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# Trains

**THE magazine of railroading**

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## Redrawing the map

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## From the Editor



### Carl Swanson

[cswanson@kalmbach.com](mailto:cswanson@kalmbach.com)

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**I**n mid-March, the U.S. Surface Transportation Board approved Canadian Pacific's \$31 billion acquisition of Kansas City Southern Railway (see News, page 4).

The new Class I is named Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC). Linking Canada, the United States, and Mexico, it is the first single-carrier line serving the three major nations of North America.

The STB noted the deal is expected to move 64,000 truckloads off highways and onto rail. It also benefits Amtrak. CPKC supports plans to add passenger service between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and between Detroit and Windsor.

We are at the beginning of a fascinating chapter in railroad history.

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## Canadian Pacific, Kansas City Southern unite

Railroads complete merger following favorable decision by regulators

▲ Canadian Pacific train No. 135 passes the Kansas City Southern unit serving as distributed power on train No. 528 on the siding at Blandford, Ontario. Kyle Stefanovic

**CANADIAN PACIFIC AND KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN OFFICIALS** celebrated their historic merger with the driving of a ceremonial spike in Kansas City on April 14, the day the railways officially combined to form Canadian Pacific Kansas City.

Their \$31.6 billion deal creating CPKC — thought to be the last merger between two Class I railroads — redraws the North American rail map by creating the first railroad linking Canada, the U.S., and Mexico.

The Surface Transportation Board, in a 212-page decision approving CP's acquisition of KCS, said the merger will increase railroad competition and help take trucks off the highway. The board's decision, announced March 15, was not unanimous: Four members backed the merger, with one, Robert Primus, dissenting.

"This decision clearly recognizes the many benefits of this historic combination," CP CEO Keith Creel said in a statement. "As the STB found, it will stimulate new competition, create

jobs, lead to new investment in our rail network, and drive economic growth. These benefits are unparalleled for our employees, rail customers, communities and the North American economy at a time when the supply chains of these three great nations have never needed it more."

Regulators attached few conditions to their approval of the merger beyond what CP

and KCS had proposed themselves. Chief among them: Keeping gateways open on commercially reasonable terms and to create no new bottlenecks at interchanges such as Laredo, Texas; Chicago; and Kansas City, Mo. To enforce CPKC's pledge, the STB will require the railroad to provide a shipper with a written justification for any interline rate increase that's higher than the



A single-car intermodal perishable test train passes through Bartlett, Ill., on June 7, 2022. Intermodal perishable service between Chicago, Texas, and Mexico City will be CPKC's first new service. Bruce Leighty

rate of inflation. CPKC also will be required to arbitrate gateway rate disputes with shippers.

STB Chairman Martin J. Oberman said the strength of gateway protections is unprecedented due to concerns that CPKC could manipulate its rates and crimp other railroads' cross-border traffic at the key Laredo gateway.

The merger had broad support from shippers but prompted requests for concessions from the other Class I railroads as well as Chicago-area suburbs and commuter railroad Metra (see page 6). Few of those were granted.

But the board imposed an unprecedented seven-year oversight period as well as what it called "extensive data-reporting requirements" that will allow regulators to monitor competition and other issues. The board's oversight period for prior Class I mergers was five years.

The board rejected Canadian National's longshot request to force CPKC to sell the KCS line linking Kansas City and St. Louis with Springfield, Ill. CN — which sought to acquire KCS in 2021 but lost a four-month battle to CP after an unfavorable regulatory ruling — wanted to use the former Gateway Western trackage to create a new single-line route between Kansas City, Chicago, Detroit, and eastern Canada.

Regulators also rejected the conditions sought by BNSF Railway, CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern, and Union Pacific.

"It is ... not surprising that the other Class I railroads seek conditions and other remedies that appear aimed at protecting their own traffic from competition with CPKC and at limiting the ability of the combined CPKC to meet its potential," the board said. "Consistent with the Board's policy to protect competition and not competitors, the Board is denying those requests while also ensuring that existing competitive gateway options are preserved."

In light of increasing concerns about derailments in the wake of the February toxic Norfolk Southern wreck in East Palestine, Ohio, the STB and CP said they expected the merger would improve safety.

"In addition to the inherent safety advantages that will be gained from shifting approximately 64,000 truckloads from our roads to rail, CP has the best safety record of the Class I railroads ... and KCS will adopt many of CP's practices following integration. Thus, any rail traffic diverted to



CPKC from other railroads will likely mean traffic moving to a railroad with a better safety record," the board said in its decision.

CPKC unites the two smallest Class I systems. The new railroad still is the smallest when measured by revenue. But at 20,800 route miles, including trackage rights, CPKC will be slightly larger than CN's 18,600-mile system.

The Justice Department, Biden administration, members of Congress, shippers, and even board members themselves have expressed concerns about consolidation in the rail industry as decades of mergers whittled down the number of Class I railroads to just seven in North America.

But Oberman noted that as the smallest Class I railroads, CP and KCS are dwarfed by their competitors. They primarily compete against the big western U.S. railroads, UP and BNSF, both of which have more than 32,000 route miles, he said.

"Putting these two small railroads together will actually provide a stronger competitive landscape in the rail industry ... because separately, these railroads just do not have the same oomph and power in providing competitive service ... as they will together," Oberman said. "I think that's an important point."

With new single-line service linking Canada and the Midwest with Texas, the Gulf Coast, and Mexico, CPKC says it will be able to gain 80,000 carloads and 137,000 intermodal containers currently handled by competing railroads.

The first new CPKC trains will be a pair of intermodal hotshots linking Chicago with Texas and Mexico City, hauling Midwestern meat southbound and Mexican-grown fruits and vegetables northbound. Prior to the merger, CP and KCS ran successful interline trains to test what will be the first cross-border intermodal service aimed at the perishables market. —*Bill Stephens*



# Chicago-area merger foes see few concessions

Suburbs blast lack of mitigation, consider legal action; Metra 'concerned'

**A GROUP OF CHICAGO SUBURBS** were outraged and commuter rail operator Metra was "concerned" after few conditions they sought were imposed as part of the Canadian Pacific-Kansas City Southern merger.

That doesn't mean their concerns over increased freight traffic on the route CP shares with Metra's Milwaukee District-West service couldn't be addressed later, Surface Transportation Board Chairman Martin J. Oberman said, thanks to the board's seven years of oversight.

Officials in the eight communities that make up the Coalition to Stop CPKC considered that no consolation. Bensenville Village President Frank DeSimone said the STB decision "ignored our concerns for safety; it ignored our concerns about quality of life; and it ignored our concerns about the negative consequences for economic development in our communities." A statement on the coalition's website railed about the "400% increase in freight traffic" — projected in the CP-KCS merger application as growing from three to 11 trains daily. The group said it was "reviewing all our options, including legal ones."

Oberman sympathized with the "real fears" of the communities about safety issues arising from blocked crossings that could come from more and longer trains.

"But while the fears are legitimate," he said, "I think some people had been given information that was just not accurate, and it understandably caused their fears to be increased. ... In the communities we're talking about, where those concerns were



**A Metra Milwaukee West train arrives at Hanover Park, Ill., one of the communities opposed to the CPKC merger. Few merger conditions addressed Chicago-area concerns.** David Lassen

voiced, the average train lengths will increase by about 10 cars," he said.

Officials in those communities may not have helped their case by seeking some \$9 billion in mitigation "by CP to build overpasses at virtually every crossing," Oberman said. "But that is simply not the real world and it isn't going to happen. And it isn't warranted."

He emphasized, however, that the board's extended oversight will allow it to call for further mitigation if data shows that there is, in fact, an issue.

He offered similar thought after turning down Metra's request to gain dispatching control of the Milwaukee West line, which it owns but is dispatched by CP.

"We are not going to order transfer of those dispatching rights," Oberman said,

"because we do not think the data requires it or supports it, and it would cause us, in effect, to break a contract."

However, he said, if the extensive data-reporting requirements show a problem, "that possibility, as well as the other conditions that were asked for, remain on the table." The board also said it strengthened a formula offered by CP to resolve disputes with Metra.

Metra, in a statement said it "remains concerned about the potential impact of this merger on our operations. We will count on the merged railroad's commitments and the STB's oversight to make sure we can operate safely and reliably and continue to provide service that meets the needs of the residents of the Chicago area." — *David Lassen*

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Amtrak resumes operation of *Adirondack*

**AMTRAK** finally resumed long-awaited operation of the New York-Montreal *Adirondack* on April 3, following lengthy efforts by members of New York's congressional delegation. The train was the last to be restored that had been suspended during service cuts at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec; Mathieu Tremblay



**NORFOLK SOUTHERN** will sell its dormant Saluda Grade route — formerly the steepest main line in America — for conversion to a trail. **THE SALUDA GRADE TRAIL CONSERVANCY** signed an agreement to purchase the 31-mile route, which includes 16 miles in South Carolina and 15 miles in North Carolina. The conservancy said a confidentiality agreement prevents disclosure of the terms. The former Southern Railway route features a 4.7% grade with a brief stretch of 5.1%.

The gauge-changing **GOLDEN PASS EXPRESS** passenger train between Montreux and Interlaken, Switzerland, has been limited to meter-gauge operation as of late February because of concerns over rail wear on

the standard-gauge portion of its route. The groundbreaking equipment not only changes gauges but height to match platforms on the two different portions of its route [see "Swiss introduce gauge-changing train ...," "Technology," April 2023]. Operators **MONTREUX BERNER OBERLAND BAHN** and **BLS** hope to resume service over the full route later this year.

#### Fixes

**In the April 2023 issue:**

— On page 38, the location of VIA Rail Canada's Rouge Hill station is described incorrectly. It is in Scarborough, Ontario, overlooking Lake Ontario.

# East Palestine continues to have major impact

## Legislators and attorneys remain busy in wake of Feb. 3 derailment

**THE POLITICAL AND LEGAL FALLOUT** keeps coming from Norfolk Southern's Feb. 3 derailment and toxic-chemical release in East Palestine, Ohio.

On the legislative front, two Ohio members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Bill Johnson (R) and Emilia Sykes (D), introduced rail safety legislation March 17. The Reducing Accidents in Locomotives Act — which sacrificed some labeling accuracy to gain the acronym “RAIL Act” — featured many of the same provisions as the Senate's Rail Safety Act. Among notable differences was its lack of a requirement for two-person crews, which drew immediate criticism from rail unions.

Democratic senators John Fetterman and Bob Casey of Pennsylvania and Sherrod Brown of Ohio also introduced a bill March 31 with measures they said were meant to build on the Rail Safety Act. None specifically addressed issues from East Palestine, but several cited problems that led to earlier fatal or hazardous-material incidents.

NS CEO Alan Shaw appeared at two Senate hearings, and continued to apologize for the accident. He promised the railroad will do everything it can to make things right in East Palestine. He also said the railroad supported much of the proposed safety legislation but urged regulators to take a data-driven approach to safety improvements, saying no statistics support two-person crews as safer than one-person operation.

Shaw's railroad continues to be the target of a broad range of lawsuits. The most significant may have been filed by the U.S. Department of Justice, over water pollution caused by the release of chemicals, and by the state of Ohio. The state wants to be reimbursed by the railroad for all costs incurred

responding to the accident, and damages for residents, among other charges. Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost said the suit's intent is to ensure the railroad delivers on its promises to take responsibility.

NS, which met with Yost beforehand, announced three additional programs for residents, including one providing “tailored protection” for home sellers if their property

loses value. Several suits were also filed by or on behalf of NS stockholders regarding stock losses resulting from the derailment.

One essentially argued the railroad had defrauded those stockholders because its investor-driven Precision Scheduled Railroading strategy to reduce costs proved to have negative consequences for investors. — *David Lassen*

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The political and regulatory fallout from the East Palestine derailment and toxic-chemical release will last long after the cleanup is completed. Sol Tucker

# Last chance to ride a streamlined legend



**Bill Stephens**

bybillstephens@gmail.com

🐦 @bybillstephens

Analysis: Trains.com

VIA Rail's magnificent Budd cars won't last forever

**T**he customs agent checks your passport and gives a puzzled look when you explain that you just landed in Vancouver so that you can take the train to Toronto. The poor chap cannot wrap his head around the concept of riding VIA Rail Canada's *Canadian* for 2,775 miles simply for the fun of it.

It's his loss, for the *Canadian* is the last great streamliner. The train's retro vibe starts at the head end with a pair of F40PH-2Ds. The real attraction, of course, is what's behind those 1980s-vintage GMDs: A 13-car train of stainless steel coaches, sleepers, a dining car, and domes, all of which Budd delivered in 1954 and 1955.

Thank goodness the Canadians can't seem to part with this classic equipment. Whether that's by design or not really doesn't matter. What does matter is that it's 2023 and you can still climb aboard as if the streamliner era never ended.

But two developments say the sun is setting on the *Canadian* as we know it.

The first is behind the *Park* car on the Feb. 6 version of train No. 2. Where there should be nothing but a view of the receding main line, there are instead three coaches tagging along behind the dome observation car. Last year cracks were discovered in welds in the frames of some of the Budd equipment. So Transport Canada has required a buffer car due to concerns about crashworthiness.

Four venerable Budd cars have been sacrificed in Montreal,

where they were stripped to their frames for inspections, metallurgical analysis, and crash testing. VIA won't comment until the review is complete. The best case: Cars sailed through the testing or can get by with frame modifications. The worst case, which seems unlikely because the trains have kept running, would be that there's no fix. That would be the *Canadian's* death knell.

The second development is VIA's January announcement that it will seek proposals to replace the *Canadian's* consists. New train sets would secure the train's future, if not its character.

So sooner or later the *Canadian* will lose the equipment that makes it special.

Naturally, you don't want to ponder this as No. 2 bears down on Edmonton, Alberta. The Skyline dome is your front-row seat to Canadian National's busy Edson Subdivision, which funnels traffic to and from Vancouver and Prince Rupert, British Columbia. In the 45 minutes before dusk, the *Canadian* is running on the heels of an eastbound freight and meets five westbounds: four grain trains and a stack train.

The call for dinner in the *Fairholme* diner comes on the leisurely approach to Edmonton, where westbound No. 1 is in the midst of its station stop. The VIA flagships sit side by side as the meal — filet mignon topped with mushroom sauce — arrives at your table.

After dessert you retreat to the *Laurentide Park* dome to watch signals and stainless steel put on a mesmerizing show. The Budd roofs glow green and then shimmer red as the locomotives knock down the signals for mile after mile across the Prairies.

For years riding the *Canadian* has been more about the experience than arriving on time. Even your boarding pass warns that you shouldn't book same-day connections at your destination.

But things are changing. As part of its effort to run its freights closer to schedule, CN has been moving the *Canadian* right along in recent months despite booming grain traffic.

CN's rail traffic controllers always have their hands full managing North America's busiest single-track railroad, the 789.8 miles between Edmonton and Winnipeg, Manitoba. East of Saskatoon, Sask., No. 2 runs on yellow signals until it gets stuck behind a pair of stack trains that are caught in a crew-change logjam outside Melville. But after that 1-hour, 5-minute delay your *Canadian* gets preferential treatment: It overtakes hot Vancouver-Toronto intermodal train 112 at Oakner siding, and 16 miles later holds the main at Rivers for 112's counterpart, the 111.

Thanks to the combination of good dispatching and ample schedule padding, the *Canadian* is able to overcome delays over the next two days. And ultimately No. 2 pulls into Toronto Union Station 2 hours, 49 minutes early.

Yes, there's nothing quite like the *Canadian* for seeing CN and Canada up close. Ride it while you can. **I**



In a view from the Skyline dome, the eastbound *Canadian* overtakes a Canadian National intermodal train that's holding on the siding at Medora, Ont., on Feb. 10, 2023. Bill Stephens



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# Delaware & Hudson marks 200 years

Looking back on a pioneer



**Brian Solomon**

briansolomon.author@gmail.com

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The Delaware & Hudson was among the most significant formative railroads in North America, and it has roots extending back 200 years. Chartered in 1823 as the Delaware & Hudson Canal Co., it was intended to transport anthracite coal from mines around Carbondale in northeastern Pennsylvania to the port and markets around New York City.

One of the most ambitious transportation projects of its time, it included a gravity tram railway moving anthracite over the mountains to the canal head at Honesdale, Pa.

D&H's engineer, John B. Jervis (1795-1885), surveyed this primitive rail route with long sections of very gentle grades, punctuated by eight short but steeply graded 'inclined planes' — a common approach to early railroad construction employing stationary engines and cables to lift railway cars up and down the inclines.

The transfer of railroad technology from England was key to D&H's early plans. In 1828, D&H's Horatio Allen met with British railway pioneers and arranged to import steam locomotives. Although D&H was the first North American railroad to import and commercially operate steam locomotives, its early efforts were unsuccessful and it soon turned to animals to haul cars of coal.

In the 19th century, D&H flourished from its transport of anthracite, and the company greatly expanded operations through the construction and purchase of conventional common-carrier steam railroads. It reached south toward Scranton and north toward connections in the Albany, N.Y., area, and beyond to Canada. D&H's original railroad and canal were obsolete by 1898 and concluded operations. Scant traces of this once-intensive enterprise remain today.

During the first half of the 20th century, D&H underwent a transformation from coal carrier to bridge line, forwarding through traffic from the Erie, Lackawanna, Central Railroad of New Jersey, Lehigh Valley, and Pennsylvania Railroad to its New England and Canadian connections.

In the 1920s, under the visionary administration of Leonor Loree, D&H was a key component for a bold scheme to create a new Northeast-Midwestern trunk line linking with Wabash and Lehigh Valley. The Pennsylvania Railroad frowned upon this venture and D&H's scheme quickly unraveled. During the same period, Loree pushed the limits of steam design by constructing high-pressure compound locomotives at D&H's Colonie Shops in Watervliet, N.Y.

In the second half of the 20th century, D&H underwent a series of transformations in a reaction to the rapidly evolving Northeastern railroad scene. During the 1950s, it was a component in various railroad consolidation schemes. Anticipating Penn Central in the 1960s, Norfolk & Western underwent rapid growth that included its merger with Wabash and Nickel Plate Road, and created a holding company to control both D&H and the recently formed Erie-Lackawanna. N&W's Dereco holding company gave the railroad a degree of control while shielding it from undesirable financial risk. However, in 1972 when damage from Hurricane Agnes resulted in EL's bankruptcy, N&W dissolved Dereco.

EL joined Conrail, which was formed by Congress in 1976 to bail out insolvent Northeastern carriers. D&H expanded to provide competition to Conrail and was granted trackage rights on Conrail to reach Buffalo, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and Potomac Yard (near Washington, D.C.), among others. D&H was briefly included in the Guilford Transportation network between 1984 and 1988. This ended with D&H's bankruptcy, and its subsequent designated operation by New York, Susquehanna & Western between 1988 and 1991. In January 1990, Canadian Pacific Railway won the bid to acquire D&H and completed its purchase in 1991.

At the end of 2014, CP Rail agreed to sell the southern end of the D&H to NS (reflecting the line's increasingly important role in forwarding NS traffic), but retained D&H lines north of Schenectady, N.Y. (a route that hosts CP freights and as well as Amtrak's *Adirondack* to Montreal). Today, D&H is probably best remembered for its colorful fleet of Alco diesels, which operated from the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s.

## NEW HORIZONS

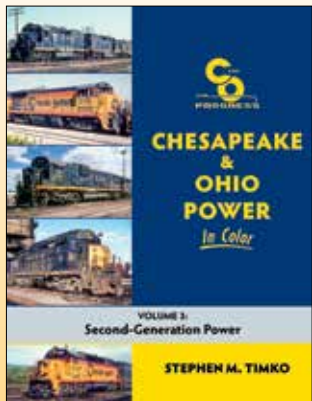
This is my final commentary column as I transition to a new monthly department called "Travel," launching in the July *Trains*. Each month I'll showcase a rail destination. So if you feel there's a special heritage railroad, a spectacular train trip, or something worthy of a detailed investigation in *Trains*, let us know! **I**



Although CP Rail phased out the Delaware & Hudson identity in the 1990s, it paid homage to the D&H by repainting three former D&H GP38-2s into the classic 1960-era scheme. A pair of the CPR D&H heritage locomotives work a local at Owego, N.Y., in 2002. Brian Solomon

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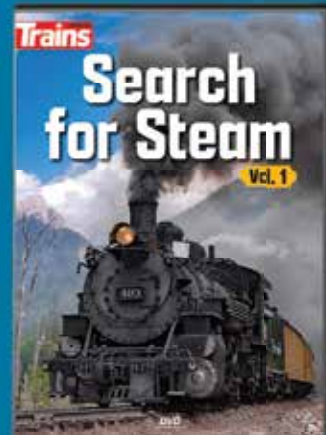
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# *Train Time* transcends the ages

An exclusive interview with  
Stephen Low, IMAX filmmaker

by Nastassia Putz  
Photos courtesy of Train Time Films Inc.

**W**ith big diesels, beautiful landscapes, and unique camera shots, the documentary *Train Time* takes the IMAX audience on an adventure from the crew's point of view. Those working behind the scenes on the BNSF Railway share their triumphs and struggles as they battle brutal weather-related conditions, unforeseen delays, and much more.

Using trackside angles and stunning computer-generated imagery — along with aerial shots captured from helicopters with gyro-stabilized cameras — Director Stephen Low presents viewers with a 5,000-mile-long round trip from Chicago to Los Angeles, highlighting the past, present, and future of railroading in the United States. But how did his team choreograph all this footage into one cohesive, family-friendly film?

“To make *Train Time*, BNSF, one of the world's great railroads, gave us unlimited access over a period of three years to film on their massive 32,000-mile, 28-state network,” says Low. “I doubt if that's ever happened before, at least not to that extent.”





Children playing with an electric train set. This is a Standard gauge Lionel layout in a surreal basement scene at the start of *Train Time*. The young mechanic can be seen holding a hammer to the roof of the train, just banging away at it, making audiences chuckle and toy train enthusiasts cringe simultaneously.

## Behind the scenes with Stephen Low

**Q** You've probably been asked this a million times now, but why trains?

**A** I've been a train enthusiast since I was a kid. I used to travel across Canada every summer to visit my grandparents. For about 20 years, we traveled by train. Then — around 11 or 12 years old — I worked at the Canadian Railway Museum. I started there painting old trains. When I went to university in Thunder Bay (northern Ontario), I worked for Canadian Pacific Railway, as a carman first, then brakeman and trainman (on the passenger trains), and as a switchman in the yards. So I got a fairly broad railroad experience from that.

I started making films in the 1970s. I eventually had my eye on doing a train film. So, we did *Rocky Mountain Express*, which was about the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and in that film, even though it's not American, Americans are the central characters — William Cornelius Van Horne, who was an American, rose to become one of the greatest Canadians in history. Ironically, we did the next film, *Train Time*, about the opposite — the great American, James J. Hill, who was in fact, Canadian.



The IMAX camera is mounted high on the locomotive, just behind the cab window. The shot provides an exclusive point of view from the crew's perspective.

**Q** Who's your target audience?

**A** Definitely kids ... because they will ask their mother and then she decides what they look at. In IMAX programming, it doesn't matter how good the film is — if the kids don't like the topic, it isn't going to happen.

I really wanted to show that my family took me on these adventures, and I, as a small kid, became fascinated with a lot of things, but in particular, railroads. I wanted

to show that some things are accessible for kids. You don't want to just show them *Star Trek* (or going to Mars) — the kind of stuff they dream about — because it's not real.

You probably could make an IMAX film about an accounting endeavor, but trains are uniquely fascinating to kids. It's a good way to introduce a very rich and complicated sort of industrial history with something kids will relate to. I thought this was a wonderful opportunity to show them what



**A BNSF train follows the path of the Deschutes River through Oregon, often through sections with no public roads, offering views exclusive to railroad crews.**

they can actually do for a living. I spent a month on the front end of the train we were filming and met dozens of employees — all of them seem to enjoy their work. There are dozens of potential careers that people can access in a very real and practical way. And, I guess in the film, it starts in a basement because I think that's where many children first begin to experience railroading.

**Q Why did you choose BNSF Railway?**

**A** We think Warren Buffett [owner of BNSF] may have seen the film *Rocky Mountain Express* in Omaha because it ran there. I've been told he's a serious train buff. That may have triggered the idea of using BNSF to tell the American side of the North American railroad story. It's more complicated in the U.S. [than in Canada] because of the way the railroads evolved with hundreds of companies, each with their own stories. We wanted to tell a simple story of a train described as sort of a conveyor belt that moves across the country and never really stops ...

I kept the locomotive [with the same road number] at the front, so it was able to do the whole country, and tie together the

entire story of how everything works. I think kids will relate to that more easily than if we told the more complex story of how trains fit into schedules.

[Regarding BNSF,] it was mutual. I don't know the exact scenario, but we did approach a number of American railroads, including Union Pacific. BNSF was really interested because there was a big event, a bicentennial coming up, that ended up being canceled [during COVID-19 pandemic].

But the film was finished in time. We just put it on the shelf for a couple of years. The railroads have been through a lot, so they didn't necessarily want to celebrate a historic event while laying off employees. Now [in 2023] the opposite is the case — there's a shortage of employees. I imagine the film is a very useful recruitment tool to show potentially millions of kids who will soon be out looking for jobs.

**Q Why did you choose this specific route?**

**A** The route was chosen to highlight both the modern main line on the BNSF but also how the "heritage" lines fit in. It was our choice to decide the route — the BNSF would have taken us anywhere we wanted. We started with the southern Santa Fe transcontinental then go north on what was Southern Pacific (hence the *Daylight* steam engine) then back to Chicago on the old

Great Northern. These are main lines on the BNSF. It works well to convey the conveyor belt nature of modern railroading. In the past I'm guessing, trains would travel both east and west on the same line ... but not always. Railroading is a complex business!

**Q What were the challenges your team faced when filming specific shots?**

**A** We had a huge gyro-stabilized helicopter system for the *Daylight* footage in Oregon. The train mounts are just big heavy mounts for an IMAX camera. The camera weighs about 60 pounds ... it's a lot of work. And for a railroad to put up with that for approximately three years, is amazing.

We had our own train for a month with our own business cars, so the crew was served very fancy meals in the private dining car. On BNSF, we were using the whole railway, the hump yards, the dispatch center, the control room in Fort Worth, repair shops, etc. So the access was incredible. We were always supervised. And we had very strict rules. Nobody got hurt. The railroad understood that we weren't ever going to do anything on our own (or silly).

I've lost a lot of friends, not in railroading, but in film. Quite a few friends who died in scuba diving accidents, aviation, helicopter crashes — this is partly why drones have become very common in photography.



**Two BNSF freight trains meet as they depart Kansas City, Mo. The large, heavy IMAX camera is hard-mounted low on the side of the locomotive.**

Partly for safety reasons, but mostly for cost. But this film was not done with drones, it was done with helicopters because trains move fast. Drones have a very slow speed, and we would do 120 mph to position the camera to move against the train. It's a very expensive, elaborate process.

Every roll of IMAX negative lasts only 3 minutes. Every 3 minutes of actual photography required a stop, a reload, and potentially a refueling for the helicopter. So imagine that, the complexity of having to find your fuel truck, get away from the train, and have them hopefully stop somewhere you can find them. You have to go looking for them. And if the train has had to move on because of say, a freight train, then you have to scout in front of the train to make sure there are no power lines even before you shoot. So if the train is coming at you, you have to go out and always check the line to see if it's safe.

And then you go back, catch your train, do another few shots, and then start over again. BNSF was fantastic. They understood that in the case of *Daylight*, we want good light. So we would be planning a shot and then we'd go quiet waiting for the sunlight to come out. Here they've got like dozens of trains, freight trains to deal with,



**Engineer Lisa Macha keeps her eyes on the track ahead as BNSF No. 3819 leads a train out of Kansas City. As kids, most train engineers tinkered with toy train sets. Now, it's giant freight trains, thousands of miles of track, and millions of pounds of cargo that can't wait.**

and we would have to sit and wait. Or the train would have to find a siding to go into or just block the main line.

**Q** So how did this affect real-time train operations for BNSF?

**A** Very difficult at first. We thought we could have trucks and stuff alongside the train that we could potentially go in. Like go into a siding and set up, let's say, a ruins of an old ghost town or something in the

foreground, then have the train go through the shot. That proved to be way too complicated. So, we found out from the railroad that asking them to stop the train on the main line is something you don't want to do very often.

We had upper management on the train with us, so they could make those calls, but generally you don't want to do that. Holding up expensive freight trains becomes a nuisance pretty fast. Generally we tried to keep things moving. I think a few times we





The IMAX camera is mounted to a helicopter as it chases Southern Pacific's *Daylight* steam engine No. 4449 in the Columbia River Gorge.

stopped the train, got off, set up shots, and had them take a run at us — but that depended on the traffic behind.

**Q** What was the timeline from start to end?

**A** It was nearly four years — the main reason is that we would set up to do things, have plans in place, and then the railroad's plans would change. For example, we were going to film the removal of a bridge being replaced by a new bridge. Then we got the whole crew there and it was delayed for another year. So, we would go home and reschedule things. Railroad crews we thought we had scheduled turned out to be too busy.

There were a lot of scheduling issues, which we expect in the real world. In Hollywood you can't afford to do that. Sometimes we'd disappear for three or four months and then start again if we wanted winter.

The railroad has to factor that in because scheduling is complicated for a film like this.

**Q** Was the crew in the film hand-picked?

**A** We were just using the crews available on the railroads. I think in the case of the control room, they had some say over the personnel, and I asked for diversity from the railroad. I got a pretty good cross-section of

employees. So I may have chosen a little more diversity than actually exists, but not by much. There are a lot of women working on railroads and they love it. I have a new granddaughter — 13 months old — loves trains for some reason. Maybe epigenetics.

**Q** Anything else you'd like to mention?

**A** I'd like to say that the coming century really is going to be the age of the railroads because the physics of railroads are so superior. There are only four dimensions in transportation: Water, which is very efficient at slow speed; there's iron, which is efficient at much higher speeds; and the other two, aviation and highways, are terrible — I mean, compared to railroads. Railroads claim to be six times more efficient than trucking. But if you do the math, it's much higher than that.

If you want to electrify something and go zero emissions, it's railroads, because they're already half wired up. The tracks are conductive themselves and only need an overhead line. And the fact is, you're starting from a raw efficiency that's vastly better. The first trains across America initially burned wood — not a fossil fuel. So it did little or no damage to the environment as long as trees were planted. Early steam engines used half a horsepower per person, compared to modern jet aviation, which needs hundreds of times more horsepower per seat.

Furthermore, railroads are the only option easily convertible to zero emissions. It's not cheap to electrify railroads, but it's doable and has worked successfully all over the world. Maybe hydrogen will work on some routes? But zero fossil emissions has to happen sooner or later, and it's much easier with railroads than any other forms of transportation. They think they're going to fly jet planes with zero emissions.

That's absurd.

Anyway, that's my spiel. That's why I think the film is important, because politicians don't seem to fully understand those things. My concern is that we're still tearing up track, which makes no sense at all. Railroads (which are charged property tax) are incentivized by governments to tear up their lines and make the remaining lines as busy as possible.

Americans have lost about half the railroads that were built in the 19th century. Rail is the best infrastructure we have available to at least help save the world, yet we keep tearing it up to put more trucks on the highways! But I'm optimistic. To quote Churchill, "Americans (and Canadians?) will always do the right thing only after they have tried everything else." **I**

*Released in September 2022, Train Time is playing at select locations throughout the U.S. and Canada. Visit [traintimefilm.com](http://traintimefilm.com) for more information.*





A large crowd turns out for the first post-World War II *Sun Tan Special* at the Santa Cruz Boardwalk on July 4, 1947. Courtesy of the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

# The long shadow of the **SUN TAN SPECIAL**

Southern Pacific beach train lives on in memory, a tourist line — and perhaps a future transit system

by Bill Buchanan

**PEOPLE IN SANTA CRUZ, CALIF.**, still talk about the *Sun Tan Special*, and not just as an artifact.

The *Sun Tan Special* was Southern Pacific's beach train. It ran on summer weekends and holidays between the 1930s and '50s, from San Francisco and San Jose to the coastal town of Santa Cruz.

The destination was appealing, the views were great, and the mood on board was primed for fun. "Life on the *Sun Tan Special* was an exciting affair," writes Santa Cruz railroad historian Derek R. Whaley in "Curiosities: *The Sun Tan Special*" on the website [santacruztrains.com](http://santacruztrains.com). "Everyone was dressed for the beach."

More than 60 years after SP canceled the train, the memory of its success, and its potential as an alternative to driving, sustain it as an idea. The *Sun Tan Special* was a talking point during a June 2022 election in Santa Cruz County. A ballot measure asked voters what they wanted to do with the last railroad line into the county, a former SP branch between Watsonville Junction (Pajaro), where it connects with the Coast Line, and Santa Cruz city and Davenport. The choice was a trail, or rail with trail.

The voters were clear: Keep the tracks. Rail with trail won by 73% to 27%, even

though the branch is mostly idle north of Watsonville, and has damage requiring tens of millions of dollars in repair — and that was before any damage from severe storms in the winter of 2022-23.

The odds the excursion train will return are hard to assess but probably modest,



Southern Pacific 2-8-0s Nos. 2581 and 2803 lead a 16-car *Sun Tan Special* toward the station at Santa Cruz on Aug. 24, 1941. William Harry



Amtrak IC3 Flexliner train sets.

UP wasn't interested in further trials but was willing to sell the branch. The last major shipper north of Watsonville, a cement plant in Davenport, closed in 2010. In 2012, the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission bought the 32-mile branch with the intent of restoring passenger trains.

That revival hasn't happened — at least not yet.

### SANTA CRUZ RAILROADS TODAY

Since 2012, three shortline companies have contracted with the transportation commission to operate the branch. The second, Iowa Pacific's Santa Cruz & Monterey Bay, operated Christmas excursion trains in the 2010s.

Roaring Camp has a subcontract with the current contractor, Progressive Rail, to serve freight customers in Watsonville on the active southern part of the line. Damage and erosion north of there has closed the branch as a through route.

Roaring Camp is "in charge of freight across the entire line, although for practical purposes they are restricted to the Watsonville area until the rest of the trackage is approved for passenger and freight service," Whaley tells *Trains*. "[That's] not likely anytime soon, since the Soquel Creek Bridge needs either very expensive upgrades or, more likely, to be replaced completely."

The 585-foot bridge in Capitola is one of the line's landmarks.

The pro-train vote in June 2022 helped reinforce public support for local rail transit and pushed back against efforts to remove the tracks as relics not worth repairing.

As of autumn 2022, the transportation commission is taking steps to repair a bridge on the Pajaro River and address erosion, plus take a fresh look at what would be needed to introduce light rail service.

Parts of the branch are intact enough to use. In October 2021, California streetcar company TIG/m, Roaring Camp, and others teamed up to offer the public free rides on wireless electric trolleys in Watsonville and between Capitola and Santa Cruz.

This Coast Futura demonstration, said Roaring Camp Chief Executive Officer Melani Clark in early 2022, showed what's possible. She is a leading proponent for repairing and restoring the track for rail use.

The transportation commission "is once again moving forward with exploring electric passenger rail transit on the Santa Cruz Branch Line," Clark said in fall 2022. "While there are many studies to complete before [passenger transit] is active on the line, Roaring Camp is very grateful the RTC is moving forward in this positive direction."

Riders could reach the Bay Area by connecting to other trains in Pajaro, she said. "Travel beyond Santa Cruz is looking very promising via the RTC's future [service] that will connect in Pajaro to Caltrain and the *Coast Starlight*."

The *Coast Starlight*, Amtrak's daily train between Los Angeles and Seattle, currently passes through Pajaro without stopping. The closest station is in Salinas, about a 20-mile drive south. Caltrain, the Bay Area commuter service from San Francisco to Gilroy, could serve Pajaro if it extends service to Salinas, which has been proposed. UP would have to agree to this use of the Coast Line.

### A REMNANT OF THE SPECIAL

The stub of the *Sun Tan Special's* original mountain route survives as the Felton Branch. Southern Pacific sold it to Roaring Camp Railroads in the mid-1980s. The company's Santa Cruz Big Trees & Pacific Railway uses ex-Santa Fe CF7s to pull passenger trains between the Santa Cruz Boardwalk and Felton, where the Roaring Camp & Big Trees tourist railroad offers steam-powered rides over a steep narrow-gauge line into the redwoods.

You can get a sense of the *Sun Tan Special* by riding one of these Beach Trains. They follow 7 miles of the original route amid trees, across bridges, and through the San Lorenzo River Gorge and a tunnel. They include street running in Santa Cruz.

The trains use a small part of the Santa Cruz Branch to access the Boardwalk, the same location where bands welcomed arriving passengers in the last century.

The Beach Train is far from the full *Sun Tan Special* experience, but it offers a lot of variety in those 7 miles. "The one part that really overlaps was the section between Santa Cruz and Henry Cowell [Redwoods State Park], which is the section still used by Roaring Camp today," Whaley says.

"While I don't think that 7-mile stretch necessarily gives a complete feel for what the *Sun Tan Special* would have been like," he says, "it definitely gives a feel for one of the best and most photographed parts of the journey."

Consider the Beach Train a tangible reminder of a fabled summer train — and, possibly, a link to whatever passenger service Santa Cruz County might see next. **I**

**A railfan excursion crosses the trestle at Capitola, Calif., on the Santa Cruz Branch on April 25, 1948. Postwar *Sun Tan Specials* traveled this more circuitous route via Gilroy and Watsonville.** Fred Matthews Jr.



▶ TRAVEL: TRAINS YOU CAN RIDE ◀

# TOURIST RAILWAY SUCCESS STORIES

Heritage operations that get it right

Story and photos by Brian Solomon





Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington has resurrected the experience of minimalist "Downeast" two-foot gauge railroading. Monson Railroad No. 3 switches a short log train at Top of Mountain near Alna, Maine at Grand Reunion event in January 2020.

**E**ach tourist railway, railroad museum, and heritage line of any length and size has its own history, its own way of doing things, and its own take on success. As a visitor, photographer, and now as marketing manager of a successful tourist railroad, I pay careful attention to what works, what makes these operations tick, and what lessons I can apply in my own work.

Maintaining a sustainable operation is crucial, and these are the railroads best positioned for long-term success.

### TOTAL PRESENTATION

Several British heritage steam railways are among the world's premier tourist lines. I've visited dozens of preserved railways in the United Kingdom over the last quarter century. My favorites include the Bluebell

Railway — the U.K.'s first standard gauge preserved railway — the Midhants, and the Severn Valley. All three excel in overall presentation, attention to detail, and professional operation.

These heritage operations share similar characteristics. All were secondary through routes culled from the national network during the 1960s and '70s. Each has a connection to the intercity passenger network, which allows visitors to arrive by train from across Britain and facilitates movement of equipment to and from their lines. The railways operate a selection of well-maintained locomotives and rolling stock faithfully recreating the experience of traveling by train in Britain's golden age of rail travel.

All have multiple stations where guests may board trains and the stations are beautifully maintained and cared for in every detail. Flowers and decorative plants adorn

platforms and station-side gardens. Platform areas feature period advertising and other vintage objects. Employees wear railway uniforms appropriate to the era and fulfill historic roles. Trains come and go on schedule, and often at relatively frequent intervals that offer guests a choice of departures and destinations.

The railroads pay great attention to vintage signaling practices and employ historic hardware and rules to control train movements. This includes fully functioning signal boxes — signal towers in North American parlance — many operated with well-maintained armstrong interlocking levers and mechanical semaphores.

The Great Central Railway is another noteworthy line in the U.K. that fulfills most of the characteristics of the above lines and is further distinguished by its double-track line, which is especially unusual for a





preserved railroad. Where else can you regularly experience one steam-hauled train passing another at track speed?

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS MATTER

Do you remember your first railroad experience? Do you have a special train ride that has stayed with you for your whole life and helped to shape your interest in railroading? First impressions go a long way toward creating a love of railroading for the next generation. For children today, riding a holiday train may be their first contact with a real railroad.

Just after Thanksgiving, Cape Rail's Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Kaylene Jablecki encouraged my wife Kris and me to travel on Cape Cod Central's *Polar Express*. This is a 90-minute railway journey featuring Warner Brothers' adaptation of Chris Van Allsburg's popular 1985 book.



British Railways 4-6-0 73082 departs Horsted Keynes on the Blue Bell Railway, creating a mid-20th century British Railways experience in May 2004.

Do you remember your first railroad experience?  
Do you have a special train ride that has stayed with you for your whole life and helped to shape your interest in railroading?

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The story is adored by children and adults alike, many of whom board the train dressed in pajamas as a nod to the characters in the book.

Using a stunning display of holiday lights, the Cape Cod Central transforms its early 20th century former New Haven Railroad station and tower at Buzzards Bay, Mass., into a festive jumping-off point for a railroad trip to the "North Pole." Its seven-car *Polar Express* is a high-capacity passenger train consisting of a mix of equipment of varied lineages including former Budd-built Santa Fe full-length dome cars and Long Island Rail Road double-deckers with a former New Haven FL9 diesel-electric at each end. Each of the cars is decorated in the spirit of the holiday.

What makes the *Polar Express* wonderful is the high-energy interactive theatrical

production performed on board, where the train serves as both theater and stage. Passengers are actively engaged and entertained by a cast of characters who act out the *Polar Express* story. Chefs, elves, a hobo, "the Boy," and of course, Santa pass through the cars on the way to and from the "North Pole" wonderland. A menagerie of lights and waving elves appear like a magical vision when glimpsed in the evening through partially fogged train windows. Positive energy and holiday charm fuel the experience that includes choreographed singing, dancing, a light-spirited mock snowball fight and, of course, hot chocolate, overcome the lack of a frosted arctic landscape.

During the season, Cape Cod Central boards up to three *Polar Express* trains each night carrying hundreds of delighted pas-



On board Cape Cod Central's interpretation of *Polar Express*, the cheerful and energetic cast of characters from the popular book is key to the nonstop entertainment, which includes the telling of the *Polar Express* story.

sengers, many of whom will remember this as a magical first train ride.

### **MAGIC IN MAINE**

Magic of another kind is found on Maine's Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington, which excels in recreating the spirit of its historic railroad namesake.

The original WW&F was among Maine's rural two-foot gauge common carriers. Between 1895 and the early years of the Great Depression, WW&F operated north from a picturesque waterfront terminal at Wiscasset. The railroad was scrapped between 1934 and 1937, and yet remained in the collective memory because its quaint threadbare operation and its use of 0-4-4T Forney steam locomotives and lightly built rolling stock. The museum owes its existence to its founder, Harry E. Percival Jr., who acquired surviving assets of the

**Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington No. 9 is among the surviving Maine two-foot gauge locomotives. In January 2020, it arrived at Top of Mountain with a short photo freight.**

WW&F in the 1980s, and ultimately secured the railroad's sole surviving locomotive, Forney No. 9, which had been preserved privately by the Ramsdell family in Connecticut. Since its founding in 1989, the museum has constructed 3½ miles of two-foot gauge track on the old WW&F right-of-way and erected shop facilities at the south end of its line at Sheepscot in Alna.

On the urging of Conway Scenic's bridge inspector and steam locomotive engineer Wayne Duffett and WW&F's Ed Lecuyer, I paid my first visit to WW&F's Sheepscot shops for a Grand Reunion event Jan. 18 and 19, 2020. The event was held in cooperation with Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Company & Museum of Portland and the Maine Locomotive & Machine Works of Alna, and brought together five surviving Maine narrow gauge Forneys, three under steam.

Snowy conditions combined with WW&F's exceptional dedication to authenticity proved a memorable combination. This railroad truly brings the past to life.

WW&F holds special events at various

times of the year and is one of the best ways of experiencing small-time early 20th century North American railroading. Operations can be elusive, so check its website for events and days of operation: [wwfry.org](http://wwfry.org)

### **RESURRECTION RAILROADS**

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad in Colorado and New Mexico, and Pennsylvania's famed East Broad Top are other exceptional examples of authentically represented narrow gauge railroads.

It has been a quarter century since I last visited Chama, N.M., — the core of C&TS operations — but I vividly recall its determination to preserve the equipment and the spirit of the Rio Grande three-foot gauge operations.

The combination of authentic 2-8-2 Mikados, Rocky Mountain scenery, and attention to detail makes C&TS one of the world's best railroad operations.

During the 1990s and 2000s, I paid numerous visits to Pennsylvania's East Broad Top. This three-foot gauge coal hauling line was a surviving example of a 19th century



railroad that had struggled as a common carrier into the mid-20th century. At the time the railroad ceased commercial operations in 1956, it was already an anachronism. Although saved from scrapping and operated as a tourist attraction by the Kovalchick family, during my visits in mid-1990s the property was clearly suffering from age and inadequate maintenance. The famous shops at Rockhill Furnace near Orbisonia, Pa., showed signs of decay. Each year I visited the EBT seemed like it might be the last for the narrow gauge line.

The railroad ceased excursion operations in 2011, although the Friends of the East Broad Top continued to maintain the historic structures.

The outlook brightened considerably in 2020 when the EBT Foundation took over, and with an infusion of funding began correcting decades of slow decline.

In March 2022, Kris and I were invited to meet the railroad's Jim Roslund and Jon Smith and see the remarkable progress accomplished over the previous couple of years. I was delighted to witness a host of changes that preserved the railroad's structures and equipment without substantially altering its unique character.

In my view, the whole of the East Broad Top and especially its roundhouse, shops, and offices remain as the most authentic example of classic railroad facilities in the United States. This railroad is the real deal and preserving it in-kind is not just historically significant, but will allow future generations to experience an industrial wonder first-hand. Words and images can only hint of atmosphere offer by this splendid historic railroad.

### IRISH STANDOUT

During our visit to Ireland last autumn, Kris and I were encouraged to visit the Connemara Railway Project at Maam Cross — a significant example of railroad resurrection that is being recreated on a vestige of the long-closed Clifden Line in Ireland's County Galway. This route opened in 1895 and closed during the Great Depression.

I have a personal connection to the route. On my first visit to Ireland, a quarter-century ago, I was visiting Clifden, the western terminus of the route, where I was introduced to an elderly couple who lived in the old railway cottage.

They had controlled the gates that protected a road crossing with the railway, and in April 1935 had closed the gate after passage of the last train. They showed me a faded newspaper clipping that marked the end of the railway era at Clifden.

In recent years, Jim Deegan (known for his leadership of Rail Tours Ireland) has led a group that is restoring station environs at Maam Cross to embody the spirit



East Broad Top's Rockhill Furnace shop complex offer an authentic glimpse of late-19th century steam-era technology complete with a stationary engine and belt driven tools.

of a rural Irish branch line all but gone from living memory.

Kris and I arrived at Maam Cross by bus from Galway just in time for a hail storm that blew across the windswept Connemara landscape. We met Deegan and his small army of volunteers who paused from their labors to show us the progress they had made while bringing us on a short train ride on temporary narrow-gauge tracks.

What impressed me was the cast of characters, many of whom have day jobs in the transportation industry. They were an all-star team of players in Irish railway preservation and have the vision and talent to craft an historically significant tourist railway beginning from little more than the most rudimentary vestiges of the old line, namely the right-of-way, plus platforms and foundations of a few historic structures.

Among their achievements to date is the addition of a signal tower, complete with crucial machinery, including lever frames, necessary to install a fully functioning mechanically operated signal system at Maam Cross.

### GERMANY'S GOLD STANDARD

Germany's Harzer Schmalspurbahnen GmbH (HSB) represents the successful perpetuation of a steam operations on a local railway network that survived as a relic of the Cold War. The Harz Mountain lines were separated from the German national network about the time of German reunification in 1990.

Today, this regional narrow gauge system offers a mix of traditional steam-hauled excursion trains and diesel railcars. The highlight of the system is the steeply graded line to Brocken, which spirals up a

In my view, the whole of the East Broad Top and especially its roundhouse, shops, and offices remain as the most authentic example of classic railroad facilities in the United States. The railroad is the real deal and preserving it in-kind is not just historically significant, but will allow future generations to experience an industrial wonder first-hand.



**Strasburg Rail Road's former Canadian National 2-6-0 No. 89 steams on a frosty March 2022 morning before working the day's excursions between East Strasburg and Lehman Place, Pa.**

prominent mountain famous for its historical witches, and which served as a Soviet-era listening post.

I visited in 2009, and was impressed by its immaculate locomotives and passenger cars, excellent track structure, the professional attitudes and sharp uniforms of its employees, and tightly scheduled operations. Significantly, this heritage

narrow-gauge railway interfaces with Deutsche Bahn's national network at three stations (Nordhausen, Quedlinburg, and Wernigerode) and serves more than four dozen local stations on its lines. DB's web-based timetable and ticketing site includes information on how to make connections to stations on the HSB network.

HSB's network integration, excellent service, and well-maintained vintage equipment has paid off. In 2022, the railroad boasted annual ridership of more than a million passengers.

### **STRASBURG'S ENDURING CHARM**

The Strasburg Rail Road in Lancaster County, Pa., is among my favorite American heritage lines. Its long operating season, frequent trains, and dedication to steam power make it the envy of other tourist railways. Its friendly attitude, attention to detail, and wide-open rural views makes Strasburg a great experience.

During a spring visit in 2022, I was impressed by the ease of buying tickets, the excellent value for money, the variety of cars well-maintained and exceptionally clean inside and out, and the railroad's



neatly uniformed employees. On one trip Kris and I traveled in the President's Car, which is beautifully maintained in its authentic condition. The car host was well-informed, and Kris was impressed by the brochure about the car that conveyed its history in way that was both interesting and informative without being laden with excessive minutia.

Also impressive is the railroad's expansive paved parking, which allows for a great number of visitors to get easy access to the station, where wide platforms that make it easy to get on and off Strasburg's trains.



The Mount Washington Cog Railway has a most impressive modern shop at the base of its steeply graded line in New Hampshire where it builds and maintains locomotives, railcars and its specialized cog railway track.

Its friendly attitude, attention to detail, and wide-open rural views makes Strasburg a great experience. During a spring visit in 2022, I was impressed by the ease of buying tickets, the excellent value for money, the variety of cars well-maintained and exceptionally clean inside and out, and the railroad's neatly uniformed employees.

#### AN AMAZING MODERN SHOP

Last June on a visit to New Hampshire's Mount Washington Cog Railway, I toured the railroad's brand-new shops. It is by far the most impressive facility that I've visited on any tourist railroad. The expansive modern building covers 35,000 square feet with ceilings 30-36 feet tall. Inside is an array of equipment including a pair of 20,000-pound overhead cranes and a computer-controlled plasma table used to precisely cut metal parts.

I was intrigued by the AeroGo Air Casters that the railroad's Ryan Presby described to me as miniature hovercrafts used to move heavy equipment weighing up to 20 tons on cushions of air. Key to making these work is a completely flat floor that is kept clean of dirt and debris.

Presby notes, "We have to tape the expansion joints."

The shop's groundbreaking was in 2019. It opened in 2021. The railroad has invested nearly \$2.5 million in the facility and plans to put in another million before completion.

The Cog Railway is one of two builders of mountain climbing cog locomotives, the other being Stadler in Switzerland. Significantly, the cog also manufactures its own railcars and track structure, producing its distinctive cog-racks as its shop. In the last few years the railroad has replaced most of its track to the top of its namesake mountain — the highest in New England.

#### BUILDING LONG-TERM SUCCESS

These are my choices for railroads that truly get it right. All are marked by an uncommon level of focus, energy, and determination to give visitors a memorable railroad experience. It's a winning recipe for long-term success. **I**



# High iron baseball

The best ballparks to watch a game and a train

by John Friedmann

**B**aseball and train watching have a lot in common: they are best done outside on clear days or pleasant evenings. Both are relaxed activities punctuated by occasional excitement. Doubleheaders are welcomed. Some fans prefer their hometown team (or railroad), while others travel around the country for variety and action.

More than half of the nation's 240 professional baseball stadiums have a railroad connection

— built next to a railroad, located on former railroad land, or served by rail transit, for example. Some teams — such as the Bakersfield Train Robbers — are named to honor a community's railroad connection.

So, here's a look at some of the best major and minor league baseball stadiums where you can watch trains and ballgames simultaneously. There are many

ballparks where you can see trains from the concourse, but this listing is focused on places with railroad views from the seats.

While only professional baseball stadiums are included, take this as an inspiration to seek out other parks — college, high school, or even Little League — that can scratch both train and baseball itches at the same time.

# Major League



It's baseball, hot dogs, and trains at Angel Stadium in Anaheim, Calif. A Metrolink train (opposite) stops at the intermodal center next to the Big A. Looking past the scoreboard gives fans a good view of the trains outside the stadium (above, right). Three photos, David Styffe

## ANGEL STADIUM, ANAHEIM, CALIF.

Los Angeles Angels  
(American League)

**Trains/day:** Amtrak: 20, Metrolink: 8-20,  
BNSF: 0-2, UP: 0-2



**ANAHEIM'S ANGEL STADIUM** takes the major league crown for ballpark train watching, even though it has hosted only one World Series (11 less than their crosstown rival Los Angeles Dodgers).

Angel Stadium (also known as the "Big A" for the capital A-shaped structure that once supported the scoreboard) has hosted the Angels franchise since the stadium's 1966 opening. Regular investment has kept the stadium up to date, helping the Angels regularly draw more than 3 million fans a season prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The attraction for railfans is the Metrolink-operated, ex-Santa Fe Orange Subdivision beyond the outfield, traversed by more than 40 trains on weekdays and about 30 on weekends. Amtrak's *Pacific Surfliners* between Los Angeles and San Diego account for 20 trains daily, and Metrolink commuter trains make up most of the rest. All passenger trains stop at the adjacent Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center, whose bulbous translucent shell makes it a local landmark. The platforms are mostly visible from ballpark seats, looking past the stadium's open outfield.

BNSF has local freight rights (through trains from San Diego usually don't pass Angels Stadium), while a Union Pacific "hauler" uses the line past the stadium to get to its otherwise disconnected Santa Ana Industrial Lead. Angel Stadium's upper level provides good train views while the third-base side — but not too far out — gives the widest angle on rail action.



**FUN FACTS:** Anaheim's most popular railroad is narrow gauge, steam-powered, and carries more than 6 million passengers a year: the Disneyland Railroad, which runs a 1.2-mile loop at the original Disney park less than 4 miles away from the Big A. Interestingly, standard-gauge steam once came to Anaheim Stadium: in January 1976, the American Freedom Train was displayed on a spur adjacent to the ballpark.

## MAJOR LEAGUE HONORABLE MENTIONS

to the Houston Astros and the Baltimore Orioles who have both incorporated former railroad buildings into their stadiums, and to the Chicago White Sox and San Diego Padres (among others) who offer train views from their stadium concourses.

## Triple Crown Winner



A swing for the fences could bounce off a passing South Shore train at the Steel Yard in Gary, Ind. Trains from three railroads can be seen from the Steel Yard stands. Seats at one of the outfield picnic tables will put you even closer to the rail action. Two photos, Bruce Stahl

**STEEL YARD, GARY, IND.**  
**Gary SouthShore Railcats**  
(American Association)  
**Trains/day:** NICTD: 18-28,  
CSS: 5-10, CSX: 30-40



**BASEBALL'S TRIPLE CROWN** honors the superstar player who leads the league in home runs, batting average, and runs batted in. "High iron baseball" has its Triple Crown winner located in ... Gary, Ind.? Yes! The Gary SouthShore RailCats connect to railroading with their name, showcase trains from three rail lines visible to fans, and are near a rail station so fans can take the train to the game.

The Steel Yard was completed in 2003 to anchor downtown Gary redevelopment. The RailCats have been more successful than the Gary redevelopment effort, averaging more than 3,100 tickets sold per game last season. Given the volume of train movements visible from the stadium, some of those ticket purchasers should also be railfans.

The closest line to the stadium is the South Shore, just across the street from the left field fence. Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District runs 28 South Shore passenger trains past the stadium each weekday and 18 daily on weekends. Freight operator Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad adds its freight trains on the NICTD line, usually behind traction orange GP38-2s.

CSS also operates the former Elgin, Joliet & Eastern City Track branch, which is visible from the stadium beyond the electrified South Shore main line. Next to the City Track runs CSX's primary entrance into Chicago, the double-track Barr Subdivision, which averages more than 30 trains per day. There are even more rail lines nearby — Norfolk Southern's uber-busy Chicago Line and CN's former EJ&E Dixie Lead to Kirk Yard — but while you can hear the action on these lines, they are just a bit too far away to see clearly.

Fans should choose seats on the first-base side for a direct view of rail action, although the City Track and CSX are somewhat tougher to see because fans must look through the elevated Indiana Toll Road's girders. For the closest views, choose seats in section 101 past third base or sit at one of the picnic tables above the outfield fence.

South Shore train riders have easy access from the Gary Metro Center train station only four blocks from the stadium. NICTD and the RailCats often cooperate on ticket discounts for riders, so be sure to ask at the ballpark ticket window. The walk between the station and stadium is safe for observant fans because there are plenty of police and other security around for games.

**FUN FACT:** Both the "SouthShore" and "RailCats" portions of the team's name honors Gary's railroading presence. And when a Rail-Cat hits a home run, a Nathan Airchime K5LA locomotive horn is sounded in the ballpark.

## Ballpark would you believe it?

**RAILROADS AND BASEBALL PARKS** can be complementary land uses — after all, passenger trains are one of the most efficient ways to move large groups of people. But when the railroad's line conflicts with the large footprint of a sports complex, things can get interesting. For example, the left field wall at Reno's Greater Nevada Field is 15 feet closer to home plate due to where the Reno "railroad trench" is located.

That modest compromise pales in com-

parison to the indignity inflicted on Philadelphia's Baker Bowl, home of the Phillies from 1887 to 1938. The North Philadelphia stadium had been open for six years when the Reading Co. built a short tunnel under two streets and a corner of the stadium, creating a distinctive hump in center field. As the Baker Bowl aged (badly), it was nicknamed "the dump by the hump." The tunnel is still there, used by hundreds of daily Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

commuter trains, but the last remains of the Baker Bowl were torn down in 1950.

If sports fans really want to get up close and personal with trains, they should take in a soccer game at Čierny Balog in Slovakia, where the narrow gauge Čierny Hron Railway runs steam-powered tourist trains in between the stands and the soccer pitch. No word on whether train passengers are charged admission if a match is going on when their train goes through.



# A Minor League



It's opening day 2019 in the new Segra Stadium, home of the Woodpeckers. Tracks border the field on two sides with trains from CSX, R.J. Corman, and Amtrak passing. Fayetteville Woodpeckers

## SEGRA STADIUM, FAYETTEVILLE, N.C.

### Fayetteville Woodpeckers

(A-level affiliate of the Houston Astros)

**Trains/day:** CSX: 15-25, R.J. Corman: 0-2



**FROM A RAIL PERSPECTIVE,** Segra Stadium couldn't be better located. The home of the Fayetteville Woodpeckers sits on a triangle of land bounded by rail lines on two sides and is immediately adjacent to the city's historic 1911 Amtrak station.

CSX's double-track South End Subdivision (the "A" Line, former Atlantic Coast Line between Florida and Richmond, Va.) runs along the third base line, separated from the stadium by the Amtrak station's long platform. Amtrak passes the stadium six times daily — the *Palmetto* and *Silver Meteor* stop, while the *Auto Train* doesn't. Local trains can be seen behind right field on the former Atlantic & Yadkin Railway, now CSX's Vander Spur. R.J. Corman's Raleigh & Fayetteville Railroad also uses the Vander Spur to access its yard in Fayetteville. R.J. Corman took over the Norfolk Southern route between Raleigh and Fayetteville late in 2022. A lucky railfan will see a military movement to nearby Fort Bragg using the Vander Spur as a tail track.

Segra Stadium is only 4 years old, so the 5,000-seat facility has plenty of modern creature comforts. The tables behind sections 108-111 will put you very close to the Amtrak platform and CSX main, but the best spot is the Kids Zone, a 4,500-square-foot play space behind left field with clear views of both lines and AY Xing — the interlocking that governs the crossing of the two CSX lines. The numerous crossings mean approaching trains are heavy on the horn.

**FUN FACT:** Fayetteville has several stretches of street running — CSX's main splits Winslow Street south of the stadium, CSX's Vander Spur divides Russell Street, and R.J. Corman runs in the Hillsboro Street pavement north of the stadium.

**A-LEVEL HONORABLE MENTIONS** go to the Spokane Indians who feature the Coors Light Caboose (a vaguely Stilwell-ish faux passenger car) in the outfield concourse, and views of Union Pacific's East Spokane yard; the Wilmington (Del.) Blue Rocks offer the only (albeit partly obstructed) professional baseball stadium view of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor; and the South Bend (Ind.) Cubs offer glimpses of nonstop action on the nearby Canadian National and Norfolk Southern lines.



Built along the Mississippi River in 1931, Modern Woodmen Park is a classic ballpark. Inside the Quad City River Bandits play ball, outside Candian Pacific and BNSF run the trains. Quad City River Bandits

## MODERN WOODMAN PARK, DAVENPORT, IOWA

### Quad City River Bandits

(A-level affiliate of the Kansas City Royals)

**Trains/day:** CP: 5-10, BNSF: 2



**THERE ARE A GOOD NUMBER OF DISTRACTIONS** at Modern Woodman Park that cause fans to look away from the ballgame: great views of the Mississippi River, a Ferris wheel, a carousel, and even a kiddie coaster. But it's impossible to ignore the trains that rumble by on Canadian Pacific's Davenport Subdivision only feet from the third-base grandstand.

Despite its name, Modern Woodmen Park (named for a local insurance company) is a classic minor league stadium built in 1931 and used for minor league baseball ever since. The park is also the home field for the St. Ambrose University baseball team.

The stadium, located between downtown Davenport and the Mississippi River, was subject to frequent flooding. A 2004 renovation fixed that issue and current ownership has been creative in adding new attractions — like the amusement rides — to the ballpark. It's tough to see trains from most of the seating areas, so when fans hear a train, they should take a walk out to the left field concourse for an unobstructed view. Canadian Pacific hopes you will notice their scoreboard advertisement — "We're hiring" was the 2022 tag line.

Canadian Pacific's Davenport Subdivision was originally part of the Davenport, Rock Island & North Western Railway, jointly owned by the Milwaukee Road and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. Davenport's former Union Station and the Milwaukee and CB&Q freight houses still stand near the stadium. CP now owns the line and BNSF exercises trackage rights on it to Clinton, Iowa. The CP/Kansas City Southern merger is expected to more than double train counts past Modern Woodmen Park since the Davenport Sub is part of the only route connecting the broader CP and KCS systems, so it may become even harder for railfans to focus on baseball.

**FUN FACT:** The Government Bridge upstream from the stadium is the successor to the first railroad bridge across the Mississippi, built in 1856. In a major victory for interstate commerce, a young Abraham Lincoln successfully defended the bridge owners against steamboat interests who wanted the bridge dismantled. Today a well-timed ride on the River Bandits' Ferris wheel could yield a distant view of an Iowa Interstate Railroad train on the Government Bridge.

## AA Minor League



Montgomery's Riverwalk Stadium is built around the old Western Railway of Alabama freight house. Looking in from left field, the freight house sits behind the first base stands. Mac the Camera Guy

### MONTGOMERY RIVERWALK STADIUM, MONTGOMERY, ALA.

#### Montgomery Biscuits

(AA affiliate of the Tampa Bay Rays)

**Trains/day:** CSX: 10-15, Meridian & Bigbee Railroad (on CSX): 2



**MONTGOMERY IS AN OFTEN-OVERLOOKED CITY** with rich history than runs from Rosa Parks to Hank Williams. But baseball fans and railroad historians shouldn't miss Riverwalk Stadium, home of the Southern League's Montgomery Biscuits.

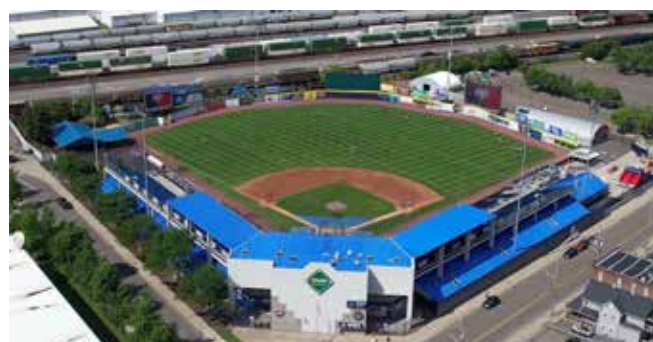
Riverwalk Stadium was built in 2004 to lure the Biscuits to town after nearly 25 years without pro baseball. The stadium uses the Western Railway of Alabama's 1898 freight house as its core, maintaining the exterior true to its railroad roots. Inside the stadium, the Biscuits have gone all-in on the railroad theme: fans can dine in the Club Car Bar, while groups can enjoy the Whistle Stop Grille, Boxcar Buffet, or go upscale at the Locomotive Loft. And yes, be sure to enjoy a biscuit at the ballpark.

Montgomery is the junction of five CSX routes, and fans have great views of virtually every through train as it traverses the Coosa Street interlocking directly behind the left field wall. Only a wrought iron fence separates the CSX tracks from fans behind left field. Montgomery's imposing Union Station is just a block away from the stadium and while L&N's *Pan-American* no longer calls, the station's 1897 trainshed is one of the best remaining in the U.S.



**The freight house cornerstone shows the building's heritage, while Monty, the anthropomorphized biscuit mascot, represents the baseball team.** Jackie Nix, Alamy

**FUN FACT:** The old tall tale about the "world's longest home run" that landed in a passing railroad car and traveled hundreds of miles could actually come true in Montgomery. In 2015, visiting player Courtney Hawkins slugged a home run that hit a passing CSX train. Only hitting the top of an enclosed auto rack kept the ball from going for an even longer ride.



**It's a doubleheader — the Rumble Ponies on the field and Norfolk Southern in the yard. Except for the tall billboards, Mirabito Stadium offers great train viewing — and baseball.** Rumble Ponies

### MIRABITO STADIUM, BINGHAMTON, N.Y.

#### Binghamton Rumble Ponies

(AA affiliate of the New York Mets)

**Trains/day:** NS: 8-12, NYS&W yard switching

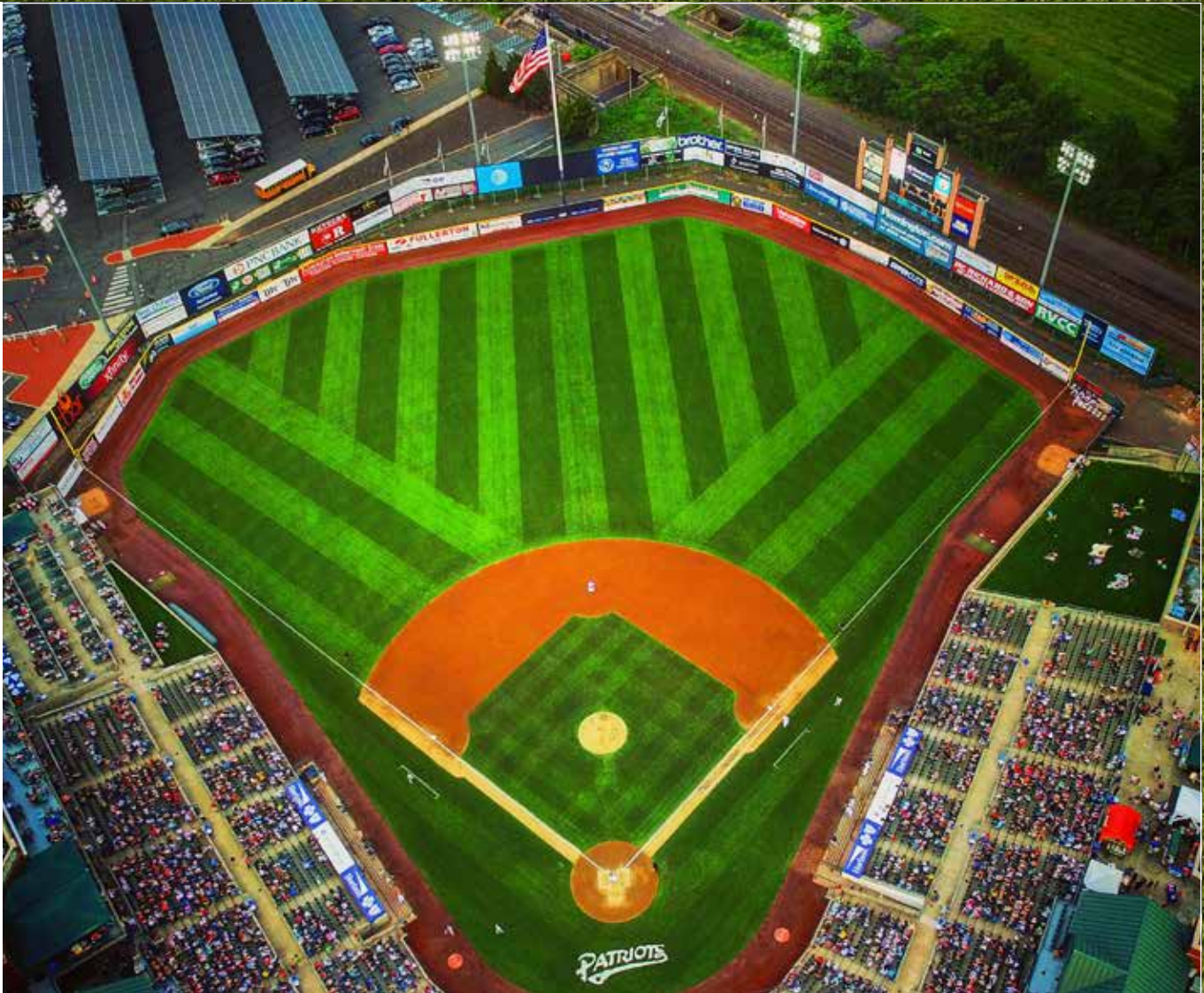


**BINGHAMTON DRIPS RAILROAD HISTORY** and the city's Mirabito Stadium is no exception. The former Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad passenger depot is half a block behind third base, and the stadium itself was built on the site of Lackawanna freight house and station tracks. Active tracks are still so close that a long home run to left center will land on the former DL&W main, used today by Norfolk Southern. Baseball-watching railfans can see mainline action on NS's ex-Erie Southern Tier line only a few feet farther away and on the ex-Delaware & Hudson Railway route to Albany, N.Y., acquired by NS in 2015.

While Norfolk Southern provides most of the railroad action, fans should keep a lookout for the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway working in its hub city. NYS&W dispatches trains to Syracuse and Utica, N.Y., and New Jersey from its small yard and engine terminal nested within NS trackage near the ballpark.

Mirabito Stadium, built at an unfortunate time for ballpark architecture (1991-92), is heavy on concrete and short on charm. But Rumble Ponies baseball is higher-level minor league (AA), and stadium amenities have been upgraded without compromising proximity to railroad action. Choose a seat higher up in the left field grandstand for the best train viewing and to avoid being blocked by the double-height outfield billboards. Visit the first base concourse for a spiedie — a sub roll filled with marinated, chargrilled cubed meat. It's a Binghamton specialty.

**FUN FACT:** DL&W's extensive use of concrete let many Lackawanna structures live long lives. But concrete made Binghamton's Lackawanna freight house difficult to demolish to make way for Mirabito Stadium, although the effort finally succeeded after several tries.



Peer around the outfield advertising to see a parade of NJ Transit trains from TD Bank Ballpark, home of the Somerset Patriots. NJ Transit's Bridgewater station is a short distance beyond the center field fence, providing convenient rail access to the stadium. Somerset Patriots

**TD BANK BALLPARK, BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP, N.J.**  
**Somerset Patriots**

(AA affiliate of the New York Yankees)  
**Trains/day:** NJ Transit: 36-54, NS: 0-2



**THE SUBURBAN NEW JERSEY SOMERSET PATRIOTS**

provide the most rail-centric (excluding subways) game experience of the 10 New York City-area professional baseball teams. Fans can see trains from their seats, but Bridgewater station on NJ Transit's Raritan Valley commuter train line is also just beyond the outfield fence, making it easy to take the train to the game.

NJ Transit provides 27 weekday round trips (18 on weekends) and trains are usually announced by horn and bell noise. Train frequency allows fans to see 10 to 15 movements during a night out at the ballpark, and the stadium is only 54 minutes away from Newark's Penn Station (expresses provide a faster ride to weekday night games). A Norfolk Southern local provides the only freight activity. Fans looking for freight action should spend pre-game time 1½ miles away in Bound Brook, N.J., which is a NS and CSX hot spot.

TD Bank Ballpark was built for the Patriots in 1999, who debuted in the independent Atlantic League. In 2021, the New York Yankees

moved their AA affiliate from Trenton to Somerset, only 40 miles from Yankee Stadium. Fans can now see the Yankees of the future in Somerset at a fraction of the price they would pay in the Bronx. Somerset's triple-decker billboards in the outfield challenge train watching, but a strategic gap in the right field corner lets fans watch commuter trains pulling into or accelerating away from the Bridgewater station. For the best train view, railfans should chose seats down the first-base line, close to the home team's bullpen.

**FUN FACT:** Both NJ Transit's Raritan Valley Line and TD Bank Ballpark are prone to flooding from the nearby Raritan River. In September 2021, flooding from the remnants of Hurricane Ida stranded a NJ Transit train in nearby Bound Brook and forced the Patriots to move several games to Hartford while the ballpark dried out. **I**

**AA HONORABLE MENTIONS** go to the Altoona Curve, whose stadium offers views of a roller coaster but not the Norfolk Southern main line, despite the team's name; and the Hartford Yard Goats, who honor rail history with their team nickname written in New Haven railroad script.



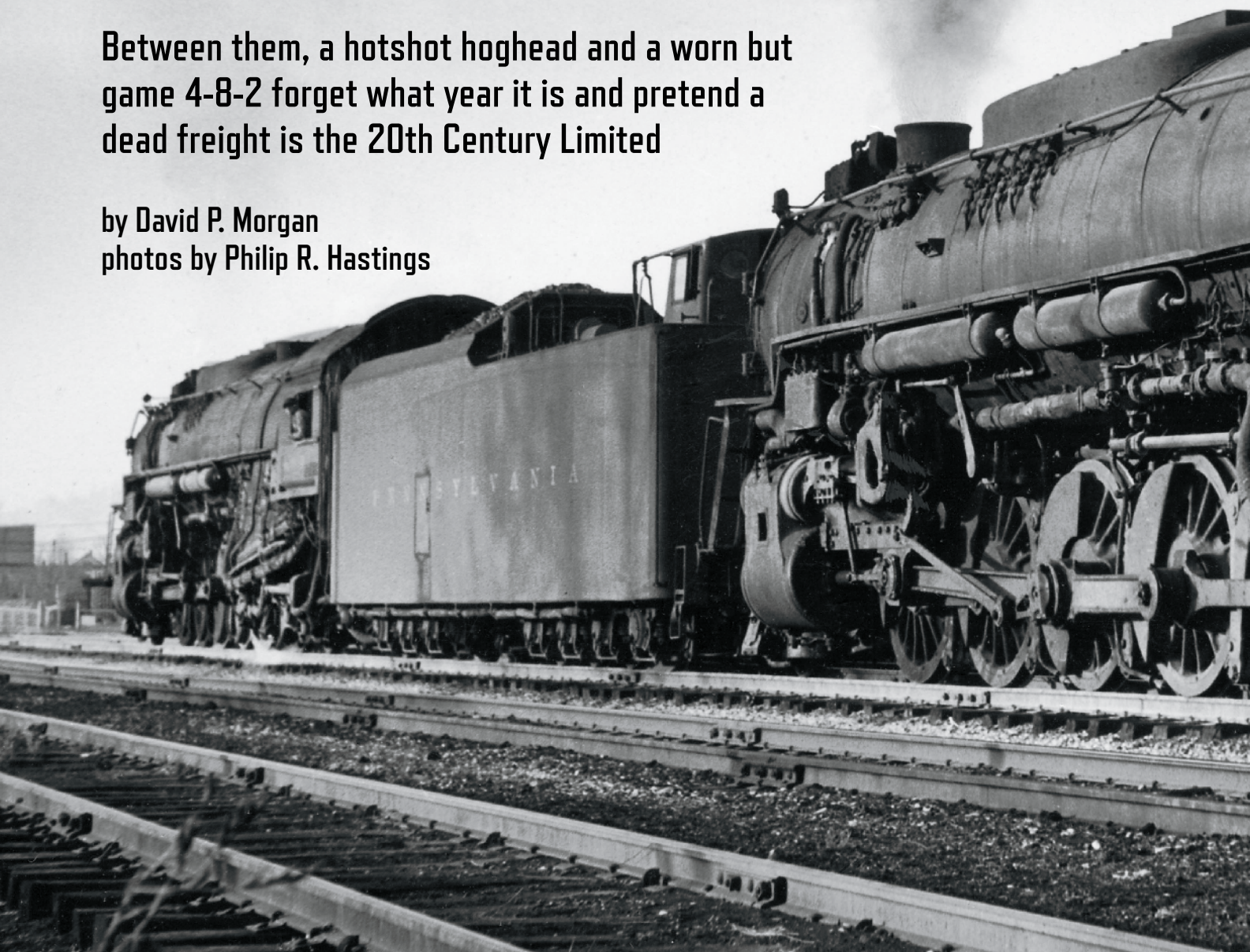
Countdown to  
**1000**  
ISSUES

# The Moh

that refused to abdicate,  
and other tales

Between them, a hotshot hoghead and a worn but  
game 4-8-2 forget what year it is and pretend a  
dead freight is the 20th Century Limited

by David P. Morgan  
photos by Philip R. Hastings



# QWIK



**WE WILL REACH ISSUE 1,000** of *Trains* in 2024. Looking back to issues 100 to 199, this is the second reprint in our series of key articles from the archives. Staff and contributors perused bound volumes from February 1949 to May 1957 for this selection.

Chosen for its significance to the history of *Trains* and setting a premise for years to come, is David P. Morgan's "The Mohawk that refused to abdicate, and other tales." This was part four of the "Steam in Indian Summer" series, published in the September 1956 issue.

The series presents tales from the last days of steam in the U.S., and is based on four years of travel by Morgan and photographer Philip R. Hastings. *The Mohawk that refused to abdicate, and other tales* became the title of a book encapsulated with these adventures (published Jan. 1, 1975).

Notably one of founder Al Kalmbach's best hires, 'Morgan, referred to as "DPM," believed in railroading and was instrumental in labeling the publication, "The magazine of railroading."

DPM became *Trains* editor in 1953. He retired in 1987. — *Nastassia Putz*

Pennsy J1s walking lake-bound coal out of Grogan Yard in Columbus, Ohio. A rakish styling note of Loewy-like influence.



An impatient New York Central engineer ... he could have commanded a Super G Constellation or a Queen Mary with equal authority.

**T**here is something about a map that brings out the beast in a railroad. Indeed, it amounts to an inexplicable lapse in an otherwise conscientious and painstaking business. A railroad will bend over backwards to refund your unused ticket to the last penny and often on a check so impressive in its countersignatures and watermarked paper that one almost feels obliged to frame it instead of cash it. Again, a railroad will employ regiments of draftsmen working at acres of

drawing tables to figure out bridge stress or driving wheel counterbalance or size of drain gutter. Accuracy is the watchword and excuses are taboo.

Except in maps — timetable maps. I think there must be rules of some sort, because the wholesale rearrangement of physical plant and nature is too universal an art to be happenstance. The standard technique is to erase all other lines except the most friendly connections;

expand all states served by the company so that they occupy approximately 80% of the land area of the U.S.; rub out mountains and other natural barriers; and most important draw all main lines with a ruler. One wonders if John Barriger first conceived of low-grade and tangent “super railroads” by casually thumbing through the pages of an old *Official Guide*. Shades of Poole Brothers!

Oh, yes, one other word of warning to the novice: Never judge a railroad line’s importance by its thickness on the map. For example, Pennsylvania’s 112.7-mile line between Columbus and Sandusky, Ohio, is about spider-web size in the company’s public folder, and the outlander envisions an H10 Consol wheezing through the weeds with a local freight perhaps thrice weekly.

No such thing! Although freight service only, Pennsy’s line is a heavy-duty tonnage funnel for coal (north) and iron ore (south) between a major interchange point and Lake Erie, so much so that mile-long trains are the rule and motive power demands are figured in multiples of approximately 100,000 pounds tractive effort per engine.

Moreover, the operation remains traditionally steam. All of which serves to explain why Phil Hastings and I neglected the implication of Pennsy’s timetable and camped a while at the west end of Grogan Yard, Columbus — there to watch the railroad’s biggest get a grip on coal bound for “the dock.” Now, “biggest” on Pennsy’s roster of steam power means the J1, a 2-10-4 of more than ordinary reputation and performance. It’s chic to remark, “Oh,

that’s the engine Pennsy borrowed the blueprints from C&O for,” but there’s a bit more to the story than that. Essentially, the J1 dates back to 1925 and the A1 2-8-4 that Will Woodard put together on the erection floor of Lima. Except in weight, the engines are more sisters than not; they share tandem rods, vast grate area, long stroke, a booster, a feedwater heater, comparatively high drivers — all the items that Woodard said spelled the difference between power and Super-Power.

World War II caught Pennsy without such an engine on the property and, worse yet, without the time and means to develop one at Altoona. Electrification and depression had caused a surplus of steam power until Mars pushed carloadings out of sight, and then it was too late for the railroad’s customary custom designing.

The War Production Board’s ban on new patterns forced the road to shop around, the choice being Chesapeake & Ohio’s T-1 Texas. C&O, did I say? Well, yes and no. Allowing for a bit more weight on drivers, the specifications of both 2-10-4s check out, often to the inch; under their boiler jacketing they were twins. And there the similarity stopped on dead center.

War or no war, the 125 J1s rolled out of Altoona looking like nothing that C&O ever had on its property. As opposed to the T-1, the Pennsy engine carried her headlight high and mounted a keystone number plate on the smokebox. Just that front end, with its drop-coupler, solid pilot was enough, but Pennsy also placed sandbox and steam dome under one huge housing, added

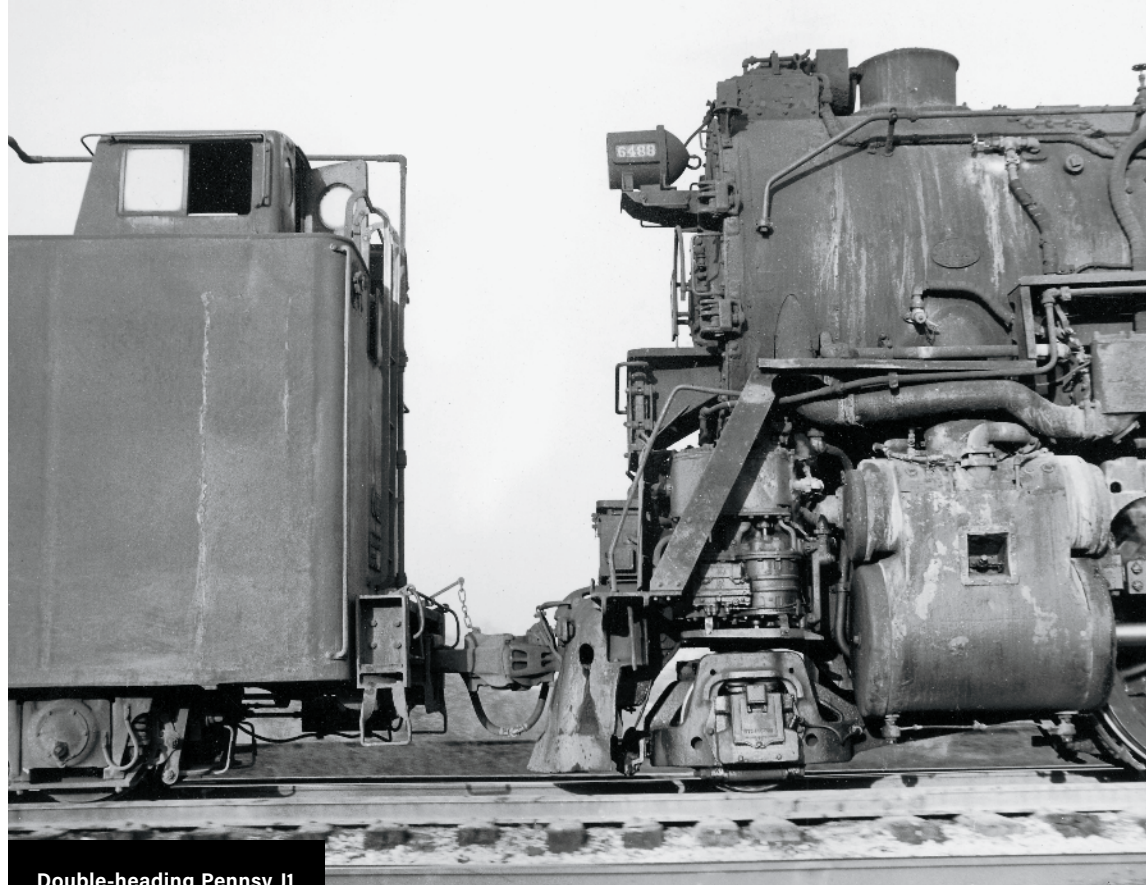


a typically PRR long-and-low 16-wheel tank, and replaced the normal C&O cab with a semi-streamlined affair of almost Raymond Loewy influence.

That cab. I remember that during the war, while riding a passenger train into Indianapolis, I glimpsed, between a couple of boxcars, a cab with a semicircular window casing. It was like nothing any road had ever placed on a freight engine, a sort of rakish styling note such as Mr. Loewy might have used to dandify a K4 for a prewar coach streamliner's debut. I was still wondering whether to write it off as an illusion when the news broke that such a cab was a trademark of 125 J1 2-10-4s, the first wholesale addition to the road's steam roster since 1930. Fine locomotives they were, too; big brutes that suddenly dated Pennsy's worn and weary ranks of 2-10-2s, engines that quite possibly meant the difference between fluidity and chaos in steam territory throughout those war-burdened 1940s.

To see them moving coal out of Columbus was like putting pages back on the calendar. As far as Lewis Center, Ohio, a dozen miles or so, the standard 125-car coal drag demands a J1 plus; and once my esthetic flashback was tempered as a gunning GP7 road-switcher helped a 2-10-4 upgrade. But the normal routine was to assist in kind.

The coal that Pennsylvania moves up to Sandusky is interchange or offline coal, mostly from C&O, L&N, N&W, and Virginian. Watching the J1s lug it out of Grogan Yard reminded me of two opinions that I'd heard while researching material for *Trains*. Once, down on Louisville & Nashville, an op-



**Double-heading Pennsy J1 2-10-4's Nos. 6486 and 6488 walk lake-bound coal out of Grogan Yard. Out of chaos to fluidity.**

erating man had solemnly remarked that L&N cars roll easier than C&O hoppers. Take two otherwise identical 120-car trains of coal, he said, and an engine can start the L&N one with less effort. I nodded and made a mental note.

A few months later I was watching a Chesapeake & Ohio track gang re-lay rail when, one after another, diesels rolled two trains of empties back toward the mines. "Ever notice," a C&O track supervisor said to me, "how those L&N cars rattle while ours roll quiet." So you take your choice: less sound or less inertia.

On Pennsy, of course, the stacks of two wide-open, earth-shaking, slogging and straining J1s made it difficult to run a fair test on the comparison as the black hoppers of Chessie followed the red ones of L&N up to Sandusky and the holds of the lake boats.

Now to New York Central and a story for the books.

You can place any label you want on this tale: The Feminine Engine That Wasn't or The Ambition of Every Boy or How To Confuse a Dispatcher. My own choice is *The Mohawk That Refused To Abdicate*.

It all took place on a hot September 1955 day in central Ohio. Dropping in on the junction town of Galion, where Central mains from Indianapolis and Cincinnati converge into

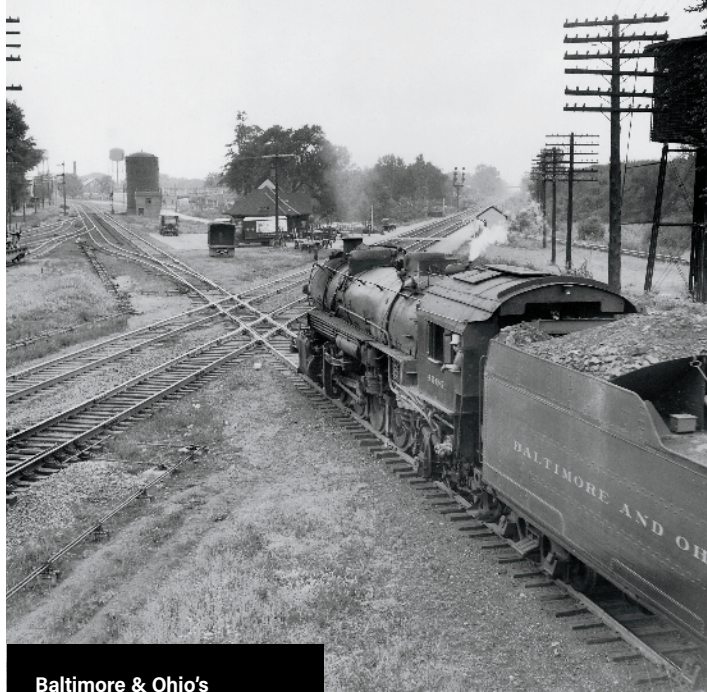
one for Cleveland, we came upon 4-8-2 No. 3005 just easing to a halt near the coal chute. One of 25 dual-purpose Mohawks delivered by Alco late in 1940, the L-3a had spent a good part of her life in passenger service. In fact, Phil had placed her on film in 1948 while she was working the *New England Wolverine* through Worcester, Mass.

An L-3a looks like a passenger engine. After all, from the drop-coupler pilot back to the third pair of disc drivers, she smacks of Hudson design in a blueprint that resists straight lines and luxuriates in smooth contours and subtle, feminine curves. No wonder Central publicists threw the





Cooling her 72-inch drivers, Mohawk No. 3134 stares at the tower guarding the Big Four/B&O diamond as No. 426, the *Cleveland Special*, makes its station stop at Shelby, Ohio.



Baltimore & Ohio's Mansfield local crosses Central at Shelby, Modified USRA and bell-ringing.

word "Mountain" out of their dictionary. Aside from the fact that The Water Level Route never let you forget it, an L-3a is the last locomotive on earth anyone would think of as a mountain engine. She is grace and speed, an aristocrat of multiple-track main lines and water troughs that would look as out of place on Tennessee Pass as a K4 in Miami.

But this was 1955 and the No. 3005 had fallen upon evil times. She was dirty; cylinder and steam dome covers were missing; and the booster had long since been sacrificed for simplicity of maintenance. Tied to her tender was dead freight: empties, gons of scrap iron, bad-order cars patched up for a trip to the shops or the cutting torch.

The bright one in this bad dream was the engineer. Hastings termed him "an alert and brawny man whose goggles and rakish mustache suggested

a flair for making cinders fly." No one could argue that. Gregarious, informative, seasoned, he was the type who could have commanded a Super G Constellation or a *Queen Mary* with equal authority; in a cab he was the man all small boys imagine they will someday resemble on the right-hand seatbox.

He said that in Galion they would pick up tonnage ("on this road we take everything the engine'll pull") so I asked what speed we could expect him to be making up the pike.

"Sixty."

"With this train?" I hastily figured the extra would be about 100 cars between tank and caboose out of Galion.

"Oh, yes, we'll ride once we get out of here."

A Mohawk making a mile a

minute on dead freight? I muttered something about excessive optimism to Phil, and we left Galion with the No. 3005 taking slack just to spot her tank for water. Sixty. Humbug!

Finding nothing else in steam at Galion, we moved 12.7 miles nearer Cleveland to a junction at Shelby, Ohio, where Central's double-track main crosses Baltimore & Ohio's Willard-Newark branch at grade. A chat with the operator in the gray, peak-roofed interlocking plant tower served to confirm my notion of the progress Extra 3005 would make. While getting out of Galion shortly after noon he'd pulled a drawbar, and judging by the clipped talk of the DS rasping out of the speaker in the tower, all hell had broken loose.

By coming apart on the eastbound main, Extra 3005

East had converted the Central main into a single-track railroad, a disruption complicated by the fact that there were four passenger trains in the vicinity. The DS moved the Cleveland-bound trains over on the westbound main to run them around the extra and against the current of traffic. Even the agent at Shelby got into the act as he tried to ascertain on which platform to assemble passengers, mail, and express for what train.

Grief all this may have been for the railroad, but the misfortune of a Mohawk on her last legs had turned it into a very satisfying day for the train watchers. A happy note in the proceedings was Baltimore & Ohio 2-8-2 No. 4594, which was working a peddler known locally as the Mansfield Turn. She was a light USRA Mike, modified in appearance by a high-mounted headlight and an extension on the cab to accommodate the head brakeman. She fussed about at a





nearby military base, ventured near the busy NYC diamond a couple of times, finally found a chance to get across between trains, and eventually did so with a great deal of whistle blowing and bell ringing.

Central itself continued to occupy the center of the stage at Shelby, of course. A Hudson rolled in on the 12 cars of the *Cleveland-Cincinnati Special* and managed to spin her drivers departing, despite a generous supply of sand. The result was not only something to hear but an opportunity to inspect the heavy motion work which Central favored on its steam power.

Gentle and cultured in overall appearance its engines may have been, but examine that Alligator crosshead again with its adjoining main and side rods and Baker gear. Tough and ponderous steel, so much so that a Pennsy K4 is fitted with tensile by comparison. Interesting.

A pair of E8s wheeled west, then two GP7s clattered across the diamond on an express train. Then . . . well, right smack in the middle of all this to be exact, tension intangible, unseen, quite real began to build in the tower. The dispatcher had temporarily lost track of Extra 3005 East and was attempting to pin down his location and whether or not he had his train in one piece.

The conversation, as relayed to us by the operator, gave no direct hint of what was to come. As a result neither Hastings nor I noticed a faint smudge of smoke building in the horizon to the west. A distant whistling was adjudged to be yet another first-class schedule, and we were scanning the timecard to identify it when another, nearer blast



**Extra 3005 East making 60 mph through Shelby.**  
*All the implications of destiny of the Book of Revelation.*

propelled us to trackside on the double. Why, it's the extra! Can't be — he might just have — it is and he's rolling!

Rolling is mild language for what he was doing. Extra 3005 East, now no less than 98 cars between tank and caboose, was bearing down on Shelby with all the implications of destiny of the Book of Revelation, gaining momentum with each revolution of those four pairs of 69-inch drivers, making the legal mile a minute with ease and perhaps a notch or two better. The elephant-eared aristocrat of an Alco rammed across the diamond with smoke going high, the Baker up near center, and the crew enjoying the breeze.

Out of her dusty wake came her train rattling, rocking, rolling, riding to Cleveland at such a pace that, as Hastings recalls it, "one felt called upon to wonder at what moment the whole shebang would take either to the air or to the adjacent countryside."

The wooden hack bringing up the markers shot off into the distance. Left in the sudden quiet were two rather shaken train watchers, one startled operator, and the voice of a dispatcher who, with noticeable alarm, had (1) discovered the pace Extra 3005 East was making and (2) was attempting to stop him so that slower but more legitimate occupants of the eastbound main passenger trains could overtake the dead freight they had been supposed to run around.

Wonderful! Too often steam departs from us in the form of a fan trip that suffers an engine breakdown ... or in a line of dead power nursed to the junkers by a Geep ... or as a local freight locomotive, wheezing out of town without ceremony or drama. How much better to wind it up like the No. 3005, taking a quiet Ohio town apart, pinning its ears back, performing like Alco said her 4410 cylinder horsepower should perform.

So study again the photograph on this page. It is everything that it implies. **I**

*Next: Bob Johnston's commentary on the chosen article from issues 200-299. Stay tuned to find out which one we picked!*



Waiting at Red Oak, Iowa, on Aug. 23, 1939, this train looks like the one our author was hoping to ride — a lighter Burlington 4-6-0 and a combine. B. Corbin, J.C. Seacrest collection



# MY FIRST TRAIN TRIP... ALONE

In the Anderson household one had to be age 14 before riding a train ... solo

by Richard J. Anderson

**IF YOU HAVE LIVED ON THIS EARTH** more than six decades — as I have — you have already ridden trains, probably many trains. Think back to the first time you made a train trip all alone. My first solo train ride is a major milestone in my progression from being “that kid who likes trains” to the man who models, writes, collects, travels, and reads about trains.

My boyhood home was a junction on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy in southwestern Iowa named for a tree, the Red Oak. The *Zephyrs* and fast freights of the Q would zip through town on the main line. But a couple of branches running north and south were hosts to typical mixed trains of the 1940s and 1950s. The branches provided same day out-and-back trips from Red Oak. I was still in grammar school when I

figured out that if I saved 35 cents or so I could spend an afternoon on a train.

I managed to save the money needed for a ticket. But I was 14 years old before I was able to come by the rest of what was needed to take the train: parental permission.

Dad was not about to let his 12-year-old son take a train ride by himself. He didn't want a 13 year old venturing forth either, especially against mother's litany of danger-

ous or questionable possibilities that could arise from such activities going on. Another year — 14 years old — proved to be the age of choice for train travel, though, especially when I would be taking my first train pictures with my brand-new Kodak Baby Brownie Special camera.

The train for this first ride had been chosen long before I turned 14. It left the division point of Creston, Iowa, some 50 miles to the east at 8:30 a.m., daily except Sunday. As train No. 91, it worked as a way freight doing local switching chores from Creston to Red Oak, arriving in our town just before noon. Freight cars accumulated along the route were left for mainline pickup on one of two sidings just east of the Red Oak passenger station. The crew would then spot the locomotive — usually a light Mikado — and the ancient combination passenger-baggage coach in front of the station. They would walk across the tracks to the depot lunchroom, run by Bessie Billings and her husband Ralph, for a plate of beef stew or ham and mashed potatoes. I had been their frequent companion at the lunch counter, plying them with question after question after question.

“When you going to ride with us, boy?” The overalled conductor used a toothpick as the lunch break drew to a close.

“Oh, I’m going to, I’m going to.” I knew that one day I would.

I especially wanted to ride in the combine. Built sometime in the 19th century, the old car had seen lots of mainline service before being relegated to train No. 91 as a wayfreight caboos. I had peeked inside of it more than once, seeing the faded green upholstered coach seats and the rusted stove in one corner. Entrance to the car was gained from open platforms at each end. I wanted to ride that combine.

Then I turned 14! That most wonderful day when I would be allowed to travel on my own.

“One round-trip ticket, Red Oak to Griswold.” Station agent Dick Gleason smiled as he handed the long yellow form through the grilled window.

I took one or two photos of the depot with my new Baby Brownie, wanting to save most of the film for the trip. The sound of chuffing exhaust from around the curve to the east announced the arrival of No. 91. The Mikado spotted a few cars on the siding and then coupled up to the ... wait a minute ... what was this? There was no combination car! The locomotive eased to a stop by the station pulling a caboos and a baggage car.

“Where’s the combination car?”

“In the yards, back in Creston,” said the conductor as he walked beside me toward the lunchroom. “Brake problems. I think they’re going to get rid of her.”



Looking west along the Burlington’s tracks in Red Oak, Iowa, the depot is hidden behind the trees across from the water tower. Red Oak sits among the patchwork of farm fields that make up southwestern Iowa. Today, this is BNSF Railway territory. Henry J. McCord

I told the captain of No. 91 that I was going to ride that day, at last, and that I had hoped to ride the combine.

“You’ll like the caboos just as much,” he said. “I’ll tell you what. After we leave the yards and head north, I’ll let you ride up in the cupola with me. How would that be?”

That, I thought to myself, might not be too bad a deal at all!

We ate our lunch, and I boarded the caboos. It was an NE-4, and probably the same age as the combine it had replaced. The baggage car was needed because there was still a good amount of l.c.l. business on the branch north to Griswold. It measured 40 feet long and had one narrow door on each side.

We headed down a grade from the elevated main line to the lower yards in Red Oak, located on the alignment of the original 1869 right-of-way through town. The Mikado was exchanged for a smaller K-2 class steam engine that was light enough not to cause damage to the many trestles of the north branch. It could also be accommodated on the small turntable at Griswold.

We headed up the branch, the K-2 whistling a warning at the many country roads we crossed. There was some switching at the grain elevator in Elliott. It took

an hour and a quarter to traverse the 19 miles between Red Oak and Griswold. That was fine with me. The more time on the train the better!

The Mikado again became our motive power after the return to the lower yards in Red Oak. We moved up the incline to the Chicago-Denver mainline level with the locomotive shoving four stock cars of hogs and pulling the rest of our train. The stock cars were shoved into a siding to await pickup by a through freight. I disembarked at the depot. The Mikado headed east, pulling what was by that time No. 92, the way freight to Creston.

Other rides came later: vista dome seats on the *Zephyrs*, bedroom accommodations aboard the *Broadway*, and parlor car chairs on the Southern Pacific. They are not remembered as clearly as that 19-mile trip up to Griswold in 1948. It was a wonderful trip even without the combine that I wanted to ride so much. **I**

*Richard J. Anderson was hooked on trains even before his first trip ... alone. Today he is a retired Episcopal priest residing in Iowa. Dick is an avid HO-scale model railroader of the Burlington Route. He has written numerous stories for our sister publication Classic Trains.*



# Famed Alco PA will move to Genesee Valley Transportation

Historic locomotive to be used for special company excursions, business trains

▲ Another chapter is about to unfold for Doyle McCormack's Alco PA, seen here in May 2014 during a visit to the North Carolina Transportation Museum. The locomotive has been dealt to Genesee Valley Transportation. GVT plans to return it to operation for use on company excursions and business trains. The unit was built for the Santa Fe in December 1948.

*Classic Trains collection*



Doyle McCormack poses with the Alco PA he restored to Nickel Plate colors after its rescue from Mexico in 2000. *Trains collection*

## GENESEE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION HAS ACQUIRED THE ALCO PA

restored by preservationist Doyle McCormack and will run the unit on special mainline passenger excursions, the shortline company announced.

McCormack and Michael D. Thomas, GVT Rail president, finalized the agreement in a March 1 meeting at the Oregon Rail Heritage Museum in Portland, Ore., the PA's current home.

The move to its new home at the GVT shops in Scranton, Pa., was tentatively slated to begin in April, Thomas says, although at press time plans were not finalized.

"We've been talking with BNSF and Norfolk Southern, and we have rates in place to move it," he says. "And there are certainly things that have to be done in order to move the locomotive. We'll have to stencil it, which we'll do, and we'll do it well — we're not going to take a spray can and spray it."

Thomas says GVT has a good idea what it will take to bring the locomotive up to operating condition.

"We know that the prime mover runs," he says. "The electrical system should be okay. It needs a couple of modifications ... because of the prime mover that was put in it."

"... I'm very comfortable that our mechanical staff will be able to get it into good operating condition. It's not going to be a month; it's going to take some time to get it ready. But I have no doubt we'll be able to do that." Genesee Valley is known for the Alco-centric rosters of its railroads, the Delaware-Lackawanna; Mohawk, Adirondack & Northern; Lowville & Beaver River; Falls Road Railroad; and Depew, Lancaster & Western [see "More than Alcos," December 2021].

Addressing a question widely asked by railfans, Thomas says any thought of changing the locomotive's current Nickel Plate Road paint scheme is "a decision for another day."

Thomas adds there are no immediate plans for excursions giving the public a chance to ride behind the locomotive.

"Our plans are to use it for special excursions and special use in the Scranton, Pa., area, and in northeast Pennsylvania," he says.

The locomotive began life as Santa Fe No. 62L, in December 1948. It was one of four PA1s sold to the D&H in 1967 for use in New York-Albany-Montreal passenger service, retaining the warbonnet paint scheme, but with D&H blue replacing Santa Fe red. No. 62L became D&H No. 18.

The units became expendable when the Albany-Montreal route was not included by Amtrak in 1971. Two units were leased to Steam Tours Inc. of Akron, Ohio, and two were traded to GE for new locomotives. But under president C. Bruce Sterzing, the railroad reclaimed the PAs — the tour company was behind on lease payments, and the planned GE purchase fell through — and eventually used them when Amtrak restored Albany-Montreal operations in 1974. During this period, all four were rebuilt by Morrison-Knudsen as PA4s, with 2,400-hp 251 engines.

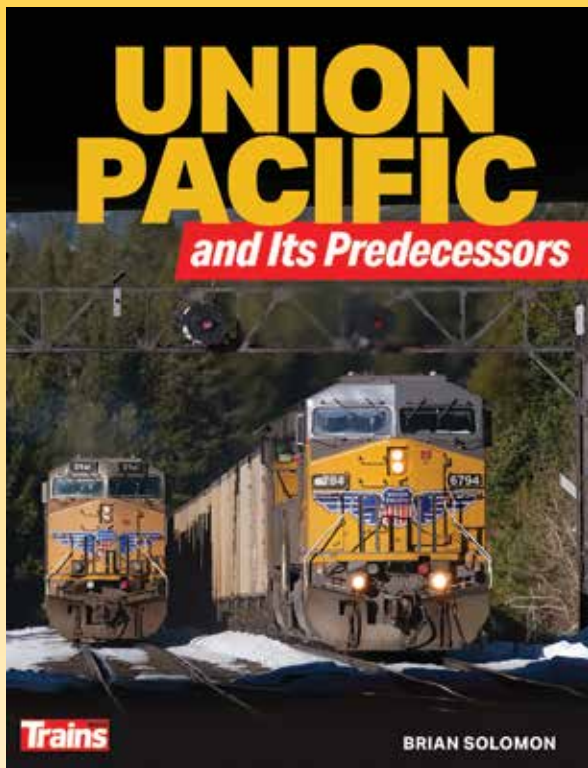
Bumped from Amtrak passenger service by the Rohr Turboliners, and after brief periods in freight service and a year-long lease to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, they were sold to Mexico in 1978. In 2000, the shells of two PAs, which was all that remained, were returned to the U.S. One shell is under restoration at the Museum of the American Railroad (Texas); McCormack acquired the other.

"It's been a long road and a remarkable story for this locomotive," McCormack said in a GVT press release. "We couldn't be happier than to see NKP 190 go to a family of railroads like GVT Rail." — *Trains staff, Genesee Valley Transportation*

NEW FROM  
BRIAN SOLOMON



# EXPLORE THE UNION PACIFIC



**GET AN IN-DEPTH LOOK** at the second-largest railroad in the U.S. today, the Union Pacific! *Union Pacific and Its Predecessors* takes a look at the railroad as it is now and how it came to be, with a look at predecessor railroads and historical routes, equipment, and other features.

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## Q What are Tier 4 credits

## and credit unit locomotives? — Doug Diebel

▲ A pair of General Electric Tier 4 credit units, Nos. 2989 and 2945, power a northbound Canadian National intermodal train at Silver Lake, Wis., on June 17, 2019. The locomotives are identical to their Tier 3 cousins built before 2015. *Chris Guss*

▲ Since the implementation of Tier 4 emissions standards on Jan. 1, 2015, builders have been required to construct new locomotives meeting stringent restrictions that primarily focus on reducing nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter from exhaust. They are also allowed to build locomotives with the previous Tier 3 emission standards called Tier 4 credit locomotives. Mechanically and visually, a Tier 4 credit locomotive resembles a Tier 3 unit.

For years prior to Tier 4 taking effect, locomotive builders were able to accumulate emission credits from the locomotives they built and sold to customers that were equipped with energy-saving devices such as distributed power, Trip Optimizer, and others. After Tier 4 implementation, builders were able to offer Tier 4 credit locomotives to their customers, which are a less costly, less complex locomotive than full Tier 4

units. For each credit locomotive, builders would apply a portion of these accumulated credits to bridge the gap between the credit locomotive's lower emission level and the more stringent Tier 4 level.

The ability to build credit units does come with a few rules. A builder is only able to construct up to 50% of its total new locomotive production per year as Tier 4 credit units. While builders can still earn emission credits, new locomotives earn the most from the moment they're built; however, this begins to decrease every year after. Rebuilt units can also earn credits but begin at a much lower starting point in terms of calculations and diminish from there.

With the current trend to rebuild versus buy new locomotives, builders are earning far fewer credits than before, which will impact the number of credits they have to offer in the future. — *Chris Guss*

Q How do I find railroad radio frequencies for my area? — *Jeff Tilmann, Montgomery, Ala.*

▲ Consider the following sources in your frequency search. The magazine's "Train-Watching" department lists the radio frequencies for that Hot Spot. While "Train-Watching" covers a specific area, the radio frequencies normally work in a significantly larger territory.

Visit [Trains.com](http://Trains.com) and search for "radio frequencies." A list of train watching locations will come up. Each of these articles gives the radio frequencies for that area.

This group of stories is an excellent resource for planning a train viewing trip or for verification in the field. Another resource covering railroad and other assigned frequencies is the website of antenna manufacturer DPD Productions ([dpdproductions.com](http://dpdproductions.com)). Its website holds a wealth of radio information. — *Trains staff*

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**Q** Recently, I have seen the term “embargo” used in association with the Union Pacific and other railroads. What is a railroad embargo? – *Joseph W. Smith III*

**A** The Association of American Railroads on its Embargo System webpage — [embargo.railinc.com](http://embargo.railinc.com) — and in Circular TD-1 define an embargo as: “... a method of controlling traffic movements when, in the judgment of the serving railroad, accumulations, threatened congestion or other interference with operation warrant temporary restrictions against such movements.” This means a railroad stops movement or delivery over a certain route or to a specific customer under certain extreme conditions.

AAR Circular TD-1 cites reasons for which an embargo can be issued. A catastrophic bridge collapse, rendering a rail line impassible, might call for an embargo. In this case, the embargo prohibits traffic until the bridge can be restored. The approach of a hurricane could be cause for an embargo, as the storm has the potential to damage track and equipment, and endanger personnel. “... government action or civil activism actions that render facilities impractical or impossible to reach ...” could also be reasons for a traffic embargo, per the circular.

An embargo is a temporary measure and only in effect until canceled. If no cancellation date is given, an embargo automatically expires in one year. The embargo rules also state: “Railroads will cancel embargoes immediately upon removal of cause for which embargo was issued.”

Embargoes can be viewed at the AAR page listed above. On a recent random date, March 24, 2023, there were 155 embargoes in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. The U.S. Class I railroads issued 47 of these; all but two — CP and KCS — had embargoes in place. Of those 47, all but one dealt with congestion. Ferrocarril Mexicano had the most with 54, 47 for congestion. On this date, 26 railroads had embargoes — 119 for congestion, 11 for track conditions, 10 weight restrictions, four derailments, four bridge outages, three catastrophic events, and two government shutdowns (both in Mexico). — *Bob Lettenberger*

**Ask Trains embargo**

We are issuing an embargo of our own. With this issue, “Ask Trains” is being embargoed from the pages of *Trains*. The embargo is being put in place to make room for several new departments arriving in the July issue. “Ask Trains” is still available on *Trains.com* Video. Please visit *Trains.com* for answers to all your railroad questions.

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[ColoradoRailroadMuseum.org](http://ColoradoRailroadMuseum.org) 303-279-4591

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## In the July issue



## New in New York

A trio of major projects is changing the face of the **MTA COMMUTER RAIL SYSTEM.**

The Illinois Railway Museum, America's largest railroad museum, is celebrating **70 YEARS** of preservation leadership.

Visit the stone arch railroad bridges of Massachusetts, **ENDURING MASTERPIECES** of civil engineering. Plus News, Photo Gallery, Preservation, and more!

**On sale June 13, 2023**



## Country road

It's hard to believe, but this spot on County Road W100S, west of Pinola, Ind., is just a half-mile from the busy Indiana Toll Road. This day, May 8, 2021, the country sounds are interrupted by a Norfolk Southern train led by BNSF Nos. 4673 and 6783, a C44-9W and a ES44C4, respectively.





## From the forest

Popping out of the woods on Oct. 30, 2021, with the fall colors dappling the leaves, a Norfolk Southern train glides downhill westbound outside Otis, Ind. No. 5346, built for Conrail in May 1978, was one of nearly 60 EMD GP38-2s rostered by NS at the time.

## The Buckeye State south

As twilight approaches on July 9, 2017, a CSX Transportation tank train is rolling southbound through Carlisle, Ohio. The train has been through Dayton on its way to Cincinnati. No. 3350, a GE ET44AH, reflects the setting sun as it passes.





## Stacks west

With a gentle down, then up, a westbound CSX Transportation intermodal train will duck under State Route 2 just ahead. It's June 2021 and we're southwest of Westville, Ind. Leading is Union Pacific No. 9076, an EMD SD70ACe-T4C built with 4 tons of extra ballast. The UP classifies these as SD70AH units.

## A line with history

This is the ex-Santa Fe Chillicothe Subdivision in Verona, Ill. BNSF Railway No. 5932, a GE ES44AC, weaves its train through the crossover under an old cantilevered signal. After cutting across 25 miles of farm fields, the next town will be Streator, Ill.







## A colorful heritage

Baltimore & Ohio, CSX Transportation, Santa Fe, and BNSF Railway are all represented here. On June 21, 2022, at Westville, Ind., this westbound CSX stack train is on Garrett Sub, a former B&O line. The run-through BNSF power is led by C44-9W No. 4717, wearing Santa Fe colors.





## Waiting for a green

A long line of tank cars holds its position waiting for a clear signal on May 31, 2021, near Porter, Ind. This is a Canadian National train on Norfolk Southern trackage with No. 8915, an EMD SD70M-2, in charge.

## Farmland skyscraper

Grain silos are the country equivalent of big-city skyscrapers. A Union Pacific merchandise train passes the grain bins in Papineau, Ill., on Aug. 4, 2022. Three GEs, including C44-9W No. 6745, team up to lead the train.



Bruce Stahl was born and raised in Gary, Ind. Currently, he makes his home in Michigan City, Ind. In 2000, Stahl retired from United States Steel after 32 years of service. For the past 23 years he's been teaching at Michigan City High School, with no plans to retire. "I love my job and working with the students," says Stahl. "As far as my love for railroad photography, well, one day in the early 1970s I just began taking photos with my pocket Kodak camera. I will never know why, but it's just fun and who doesn't like fun!" The rest is photographic history.

## Long time running

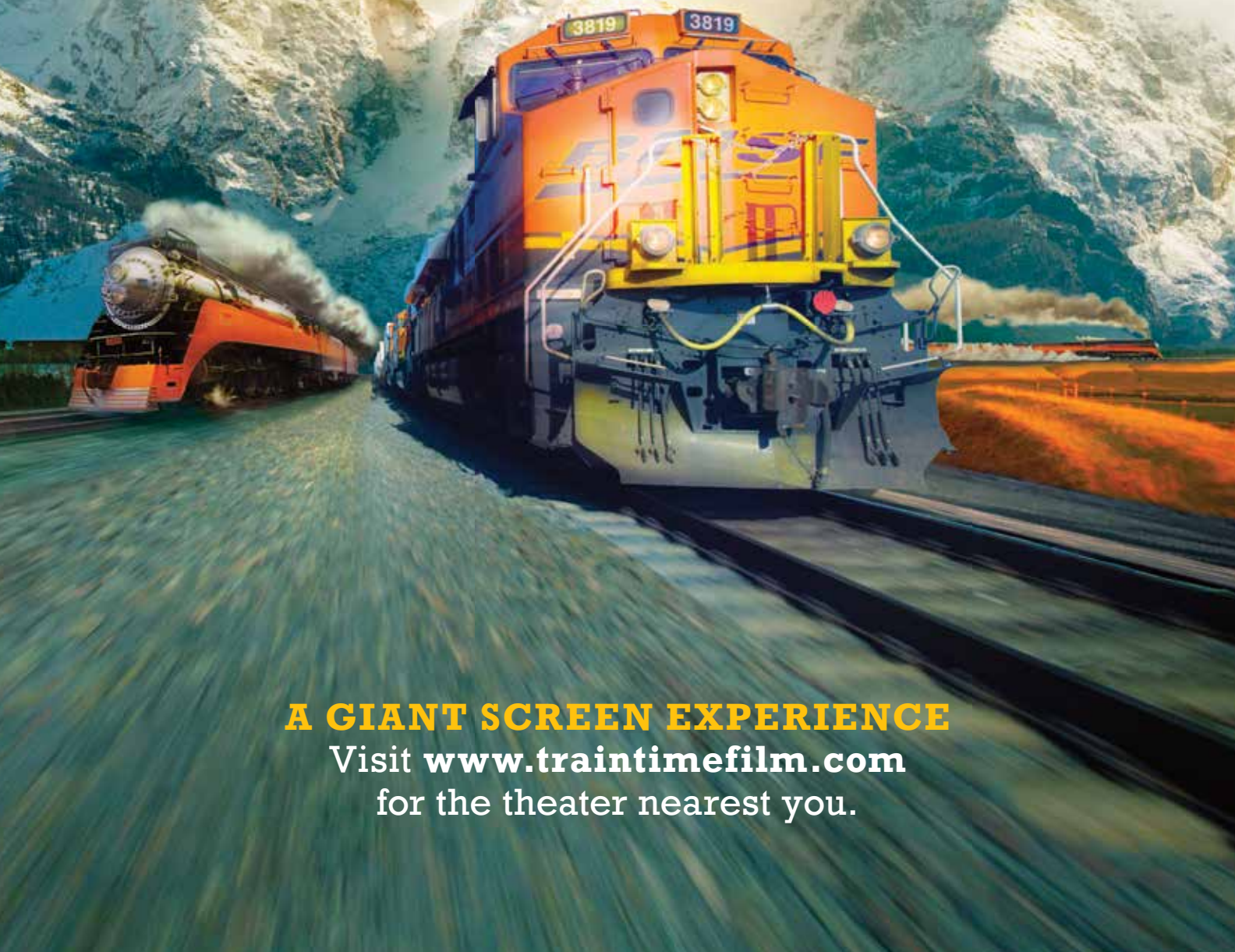
The South Shore Line's first revenue run in 1908 carried passengers from Michigan City to South Bend, Ind. More than a century later, May 22, 2020, this South Shore train leaving Hudson Lake, Ind., will run all the way into Chicago's Millennium Station.



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