

THE PENDRAGON

Vol. IV : Number 5/6 The Newsletter of the Unadilla Valley Railway Society & Museum : PO Box 751, New Berlin, NY 13411 Winter 2001

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Building for Tomorrow and Beyond

We have worked hard these past few years in our attempt to put together a viable railroad museum. We have gathered railroad memorabilia, often at considerable personal expense, in the hope that others think what we have acquired is as important to the museum as do we. We have negotiated deals for artifacts and for sites in the hope that we will not be 'shot down' in our attempt by 'friendly fire.' We have also gone pleading for support from the commercial world, so often to 'deaf ears.' Do we get appreciated? Well, if you are like I am, it it were not for a personal love of the cause, you would have long since quit in your efforts.

We have acquired a considerable bounty of railroad artifacts, like historic paper, photographs, hardware of numerous sorts . . . enough to make a notable railroad museum display. But more is out there which should be in the museum.

We have acquired two separate properties in New Berlin for our museum over these past few months. The first is the last remaining stall of the UV enginehouse. Both the building and the grounds will require much time and labor to put into shape. The second is the NY O&W Depot with its extensive freight room. It is well equipped and is suitable to be used for our museum.

For the past month and a half, we have been in the depot with our museum. Most of our artifacts are now there and on display. A few of the larger items have yet to be brought in. Manpower and means of transport are a little short at present.

Financial backing for our efforts is trickling in barely ahead of our expenses. But for a benevolent backer, we would be over our heads in bills.

There are several areas of our need. First, if you have or know of railroad memorabilia, particularly UV and O&W, but really, of any railroad, something that should be in the museum, would you help us put it there?

Secondly, we need display cases.

Thirdly, we need volunteers to man the museum.

Finally, we need financial aid. Our buildings are our own now, only because someone willingly put up the front money . . . without interest. We are eventually going to have to pay this back. We could use grant money, if available, but even for that, we need a grant writer. Again, if you know where some money is or can yourself help us out with some, please let us know.

Thank you. We look forward to your letters.

GEORGE WOLFANGLE, *President*

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Since our last issue, much has taken place. Besides the UV enginehouse previously acquired, we have agreed to purchase the NY O&W freight depot, also in New Berlin, based on the certified promise of an anonymous doner to provide the 'front money' with only one requirement on our part. We will have to pay him back, though no time limit has been set.

The new building has already been set up as our museum, with artifacts organized and displayed for all to see. We already have three

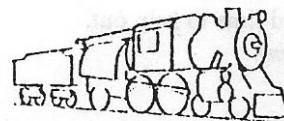
News & Notes

Winter Schedule

1st Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at New Berlin Library.

Items for Publication

Articles and photos for publication in The Pendragon may be sent to The Editor, UV Railroad Society and Museum, PO Box 751, New Berlin, NY 13411.

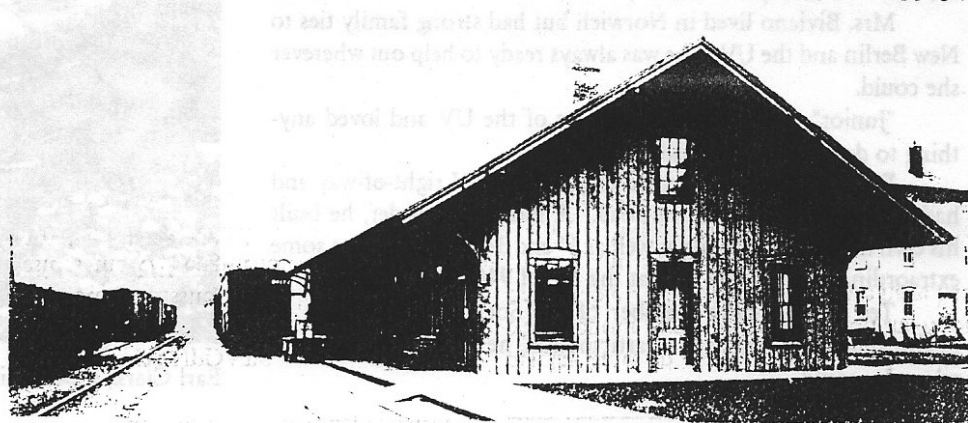


The Pendragon's next scheduled stop at your station is March 2001.

display cases in use (2 floor type, 1 wall). Much of our larger pieces are set on the floor or on tables. For the brief time we have had to set up, it is awesome.

We held three of our meetings at the 'Depot,' only returning to the New Berlin Library for our December meeting. Depending on how late the weather breaks, we expect to return to the Depot for meetings by April. Though the museum is not staffed or heated during the winter, we are prepared to open it for viewing upon your request (Just say when).

(Continued on following page.)



O&W Railroad Depot, New Berlin, NY

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

(Continued from page 1)

Some things that we still need for the museum:

Display cases. The ones we have are good but inadequate to hold all the small and delicate artifacts we have, let alone others we anticipate.

Mannequins, both male and female. Uniforms display much better on a human form than on a hanger.

Artifacts pertaining to any railroad, though UV and O&W will take center stage. Other connecting roads were DL&W and D&H but we need not stop even with these.

Volunteers for staffing. Strong bodies are not required for this though occasionally would be helpful. You just need a pleasant smile and time to help out.

Funding.

When I open his book, I can hear his voice . . .

In 1995, when four men got together to form the Unadilla Valley Railway Society, remembrance of the Unadilla Railway was all but nil by residents of New Berlin, the center of its operation. But for one man, it likely would have soon been forgotten. That man was Fred Pugh.

In his youth, Fred lived nearby the UV Railway. He had come to know a number of the employees personally and had even taken rides on the then freight-only-trains it operated. Fred nourished his interest in trains by doing a thorough research about this railroad. In 1984, he used this research to write and publish his book about the Unadilla Valley Railroad which he titled *Days Along the Buckwheat and Dandelion*. The first printing of this book was sold out long before I, or the Society, took an interest. Through much gentle persuasion, Fred decided to come out with an updated printing of his book in 1997, selling out the hard cover version and much of the soft cover.

Today, Fred is no longer with us. During the night of December 31, 2000, Percy F. "Fred" Pugh passed into eternity. Having been diagnosed in September with an infection of the liver and pancreas (which was shortly corrected to cancer), Fred had been treated largely with painkillers for the past three months. At home much of this time, he kept a good face to those about him though gradually becoming weaker and sleeping a lot. Toward the end, he spent time in the hospital though preferring to be at home.

I cannot any longer converse with Fred. I wish I could. But when I open his book, I can hear his voice and see his face.

See you again, Fred, when I ride that Heaven bound express.

G.R.W.

IN REQUIEM

The year 2000 has taken several fine people from among our number. Some have been with us almost from the beginning while others but a short while. All will be missed.

Kenneth O. Davis	d. Winter of 1999-2000
Mrs. Lillian Biviano	d. April 2000
Clayton "Junior" Linger	d. June 6, 2000
Earle Clark	
Ted Doehner	d. December 8, 2000

Mr. Davis was a collector and commercial dealer in railroadiana. He and his wife were taking a winter vacation in Florida when he died quite suddenly. His home was in East Guilford.

Mrs. Biviano lived in Norwich but had strong family ties to New Berlin and the UV. She was always ready to help out wherever she could.

"Junior" was a former employee of the UV and loved anything to do with the railroad.

Earle was born and reared close by the UV right-of-way and had strong interest in the railroad. A model railroader, he built his own models to "0" scale as well as 1" and 3/4" scales, doing some extraordinary work. He died at the age of 94(?).

Ted was an early member of the Society and, though ill health kept him from active participation, he never ceased to help where he could.



Earl Clark, model railroader, passed away; he was in his 90s.

Gary, Indiana Union Station

Despite all of the wonderful progress that has been made over the years of saving, preserving, restoring and reusing historic (and not so historic) railroad stations, there are several glaring examples where even the best efforts have failed. Many times this failure results in the demolition of the depot; sometimes, it is altered so severely that it is all but unrecognizable as a former railroad structure. But often it remains abandoned and derelict, a target for vandals, a home to the otherwise homeless, a neglected eyesore. Sometimes the fact that the depot is on railroad property and occasionally used for ancillary railroad purposes increases its longevity. However, this can also be a major curse, hampering potential redevelopment because of the proximity to active lines. Realizing the great affection for and collective consciousness toward railroad stations, many municipalities have developed elaborate revitalization plans that utilize the station as the centerpiece. Nonetheless, for a series of economically challenged, formerly industrialized rustbelt cities, there are deeper issues to deal with than restoring train stations. Money, and more importantly, the will are absent to bring such a project to critical mass. Oftentimes, the larger cities have proportionately large stations that would require tens of millions of dollars to resurrect. The neighborhoods are mostly transitional, the locations are far from the center of downtown, and the properties are nearly landlocked by railroad and industrial uses.

Such is the case in Gary, Indiana. The Union Station is literally sandwiched between two sets of well-used elevated tracks, and further insulated by the remnants of the gigantic steel-producing plants (and Lake Michigan) to the north and the busy I-90 Interstate to the south. Sometimes visible as a curious blur from the *Lake-shore Limited* as it is approaching or just departing **Union Station** in **Chicago**, it is both a peculiarity and a dilemma.

The **LakeShore & Michigan Southern** (ultimately part of the *New York Central System*) and the **Baltimore & Ohio** collaborated on a collocated station and in 1910 the **Gary Union Station** opened. It consolidated operations and replaced several more remote and less permanent structures. It was designed in the Beaux-Arts motif and made use of cast-in-place concrete its primary building material. The details that adorned the structure such as the *keystones, lozenges, dentils and garlands* were also made of the same cast-in-place concrete. Over the years, the fact that the cast-in-place concrete material was used has been critical to the survival of the structure. Its reinforced durability has been able to withstand the ravages of time, the lack of adequate weather protection (AKA, a functioning roof and windows), and the destructive gnawing of repeated vandalism.

Inside, two stories above the main waiting room's marble floor, was a heavily coffered ceiling with a massive skylight. This was an important element since the north side closely abuts the tracks, and the south side had the tracks and a ramp to the adjacent mail/baggage and railway express building that is also still standing.

Those *New York Central* or *Baltimore & Ohio* passengers who wished to transfer to *the Pensey* had only to take a trolley down Broadway on what was referred to as "The Electric Road" to the *Pennsylvania Railroad* station across town. The former *Chicago South Shore and South Bend* (interurban) line is still running to the Indiana Dunes State Park/National Lakeshore can still be accessed just south of I-90.

Vacant, vandalized and vanquished, **Gary Union Station** has suffered a fire and *misuse* as an auto junk shop, not necessarily in that order. CSX currently owns the property and the city of Gary has been negotiating with them to purchase the property. It proposes a mixed-use transportation center, including an Amtrak stop, commercial development and a rest stop for motorists on the nearby I-90 tollway. To date, there is no word on where this plan currently stands.

From *Tower Topics*, Bulletin of the Utica & Mohawk Valley Chapter of the NRHS; Aug 2000, Issue 230.