us for they were outracing a Pennsylvania Railroad train.

Our engineer kept the speed at 12 mph, but soon closed the throttle upon nearing a place known as N Cabin, one fourth of a mile northwest of Pleasant City.

.....TO BE CONTINUED.....

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

Recently, during the first week of June, I was over to the Cambridge Library "surfing" the old micro-film newspaper files for historical items that I could use in this newsletter. I thought that for this issue I'd start in 1900. In 1900 there were 3 newspapers in Cambridge; the Cambridge Jeffersonian, you see in 1900 it wasn't "Daily", only weekly, coming out each Thursday; the Guernsey Times, and the Cambridge Herald. So I decided to start with the Jeffersonian.

Little did I know that I would find this one article or quote, and then be able to inter-twine it into one large factual story, a very little of which is supposition. This was neat to do because some other things that I had all ready found out meshed nicely with this. So I quote the article, then the rest:

Jan. 18, 1900 from the Byesville Enterprise:

"About 30 years ago a rousing railroad meeting was held under a white oak near the place now occupied by our village school house, which place was at that time, a swampy tract thickly grown with

timber. This meeting was addressed by Gen. A. J. Warner and other representatives of the M&P Rwy., who stated the advantage of having a railway through this part of the country."

About 30 years ago in January 1900. In all probability would have had this meeting take place during the summer months of 1870, since there were no indoor facilities at that time. Also Gen. Warner and his reps, probably had to come to this meeting by horseback, a remote possibility by horse-drawn wagon, and even more remotely by canoe up Wills Creek, as Wills Creek does flow north. It is very doubtful if there were any "improved" roads at that time, and more than likely just trails. Byesville, at that period in history was more like a settlement predominately in close proximity to the creek, near the mill, general store and blacksmith. Only after the M&P was built did Byesville move up to it's present location, then fan out. And also one would think that the word of this meeting got passed down around the mill.

A "rousing" railroad meeting was held under a

white oak near the place now (1900) occupied by our village school house. In 1900 the village school house was located on what is now Watson Ave., exactly where the Byesville post office now stands.

The first known school for the Byesville area was the Oak Grove school, which according to a publication published in 1907 by the Byesville Enterprise was located in what was known at that time (1907) as the Riddle Grove, near White Ash mine. White Ash mine (1905-09) was on the railroad switch that ran up to Lucasburg (Little Kate). The site of the slope opening was on a small hillside behind what is today the pavilion at Jackson Park. Therefore Oak Grove school was near that location, down in the small valley or grove. It is not known on which side of present day SR 821 the school was, for in those times there was no road.

Byesville was incorporated in 1881, so in that year, property was acquired and a 2 story, 2 room building was erected on the now Watson Ave. site at a cost of \$1,000.00. Meanwhile the old Oak Grove school was removed to Lucasburg, probably around 1900 when the shaft was sunk that would become Little Kate No. 1 mine.

In 1886 the rapid growth of Byesville made more school space necessary. Two more rooms were added on the west side of the Watson Ave. building at a cost of 1,200.00. In 1892 it became necessary to rent a room, the board having rented for 2 years the present (1907) property of A. J. Bean, at the expiration of which time the 2 rooms completed the "T" were added on the south side of the building at a cost of \$1,500.00 thus forming the old building as it was in 1907.

After this time, again with the rapid growth of Byesville, again more space was needed. Four lots were purchased and during 1902 the old Lincoln School on today's S. 5th street was erected at a cost of \$20,000.00. It opened in Jan. 1903.

But still the influx of families in the light of 2 large shaft mines opening in 1900, the Ideal and Little Kate No. 1 made even more space necessary. In

1906, the North Side School of the Ideal addition was built at a cost of \$1,200.00, and as previously mentioned, the old Oak Grove school had been moved to Lucasburg (Little Kate). In addition in 1907 two more rooms were rented on Seneca St., then in 1908 the "Central School" on Meek Ave. was opened as the first high school in Byesville. This served the educational needs until the Byesville High School was completed in 1923.

It is supposed that after Central school opened in 1908, then the old village school was no longer used for that purpose, as also was the same for the rented rooms on Seneca St. The old village school then became a livery stable operated by Oscar Beckett, simply known as "Os". After the emergence of the automobile and truck, then Os Beckett must have seen the handwriting on the wall, then after obviously re-modeling the building, he opened an ice house with a dairy. The dairy was operated by John Lewis. I was told that during the 30's and early 40's, there was a room in that dairy where you could go in off the street and have freshly made ice cream. I can remember the building, and estimate that the ice house lasted till about 1950.

I should also mention the school that was located down in the Brick Plant Addition called "Garfield". I do not yet know what year this school was established, probably after 1907. This school burned to the ground in 1944, and was never rebuilt. All the students then were sent to Byesville schools.

All this now brings us to the old Opera House in Byesville which was situated at the south corner of Watson Ave. and S. 2nd St. I have not yet found out what year the Opera House was built, but I do know that the 2nd story of this wooden building contained an auditorium with a stage and seating. I presume that musical presentations, plays, vaudeville...etc... were held there, and also all school activities such as plays, recitals and graduations took place. You see, until Byesville High School was built in 1923, none of the other school buildings had any such facilities. Sometime

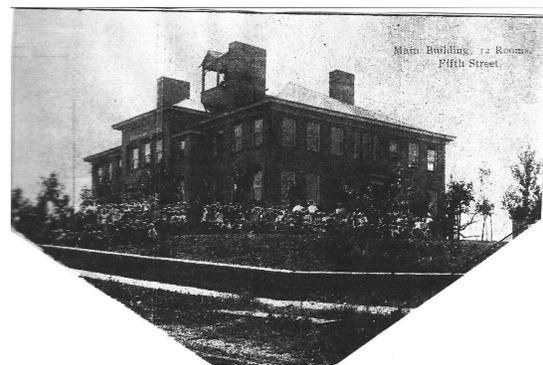
after 1923 I speculate that the auditorium was removed, and the 2nd story was converted to apartments. On the 1st floor was the general store of Yontz and Burris. Again, I can not remember the actual tearing down of this building, although I do remember the building vaguely. I have to make an un-educated guess of 1951-52 of when this building ceased to be. I was in the store one time and recall that it looked like a general store of the 1890's.

Now, back to the railroad meeting in 1870 where it said that this meeting was held "under a white oak near the place occupied by our village school house" in 1900 which place was at that time 1870 a swampy tract thickly grown with timber. So we know that the old village school house was where the post office is today. I believe that Gen. Warner fully knew his stuff about promoting this railroad, and he knew exactly where the right of way would be in relation to the swampy ground. I really do believe that the meeting in 1870 was at or in very close earshot of where our train, depot or crossing at 2nd St. is today. It is "NEAR" where the old village school was. In 1870, forget today downtown Byesville, as it was a swamp, and after the M&P came through, and the downtown was in it's infant stages, I was told that 2nd St. was so bad they had to lay large logs crossways in the street corduroy style, and the first sidewalks were very elevated. In the laying of the sewer in 1935, a WPA project, these logs were run into during the excavation, and as I understand are still there now, probably petrified.

Take note as you drive today on Watson Ave., you can see that Watson Ave., which at one time was High St., not avenue but street, has been filled in to the level of each house, and right before it's intersection with S. 4th St., which incidentally was at one time called Grant Street, there is a dip up to S. 4th. For some reason this part was never filled. I was told by a gentlemen years ago, Mr. Paul Gabel, who lived for years on Watson, that when the Cambridge Collieries repair shops, which were located partly on our property where our building

and where the ballfield is, they would bring in huge armatures for repair from the mines, by horse and wagon. Especially in spring months those wagons would be up over their axles in mud. Try to imagine that.

I trust that I haven't bored anyone, and really like all of us to see, that because of that meeting 139 years ago, every time we take our train out, all the other things we do on the right of way, clear to Cumberland, and every meeting we have is only a continuation of that meeting under that white oak in 1870.



Main Building South 5th. Street



Seneca Street - Note Interurban tracks in front



Ideal

AS I REMEMBER

In our previous issue, I told you about the old coal loading facility located where the Byesville Library is today. I'd also like to tell you about the long passing siding that paralleled the PRR mainline from roughly across from N. 12th St. all the way south up to just beyond High Ave.

The mainline of the PRR in the early days was one of the busiest lines in the state of Ohio with all the coal, freight and passenger trains. This passing siding was a vital necessity in maintaining as smooth a flow of traffic as possible. Coal and freight trains would almost certainly pull into this siding to accommodate the passenger trains coming through, or even any express freight trains.

I never remember anything being stored on this siding except hopper cars. I do not know when this siding was put in, and I can only remember back to 1945, so its not to say that before that there may have been other types of cars stored on it, after the extremely heavy traffic volume dropped down during the depression.

I can only make an un-educated guess when this siding was taken up. I do remember it still being there when I attended Central School on Meek

Ave., from 1950-53. Maybe 1952 or 53 it was taken up. Do you ever notice that when real neat things are done away with, you have no memory of it, as I do not remember the actual removal of that siding. I guess you just want to blot it out. Here is a photo of me walking on that siding in 1949, the same day my Dad and I was up at the coal dock. The locale was at the juncture of Meek and Glass avenues. The house in the background is still there today.



GRANT IDEAS

Lets apply for some grants ! Please permit me to start off with some ideas, be they wild or not. I most certainly do believe that we should do "all that we can do" to make our scenic railroad "unique" in that people will come from afar to see and to ride with us, simply because we do more than just "take them for a ride", and all ready our narrated and acted rides are more than you get on other tourist railroads here in Ohio, and even ones in W. Va., South Dakota and even Colorado. They only have us beat in distance and scenery, for now.

Surely we can come up with doable ideas, that will make us even more special, and when people come to our railroad, after they leave they will know that they have been to and rode on an awesome railroad.

I believe, as I said previously in this newsletter that I would like to apply for a grant for an engine house, a switch and track and chain link fence, so that we can house a steam engine (historical railroad equipment) here in Byesville, as it is a possibility, this could happen.

Another idea is hopefully we could get another coach car, and then to commemorate the Interurban line by restoring this car to nearly resemble the interurban car. Putting it briefly, paint it the dark green that the interurban cars were and trim it in gold. The photos we have of the interurban would show us how to do the trim. It would certainly look sharp with "New Midland Power And Traction Company" in gold across the field of dark green. Car No. 17.

Inside, the fun begins: The whole ceiling of the car from above window to window would be painted white on white. Down the center ceiling would be working lights with chandeliers. The main aisle on the floor would be laid with that ribbed black rubber looking floor cover. Under each seat would be medium green carpeting. Then each seat would be covered with dark green velvet. Then from the floor up to just above the windows would be

attached a brocade fabric of bright Kelly Green. Beautiful ? Oh yeah. Only to be used for very special occasions, such as Valentines Day evening ride. Any more weddings?, and any other special occasions. People, this also is doable. I don't know how the interurban cars looked on the inside. But to be able to do this would certainly help to make us unique, and something we could show off and be proud of.

A couple of other grants that would be nice, would be for us to be able to acquire 2 or 3 more cabooses, improve them all, then use them alternately. And also we most certainly could put a MOW train to good use: a flat car for ties, a 3 bay hopper for ballast, as there are no 2 bays left, and some kind of car to carry tools in. These are all my ideas.....FOR NOW.

Please, lets see some more. ANYONE.
Next edition is October.

Historic Railroad Travels: The Allegheny Portage Railroad

By Gary Frame

Many people, especially train watchers, have made the trip to Altoona, Pennsylvania to see the famous Horseshoe Curve. From a vantage point there, folks can view trains traveling up or down the long winding curve that makes it possible for them to make the trip through the steep mountains. Without that marvelous piece of engineering, trains could not cross the steep grade on either side of the Alleghenies. But what did travelers do before the curve was opened in 1854?

Imagine you were on a train headed west from Philadelphia in the early days of steam locomotives. Those early engines were quite fast for their time on flat ground, but tackling a grade was another matter. As you began to enter the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains, your train would have a tougher and tougher time making headway as the grade increased. Finally, a point would be reached where the train could go no

farther and you would have to find another mode of transportation over the mountains. Of Course, for passengers this was an inconvenience and an added expense, but for shipments of goods it was even worse. All of the items on the train would have to be unloaded, then reloaded onto another form of conveyance - canal boat, horse-drawn wagon, etc. All of the options were slower than train travel, even in those early days.

To solve this problem, the state of Pennsylvania in 1831 began construction on the Allegheny Portage Railroad. Completed in 1834, it consisted of a series on 10 inclines, 5 on each side of the summit. At the top of each incline, an engine house was constructed. A steam engine inside the engine house powered a cable system that pulled the railcars on tracks up to the top of the incline. The cars would then be attached to a locomotive for a short trip to the next incline and the process would

be repeated. After the summit was reached, the railcars would be lowered down the mountain in the same fashion until, at the bottom, they would be attached to a regular locomotive to complete their journey. Neither passengers nor freight would have to leave the comfort or convenience of the train car to compete their journey, thus saving both time and expense.

Of course, the journey was not without hazards, and some people were killed or injured when the cable would unexpectedly break while a car was on the incline. For this reason, passengers often chose to walk beside the cars rather than ride to the top. At the top one would find not only the engine house but also a tavern or inn where travelers could find refreshment and lodging - for a price, of course.

The Allegheny Portage Railroad operated until 1854, when the opening of the Horseshoe Curve on the Pennsylvania Railroad made it obsolete. It was abandoned and its rails and equipment were sold,

marking the end of one of the unique engineering feats of the 19th century.

You can still visit this historic marvel today, at least a portion of it. The Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site is located about halfway between Ebensburg and Altoona just off US Route 22. This site preserves one of the inclines with a rebuilt example of the strap rails used at the time. The engine house ruins have been excavated and a replica of the engine house has also been built. The original tavern near the engine house is open for tours and the visitor's center displays artifacts connected with the railroad, including a steam engine from the era. A film about the construction of the railroad and the history of the site is also shown. The entrance fee is \$4 for adults; children are free.

So the next time you visit central Pennsylvania, stop by and see this one-of-a-kind place that is full of railroad history. You'll be glad you did.

Gary Frame has been a member of the Byesville Scenic Railway since 2007. He is a resident of Dover but attends church in Byesville at the Stop Nine Church of Christ. He was introduced to the Railway by his friend and fellow Railway member Jake Davis, with whom he enjoys discussing history in general and railroads in particular. This article will hopefully be the first of many on historic railroad sites throughout America.

Send articles and photos for publication in the Byesville Switch Stand to switchstandnewsletter@gmail.com
Jake and Louise Davis, editors

Photo Gallery



Depot Street, Byesville, OH



Jake & Dave – Picture Display at Cambridge, 1973



B&O Train, N. 6th St. Byesville, OH, 1975



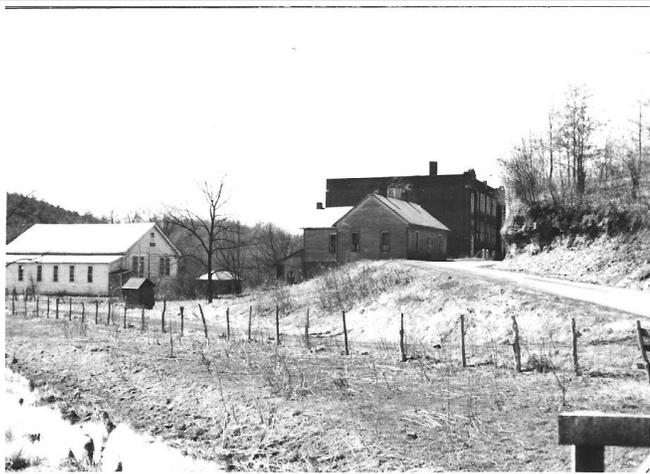
Old Spur Track into Byesville, 1975



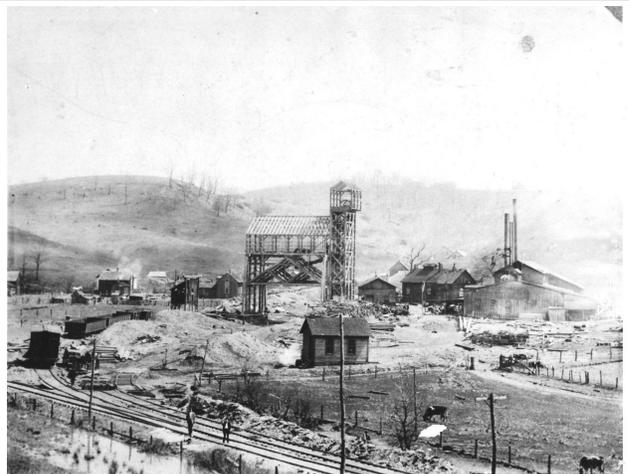
B&O Train passing now day BSRW , 1975



Cambridge Collieries Repair Shops in the field below present day BSRW, 1918



Old Community High School & Gym at Trail Run, 1975



Trail Run #1 Mine being rebuilt, 1908



Old Company Store at Opperman, 1905

Our New Construction
Photos courtesy of Monica



Unloading the Spiker



The Spiker at Work - Aaron demonstrates the art of leaning on a handle as they did in WPA



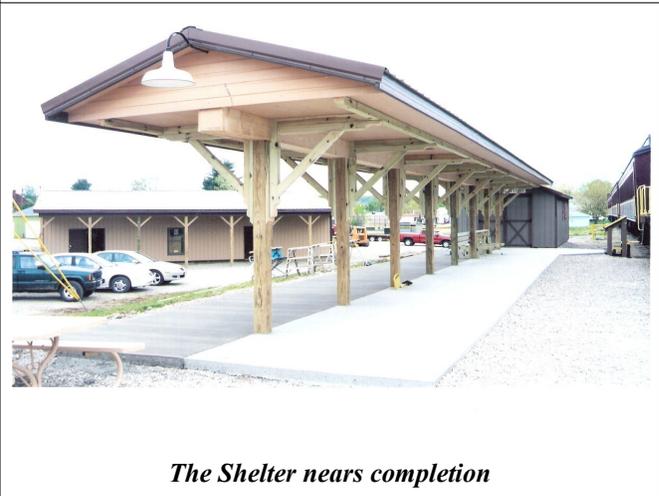
Beginning of the Shelter



Wayne at work on the Shelter



The Shelter progresses



The Shelter nears completion