

PENDRAGON

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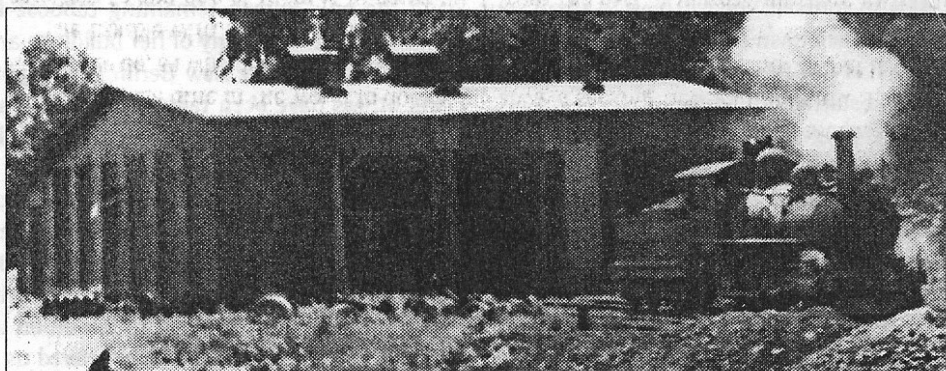
December 1999

A Starting Place for the Museum

By George Wolfangle

When I wrote to you in the September *Pendragon* I told you that we were acquiring the last remaining stall of the Unadilla Valley Railway's enginehouse. It is the "heavy maintenance" stall, and was the westernmost part of the building. The building originally had four stalls, built parallel to one another and not on a curve. They opened northward to merging tracks forming the southwest part of the yard. To the building's east was the coal barn, and beyond that the U.V. depot. The depot is no more, and the coal barn is but a pile of rubble. Fortunately much of the missing stalls' floor can still be seen and the track in at least one of these remains. With care and some hard work we may one day be able to restore the rest of the enginehouse.

Title to the property was delayed to us while one of the property lines was being determined. Only some technicalities remain unfinished. We should have title in hand by the time you read this.



U.V. RAILWAY MUSEUM COLLECTION



PHOTO COURTESY PAUL STRANY

Fading history: The four-stall enginehouse in the UV's heyday (above); the stall that remains today.

Although it is structurally sound, much work will be required on this building and the accompanying land in order that it may function as part of the museum. Your participation in this effort is both desired and necessary. Perhaps you have a skill that can deal with some aspect of the restoration. But in more cases than not, basic abilities such as sweeping, shoveling, picking up, and hauling away will be what is required. Please lend your hand in this effort and we will be able to open this coming spring. I look forward to working with you.

News & Notes

Membership Report

Norwich resident Michael V. Robertson joined our ranks during this past quarter. Membership now totals 85.

Meeting Schedule

Winter meetings of the UV Railway Society are scheduled for January 3, February 7, and March 6 at 7:00 p.m. in the basement of the New Berlin Village Library. If the weather is bad, meetings will be postponed until the following Monday. To check for meeting postponements, call 847-8581 or 847-6435.

Items for Publication

Articles and photos for publication may be sent to The Editor, UV Railway Society and Museum, PO Box 791, New Berlin NY 13411.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Building Up a Museum Site

One might think that we already had everything that we could need, so why worry about this? Or one might think that we are so puny and fragile that we don't dare to take chances for fear we might be blown away, so why take that kind of risk? And then again, maybe one might think that we have all the time in the world to do what we plan to do, so why get oneself in a dither?

The trouble with these ideas is that subscription to any one of them is to court disaster. To think like that is but to give up and quit.

We have a few things to our credit. We have a fairly good cross-section of artifacts for our museum, some integral to the U.V. Railway and others representative of sister

railroads. We have a large volume of "paper" similarly representing our railroad and a good number of others. And the same is true of our photo collection, not to mention our current acquisition of the U.V. engine house.

But as much as we have, it pales compared to how much we lack. A real art museum is always seeking new and finer art. A natural history museum seeks artifacts that takes life back further and further, seeking answers from the past. A railroad museum must put together the best possible picture of railroad-ing—its past, present, and future. We have a good start, but we have a long way to go.

We are a relatively young railway society, beginning the spring of 1995. But there are

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Building Up a Museum Site

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active younger ones. A puppy has many spills before reaching maturity. And if you're honest with yourself, you will have to admit your adolescence wasn't all wine and roses. We all have had our false starts, but then we went on and started out again.

History gets more distant and remote day by day. People you knew as a child, places where you had been, fade in the distance as people move or die and as buildings are modernized or destroyed.

So is it with railroads. Major railroads as well as small ones have, by and large, merged or gone out of business. In the very least they have changed about everything except that their trains run on tracks. And technology is coming to a point where that may soon change as well.

As the past recedes from us, more and more of what we once knew disappears, never to be seen again. Whole classes of locomotives once numbered in the hundreds have gone to the torch, leaving not one represen-

tative to show to the future. Structures and operating systems have gone the same route. Most all U.V. rolling stock has been destroyed, and the only known remaining caboose is unavailable to us. Many of her buildings are gone, including the New Berlin U.V. depot, and others have been radically altered. The longer we wait, the less of history is available to us.

We still have the old O&W freight depot standing in New Berlin. The front was altered several years ago, but could be restored. By and large, it is still a gorgeous old building in excellent condition. We had an option on it, but we faltered. The new owner offered us a deal on it, but it seriously looks like we are going to falter again. Dare we risk our whole purpose for being by not stepping out in faith?

Several people responded to our recent plea for financial support to get this building, but we are still a long way from reaching our goal. This building is critical to our museum, being the place where most of our displays would be housed. The engine house is

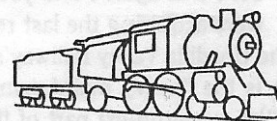
also a necessary building, and we are fortunate to have it, but the very nature of this building does not make it conducive to housing display cases and many kinds of railroad artifacts. It is an artifact in itself.

Don't let us fail. Remember, as a railroad is much more than its board of directors, a railroad museum is much more than its trustees. You, members and friends of the Unadilla Valley Railway Society, are the arms and legs of the Unadilla Valley Railway Museum. You, too, are its heart and its lungs. You make it function. You are its lifeblood. Please do your part. Make us work, make us function. Make us be the museum that we are supposed to be. Make us come alive.

—GEORGE WOLFANGLE

President

Unadilla Valley Railway Society



The Pendragon's next scheduled stop at your station is March 2000.

Unadilla Valley Railway Society
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