



THE SWITCHSTAND

*The Official Newsletter of the
Byesville Scenic Railway*

Volume 4 Issue 3

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.

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Doug Stolarik collection

Our New Burro Crane

C O R R E C T I O N

In the previous Switchstand (April), we made two errors, which we will now correct. The first goes back to the day of our Banquet (22Jan11). Shortly after arriving that day, while looking around, I happened on Jim Phelps busy un-packing a beautiful collection of OR&W freight cars from a box. I was never aware that such a collection even existed, as I had never heard about, let alone seen anything about it. Since Jim was unpacking them, I assumed that they belonged to him. WRONG !!!!

Now that I think about it, I should have known that they belonged to Dave Adair, being the fact that he was going to give a presentation that day on the OR&W. I mistakenly gave Jim the credit for them. I'm sorry Dave. I apologize. Even our mistake does not take anything away from how great that collection is, and you should be well proud of it.

Secondly, in the April edition, and how we did this we'll never know. On page 14 at the top of the page was an article that started as "Here is an interesting hand bill issued to the public back in 1883". This article, given to me by Dave Adair was supposed to be the start of a larger story concerning the merger of the C&M and the W&LE. By not adding the remainder of this story in the paper, it is little wonder why no one knew what was going on. Again Dave, we are sorry.

OUR NEW MUSEUM

by Jake Davis

Most of our members who are local have taken the opportunity to go through our new museum. It is really a great thing. For now it is not really that large, but in the future there is plenty of room for it to grow as more things are added. Kudos to Dave and Steve who really put this thing together so professionally. I mean it, I have seen other museums for different things that are nicely done, but this one is by far the best I've seen. Outstanding job Dave and Steve !!

I urge those of you who do not live close to here, but are members to take a drive down, ride the train, then by all means visit the museum. You'll be glad you did.

FROM THE ORDER FORK

by Jake & Louise Davis

Well, the high lights over the past 3 months began on April 9, on a cold and blustery day when 6 of us journeyed north to ride the Cuyahoga in conjunction with the ORTA spring meeting. Cecil and Mrs. Carlson were already there, as they had arrived the day before for the activities on Friday. On Saturday morning pretty early, Dave Adair, Monica and Mark, Wayne and

Betty and myself made the trip to Brecksville. On this day, hardly any signs of spring were evident. After arriving there, we soon thought that things were taking a downturn, when we were informed that due to a miscalculation there would not be enough box lunches for us. However, things quickly brightened up considerably when they deducted \$10.00 off our

fares. So we had to pay only \$15.00 for a 104 mile round trip train ride !! Are you kidding me ? That was awesome !! It was a very very enjoyable ride.

Also quite comically, when we boarded the train, we were sent to one car, which ended up being the wrong one, we were then sent back to the next car, started to sit down, and then we were informed that this was also the wrong car. They then sent us back to the next car (which was the last one), and found out we weren't supposed to be there either. I know we made at least two more trips among those 3 cars before they settled on us riding in the second car. By then it was uproariously funny. I think that is the first time that I ever played "musical train cars".

And also to our advantage, one of the other cars had a small kitchen where they cooked hot dogs, had chips, candy bars and sodas, so we made out well. And to boot, later that afternoon after the ride on our way home, we stopped at a Bob Evans. Great Day !!

When we returned to Brecksville at the end of our ride, as we had went clear down to Canton, there was a large crowd of people waiting for the next ride. Unknown to us, the engine that pulled our train was experiencing some minor difficulty. So after we got off, they took the train back to the shops. A short time later, the train re-appeared, but with a different engine. An old B&O PA, which had definitely logged many many miles in it's life. This engine actually made a chugging noise, and when they "gave it the gas", the old black smoke shot up out of the exhaust. But what a super super neat old engine, and it's horn about blasted your eardrums out. We really wanted to pose for a photo with this old gal, hence the picture. I sure would love to have some old vintage operable engines here in Byesville, that we could use on special occasions. That PA was so neat. Moving to our May meeting, Christina Wampler, who is a grant writer attended our meeting, and gave us some good insight on

applying for grants. Dave Adair had a good idea to apply for a grant to really dress up our area all around our grounds, and this will be really important particularly when the time comes to take delivery of our coal miners statue. Christina seemed optimistic on our being successful for this grant. We also discussed educational grants, and grants for our museum.

Through generous donations we now have some fine looking rail and ties stored along the mainline down at Bi Con Services in Derwent. These ties and rails will be used to replace get us to the first of the "big boys", trestle # 318, a 9 span at MM 11.60. This is our goal for the end of our next run extension towards Cumberland, This will be 1.6 mile farther than where we stop now at bridge # 315 at MM 10.0 and will make for a nice run..

Then maybe we could devote our earnings to sprucing up some things from Byesville to trestle #315. For example, particularly from Derwent further south, then west on the B&O. All the trees and brush that we have cut the last few years has been cast to either side and is piled up and looks rather unsightly. Something that was suggested in the past was renting a chipper and cutting all the brush up that isn't too large. It would have to be a big improvement sight wise. It would also be great to clean up and improve Central Mine, Derwent and C&M Junction. At Central Mine, getting rid of some of the vegetation so Dave and Steve can point out and give the passengers something to see as we go by Central Mine. This could be done by, after cutting out the vegetation for just a short distance on the switch that led into the mine locale, then bulldoze the switch in order to get the cinders ballast and coal turned over to be visible once again probably after close to 100 years, and then we have plenty of junk ties and some junk rail to make good use of. I'll talk about Derwent and C&M Junction in the next issue. I really do believe that we should continuously be looking for ways and means to improve our line. The more that we can present

for the riders to see to go along with the narrations, the better it will be.

I almost forgot about the Burro Crane. Already it has saved our line by being used to open the plugged culvert at “The Tile”, as the water was really backing up big time, and potentially could have washed out our line had it continued unabated.

Also the Burro was used to repair a washout and

open a culvert at MM 10. It seems those pesky beavers had dammed up a drain tile and with all the rain we have had, the tracks were under washed. (See top 2 photos on pg. 8)

Our MOW track gang expects they will lay track starting at the first SR146 crossing @ MM 10.5 and have MOW equipment to the Bethel Church bridge # 318 at MM 11.60 by the end of this year.

OUR DAY AT CUYAHOGA, APRIL 9, 2011



Monica Chicwak collection





Monica Chicwak collection

Doug and Joe's Train Ride May 14, 2011

by Doug Stolarik

My son Joseph and I were visiting my parents in Byesville the weekend of May 14th/15th and that Saturday we decided to catch our 3 pm excursion. It would be my son's first chance to enjoy our train since the 2010 excursion season. After a long winter we were both looking forward to taking in the welcome sights and sounds of springtime along the good old PRR Marietta Branch (and the B&O Eastern Ohio Branch).

Upon arriving at the station in Byesville we were given friendly greetings as usual by our good friends of the Byesville Scenic. My son always gets lots of "hellos" and pats on the back

from the crew, and this does his dad's heart good. It sure was nice to see everybody down at the station that day, as it seemed like a long time since seeing everyone at the BSRW annual banquet back in January.

Instead of riding in the coaches that day, we asked our loyal conductor John Warne if he would mind if we rode in the caboose with him that day. I promised we wouldn't be much trouble and we both would try our best to behave for him. John agreed and we were soon on board traveling southbound after a timely departure from the Byesville station, although under cloudy skies.

At about 3:30 that day we were about 1/2 mile north of C&M Crossing and the skies decided to open up. It was nothing short of a torrential downpour, with some thunder & lightening to boot, although off in the distance. The heavy rains would continue to pelt us as we made our way around the curve at C&M Crossing and onto the old B&O Eastern Ohio Branch. Once we came to the State Route 821 road crossing the rain soon let up. We were glad to see that the storm had passed and naturally assumed the rest of the trip would be uneventful on the outside as it often is.

We approached Banner switch and began to tell conductor John and my son about my three great uncles, the Valochik brothers from Pleasant City, who worked in Banner Mine. The Valochik's were my Dad's Uncles on his Mom's side... George, Andrew, and Joseph Valochik (spelled "Valovcik" back in the day). George and Andrew died of black lung in the late 1930's about the time when my Dad was born. All I have are a handful of black & white photos of them. My Uncle Joe Valochik lived until about 1998, so I had a chance to know him and talk a little about coal mining. He used to visit with us and he would tell us kids stories about working

in Banner and how rough the conditions would be "down under".

One interesting fact from My Uncle Joe Valochik that I had never heard before or since was that he would tell me that they would lay track in the mine as they made their way underground. He explained that the track would be nice and level one day. The next day they would come in and not only would the ceiling drop down, but also the floor would heave up, and the once nice, level track would resemble something more like a roller coaster.

I will never forget My Uncle Joe telling me "Doug, you don't know how lucky you are that you don't have to work in the mine". I can hear his voice to this day. Anyway about the time I finished telling all this to John, one of the biggest claps of lightening struck near us not far from our caboose and lit up the interior like daylight. It did a pretty good job of surprising us, especially my little boy. I looked outside and that's when I realized exactly where we were-right at the old switch to Banner Mine. I told "Big John" that if THAT wasn't proof enough of the life thereafter and proof that my Uncles were "talking to us", NOTHING would be.



Doug Stolarik collection





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A TRAIN OF MEMORIES

There is something about
The empty coaches of a train
That sends a sadness
To my heart-----
Or brain.
The doleful whistle
Prolonging as it nears
The old town;
The pausing---momentarily,
Orders---and a lone passenger
Stepping down.
Once a day---each way,
While the hustling horde
Ignores its enterprise,
And rides the fragile speeding
 Things,
On concrete pave,
That I despise---
This roaring wraith of former
 Years
Brings thoughts of happier days;
When---if clear or rain---
The bunch of village loiterers,
Would meet and greet
The evening train

Howard B. Potts,
1943

MINERS MEMORIES

I've wandered to the coal mine,
 Tom
Or where it used to be;
And find there's little left, Tom
Of the plant we used to see

The tipple house has gone to rack
The power house shows decay;
The railway track has been re-
 Moved
From the lonesome right-o'-way.
The shaft and slope have both
 Been sealed,
Closed are the chambers down
 Below;
Where we trapped the doors and
 Whacked the mules,
Some forty years ago.
And of the men we worked with,
 Tom
Down in that gloomy glen;
The greater part have quit the
 Mines,
But are in the dark again.

Howard B. Potts
1943

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Jake Davis Collection

This photo shows today's SR 209 in the vicinity of today's Orr's Drive In which would be at the left of photo looking south towards Pioneer Road. The year is believed to be about 1916 or 17, as it is supposed the road was bricked in 1918.



Jake Davis Collection

Banner Mine from behind looking down the valley to our line which is in the middle of the photo. By looking very carefully you can see just to the left of the building behind the tibble along our line, can barely be made out the very edge of bridge #315, which is where we have to stop today.

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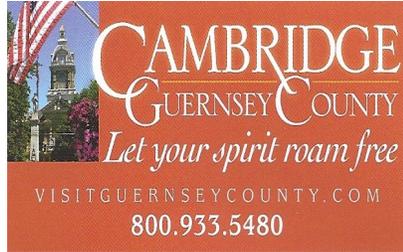
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