

PENDRAGON

The Newsletter of the Unadilla Valley Railway Society & Museum PO Box 751, New Berlin, NY 13411 -- Summer 2011

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A NOTE

TO CONTRIBUTORS

The Unadilla Valley Railway Museum & Society is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. Checks payable to Unadilla Valley Railway Society & Museum may be sent to our P. O. Box 751, New Berlin, NY 13411.



Historic marker on Genesee Street in New Berlin with (red) Unadilla Valley Railway Depot building behind the tree at 3 Railroad Street.

The Historic sign tells about our depot. It was built in 1869 and has the distinguished honor of being the largest Board & Batten Depot. It was built by the New York Oswego Midland Railroad. It's size shows how important New Berlin was to the railroad at that time. The year was 1869 on this Historic Marker, but the start for this project was actually in 1868 when the "Midland" began building. The New York & Oswego Midland Railroad (O & W's predecessor) was the grandiose vision of DeWhitt Littlejohn, a dynamic politician whose concept of a rail route across NYS serving virgin territory seemed logical. As "Midland" began building and making its way thru towns which had put up money for its construction, the cost far exceeded estimates, and within a month of completion the Midland was bankrupt. But it survived and was reorganized in 1880 as the New York, Ontario & Western Railway.

It lasted until March 29th 1957 when it was ordered liquidated by a US bankruptcy judge. The O & W holds the distinction of being the first major U S railroad to be abandoned in its entirety.

Schedule of Meetings

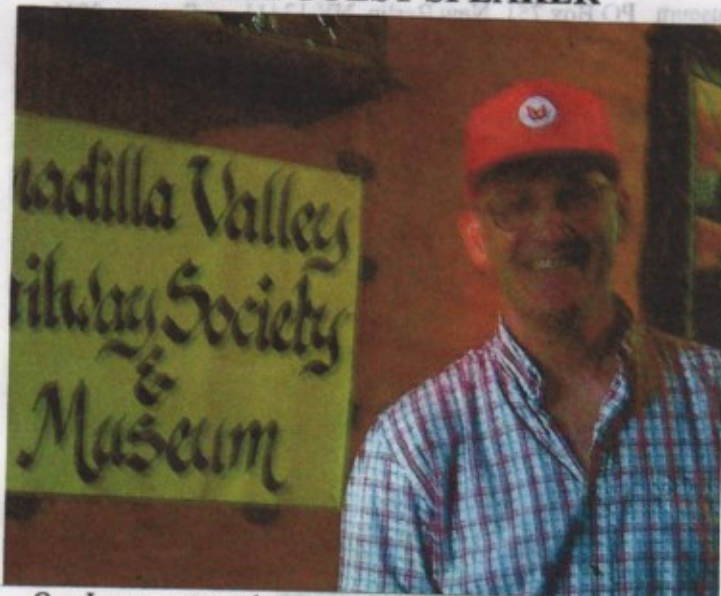
All regular meetings begin at 7 P M. June through September are held at the U V Railroad Museum, 3 Railroad St. in New Berlin. October through May are held at the New Berlin Library South Main Street in New Berlin, NY.

All are welcome to attend meetings which include a program, discussions about railroading and refreshments.

Speakers often provide informative programs coupled with opportunity to purchase one of their railroad books.

Date	Speakers	Meetings Events
April 4 th	Alan Fairbrother	
May 2 nd	The Loomis Gang	
June 6 th	Mark Simonson	Oneonta Rails History
July 16 th	John Taibi---NYO & W	Local Railroad Families
August 1 st -6 th	Christmas in July with Grand Opening Model Trains & "Rail" Authors	
August 27 th	Otsego Co. Fair Booth and Parade	
September 3 rd	New Berlin Youth Days	
October 3 rd	Annual Picnic	
November 7 th	To be announced	
December 5 th	Nominations	
	Election of Officers	

JOHN TAIBI GUEST SPEAKER



Our June guest speaker was John Taibi, author and preserver of railroad history, who lives in a home that was once the Munsville railroad depot, similar to the depot where the Unadilla Valley Railway Museum is housed now. John gave a presentation about four railroad families who were part of that industry spanning the entire life of railroading in our area.

Thanks to much documentation, literature and photos offered for his use by Bob Collins of Norwich, John was able to share many railroad stories from the John Fagan collection about the Fagan, Batic, Collins and King Families who worked for the NYO&W and who as engineers of the day would have frequented the depot in New Berlin.

John's book entitled "Delaware and Hudson" containing more than 120 short stories will be coming out this fall. He will continue writing books about the history of the railroad and the people that supported it among which are the Engineers, Conductors, Station Agents, Trainmen, Firemen, Station and Train service people. He spoke of the Brotherhood of Railway Firemen and Engineers and the family trees of these four families as they chose their professions, began, were promoted, honored and retired with many wonderful photographs of the era.

John was pleased to receive a UVR&M hat and appreciation from all who attended as questions were answered and refreshments were served.

Our records show that John has been our guest speaker on five occasions and has been a member of the UVR&Museum since 1996.

John lived in Franklin, NY when he joined us. He has been instrumental in bringing railroad "buffs" to visit our beautiful historic board and batten depot with its huge beams and to see our Museum as it has grown through the years. Some of John Taibi's books published over the years include; "O & W" The long life and slow Death of the New York, Ontario & Western

Railway"; "Remembering the New York Ontario & Western Railway (Oswego to Sidney & Branches)" Rails Along the Oriskany" and John's fifth book on the O & W was "The Ontario & Western Northern Division"

On July 16th we expect John Taibi along with Wm. Young, author of many books to include UV the Life and Times of a Small Railroad; Short Line Odyssey; The Tunkhannock; and Starrucca Bridge of Stone; Mrs. Fred Pugh whose late husband wrote Days Along the Buckwheat and Dandelion; Jim Loudon, author of several books to include Railroading Along the Upper Susquehanna and The Oneonta Roundhouse; Rev. Ernest Clemens book, The Baby Railroad, is a good purchase for a donation of \$5.00. He has given us a hand full of the little books, very interesting and informative with pictures. Ernie wrote the booklet from an article in Fortune Magazine dated August, 1938. Ernie and the others will be at this meeting so stop by and visit with our many authors and buy the books you need to add to your collections.

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Reports from other Stations....

Utica & Mohawk Valley Chapter of the NRHS Inc.

Meetings held on Fridays at 7 pm at the Zion Lutheran Church Hall on French & Burrstone Roads in New Hartford NY. Next Scheduled regular meeting is September 9th (starting a new season) with Wayne Freed presenting a program of rail entrepreneur and steam aficionado Ross Rowland. Before the new season starts they will have the annual track-side picnic at the Utica Union Station, Friday August 12th at 5:30 pm. Adding to their special events, they are planning a one-day bus excursion to follow railroads, live or abandoned, in our local area. John Taibi will be aboard as our knowledgeable and entertaining tour guide, as he was on our 2010 excursion to Oswego, NY. It will take place on a Saturday in October, and other details of destination, routing and cost will be made known as they're firmed up. All that went on the Oswego trip last year enjoyed it immensely!

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Utica & Mohawk Annual Picnic

The big picnic of the year for our neighboring Railroad Chapter will be held on the track side just a few feet from the busy Utica Union Station's tracks. Each year they enjoy watching all the trains come and go during the evening hours. The UVR&M members are planning to attend this event. Please contact Pat at 847-9484 to let her know that you plan to attend and the dish (food or desert) you are bringing to pass. The Utica chapter will furnish the following; Hamburgers, Hot dogs, sausage, rolls, soft drinks and condiments. An invitation from Harla and Mark Lazur reminding us to join them states ALL ARE WELCOME. Last year the UV members that attended had a great time and really enjoyed seeing the trains, especially how fast the Amtrak trains railed by just a few feet from our picnic grills. Bring your lawn chairs and plan an evening of eating, sharing, and viewing trains and the beautifully restored Utica Union Station.

Notes from here and there!

++ Post card from Lance Erickson reminding us he plans on riding on the New Saratoga and North Creek Rail Road this fall and wondered if any of us were also? Not knowing about this railroad I wrote him and received back a lot of information about the Saratoga and North Creek railroad. See article page 4 "Exciting News"

++Life Member, John Hyde is at Sitrin Health Care Center in New Hartford, NY. We send him Get Well Wishes.. Hope to see you at the Track-side Picnic in Utica on August 12th (Friday) at 5:30 pm.

++From A NEWSLETTER written by Our Ernie Clemens... A husband was trying to console his bride who was in tears because the dog had eaten a whole batch of cookies she had just baked.. He said, "Please don't be upset dear, I'll buy you another dog".

++Extremely interesting rail books were donated by Janet Brand, The Pictorial Encyclopedia of RAILWAYS by Hamilton Ellis, and DOC & SUSIE, The True Story of a Country Physician in the Colorado Rockies, by Virginia Cornell. These books will be in our lending library soon. Our thanks go to Janet for her thoughtfulness. Janet lives in the state of Maine.

++Our Secretary, Laurie Hotaling has moved to Norwich, has a new phone

number and address. We wish her well in her new home and are grateful that she is going to keep being our Secretary. She will be at the railroad meetings and asked me to give you her new phone #607-334-4364.

++Make sure you stop by our UV Railroad booth at the Otsego County Fair the first week of August and see the UVR& Museum coal Crystal Gardens growing and pick up the directions for growing these interesting crystal flowers.

++Bring your children to have their picture taken on "the train that could" float on July 16th at our Depot from 2 to 4 p m. Christmas in July all day Saturday will feature many interesting events. You can

decorate a tree and win one of many prizes, Bring your own decorated tree for the competition or decorate a tree already waiting for you at the Museum by calling Pat at 847-9484 and reserving the tree in your name. Trees can be decorated on Friday at the depot or brought in all decorated on Saturday before noon. There will be several guest authors and their books in attendance from 2 to 4 rain or shine! **FREE TOURS** from 1 to 5 Saturday the 16th.

Grand opening of our new Scale Model Train Display Exhibit. Come and watch the trains run thru the mountains, the tunnels and rolling fields, it must be seen to be appreciated. Children as well

as adults will really enjoy this new display.

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NEW MEMBERS

Warren S. Genung, Norwich
MarieDunckel, New Berlin,NY
Anna C. Lien, Bridgewater, NY; Dorothy Pierce, New Berlin, NY

NEW FAMILY MEMBERS

David and Jane Mondore, New Berlin; Cynthia Berger, Sherburne NY; Richard Sheeman, New Berlin, NY; Tullio Giovanniello, Farmingville, NY.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS Janet Brand, Brunswick Maine; William Young Susquehanna PA; Ethan Brand, Roscommon, Michagan.

RENEWED MEMBERS

James Doran, Campell Hall; Warren Prentice, SC; Bruce Moskos and family, Mt. Vision, NY; Chris Lord, Gilbertsville NY; Gordon, Davis,Liverpool NY;Donald & Betty Gibson, Cairo, NY; Jeffrey Hepola, Cassville NY;Charles Sage Oneona, NY; Franis Parker, Muncie IN; Robert Donnelly, Jersey City, NJ; William Wellman, Plattsburg, NY; *to be continued next Pendragon...if you have not paid your dues this year please do so and help us keep railroading alive for future generations in our surrounding area. Form on back page .

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ANNUAL PICNIC

Mark your calendar now . September 3rd Second Annual picnic at Alan Fairbrother's Don't miss it!!!!

**THE OPEN HOUSE AT BRIDGEWATER
HISTORICAL SOCIETY DEPOT**



Bridgewater Historical Society Depot. Right to left Doug Preston, President of Utica & Mohawk Chapter; Harla Lazar, President of Gulf Curve Chapter in Little Falls also Utica & Mohawk Chapter Storekeeper; Mark Lazar, National Director for the Utica & Mohawk Chapter, Utica NY.

Unadilla Valley Railway members attended the open house of the Bridgewater Historical Society on June 19th. It was held at the Bridgewater Union Station Depot and included artifacts from railroads, as well as many interesting items of historical interest. The station once served the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western (on the Richfield Springs branch) and the short line Unadilla Valley Railroad. The depot has been restored by the Bridgewater Historical Society.

The station is located on the north side of Route 20 a short distance east of the intersection with NY Route 8. Several people attended including people from other states including our member William Young from PA. He brought Hank and Roz Sommers from Vestal NY with him. Refreshments were enjoyed by all.

Exciting News from Lance Erickson.....

Lance sends word about his hopes of riding the New Saratoga and North Creek Railroad this fall..

The first two passenger cars for a scenic Saratoga and North Creek Railway have reached the Spa City, and locomotives are on their way. Meanwhile, train operator Iowa Pacific Holdings LLC signed a formal contract with rail line owners, the town of Corinth and Warren County, at the historic North Creek train station in early June. Tourist trains are expected to start running sometime during the first two weeks of July, 2011. "We're still working through the regulatory approvals," said Ed Ellis, president of Chicago-based Iowa Pacific. "Everybody's working to get it done. We want to do it right"

Iowa Pacific operates several other excursion trains,

primarily in western U.S.

The two dome cars that arrived in Saratoga Springs this week are from its West Texas & Lubbock Railway. Two locomotives are en route from Colorado and East St. Louis and should arrive early next week. A third locomotive is currently being worked on at Rock Island, Ill.

Eventually, the overall operation will have four or five locomotives and five passenger cars. The scenic railroad's website (www.snrr.com) is available for viewing, but it is still under construction. People may also visit the website www.iowapacific.com.

When this excursion train starts operating, the members of the UVRs&M will plan a group ride.

Lance Erickson lives in Gilbert, Iowa and has been associated with our Museum since 1996. Thanks for the exciting information Lance.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

One of the biggest events of the year is this MONTH 7-16-11. We are having a full day of exciting events to be held at the Unadilla Valley Railway Museum Depot. Saturday is also New Berlin Quilt day.. Stop at the Masonic Temple and get directions to the museum and be the first to arrive with that paper and win one of the special prizes; A Gift Certificate for Remember When, A Pizza from New York Pizzeria in New Berlin, A year free membership to the Unadilla Valley Railway Museum, A UV T-Shirt, Cap and more. See the Railroad Coal Magic Crystal Gardens growing and have your child's picture taken with "The Train That Could". Spend time watching the newly installed model trains and have a free tour of the Museum with our Special Conductor George Wolfangle.

HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY AMTRAK!!

May 1st marked the 40th anniversary of the creation of AMTRAK or the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (NRPC, or "Railpax," as it was originally called), as a direct result of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970. For an experiment that was (deliberately) designed to fail, it is amazing that it has actually survived for the last 40 years! May there be many more anniversaries and may they and the future of AMTRAK be brighter than any of us could ever hope for.

THE BABY RAILROAD

BY

Ernest Clemens

Last issue of the Pendragon told about Rev. Ernest Clemens booklet. We sold out right away of the little picture booklet about the Short line railroads and asked Ernie if he had more. Today he brought 25 more copies that he ran off on his home equipment and donated them so more people interested could not be left out. This less than 20 pages with 25 pictures taken in part from the 1938 Fall issue of the Fortune Magazine is indeed interesting reading.

The booklet is centered about the Unadilla Valley. As history this 72 year old glimpse into our short line railroad does bring back a lot of memories. The following is from his first page. "Those of us who have lived, and seen the "Dilly Dally" rolling up, or down the valley are warmed with nostalgia. We can call to mind the sound of the mournful whistle, the wafting smoke spiraling up and trailing back and dissipating in the air, the "clacking" of the wheels as they passed over each rail joint and the wave of the engineer, fireman or brakeman as you passed the train or it passed you...and very seldom the latter.

Can the reader recall the number of blasts from that whistle when the train was backing up?

Can you remember the sound of that whistle as a warning when the train approached a crossing?

Did you ever have to wait as the slow moving engine, string of cars and caboose crossed at Sweets crossing... or the joy and laughter of the kids in the car as the train ran parallel to route 8 along side your car? Or, can you remember riding from any point on the line to another and feel the rocking and rolling of that passenger car, or the soot seeping in around the windows and doors?

If you have enjoyed this bit of yesterday in your memory read on...This era will never return. We have lost so much from "days that used to be." Businesses that once flourished have closed their doors forever. Those of you who have "come to age" have something that our youth can never know, and even if your bones creak and rheumatism takes its toll on you everyday, you are blessed to have known those wonderful days."

Editors note: We will be glad to take your order and mail the booklet to you for a donation to the UVRS & Museum of \$5.00. Mail a request and \$5.00 to UVRS & Museum at Box 751 New Berlin, NY 13411 or Call Pat Gifford at 607-847-9484 and leave a message.

Grand Opening of our New Model Train JULY 16th



Unadilla Valley Railway Museum and Society Membership Form

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ **State** _____
Zip. _____ **Phone** _____
e-mail address _____

Single member.....\$15.00 per year.....()
Family Member...\$25.00 per year.....()
Single Life\$225.00 per year.....()
Life Member.....\$250.00(Family Life).....()
Donation only.....\$_____ Thank You!

**Join the 161 people
 who are or have been
 members and receive
 our newsletter and
 enjoy our many events
 each year. Families &
 children are welcome.**

***All joining now or renewing will cover you until 1-1-2013 A member
 ship card along with the Pendragon publications will be sent to you.***

The UVRM is a 501 © 3 tax exempt organization chartered by the NIAS board of Regents and is tax free.
 Send To: Gladys Slentz, Treasurer, of UVRM&M PO Box 751, New Berlin, NY 13411.

To:



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