

The Anthracite EXTRA



Issue 111

Anthracite Railroads Historical Society, Inc.

November 2020

ARHS Membership Meetings Zoom to Success

Monthly membership meetings will be conducted using internet teleconferencing through June 2021. Our initial Zoom membership meetings in October and November were very successful, with members attending from across the USA.

The December 11, 2020 meeting will feature the late Richard Samsel's photos of the 1960s Delaware & Hudson Ry. in Pennsylvania and New York State. Rich Jahn will present the program.



Photo by Richard Samsel

During that era, the D&H received north- and eastbound traffic from the PRR at Buttonwood, PA and the CNJ in Wilkes-Barre, PA. After threading the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area, the D&H ran

through Carbondale to Oneonta, NY, then on to Albany and north to Canada.

In the January 9, 2021 meeting, focus shifts to modern freight trains on former Reading Company trackage. Heritage locomotives of the Norfolk Southern will be featured by photographer Dale W. Woodland.



Photo by Dale W. Woodland

Dale's photo locations include the Main Line, East Penn, W&N, Lebanon Valley, PH&P, Norristown and New York Branches as well as the yard in Reading, PA. Maps will show each branch, and remaining Reading Company stations provide reference points to the past.

See the article on the back page for tips on using the Zoom platform for video conferencing.



President's Message

By John M. Gabriel

Welcome to the November issue of the Anthracite Extra, which arrives at the onset of the year-end holiday season. While 2020 has been a year of challenges and despair, and in some cases unthinkable losses, we can seek comfort and assurance at this time of the year. This is a time to reflect on our accomplishments and to look ahead to the potential of the upcoming new year.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, there is much to be grateful for - even in this pandemic year. We live in a country that is blessed with natural resources and relative wealth, which supports and allows us to share the lifelong interest and fellowship of railroading.

ARHS gives us many reasons to be thankful. Our organization continues to grow both in terms of membership and scope. My gratitude is extended to the many members who have volunteered their skills and time to advance the various projects we have.

Looking back over 2020, we have a rebuilt website with enhanced functionality, the Gap House is being improved and preserved, historically significant slides and negatives of non-Anthracite railroads entrusted to us are finding caring homes through deaccession, modeling and sales of Anthracite locomotives, rolling stock, and structure is on the rise, scanning of our archives continues on a daily basis, we had frequent book sales from inherited collections, and our fleet of operating equipment continues to be restored as time and funds allow.

Equally fulfilling has been our use of modern technology in the form of Zoom teleconferencing. While the pandemic has kept us apart, it challenged us to find new ways to remain together—and through Zoom we are engaging more members than was possible before. In the following pages we are updating you on the upcoming monthly programs, modeling, restoration, and showcasing some of the fine work of our membership.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for supporting ARHS and helping to make us a premier railroad historical organization. We welcome more

volunteers and I am encouraged that on a frequent basis new people are contacting us to get engaged and or to donate portions of their collections to us.

As the Board meets over the next two months, we will be looking ahead to 2021 and formulating a plan for continuing our journey and mission. We will share our plans with you in the upcoming extras and membership Zoom calls.

Please set aside time to enjoy the upcoming holidays with family and friends and continue to keep yourself and families protected. The sacrifices we make now will ensure we are all present to meet and celebrate once again in person in the future when life returns to a steady state.

Take care and have a safe and fulfilling holiday season!

Restoration News – New Radiator Cores for the B-unit

While some parties stock parts for older EMD units, their prices are high to cover costs of inventory and advertising. An alternative is to use the grapevine to locate parts from units being scrapped, and to act quickly when necessary. The ARHS restoration team has obtained radiator cores at a reasonable cost with collaboration from the URHS of New Jersey.



Photo courtesy Bill McElvey URHS

The team made a quick trip to Boonton, NJ, on November 1, to inspect the radiator cores and to loosen them from the radiator assembly.

On November 29, a URHS volunteer will use ex-Erie wrecker 03125 to remove the radiator assemblies from a derelict unit and place them on the ground. The ARHS team (Rich Jahn, Steve

Olear, and Craig Ealey) will load the radiator cores into a waiting vehicle and transport them to Pennsylvania.

The team plans are to move our B-unit to the D-L shops in Scranton with our recently-acquired 567C prime mover. The team will install the prime mover, and the radiator cores, in 2021.

Local and Distant Members Hail Re-start of Monthly Meetings in October and November

Since we've migrated our monthly meetings to Zoom teleconferencing, nearly 100 members and guests have participated. Many members, of course, are based in the anthracite region; others join from across the West Coast, the Midwest, and the South.

Our initial on-line membership meeting, October 9, 2020, meeting featured Tom Nemeth presenting on the Lehigh & Hudson River Railroad. Tom's photos added to our understanding of this remarkable railroad.

The November 13, 2020 meeting featured detailed information on the New Jersey Zinc Company and its operations in Palmerton, PA. Kermit Geary, Jr. shared outstanding photos based on his family's connections with NJZ.

Modeling Report

By Charles Liggett

Rapido LV RS-11

The society's inventory of HO scale bright Cornell red LV RS-11s by Rapido are selling quickly. Only two 7643s remain. The models are sound equipped with ESU LokSound decoders for DC/DCC. See our web page for current availability and to order: <https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/product/lv-rs-11s-by-rapido-ho-scale>

Price is \$300.00 plus shipping.

AHRS LV SW-8 Detail Parts

The address for the kits is:

<https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/product/mdlc-ho-dbkit/>

They are \$22.00 for the package.

ARHS CNJ Baldwin "Babyface" Diesels

The metal detail parts for the Baldwin DR-4-4-1500 kit are now in our possession. The society expects to complete this kit by early December in time for the holidays. Look for the announcement on the ARHS website

<https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/category/models>

Price will be announced.



Photo by Jack Hahn

Future Project Ideas

If you have ideas for future modeling projects, in any scale, contact us through the web site at: <http://www.anthraciterailroads.org/contact-us/>

Photos Wanted – RDG Plymouth Branch

The ARHS is looking for pre-1976 photos on the RDG Plymouth (Pennsylvania) branch. Photos showing trains at identifiable locations, or switching local customers are most valuable. Color photos are welcome; vintage back-and-white photos and postcards are especially desired.

Most through trains ran at night in the 1960s and 70s, but there was a daytime local for many years. The branch started at Oreland on the Bethlehem branch and ran to Plymouth PA, connecting with the Norristown branch.

Photo Deaccession Report

By Bob Wise

As noted in the last issue, over the years ARHS has received a number of photo collections from

members to use in our magazine, newsletter and archives. Many collections include material that is not pertinent to ARHS railroads. The Deaccession Committee is charged with taking this non-ARHS material and making it available to other rail societies.

Through October 2020, the Committee has delivered over 4,000 slides and negatives to societies representing the Atlantic Coast/Seaboard Air Line/Seaboard Coast Line, Bessemer & Lake Erie, Boston & Maine, Burlington Route, Burlington Northern, Conrail, Missabe Road, Erie Lackawanna, Gulf Mobile & Ohio, Illinois Central, Louisville & Nashville/Nashville Chattanooga & St Louis, and the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railway. There is much more work to do.

This process works both ways. We encourage other societies to keep the ARHS in mind when they find ARHS-related material in their collections. Opening lines of communication helps develop good relationships with other rail historical societies.

Do you know of another rail historical society that might have received Anthracite material they can't use, but we could? Please suggest they think of the ARHS, and contact Rich Jahn, Archives Chairman.

Recent Donations of Books and Documents

The society has recently accepted a complete set of track charts of the RDG Philadelphia and New York divisions dated 1973. These were compiled by HC Archdeacon, Chief Engineer.

Also several large paint and lettering drawings from the CNJ. These show RS3s, Baldwin cab units, etc. The donor said "I can't think of a better place for these plans to be."

If you are interested in donating photos, documents or other items to the ARHS, please contact either Rich Jahn (Archives Committee) or John Gabriel (President) to discuss options and intentions.

LV "Map" Boxcar Still Exists

By Jeff Kovacs

Here is an update on the LVRR "map car," the former LV 62324. It resides at Nischwitz Feed and Fuel, on Front Street in South Plainfield, NJ.

This is the same location where I placed it when I was conductor on the 3 PM South Plainfield Drill on March 28, 1976, with engine 182, almost 44 years ago!



Jeff Kovacs photo

Time has not been kind to the car. It is used as an outdoor storage facility for hay, and the map is long gone.

Nischwitz Feed and Fuel was established in 1895 and is still owned by the same family. The firm is "hanging in there" by focusing on residential gardens and pets, instead of farms and cows, and by fuel oil and propane, instead of Lehigh Valley Coal.

ARHS Seminar Postponed

The society has re-scheduled our educational seminar in Binghamton, NY, to Fall 2021. It will feature the Lehigh Valley and DL&W railroads in New York State. Speakers and topics will be announced.

Model Spotlight: Steve Olear's CNJ 903 in HO

This model represents CNJ 2-8-2 M-3s 903, one of the super mikes rebuilt for back-track service. Steve heavily modified an Akane model, stripping all the details and building a new cab and long-haul Lima tender. Most of the new details were also scratch-built. This HO model features a can motor with a flywheel and gear tower set up for low speed lugging.



Photo by Steve Olear

Share your favorite model! Send a high-res photo and description to extra@anthraciterailroads.org
Models in all scales are welcome

Along the Right of Way - Valuable Information in Past Issues of FD&S

Back issues of the Society's magazine contain timeless information for historians and modelers. Most are available in print or electronic formats.

For example, FD&S volume 6 contains an article by Rich Jahn about the Lehigh Valley RR's gas-electric cars. It contains a variety of vintage photographs, a detailed roster, and additional information.

Many railroads purchased self-propelled passenger equipment in the 1920s and 30s to reduce costs. The Lehigh Valley RR used the cars on the branch lines and sometimes on the main lines as well.

You can purchase FD&S volume 6 on CD-R at the society's web store.

Interchange Track - Structure or Rolling Stock Projects by Other Organizations

(In each issue we publish a brief description of a preservation or restoration project by an outside organization.)

The Sterling Hill Mining Museum in Ogdensburg NJ has nearly completed the restoration of CNJ 91544, a steel caboose built by the Reading Company in 1942.

In an unusual move, they've painted one side for the Lehigh and Hudson River RR, which operated similar cabooses.

Do you have a favorite museum or non-ARHS restoration project? Please send us a link and brief description.

Upcoming Train Shows

Due to COVID-19 impacts, many of the regional train shows that were scheduled for this Fall and Winter have been cancelled.

This includes the Amherst Railway Society's annual show, previously scheduled for January, 2021 in West Springfield, Mass. We are planning to participate in January 2022.

Help Wanted - Volunteers for ARHS Retail Tables (When Train Shows Resume)

Attend a train show for free! We really need the help. Volunteers staff sales tables at train shows, inform people about the Society, and help them to purchase models, books, posters, etc. Sale proceeds support ARHS projects and help in keeping dues reasonable. No special skills are needed. Please contact Kermit Geary (kgjr1554@earthlink.net) if you are able to help with any of these shows.

Zoom Info for Membership Meetings

To participate, you need a computer, a smart phone, or a combination. (A computer offers a large screen for easy viewing.) Before the meeting, please check that you have the Zoom app installed on your device. If you have never been part of a Zoom meeting or webinar, you must download the "Zoom Client for Meetings" ahead of time. There is no charge, and you do not need to register for a Zoom account.

Information on how to set up the Zoom app on your computer or smartphone, and a link to the upcoming meeting will be available on the ARHS website and Facebook page about the first of each month.

For members reading this on-line, if you have railfan friends who are not computer-savvy, we encourage you to help them participate.

About one-third of our members do not have email (or do not share it with the Society) and may not have access to the Internet.

Suggestions, Feedback, and New Ideas Wanted

The Society officers and the Extra editor are eager for your input and assistance. We are all volunteers. Together we can accomplish remarkable things.

Contact Us

The Anthracite Extra is published six times a year by the Anthracite Railroads Historical Society, Inc. We focus on Society news, and include additional features as resources permit.

The Extra is edited by Mark Charles.

Please write to us at P. O. Box 519, Lansdale, PA 19446, or use the online form:

<https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/contact-us>