

NRHS

WISCONSIN CHAPTER

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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.

Preserving Wisconsin Railroad History for 74 Years

Visit the Chapter Webpage www.nrhwis.org



Soo #213A F7A diesel locomotive at Fond du Lac, 1965. *Photo by Ralph Wehlitz, collection of LSRHA.*

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Wisconsin Chapter Meeting Schedule

Upcoming chapter events

May 3 2024 Paul Swanson presents "Wonderous Wisconsin"

June 7 2024 Bill Edwards presents "Railfan Routes Railcars via Rondout to Resolve Receiver's Remorse"

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. For more up to date information on meetings and speakers, and also any weather cancellations, check the chapter's webpage at www.nrhswis.org.

Doors open by 7:00 pm, so arrive early to socialize. Meetings start at 7:30pm sharp. Please bring a friend! Our meetings are live-streamed on the Zoom platform. Connection details are shared with chapter members and other interested persons via email the day of the meeting, or before. To ensure you are made aware of this info, we must have a working email address on file - send yours to membership@nrhswis.org.

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

The Big Picture is your page!

We've changed the format of the Sparks & Cinders back page, giving us room to run a large photo. Member submissions are solicited. Please send one or two of your outstanding pictures to Keith Schmidt, editor@nrhswis.org.

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 June, 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.nrhswis.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 Mike Yuhas membership@nrhswis.org (or via USPS at PO Box 070758 Milwaukee, WI 53207).

Wisconsin Chapter officers are: Keith Schmidt, President; Ward Wells, Vice-President; Tom Marcussen, Secretary; Tara Grudzielanek, Treasurer. Directors: Dan Grudzielanek, Mike Yuhas, Andrew Roach, Ralph McClure and Neal Wegner.

Contributions to Sparks & Cinders should be sent to Editor Keith Schmidt at editor@nrhswis.org (or USPS at PO Box 070758 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 ©2024, Wisconsin Chapter, Inc., NRHS.

Meeting Summary for April 5 2024

Introduction

President Keith Schmidt ran this meeting from our in-person meeting site in the basement of the North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point. Recording started at 7:28 pm. Keith opened the meeting by bidding all attendees a good evening and welcome at 7:30 pm. We then had 11 in the physical meeting room and about 40 more attending virtually on Zoom.

Announcements

Keith reminded everybody to be safe and use eclipse safety glasses while viewing the (90 per cent in Milwaukee) solar eclipse on Monday, April 8.

Canadian Pacific "Empress" 4-6-4 Hudson-type steam locomotive #2816 will leave Calgary, Alberta on April 24. It will stop in the Twin Cities of Minnesota and in Franklin Park, Illinois (just NW of Chicago). The CP #2816 will be in Franklin Park on May 8. It will be stopping in other cities, with a final destination of Mexico City. The full route, list of stops, and precise schedule are not yet released. Nothing has been said about its return trip.

We are planning an East Troy dinner train, to be followed by a night photo session, sometime this coming summer. We are still working out the details. There will be two entrée choices for dinner. This a full-service dinner—on a moving trolley. It will be pricey. Members should be prepared for sticker shock. There will be three options—for the dinner train only, the night photo session only, or both. We may be offering a discount for members.

Next year is our 75th (diamond) anniversary. Drew Halverson, who designed our current Chapter logo, visible on the front page of Sparks & Cinders, came up with some preliminary ideas for a special 75th anniversary logo. Mike Yuhas presented one of those. The design is suggestive of the diamond crossing of two railroad tracks. It was designed with the intent that it would look good on special anniversary "swag." Mike presented some sample images of how it might look on a coffee mug or a T-shirt.

From the President

On Friday, May 3, Paul Swanson will present "Wondrous Wisconsin—from Benton to Superior." This will be a buffet collection of images, from various different photographers, from the archives of the Lake States Railroad Historical Association in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

On Friday, June 7, Bill Edwards will present "Railfan Routes Rail Cars via Rondout to Resolve Receiver's Remorse." This will chronicle his interesting 993 experience in trying to reduce rail transit times from Chicago-area steel mills to his Minneapolis distribution center.

Our first meeting of the next season, on Friday, September 6, will be Favorite Slide (now digital image) Night, per our usual tradition.

There are three ways to renew (or join) the Wisconsin Chapter. The first way is very easy. Go to the back of the room, and pay the 20.00 in annual dues (by cash or check) tonight. The second way is on-line payment via our website at nrhswis.org. That second option includes an extra \$1.00 fee for credit card processing costs. The third way is to send a \$20.00 check to Wisconsin Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 070758, Milwaukee, WI 53207.

Keith again turned the podium over to Mike Yuhas. Mike seconded the membership message above. If you are not currently a member, and see value in what we are doing, please consider joining us. Dues payments support Chapter meetings like this one, other activities and publications. Your support is much appreciated.

Presentation

Mike Yuhas then introduced Ed Koehler. They were both on Long Island, unknown to each other, decades ago. Ed joined our Chapter, and Mike re-joined the Long Island Sunrise Chapter, remotely via Zoom during the 2020 corona virus pandemic. Ed will present "A Glance at the New York, Ontario, & Western," which the US Bankruptcy Court ordered abandoned on March 29, 1957. That was the largest single rail abandonment in US history up to that date. Ed has been a member of the Ontario & Western Railway Historical Society since 1975. The latest invitation (sent out on Thursday, April 4, at 5:40 pm) to this meeting included a link to 18 pages with a map, station list, historical summary, and equipment rosters for the NYO&W. That link is still active. His presentation included slides, video, a lot of historical notes and some music. There were then 11 in-person attendees in the church basement. There was a peak of 40 devices in the Zoom meeting room. Subtracting the one device in the church basement tonight yielded a total peak attendance of 50.

Discussion Group

The recording stopped at 9:02 pm. Mike Yuhas and Ward Wells took over as Zoom hosts, so that the physical meeting room could be closed up. An informal on-line discussion group on various railroad subjects continued until about 9:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Thomas W. Marcussen

Wisconsin Chapter Secretary

April showers bring May flowers. It has been raining this April and likely flowers will bloom in May. A few other things are happening in May. The complete schedule for the CP #2816 Final Spike tour was just released. You can see the full schedule on Page 4. It has been almost 17 years since "The Empress" has been in the area. Who knows when it will be back again.

Then in June the UP #4014 "Big Boy" will be traveling west to California and back through Ogden UT where it was first on display as part of the 150th Anniversary of the golden spike in 2019.

Locally the Milwaukee County Zoo steam locomotives are making their trips to the Riverside and Great Northern Railroad in the Wisconsin Dells. There the two steamers will be reunited with other of Sandley built 15 inch gauge steam locomotives.

Check out the East Troy Railroad Museum they are starting up the season again. They will be having some special events including a Railfan Day on Saturday June 22nd. Railfan Day includes most the museums equipment running. Plus a special "Behind the Scenes" ticket will be available which includes special tours of the barns and maintenance facility. It's going to be a great summer. "Get Busy Livin"

Wisconsin Great Northern acquires Steam Locomotive

The Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad has added a steam locomotive to its expanding roster. Former Duluth & Northeastern 2-8-0 No. 27 will be moved from its display site at the Carlton County Fairgrounds in Barnum, Minn., where it has been displayed since 1968.

Wisconsin Great Northern, known for its ongoing restoration of the Mark Twain Zephyr, acquired the locomotive from Carlton County, which wanted to dispose of the Consolidation, as it was deteriorating and the county could no longer afford its upkeep. It offered the locomotive free of charge to any party that would pay for moving it, but said it might scrap the 2-8-0 if it could not find a new home. WGN stepped in.

"I had heard a grapevine rumor that the locomotive was in danger of being scrapped because it had been offered to museums in the area and they were not able to take on the process of moving the locomotive," WGN President Greg Vreeland said in a phone interview with Trains News Wire. "I called the president of the Carlton County Fair Association board and he told me indeed they were looking for it to be removed one way or another.

"The important part at this point, and job No. 1, is securing and moving the locomotive. After we complete our current project, the Mark Twain Zephyr, we will then thoroughly examine No. 27, with an option to restore her to operation." No. 27 was built by Alco-Pittsburg for the Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway in June 1907 as No. 348. It became Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railway No. 348 in the 1937 merger of the Duluth, Missabe & Northern and the Spirit Lake Transfer Railway. DM&IR sold the engine in 1955 to short line Duluth & Northeastern of Cloquet, Minn., where it was renumbered 27. D&NE was well known to steam fans as one of the last short line railroads in the United States operating steam locomotives, not converting to diesel operation until 1964. After dieselization, No. 27 was stored in Cloquet until it was donated to Carlton County, Minn. *Courtesy Kalmbach Media TRAINS Newswire*

Friday May 3rd Wondrous Wisconsin with Paul Swanson from Lake States Railway Historical Association

Join us on Friday May 3 2024 for another great presentation. Our presenter will be Paul Swanson President of the Lake States Railway Historical Association. Paul will be presenting "Wondrous Wisconsin—From Benton to Superior". The program will feature several different photographers and eras of Wisconsin railroading from the collection of LSRHA. For more information about the Lake States Railway Historical Association check out www.lsrha.org

Join us in person in the lower level of the North Shore Congregational Church at 7330 N Santa Monica Dr. in Fox Point. Doors open at 7pm for socializing and the program begins at 7:30pm. Or join via Zoom. Contact membership@nrhswis.org to receive notice of the meeting and the link to the meeting.



C&NW turntable and depot at Benton, Wisc, 1947. Photo by F. R. Ritzman, collection of LSRHA.

Upcoming NRHS National Events

Here's some advance notice on 2024 NRHS events - save the dates!

NRHS is holding an annual conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in May. Advisory Council and NRHS Board meetings are scheduled for Sunday, May 5. A special inspection trip on Iowa Interstate is being planned for Monday, May 6. The trip will include a tour of the IAIS locomotive shop and a nearly 80-mile rare-mileage trip on a portion of the former Rock Island mainline.

The NRHS annual convention will take place in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, August 26-31. Included are trips to Strasburg (a ride on the Strasburg Railroad and a visit to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania), the East Broad Top, a trip behind Reading 4-8-4 2102, a meeting day, and more.

These opportunities are open only to members of the national NRHS organization. All NRHS members will receive full details of the events. To join NRHS, visit www.nrhs.com.

Canadian Pacific #2816 "The Empress"

The Canadian Pacific #2816 4-6-4 Hudson "The Empress" will be pulling the "Final Spike" tour in April and May of 2024. The Final Spike tour celebrates the merger of the Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern railroads into the CPKC. The #2816 will depart Calgary Alberta Canada on April 26 and conclude in Mexico City Mexico. Below are the dates in Wisconsin and neighboring states. Exact times are not known.

May 2nd Glenwood City MN to St Paul MN
May 3rd St Paul MN Event
May 5th St Paul MN to Portage WI
May 6th Portage WI to Bensenville IL
May 8th Franklin Park IL Event

Some local spots #2816 will run through in the other direction. I don't believe #2816 has ever run southbound except from Sturtevant WI. Photos by Keith Schmidt



Waterford Ave Milwaukee WI June 16 2004



Hawley Road near Saz's in Wauwatosa WI June 16 2004



Brookfield WI June 16 2004. Can't get this shot anymore.

What's Going to Happen to Me

In January 2023 the COFCO sold the grain elevator on Milwaukee' Jones Island to Ozinga Concrete. Ozinga has not announced plans for the property. Ozinga did say it would no longer be used for grain storage. It was also known as Continental Grain and Nidera. Not sure about the fate of STBX #210. The STBX #210 has been the switcher at the elevator since 2014.

In 2014 the #210 replaced RLCX #1063 an Alco S2. In January 2015 the RLCX was scrapped in place at the elevator. Hopefully the same fate doesn't await #210.

STBX #210 is an EMD SW8. It was built in 1952 for the Colorado Wyoming Railroad. It has served the elevator well for the last 10 years. In March 2024 I decided I needed to get some shots of the #210 before it moved or something worse would happen. The locomotive is not in a very accessible location unless you can provide aerial surveillance. That's what I did. It was probably the most careful I've had to fly my drone yet.

There were wires on both sides. Plus a large grain elevator and a locomotive. Below are the results of my aerial photography of the elevator and #210. Hopefully #210 your future will be a good one. By Keith Schmidt



New UP bridge over I-43 in Glendale

by Mike Yuhás

As motor vehicle traffic in the Milwaukee area continues to grow, the four lane (two each direction) Interstate 43 highway north of Glendale has become more congested. Wisconsin DOT recognized the restriction and in 2014 began planning to widen the freeway to six lanes between Glendale and Grafton. One of the biggest impediments was the Union Pacific (former Chicago & North Western) bridge over the freeway north of Bender Road. When the bridge was built to accommodate the freeway, planners envisioned the need for only two lanes each direction. So, in order to accommodate the widened freeway, an entirely new bridge was built and recently placed in service. Here are some then-and-now photos by Wisconsin Chapter members.



An aerial overview of the old bridge, looking north, on the morning of June 2, 2017. The train is the Sheboygan wayfreight, which, at that time, ran five nights a week from Butler to Sheboygan and return. Photo by Mike Yuhás.



On December 30, 2005, a set of light engines heads north toward Belgium to retrieve some stored hoppers. This photo, looking west, was taken from the sidewalk of Santa Monica Blvd., about 1.3 miles south of the Wisconsin Chapter's meeting venue. Photo by Mike Yuhás.



A similar view showing the new track alignment immediately to the north (right) of the existing track. November 19, 2023. Photo by Joe Kmoch.



The old bridge being removed on January 11, 2024. Photo by Dave Rasmussen.



An aerial view showing Santa Monica Road on April 13, 2024. The track is in place on the new alignment. Photo by Mike Yuhás.



The new bridge, looking north, on April 13, 2024. The roadway between the west (left) abutment and the first pier is Jean Nicolet Road, two lanes. In the space between the first and second bridge piers are the temporary alignment of two southbound and two northbound lanes of I43; when road construction is complete, the three I43 southbound lanes will occupy this space. The northbound three lanes of I43 will be routed between the second and third piers. Port Washington Road is between the third pier and east abutment, and will be expanded to four lanes by the conclusion of the project. Photo by Mike Yuhás.

From the Archives

May 1954—70 Years Ago

As a special sort of prelude to our coming Milwaukee Road trip, we have scheduled a joint meeting with one of the groups co-sponsoring the excursion. We will meet with the Museum Group of the Wisconsin Centennial, Inc., at the Finney Neighborhood Library on May 19....Two rail-road films will be shown: "Modern Coal Burning Steam Locomotives" (Norfolk & Western) and a Milwaukee Road film, probably "Hiawathas are Rolling"

May 1959 - 65 Years Ago

"The Milwaukee Railroad and Swimming Pool Company" After a winter of snow, snow, and more snow, with resultant train delays and cancellations not seen since the winter of 1936, the local railroads then suffered a plague of rather damp operations as the winter's accumulation of snow began to melt. Herewith is Jim Scribbins' account of the recent unpleasantness: Friday, April 3, No. 4 was the last train over the main line. That morning, the marsh at Reeseville over-flowed and we went under 17 inches of water. Since the track through there has been elevated about 1 and 1/2 feet in the past several years, you can imagine the situation. That day's Hi's, 2 and 16, went from Portage via Madison and Janesville to Chicago; Milwaukee passengers were brought by chartered bus from Madison. Hi's 5 and 15 went via the Northern Division to Portage. We had Milwaukee make-ups on 16 and 2, also for 58 to take care of Superior 14's passengers. Regular 58 was the only train to operate East via the Northern, late, of course. No. 57 went over the Northern.

May 1964 - 60 Years Ago

The bulk of this issue was made up of a listing showing the disposition of rolling stock of the Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railway compiled by member Lowell H. Rott, then of East Troy. The listing ran six pages and nearly 200 cars, of which approximately 40 were saved by various individuals, museums, and companies.

May 1969 - 55 Years Ago

Thirty-two cars of a Soo Line freight derailed at Allenton on April 15, on April 20 three units of a southbound freight derailed three miles north of Allenton, and on April 24, 15 cars of a southbound freight derailed a mile north of the April 20 incident. Three wrecks in nine days on five miles of track!....UP steam loco-motive No. 8444 will be used to pull the High Iron Co.'s train on the UP to Ogden, Utah, for the Golden Spike Centennial on May 10. Ex-NKP No. 759 will pull the train from Buffalo to Kansas City

May 1974—50 Years Ago

The Mid-Continent Railway Museum will possibly have five steam locomotives available for service when the 1974 season opens on May 25. They include ex-C&NW No. 1385; Western Coal & Coke No. 1; D&R No. 9; 0-4-0 saddletank switcher No. 6; and W&OV No.1....A hearing was held by the ICC on March 12 in Green Bay regarding the possible abandonment of ferry service to Kewaunee and Manitowoc by the Ann Arbor Rail-road....Amtrak has purchased 23 Milwaukee Road coaches

May 1979—45 Years Ago

The Milwaukee Road has been operating single track from Watertown to Brookfield account track work on the Eastward main. Since there are no passing sidings between Brookfield and Watertown, and the line is only signaled in one direction, there has been considerable traffic congestion in the area....Recent flooding on the Mississippi has caused considerable problems for Amtrak. Amtrak's Chicago-New Orleans Panama Lim-it has been the most severely affected.

May 1984 - 40 Years Ago

Amtrak will be making a number of major changes in its scheduling on April 24. Several of the changes will provide additional service and connections to New Orleans for the Louisiana World Exposition which runs May 12 through November 11....The Grand Trunk Corp. has offered to pay \$143 million in cash to retire the bankrupt Milwaukee Road's debt to the U. S. Government if Grand Trunk is successful in acquiring the Milwaukee Road

May 1989 - 35 Years Ago

The new depot at Wisconsin Dells will be dedicated at noon on June 10. \$49,000 for construction of the depot was raised through sales of lithographic prints of Chapter member Russ Porter's painting of "Pioneer Limited at the Dells."...FRVR has repainted an engine and will run a business train from Green Bay to Butler and return on May 10 and 11

May 1994 - 30 Years Ago

Ex-Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261 is scheduled to power the Chocolate City Express operating between Des Plaines, Illinois, Burlington, and Fond du Lac on May 14 and 15. There will be one round trip each day....The American Legion has expressed its displeasure with the new CP Rail "Dual Flag" livery. They claim that sharing of the flags shows disrespect to the Stars and Stripes.

May 1999 - 25 Years Ago

The USPS Celebrate The Century Express powered by Amtrak No. 100, a P42 Genesis painted to resemble a giant manila envelope, with a consist of a 1926 RPO, an exhibit car, and private car Georgia 300, will -continued from below stop in Green Bay and Oshkosh. No stops are listed for Milwaukee, Madison, or Chicago....Last year's Hiawatha Extension service was popular with riders - 89% said they would keep riding if the service became permanent....With all of the concern about Y2K compliance, the traveling public has been reassured that railroad signals don't know what day it is, much less what year. They will continue to operate just fine....WSOR announced a tentative schedule of 14 different passenger excursions from May through November

May 2004 — 20 Years Ago

During the last week of April, CP replaced the 307-foot truss swing span with a rolling bascule span, turning the 1902 swing bridge over the Black River between La Crosse and French Island into a lift bridge....BNSF will replace its 1903 1,453-foot Wisconsin River bridge near Prairie du Chien with a 1,462-foot pre-stressed concrete beam bridge during the summer....The 200th Anniversary of the invention of the high pressure steam locomotive by Richard Trevithick was celebrated on February 21 by many UK rail museums....Bill Gardner, president and CEO of Wisconsin & Southern Railroad was the speaker at the annual Chapter banquet on Saturday, May 1.

May 2009 — 15 Years Ago

59th Annual Chapter Banquet was held May 1st at South Woods in Cudahy, WI. The speaker was Roger Breske WI Railroad Commissioner. On Saturday April 4th the Chapters Print collection was moved by several members from the home of Mike and Sue Patrick to its new home in the Butler Public Library. The Library was built to resemble a railroad depot. The chapter hopes to host "Butler Railroad Nights" at the library. The Southern Pacific #4449 4-8-4 steam locomotive will be passing through Milwaukee on its way to Steam Festival 2009 in Owosso, Michigan it will be traveling on several different railroads on its way east from its home in Portland, Oregon.

May 2014 — 10 Years Ago

The annual Chapter Banquet was held at Meyers Family Restaurant. Mark Westerfield Vice President of Operations for Iowa Pacific Railroad was the speaker. Also Chapter member David Mudge was honored by receiving the Jim Roevers Award. Dave was honored for his 30 year membership in the TMERL&Co Historical Society and the Milwaukee Lionel Club. Dave was always seen at local shows with a Lionel layout showing off his favorite hobby.

May 2019— 5 Years Ago

The chapter will be touring the Talgo manufacturing plant in Milwaukee on May 18 2019. The building has been repurposed as their North American Rehab Facility. The plant is now used to rehab Los Angeles Metro Red Line A650 cars. UP #4014 Big Boy has announced it's schedule to head from Cheyenne WY to Ogden UT for the 150th Anniversary of the Golden Spike. On the return trip the #4014 will double head with the UP #844 4-8-4 steam locomotive. (note - the doubleheader didn't happen in 2019.)

The Big Picture



Canadian Pacific #2816 "The Empress" exits the tunnel at Tunnel City WI on September 4 2007.

Photo by Keith Schmidt