



SPARKS AND CINDERS

Our purpose as members of Wisconsin Chapter—National Railway Historical Society is to gather, preserve and disseminate information, both historic and current, pertaining to railroading in Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest.

Since 1950



Soo Line #1003 2-8-2 Mikado runs light and backwards towards Burnett, WI for coal loading on snowy November 2 2019. Photo by Elijah Jackson

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Wisconsin Chapter Meeting Schedule



Friday December 6, 2019 Green Bay Western & Tour of the Twin Ports by Jerry Krug
Friday January 3, 2020 To Be Announced
Friday February 7, 2020 To Be Announced

Green Bay and Western and Twin Ports

Jerry Krug will be presenting a two part program. The first half will be an introduction to the Green Bay & Western Railroad. The predecessor of the Green Bay & Western Railroad was chartered in 1866; eventually the GB&W built west across Wisconsin and over the Mississippi River to Winona, MN. To the east, the GB&W reached Lake Michigan at Kewaunee and Sturgeon Bay. The GB&W operated independently until 1993, when the Wisconsin Central acquired and assimilated it. The Canadian National continues to operate sections of this line, particularly at Plover and points west to Arcadia, WI. Late-era operations and motive power (Alcos!) will be presented via a slide show. In the second portion, Jerry will present highlights of several visits to the Twin Ports and beyond starting in 2004. While Duluth Missabe & Iron Range ("DMIR") power and operations will be featured, snippets of North Shore Mining, Erie Mining, Canadian National, BNSF, and Union Pacific also will be presented. This will be more of a travelogue using digital shots rather than a presentation focused on a railroad or location.

Monthly meetings are held in the lower level of the North Shore Congregational Church at 7330 N Santa Monica Dr. in Fox Point. The church is handicap accessible. Refreshments are available for a donation. For more up to date information on meetings and speakers, and also any weather cancellations, check the chapter's webpage at www.nrhwis.org.

Doors open by 7:00 pm, so arrive early to socialize. The meeting will start at 7:30pm sharp with introductions and railroad-related news and announcements. Please bring a friend!

If you have a program idea please contact Program Chair Dave Nelson at engine1385@aol.com

Sparks & Cinders is published by and for the members of the Wisconsin Chapter, Inc., National Railway Historical Society monthly except for July and August. The Chapter meets at the North Shore Congregational Church, 7330 N Santa Monica Blvd, Fox Point, Wisconsin, on the first Friday of each month, except May, July and August, at 7:30 p.m. The Wisconsin Chapter is a not-for-profit corporation, affiliated with the National Railway Historical Society and the Wisconsin Historical Society, organized to preserve the history of railroading in Wisconsin and the surrounding area. Additional information is available on the chapter's website, www.nrhwis.org.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of railroading who is also a member of the NRHS. Paying \$20 annually to the Chapter will entitle you receive Sparks & Cinders. Paying the National dues of \$50 to the NRHS will entitle you to membership and subscriptions to the NRHS Bulletin and NRHS News. Full NRHS membership is required to participate in chapter business discussions and to vote in annual chapter elections. All address changes should be sent to Tom Hoffmann, treasurer@nrhwis.org (or via USPS at 1102 Aspen Dr, Waukesha, WI 53188).

Wisconsin Chapter officers are: Mike Yuhas, President (president@nrhwis.org); Keith Schmidt, Vice-President; Tom Marcussen, Secretary; Tom Hoffmann, Treasurer. Directors: Dan Grudzielanek, Ralph McClure, Andrew Roach, Cathy Wegner and Neal Wegner.

Contributions to Sparks & Cinders should be sent to Editor Keith Schmidt at editor@nrhwis.org (or USPS at 3286 S Springfield Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53207) by the 15th of the month to be considered for the following month's publication.

All original material published in Sparks & Cinders may be reprinted in other railfan publications provided credit is given to "Sparks & Cinders, Wisconsin Chapter, NRHS." If an author is indicated for the item or article, credit must also be given to the author. The views, opinions, and comments published in Sparks & Cinders are those of the authors and do not reflect the policies of the Wisconsin Chapter or the National Railway Historical Society. Copyright ©2019, Wisconsin Chapter, Inc.,

Meeting Summary November 2019

President Mike Yuhas opened the meeting at 7:30pm. 26 members and guests signed the register. The meeting featured The Hop, Milwaukee's streetcar at one year. Below is a photo from the meeting and the guests presenters that night.



The November 2019 NRHS Wisconsin chapter meeting featured an informative program by people involved with Milwaukee's modern streetcar, The Hop, on the first anniversary of service to the downtown area. We heard from Terry Mulcahy, general manager of Transdev's Milwaukee operations; Alisha Adaway, Brookville Equipment Corporation's maintenance manager for Hop vehicles, and Milwaukee alderman Bob Bauman. They are shown here with chapter president Mike Yuhas. Photo by Dan Grudzielanek.

Merry Christmas and

Notes from the Prexy

Not much of an autumn this year, huh? Luckily I spent a few days "up north" in early October and saw a bit of color. Didn't seem to be as brilliant as fall 2018, but it was a nice trip anyway. Here's a photo of a northbound CN train crossing the Chipewewa River north of Ladysmith on October 9:



An important fall activity was the October 26 meeting of the Chapter's board. Among the items discussed was the proposal to hold additional meetings away from southeast Wisconsin, in order to bring our programs to folks who might not otherwise be exposed. These would be in addition to our monthly Fox Point meetings. The purpose would be to stimulate interest and membership elsewhere in the state. Ralph McClure, Dan Grudzielanek, and Mike Yugas will explore options.

The board discussed moving the chapter's annual banquet from May to June. There was general agreement to try that in 2020. We'll let you know as soon as details are finalized.

And finally, Tom Hoffmann announced that he'd like to retire as chapter treasurer, a post he's held since 1986.

Board meetings are open to all NRHS Wisconsin Chapter members. Notice was served via email to all members in good standing.

Have you ridden The Hop? That was the question of the month at our regular November membership meeting, when we welcomed three speakers involved with operation of Milwaukee's modern streetcar. It was a lively (and lengthy) meeting!

Join us in December for Jerry Krug's two-part program (details elsewhere in this issue). In January, Tom Hoffmann presents another of his look-back year in review programs.

Thank you again for your membership in NRHS and the Wisconsin Chapter. Be safe out there!



The Extra Board - Upcoming Events

NRHS National Convention

www.nrhs.com

2020 No Announcement Regarding Location

TMER&THS (Traction and Bus Club)

www.tmer.org

Waterstone Bank

Saturday December 21, 2019 - Members Christmas Party

Bring a dish to pass and enjoy a variety of presentations

WISE Division NMRA www.wisedivision.org

No Meets Currently Scheduled

Watch for Updates.

C&NW Historical Society

www.cnwhs.org

National Convention

May 28- May 31 Mankato, MN

Milwaukee Road Historical Association

www.mrha.com

2020 National Convention - Elgin, IL No Dates

June 18-21, 2020

Soo Line Historical and Technical Society

www.sooline.org

Did You Know ?

Photos and Article by Dave Nelson

One of the most famous and iconic freight cars in American railroading was the unique 70 ton "battleship" coal gondola of the Chicago & Illinois Midland Railway. Did you know that some of the last examples of the 1,000 gondolas built for (and mostly designed by) the C&IM by Pullman-Standard, in four batches between 1927 and 1951, ran their last miles in Milwaukee into the 1980s?

The C&IM was the brainchild of the great Samuel Insull - yes, the man behind the North Shore and South Shore electric railroads. The C&IM had a single reason for being: to bring coal from southern Illinois to Insull's Chicago Edison Power Company. It was a Class 1 railroad stretching from coalfields south of Springfield, IL to Pekin, IL, using trackage rights to East Peoria and Peoria. The coal was either transloaded to river barges in Havana IL or continued on friendly connecting railroads with trainload after trainload of coal sent to Chicago. The C&IM served other industries on its route, and even ran some passenger trains, but the essence of the C&IM was to be an endless coal conveyor to Chicago, and their specially designed 70-ton gondolas were an integral part of the operation. With their lowered center floor and center beams that protruded into the payload space, the C&IM 70-ton gondolas were deliberately designed to be so distinctive and unusual that no connecting railroad would be tempted to divert the cars to its own on-line shippers. This allowed the C&IM to always use home-road cars and saved the C&IM from having to pay to utilize off-line hopper or gondola cars to haul coal. It was a tightly integrated vertical supply chain dedicated to the shipment of coal.

Eventually by the 1970s the coal gondolas were wearing out and began to be retired in large quantities. The story should have ended there -- but the cars still had a few miles left in them and Miller Compressing of Milwaukee, which was among other things in the business of scrapping obsolete railroad rolling stock, obtained and utilized a number of ex-C&IM gondolas for the shipment of scrap metal. Miller Compressing even had its own CGOX reporting marks for its rag-tag fleet of beat-up gondolas at least theoretically in interchange service.

In 1985 I was astounded to find ex-C&IM gondolas near the Miller Compressing site on Jones Island. In just the right light one could still make out the huge "C & I M" letters on the sides. I assumed these antique cars were in captive service moving scrap metal around the various Miller Compressing facilities (using their blue Fairbanks Morse switchers that used to be a common sight on Jones Island in the 1980s). But also in 1985 I was lucky enough to catch one of the CGOX ex-C&IM cars on the C&NW main line running through South Milwaukee at Rawson Avenue, carrying a load of metal turnings from some south side factory or machine shop back to Miller Compressing. The photos tell the story ... of how a series of specialized coal cars designed under the mandate of the great rail magnate Sam Insull himself came to run out their last miles in Milwaukee, hidden in plain sight in the lowly service of Miller Compressing, but also seeing service on Class 1 rails, perhaps for one last time.



Above is C&IM Gondola in 1985 at Burcyrus Erie in South Milwaukee. Below is another C&IM gondola this time Miller Compressing near Jones Island in Milwaukee in 1986.



Soo #2719 sold to Duluth Museum

"Unable to find a better offer or an affordable way to return it to Eau Claire, the city decided to sell its historic steam locomotive to a Duluth, Minn. museum for \$8. The City Council exercised its right to buy the locomotive, which had long resided in Carson Park, for \$4 last year but voted 10-0 Tuesday to sell Soo Line No. 2719 and its tender to the Lake Superior Railroad Museum.

"Over the past 15 months of city ownership, the locomotive has been stored at the museum," city attorney Stephen Nick noted. The locomotive had been on display at the museum since 2006 under a prior agreement with the Locomotive and Tower Preservation Fund, a local volunteer group that had refurbished the engine after it was taken out of Carson Park in 1996. Ownership of No. 2719 went to the city in 2015, and the City Council opted to sell it to the museum for \$2. But the city retained its right to buy back the locomotive and opted to do that in July 2018 in the hopes of returning it to Eau Claire for display.

Councilman David Strobel had been the main supporter for returning the locomotive and tender to Eau Claire, but relented as cost estimates for transporting No. 2719 grew. "All of them well exceeded the \$100,000 budget," Nick said Tuesday. Leaving office in April after serving six years on the council, Strobel had hoped the city could retain ownership of the locomotive and lease it to a museum where it would reside.

But Nick said the museum didn't want that arrangement. The city also sought other offers for the locomotive, with some showing interest in it, but nothing materialized. "The outside parties never made any formal proposals of any sort," Nick said. Councilman

Jeremy Gragert had co-sponsored Strobel's push to get the locomotive back to the Chippewa Valley and acknowledged the efforts of his former colleague and city staff that tried to accomplish that. "A lot of different options were explored but none of them were viable with the budget we had," Gragert said. He added that the train museum was very ambitious in its desire to keep the locomotive there.

"Ultimately it is probably in the best interests of the locomotive itself that it stay in a museum," Gragert concluded. The city's agreement to sell No. 2719 does mention that it be preserved as a historic artifact and the hope that it could be restored to working order again. The steam locomotive was built in 1923 and operated until the mid-1950s. It came out of retirement in 1959 and hauled the last steam trains on the Soo Line tracks. It was given to the city of Eau Claire and was on display in Carson Park from 1960 to 1996. In 1994, it was the first train locomotive in Wisconsin to be named to the National Register of Historic Places." - *From Eau Claire Leader - Telegram by Charles Kuehn as printed in Dick Wilson's Brass Switchkey*

Great Tri - State Rail Sale

Hobby Sale - Model Railroad Flea Market - Swap Meet
300 Vendor Tables

When Saturday January 25, 2020 9am to 3pm
Where LaCrosse Center 2nd and Pearl Streets
La Crosse, WI

Cost \$5.00 Children under 12 are FREE

For information contact
The 4000 Foundation Limited
PO Box 3411
La Crosse, WI 54602
608-781-9383 or 608-498-9522
www.4000foundation.com

Dues Renewal Reminder and Contact Information Update

This form is for the renewal of Chapter Dues Only. National Dues must be paid directly to NRHS. Paying National Dues can be done online at www.nrhs.com. Follow the directions on the webpage. Also dues can be mailed to the National Railway Historical Society Attn Membership Renewal PO Box 31074 St Louis, MO 63131.

Chapter Dues are \$20.00 for the year. This includes a subscription to Sparks and Cinders. Please include this form with payment. The chapter is trying to utilize contact information especially email to keep people up to date on changes and important information. Thank You

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Email Address _____

Payment of only Chapter Dues can be made to our Treasurer Tom Hoffmann at Chapter meetings or by mailing this form to him at Tom Hoffmann 1102 Aspen Dr., Waukesha, WI 53188. Please fill out this form whether mailing in dues or paying person. Thank You.

A Steamy Seasons Greetings

Most of the talk about the steam engines lately involves the Big Boy. The Big Boy running again is a big deal. However SE Wisconsin has its own steam engine. The Soo Line #1003 which sits in Hartford, WI at the Auto Museum is definitely a steam engine to be proud of. The 106 year old 2-8-2 Mikado was steamed up November 2nd for the 150 Anniversary of the Village of Slinger. Also the #1003 made its annual appearance at the Hartford Christmas Parade on November 9th. Below are some photos taken by a young talented photographer Elijah Jackson. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year !!



From the Archives

December 1954- 65 Years Ago

At the NRHS National business meeting on November 14, The Milwaukee Chapter -NRHS was chosen to host the NRHS National Convention on September 3, 4, and 5, 1955.

December 1959 - 60 Years Ago

The Milwaukee Road and the Rock Island are studying the possibility of merger, it was announced recently. The Milwaukee, with 10,590 miles of track, and the RI, with 7,584 miles, generally run in different areas with the exception of the Chicago and Omaha-Kansas City lines....The Burlington announced recently that it will retire and preserve the original Zephyr No. 9900.

December 1964 - 55 Years Ago

The Annual Chapter Railroadiana Auction was a success, netting some \$27 for the Chapter treasury. A new system for settling accounts will be in place for next year's auction, eliminating some confusion in this year's settlements after the auction.

December 1969 - 50 Years Ago

The annual Chapter election of officers featured a contest for President with Carl Solheim and Larry Trovinger as candidates. After the election, the Chapter sponsored a photo contest which was judged by Bill Rau, Harold Edmonson, and Fred Tonne. The annual auction was again a great success, netting \$74.20 for the Chapter treasury....The Santa Fe announced plans to discontinue the San Francisco Chief effective January 5, 1970. This will leave only the California Zephyr and the City of San Francisco on the Chicago-San Francisco route.

December 1974 - 45 Years Ago

The Milwaukee Road has repainted SD40-2 No. 156 in a red, white, and blue bicentennial paint scheme. Local fans opined that the MILW design was superior to N&W's No. 1776.

December 1979 - 40 Years Ago

The laying of welded rail on the eastbound Milwaukee Road main between Hartland and Elm Grove has been completed and operations are back to normal....President Carter signed "The Milwaukee Road Restructuring Act" on November 4 and the Milwaukee Road is "restoring full operation as fast as operationally possible

December 1984 - 35 Years Ago

Russ Porter's program "Not All Cars Used in Railroad Are Scrapped" highlighted alternative uses for retired railroad equipment....The run of the Heartland Special, the Reagan campaign train which ran on the B&O from Dayton to Perrysburg, Ohio, was chronicled by Dave Ingles, with additional information from the Chessie System....The impending demise of the West Allis Car Station, at 84th & Lapham, was noted.

December 1989 - 30 Years Ago

The Chapter's recent fan trip on the WICT was a complete success - a beautiful fall day and an interesting trip....NORTRAN, the public transportation agency for areas north of Chicago, has proposed running commuter trains on the WC from Des Plaines to Mundelein.

December 1994 - 25 Years Ago

The new Chapter publication, Wisconsin Rails II: A Passage of Time by Bob Baker, was offered for sale at Trainfest. 1,000 hardcover and 2,000 softcover copies have been printed.... Mid-Continent Railway Museum's ex-C&NW No. 1385 once again has sound running gear. Steam Operations Corp. of Birmingham, Alabama, found and repaired 68 cracks in the driving wheel spokes....Norfolk Southern announced that it was discontinuing its 28-year-old steam program effective January 1, 1995. No. 611 will be returned to the Roanoke Transportation Museum. The disposition of No.1218 and passenger cars is pending....New national officers of NRHS are: President Greg Molloy; Vice-President-Public Relations Dick Davis; Secretary David Ackerman; Central Region V-P Robert Ernst.

December 1999 - 20 Years Ago

The Chapter scheduled a railroadiana auction for Friday, December 3. Members were urged to: "Sell - all the old junk that has been gathering dust in your basement. Buy - all that neat stuff from someone else's basement."...Gardner Realty, an affiliate of Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, has purchased the Janesville roundhouse from the estate of the late Glenn Monhart. Janesville is the operating hub for the Southern Division of WSOR....UP announced a two year locomotive re-numbering plan since not enough contiguous number blocks are left to accommodate planned locomotive purchases. Locomotive numbers cannot exceed four digits because of computer system limitations....UP is considering whether to discontinue publication of its wall calendars because of budgetary constraints....The Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society received a \$340,000 USDOT TEA-21 grant to restore ex-NKP 765 to service. The FWRHS must raise \$85,000 in matching funds for the project.

December 2004- 15 Years Ago

The CP Holiday Train visited the area on December 9 and 10.... A man from Alaska was sentenced to four years in prison for making bomb threats against the Empire Builder while it was traveling through Juneau county on July 6 last year....A Pennsylvania woman has sued Norfolk Southern after she was hit by a train. She claimed that the railroad failed to warn pedestrians that trains travel on the tracks. (I don't make this stuff up, folks -ed.)...Lionel LLC filed for bankruptcy on November 15. The filing was prompted by a \$40.8 million judgement against the company for alleged misappropriation of a competitor's designs by a sub contractor....Railroad video produced David Goodheart passed away suddenly on November 10 shortly after a three-day "photo freight" outing he organized with Soo No. 1003 on the WSOR....The B&O Railroad Museum re-opened its doors on November 13. It had been closed since a February 2003 snowstorm caused the roof to collapse on the 1884 roundhouse.

December 2009 - 10 Years Ago

It was announced the Milwaukee Road #261 would be returning to the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, WI after the Friends of the #261 and the Museum couldn't come to terms on a long term lease. The Museum hopes to restore #261 and continue to have the steam locomotive pull excursion trains (note - The Friends of the #261 ended up buying the locomotive from the Museum the following year it has been restored and is running in Minnesota) Warren Buffet announced his Berkshire Hathaway Company is purchasing the BNSF Railroad in its entirety. The deal is said to be valued at 34 billion dollars in equity and 10 billion in BNSF debt.

December 2014 - 5 Years Ago

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has awarded more than \$20.3 million in grants through the Freight Railroad Preservation Program (FRPP). In addition, WisDOT is awarding \$3.8 million in loans through the state's Freight Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program (FRIIP). Recipients of 2014-2015 FRPP grants and FRIIP loans include: Port of Milwaukee - A \$1,449,184 FRPP grant was awarded to cover 80 percent of the costs of a \$1,811,480-reconstruction of the Lake Yard at the Port of Milwaukee facilities on Jones Island. The funds will be used to improve deteriorated tracks. Canadian Pacific and Union Pacific serve the yard and the Port of Milwaukee. The Wisconsin & Southern Railroad received four project awards including: Fairwater to Markesan - A \$4,116,160 FRPP grant and a \$514,520 FRIIP loan was awarded to replace 4,000 ties, five public road crossings and six switches. WSOR will also install 4,000 tons of new ballast with tamping and surfacing, and 7.2 miles of continuously welded rail. The state and the East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium own the Fairwater-Markesan line.

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