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Fall 2025 • Volume 26 Number 3

# This Issue



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Illinois Central 4-6-4 No. 1 handles a 34-car freight at Springfield, Ill., in this undated view. Joe Collias, David P. Oroszi collection

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# Don't Stop Learning

**Railroading is a vast industry**, and it's difficult to know everything — although many people think that they do. I've often said that it's not an editor's job to know it all but rather to know the right place to look for the answer. (Lucky for us, the David P. Morgan Library is often the right place.)

Growing up with *Model Railroader* in the 1980s, I never understood the appeal of Colorado narrow gauge. Everyone seemed to model it. That was until I visited for the first time and imagined men 150 years ago blasting and building into the mountainsides. What a sight that must have been.

And the Northeast Corridor always seemed so sterile and repetitive. More Amfleets behind yet another AEM7. Who wants to see that? It turns out, I did. Go to Rahway, N.J., and see a six-track right-of-way or Havre de Grace, Md., and see seemingly small trains cross the mighty Susquehanna River. It never gets old.

Railroading doesn't stop at the shores of this great nation, either. Be curious. Why does railroading look different overseas? How do those places make the technology work for them? Embrace both the journey and the findings.

This is my last issue at the throttle of *Classic Trains* and I'm thankful for opportunity to do so for almost four years. I look forward to new challenges and even more opportunities to learn. I hope that you do the same.

*Brian M. Schmidt*  
EDITOR



On page 32, Lou Gerard details a 1977 trip to see GG1s on the Northeast Corridor. I made my own such trip in 2017 to document the last Bombardier HHP8s working for MARC in commuter service on the Corridor. Here, one meets a diesel-powered train at BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport station in Maryland. Brian M. Schmidt



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# HeadEnd



A Penn Central, former New York Central, caboose crosses the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton at Maitland tower near Springfield, Ohio, on Dec. 12, 1971.

David P. Oroszi



## Cascades juice

Perhaps the handsomest electric box-cabs were the GN Y-1s, after they got the road's orange-and-green livery in the 1940s. GN installed an unusual two-wire system on a 4-mile segment through the first Cascade Tunnel in 1909, then re-electrified with a 63-mile, 11,000-volt A.C. system in conjunction with the 1929 opening of a new, 7.8-mile Cascade Tunnel. Ten Z-1 boxcabs, eight Y-1s, and two giant W-1 streamliners, all from GE, hauled freight and passenger trains over the Cascades until the wires came down in 1956. Here three Y-1s roll an eastbound between Chumstick and Leavenworth, Wash., in 1953. George Krambles, Krambles-Peterson Archive collection

### Final departure for Mileposts column

It's difficult to overstate the contributions of former *Trains* Editor Kevin P. Keefe to the world of railroad journalism. Still, I will try.

Through nearly 10 years, over 300-plus blog entries and columns, Kevin produced around 300,000 words for his biweekly Mileposts blog and quarterly column. So it is a great loss to announce the end of the series with the publication of the Summer 2025 edition.

We certainly wish Kevin all the best in his future endeavors. — Brian M. Schmidt



### OBITUARY

**Ross E. Rowland**, 85, died July 19 after a brief battle with cancer. He lived in Sackets Harbor, N.Y., where he moved several years ago from his longtime home in New Jersey.

A successful Wall Street commodities trader by profession but a steam entrepreneur at heart, Rowland was associated with the operation of an unprecedented variety of large steam locomotives, including Nickel Plate 2-8-4 No. 759, three Canadian Pacific 4-6-2s, Reading 4-8-4s No. 2101 and 2102, and, most recently, Chesapeake & Ohio 4-8-4 No. 614. And all as a private operator, not a railroad official.

More than the individual locomotives, however, he's likely best remembered for his role as a showman, conceiving and staging steam operations on a national stage, most notably the Golden Spike Centennial Limited behind NKP 759 and his part in the American Freedom Train. The latter operated in the eastern U.S. behind Rowland's ex-Reading No. 2101 in the patriotic guise of AFT No. 1.

During the mid-1980s, Rowland served on Amtrak's board of directors.

Rowland and the 614 resurfaced in the late 1990s with a series of highly patronized excursions over NJTransit from Hoboken, N.J., to Port Jervis, N.Y. Just before his death, Rowland celebrated the successful sale of the 614 to the rail preservation firm RJD America and its subsequent transfer to the Strasburg Rail Road for restoration.

His admirers will remember him as the archetypal hogger, leaning out the cab window of any number of steam locomotives, dressed in the full regalia of polka-dot cap, denim, and leather gauntlets. — Kevin P. Keefe

# Genesee Valley Transportation's PA locomotive makes debut

Restored diesel handles invitation-only excursion on Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad



Nickel Plate Road-painted Alco PA1 No. 190 parades through Scranton, Pa., on July 11, 2025, with recently repainted Alco RS3 No. 4068 carrying Delaware & Hudson colors. Two photos, Doug Fear

**For the first time in more than four decades,** an Alco PA locomotive has hauled a passenger train in the United States.

Genesee Valley Transportation's Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad hosted an invitation-only excursion on July 11, 2025, marking the completion of restoration on PA4 No. 190, the former Santa Fe and Delaware & Hudson locomotive repatriated from Mexico in 2000 and formerly owned by preservationist Doyle McCormack, who began the restoration work. The locomotive now wears Nickel Plate Road's "Bluebird" scheme and the No. 190 because that was the favored railroad of his boyhood.

McCormack was on hand and spent time at the throttle as the locomotive led today's trip from Scranton to Mount Pocono, Pa., and return on Delaware-Lackawanna's former Delaware, Lackawanna & Western main line. GVT Chairman David Monte Verde has said passengers last rode behind PAs on this route in 1965. It is believed to be the first passenger movement of any kind behind PAs since No. 190 and its three brethren

spent a year as leased power for Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority commuter trains, service that ended in September 1978.

As part of ceremonies on, GVT officers presented McCormack with a replica Alco-GE builders plate. Bill Strein, GVT's chief mechanical officer, was also recognized for the work he and his team had done in returning the locomotive to operation.

GVT announced acquisition of the locomotive for use on office-car trains and main line excursions in March 2023. Company president Michael D. Thomas said then that it was "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to obtain the 'Spirit of St. Louis' of locomotives. ... We are ecstatic that Doyle has entrusted us with the stewardship of his great gift to rail preservation." The locomotive was moved to Scranton that year, where work began to complete its return to operating condition.

The train for Friday's trip included the PA, RS3 No. 4068 (in Delaware & Hudson paint), a power car, a former NJ Transit Comet coach, Pullman

*City of Lima*, and business car No. 2. The trip included a stop at Tobyhanna, Pa., for a photo runby for those onboard, as well as the dozens of railfans chasing the train.

No. 190 was completed by Alco in December 1948, going to Santa Fe as its No. 62L. Renumbered to No. 18, it and three other Santa Fe PAs were acquired by Delaware & Hudson along with some secondhand passenger cars in 1967 to upgrade the railroad's New York-Albany-Montreal *Laurentian* and *Montreal Limited*. (Those trains operated on New York Central/Penn Central between Albany and New York's Grand Central Terminal, using NYC/PC power). Those trains were discontinued in 1971 with the launch of Amtrak, and the locomotives were traded to General Electric.

But D&H President C. Bruce Sterzing reacquired the locomotives, which operated on occasional excursions until 1974. That year, New York State and Amtrak reached agreement to restore a daily New York-Albany-Montreal train, the *Adirondack*. D&H supplied the equipment; the state picked up the cost of refurbishing the passenger cars and the locomotives. The PAs



No. 190 leads a passenger train for invited guests of the Delaware-Lackawanna.

went to Morrison-Knudsen in Boise, Idaho, for a rebuild, where their original Alco 244 prime movers were replaced with 251 engines for an upgrade to 2,400 hp. The completed rebuilds were designated as PA4s.

The D&H equipment was replaced by Amtrak's Rohr Turboliners after a year, after which the PAs saw intermittent use in freight service until being stored in May 1977 following Sterzing's departure from the railroad. They reemerged for their one-year stay on the MBTA, then were sold to an equipment dealer who found a home for them in Mexico. Two of the units were wrecked there by the early 1980s; the other two were retired and reportedly still exist at the National Museum of Mexican Railways in Puebla.

McCormack and the Smithsonian Institution's Bill Withuhn worked for years to bring the damaged units back to the U.S. The locomotives were included in a cultural exchange agreement between Smithsonian and the government of Mexico signed in March 1999, leading to their shipment from the former Chihuahua Pacific shops in Sonora, Mexico, in October of that year. The two damaged locomotives — little more than shells — arrived in Albany, Ore.,

**"When I was a boy, my dad worked for the Nickel Plate, and the first diesel I ever rode on was PA 190. The Nickel Plate became my passion, and that's why a fully functional Nickel Plate PA is going to rise again."**

in April 2000, where they began the long road to restoration.

"People don't understand my passion for this PA project because they don't understand the history of it," McCormack told *Trains Magazine* in 2000. "When I was a boy, my dad worked for the Nickel Plate, and the first diesel I ever rode on was PA 190. The Nickel Plate became my passion, and that's why a fully functional Nickel Plate PA is going to rise again."

By 2008, the shell of McCormack's unit had largely been restored, and in 2014 it made an appearance at the North Carolina Transportation Museum's "Streamliners at Spencer" event. McCormack continued work on the project until the locomotive was acquired by GVT.

The other repatriated PA4, the former Santa Fe No. 59L, is being restored at the Museum of the American Railroad in Frisco, Texas; a Facebook page tracks that project's progress. — *David Lassen and Scott H. Hartley*



**Cheers erupt at the Mid-Continent Railway Museum's depot as Chicago & North Western No. 1385 breaks through a banner welcoming it home on July 12, 2025.** Lucas Iverson

## C&NW No. 1385 returns to Mid-Continent museum

Homecoming leads toward home stretch to prep 4-6-0 for operations in 2026

**NORTH FREEDOM, Wis.** — The long wait for Chicago & North Western steam locomotive No. 1385 to return to the Mid-Continent Railway Museum is over.

The Alco 4-6-0 returned home Saturday, July 12, after 12 years at Spec Machine LLC in Middleton, Wis., and a multi-day move from Middleton, sparking a homecoming celebration at the museum in North Freedom.

The last step in that journey came shortly after 4:30 p.m., when the museum's Alco S1 diesel, No. 7, slowly shoved the flatcar carrying the nearly-restored engine, built in 1907, across a bridge over the Baraboo River to the museum's depot, where a waiting crowd lined the platform and west end of the yard. Cheers erupted as No. 1385's pilot beam, minus the cowcatcher, broke through a banner reading "WELCOME BACK CHICAGO AND NORTH WESTERN #1385." The locomotive's restored tender was placed behind the flatcar, which then became a stage for speakers involved in the project.

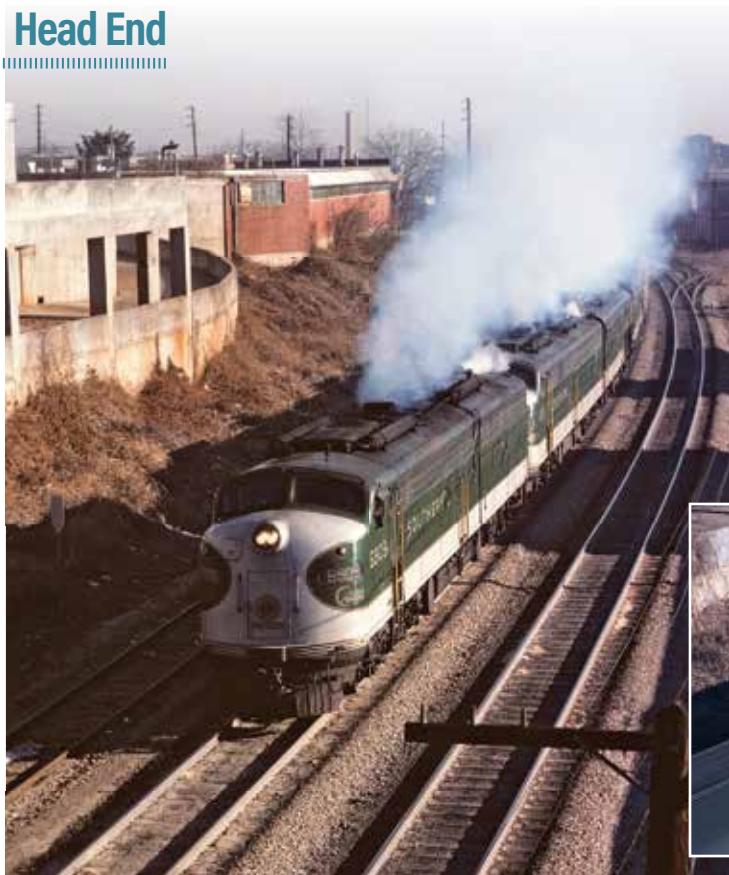
Speakers included Andy Spinelli, museum president; Mike Wahl, project manager; Pete Deets, task force member; Colin and Macklin O'Brien, sons of the late Tom O'Brien Jr., who was instrumental in No. 1385's mainline runs over the C&NW in the 1980s-90s; and Bobbie Wagner. She and her late husband, Richard "Dick" Wagner, founded the Wagner Foundation that provided the initial financial boost for the locomotive's restoration in 2011.

The move that concluded Saturday saw the locomotive hauled by truck from Spec to a nearby facility along the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, where it was loaded onto a flat car and moved on the short line's Reedsburg Subdivision to the interchange with Mid-Continent in North Freedom. While the engine was away, the tender remained at Mid-Continent, where it was restored by 2013.

The project to return the locomotive to operation for the first time since 1998 is now in its home stretch. The engine will be unloaded onto the museum tracks by a crane and reconnected to its tender. It will then head into the engine house to resume work with the goal of preparing No. 1385 to operate in 2026. That work, Wahl said, will include:

- Hydrostatic test for the Federal Railroad Administration
- Boil-out for the newly constructed boiler
- Static steam test
- Installation of the pistons, rings, and remaining valve gear work
- Boiler jacketing
- Remaining pipe work
- Additional minor work and adjustments
- Test runs and final certification by the FRA

An additional \$300,000 of material and labor will be needed over the winter to reach the end zone in a project Wahl said is now at the 5-yard line. For more information, or to donate, go to [www.midcontinent.org](http://www.midcontinent.org). — *Lucas Iverson*



## Railroads that didn't (initially) join Amtrak

Out of the 26 eligible U.S. railroads, a handful continued passenger operations



The *Crescent* would change power at Peachtree Station, Atlanta, resulting in a smoky show as its four elegant E8s notched out after hours of idling. Here's No. 1 departing in late 1977 with fresh engines and the Atlanta-New Orleans dome car on the rear. Two photos, Karl Zimmermann

**The formation of Amtrak** on May 1, 1971, allowed 26 eligible U.S. railroads, which still had passenger service at that time, to finally discard those money-losing burdens. By "joining" the fledgling carrier, they gave Amtrak trackage rights and equipment needed to operate trains along the new national network. But not everyone jumped on the bandwagon as a handful continued to independently operate their own passenger trains following that May 1. These are the railroads that didn't initially join Amtrak.

### SOUTHERN RAILWAY

While nearly all eligible railroads seemed to have no problem making their struggling passenger trains Amtrak's problem, W. Graham Claytor Jr. and his Southern Railway thought differently. Both the president and railroad elected to continue independent operations of its New York-New Orleans *Southern Crescent* and Washington-Atlanta *Piedmont*. The former, then tri-weekly between Atlanta and New Orleans, was seen as one of the last, reputable luxury trains in the country.

After Claytor retired in 1977, L. Stanley Crane succeeded him at Southern. Change of scenery always begins with change at the top as the new president chose to have Southern join Amtrak shortly afterward. Only the *Southern Crescent* was left standing when Amtrak officially took over in 1979.



The *Peoria Rocket* departs Chicago on Sept. 13, 1975. The *Rockets* hung on until Jan. 1, 1979, when a state subsidy ended; the Rock itself quit the following year. Art Peterson, Krambles-Peterson Archive collection

The name was shortened to *Crescent*, though the service increased from tri-weekly to daily between the Big Apple and Big Easy.

### ROCK ISLAND

Letting Amtrak assume passenger operations came at a price for each railroad choosing to join. For the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, the \$4.7 million price admission wouldn't do amid the company's already-crippled finances. The State of Illinois was also willing to subsidize two-thirds of the operating cost for the railroad's remaining passenger trains: the Chicago-Rock Island *Quad Cities Rocket* and the Chicago-Peoria *Peoria Rocket*.

From 1971 to 1977 the Rock Island soldiered on with its two *Rockets*. However, the trains weren't living up to their renowned names as they traversed rough track at slow speeds. By 1975, the railroad revisited the idea of

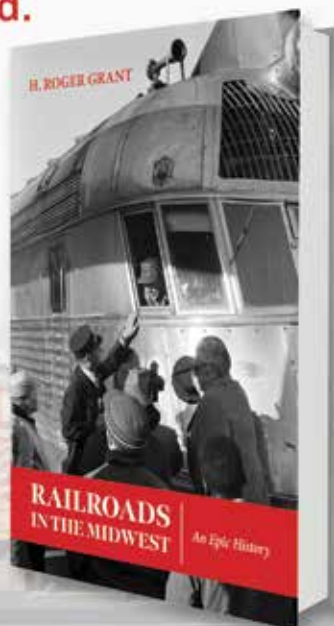
Amtrak taking over as patronage continued to freefall due to deteriorating on-time performance. That plan ultimately fell through, but the Rock Island was able to discontinue the *Rockets* in 1979.

### GEORGIA RAILROAD

The Georgia Railroad seemed to have a "good gig" by operating mixed freight-passenger trains. This was mainly due to tax remission, which the railroad feared losing if it relinquished any form of passenger operations to Amtrak.

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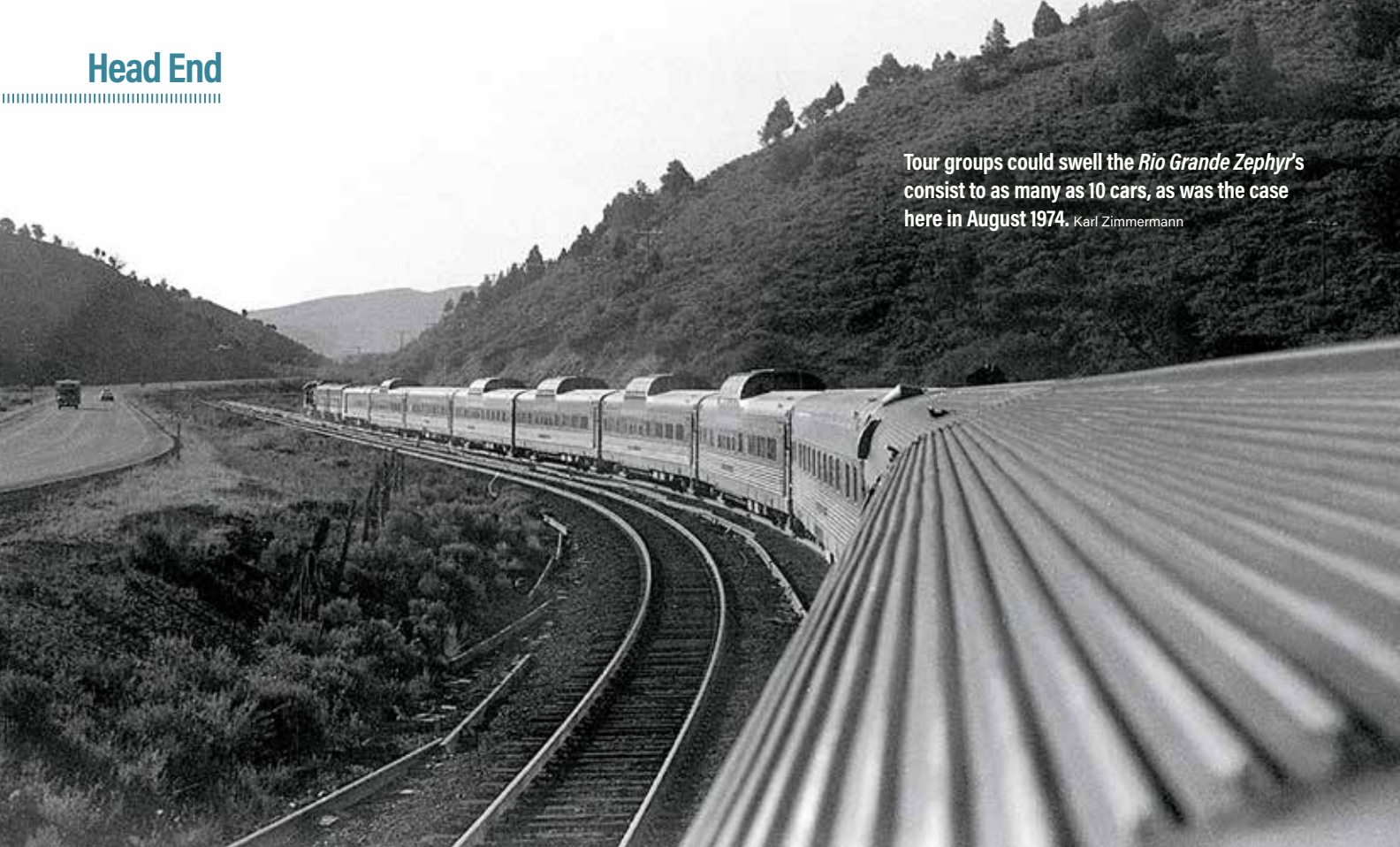
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## FRIENDS OF THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD



Tour groups could swell the *Rio Grande Zephyr's* consist to as many as 10 cars, as was the case here in August 1974. Karl Zimmermann

The mainline service continued between Atlanta and Augusta, Ga., which normally consisted of a single coach as part of a daily through train (except Sundays effective Dec. 28, 1980), while the Washington and Macon branch accommodated passengers in the caboose. When the Georgia Railroad merged into the Seaboard System Railroad on Jan. 1, 1983, the mixed trains were discontinued a few months later.

## DENVER & RIO GRANDE WESTERN

Leading up to Amtrak's genesis, it seemed at first that the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad would be on board with letting the new carrier traverse its Denver-Salt Lake City main line. But concerns over the steep price to join and potential interference in freight traffic prompted the railroad to back out. Amtrak would have to reroute its new Chicago-Oakland *San Francisco Zephyr* over the Union Pacific Railroad's Overland Route.

Back on the D&RGW, the railroad would continue to operate the Denver-Salt Lake City-Ogden *Rio Grande Zephyr*, a triweekly streamliner that began right after the *California Zephyr's* demise in 1970. The railroad's owned equipment of baggage, coach, dome, diners and observation cars from the predecessor train was passed down to the successor, gaining notable fanfare during the *RGZ's* existence. Increasing maintenance and poor patronage west of Grand Junction, Colo., caused the D&RGW to even-

tually wave the white flag in 1983.

By the time the *Rio Grande Zephyr* made its final run on April 24, 1983 — followed by Amtrak rerouting the restored *California Zephyr* service on July 16 — the Denver & Rio Grande Western became the last U.S. private railroad to operate an intercity passenger train.

## OTHER RAILROADS

A couple more eligible railroads decided to bow out, too, though mainly via more of a commuter orientation than intercity.

Chicago South Shore & South Bend: Ever since that 75-mile connection between Chicago and South Bend, Ind., was established in the early 20th century, interurban operation was always the name of the game. It still is today for the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, a commuter authority created in 1977 by the State of Indiana, operating South Shore

Line passenger service on a line shared with South Shore Freight.

Reading Co.: This Anthracite Empire only had two passenger routes out of Philadelphia, less than 100 miles each by the time Amtrak came calling. Facing financial hardship, the Reading Co. had bigger fish to fry in 1971, ultimately becoming a fallen flag to Conrail on April 1, 1971, with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority taking over the remaining passenger — now commuter — services. — *Lucas Iverson*



When South Shore applied to end all service in 1976, Indiana formed a commuter agency to keep the M.U.s rolling, as seen here at Fisher, Ind., in January 1981. Art Peterson, Krambles-Peterson Archive collection

## Conway Yard – Keystone of the Pennsylvania Railroad

By Ken Kobus, Frank Napoleon, and Steve Titchenal



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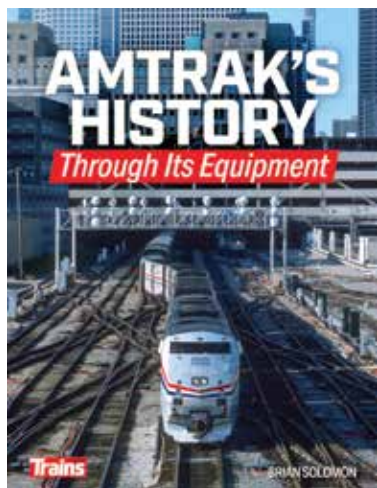
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WINTER ISSUE  
ON SALE  
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## GN to CNW!

*Classic Trains* interviews industry veteran Ed Burkhardt about his railroad career before Wisconsin Central Ltd. Also, learn what went wrong at Alco empire Indiana Hi-Rail, examine Southern Railway's Fairbanks Morse motorcars, and a Great Lakes car ferry.

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# Admiration for the AC60

It's time to look ahead to the next generation of classics

**What are the new classics?** I propose the memorable General Electric AC6000CW — specifically two of them on the high-priority CSX Transportation intermodals in the early 2000s. They could move these trains at 70 mph, and their 7HDL prime movers had a distinctive sound. They were also visually different with large, yellow “CSX” lettering on their flanks, heavy-duty trucks, a rise in the frame stripe on the engineer’s side, and oversized radiator sections. Eight units went to Australia to move iron ore. Today, one Union Pacific unit, a former demonstrator, is preserved at the Lake Shore Railway Museum in North East, Pa. The GE AC60s are sure to be among the new generation of classics. — *Brian M. Schmidt*



Three bright GE AC60s handle a southbound freight at Starnes, Va., on Sept. 28, 1999. Ron Flanary

## Montana Rail Link: A Legendary Legacy Lives On

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## Generosity on Caritas

**An Explorers special** made its way to Carey, Ohio, on Oct. 5, 1991, on the Wheeling & Lake Erie. Originally the Akron, Canton & Youngstown, the line was abandoned west of Carey around 1982 and removed just west of the Budd Co. plant at Wyandotte County Road 96 west of town. The train backed up to the end of the line and after a short stay, came back east and continued their eastward trek past Carey. It would be the last passenger train west of town on the old AC&Y as tracks were taken out of service shortly after this run.

The AC&Y discontinued regular passenger service between Delphos and Akron on July 20, 1951. The train was a mixed freight pulled by one of the roads trusted FM road switchers. The last passenger train prior to this were all excursions from Akron west. At the end, April 1972, Reading T-1 No. 2102 was used to pull the trains.



**Private car Caritas approaches West Findlay Street in Carey, Ohio, on its way to the end of the line on Oct. 5, 1991.** Photo by Dale A. DeVene Jr.

I was given a tour of the Caritas by Clark and Nona. They were most gracious hosts and excited to be traveling to the end of the line thanks to the local W&LE train master giving the go-ahead. Their passion and love of traveling was

quite evident. While the weather was dull and gloomy, it was a pleasure to see the train, and several of us followed it to the State Route 53 crossing east of Carey before we all headed back home.

Dale A. DeVene Jr., Wharton, Ohio

## British disapproval

The Summer issue was way too much of a truly uninteresting subject. All of "us" know where and how railroading began and came to this country. A nice two- or three-page article with a few photos would have been sufficient. Instead, the subject was vastly overdone.

I read the magazine because, like others, I love to revisit old haunts; see trains, yards, and towers I've visited; and in addition, the many places and trains that I longed to visit and ride but never had the opportunity. To me, nostalgia is the overarching reason for subscribing; this issue fell far short in that regard. In short, who here really cares about the Stockton & Darlington, the Manchester-Sheffield electrification, or the other arcane sleep-inducing subjects filling the magazine!

Please stick with the "home team" in future issues.

Al DiCenso

**Feedback on the British content in the Summer issue was split about 50/50. That was a bit more positive than I was expecting it to be. — B.M.S.**

## Hand signals around the U.S.

I spent three years employed as a switchman/engine foreman on the former Illinois Central Railroad at Fort Dodge, Iowa. Our hand and lantern signals for the main yard were pretty standard; our industry locations had their own signal identity. The only signal added to the standard hand signal signage during my tenure was a new industry that was added, The Iowa Beef Packers hide plant housed in the former IC roundhouse. The day hand signal was a combination of a stock track sign (thumb in ear and four fingers wiggling upwards) and a pinched nose conveying a stinking sign, similar to a hot box sign.

The Fort Dodge Terminal saw three

main lines radiating out to Omaha, Sioux City, and Waterloo. Being the youngest in seniority of 21 switchmen, I was always eager to fill a vacancy on one of the road districts when needed. I found that most of the signals on the three districts were the standard of the day; however, some crews had their own set of signals which I learned from the crews.

Later, during my checkered railroad employment of 43 years, I worked in engine service for the Chicago & North Western at Fort Dodge at the former Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern East Yard. That yard hosted merged road and yard crews from around the C&NW.

Most of the signals were the same standard except the FtDDM&S crews.

The "come to me" night lantern signal was a circle regardless of which way the locomotive was oriented. And the "go away from me" night lantern signal was a straight up and down signal again, regardless of which way the locomotive was oriented. I encountered the signal confusion at a short industrial siding one evening and was grateful that the conductor came up to talk to me before we ended

**Got a comment?** Write us: Fast Mail, *Classic Trains*, 18650 W. Corporate Dr., Suite 103, Brookfield, WI 53045 or [fastmail@classictrainsmag.com](mailto:fastmail@classictrainsmag.com). Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

up with a car on the ground. Up to that point a circle to me meant “back up” and was oriented with the direction the locomotive was facing and the straight up and down meant “go ahead.”

Later in my railroad life I relocated to Kansas City working for the C&NW at the former Chicago Great Western Ohio Street Yard. There switchmen did not give the standard car count signals when closing in on a coupling. After you received a “come to me” signal regardless of which direction the locomotive was facing — the next signal was a continuation of the sign, which meant you were one car length from coupling. There were a few hard joints before I figured out this practice that was new to me.

One other signal peculiarity occurred at Kansas City. Some of the switchmen had previously worked the passenger terminal downtown and the track number signs were derived from the Kansas City Terminal and they were completely different from the track number signals that were used at Ohio Street Yard.

Mike Porter

## Amtrak Alco amplification

Alco and its Canadian associate Montreal Locomotive Works built RS3s between 1950 and 1955. Subsequent Alco models featured the builder's new Model 251 prime mover, although MLW continued to build locomotives powered with the earlier Model 244 engine until 1957.

Amtrak's acquisition of 25 CF7s and 18 EMD switchers from Santa Fe in 1984 resulted in the quick retirement of the company's RS3s. All were shut down by mid-1985. (RS3 No. 127 might have remained on the official roster until the following year, but it was not in service). Among the last active RS3s were three former New Haven units. One, Amtrak RS3 No. 138, was acquired by the Railroad Museum of New England, and operated as NH No. 529 on the museum's Naugatuck Railroad in Connecticut from 1996 to 2010. Today it is undergoing a full rebuilding and is expected to return to service in its original 1950 appearance.

Following its retirement by Amtrak, re-engined RS3 No. 104 had brief careers on Northeastern short lines, last running as Connecticut Central No. 1201 until that railroad was acquired by the Providence & Worcester in 1998.

Scott A. Hartley

## Maupin: A town on the move

Our part of the country doesn't get a lot of coverage in *Classic Trains*, so I was

delighted to see “The Northwest's Own” in the Summer 2025 issue. Imagine my surprise, though, when I read that the author had reached the town of Maupin just a few miles west of Spokane, Wash. Later on in the article we encounter Maupin again, which in the meantime has slipped back to its accustomed location in Oregon, where it has been a station on the Oregon Trunk branch along the Deschutes River every time I was there.

Peter McGraw, Portland, Ore.

## One more axle

The D&RGW No. 1712 appearing on page 5 seems to me to be a Class M-64 4-8-4, not a 4-8-2.

Jimmy Lisle, Roanoke, Va.

## Reading T-1 memories

Kevin Keefe's remembrance on ex-Reading Co. 4-8-4 “AFT-1” reminded me of my American Freedom Train experience trackside in early March 1975. The Freedom Train was traveling from Albany, N.Y., to Greenfield, Mass., (East Deerfield yard) in reverse to avoid having to turn the locomotive and cars twice. Boston & Maine GP38-2 No. 200 was leading. While stopped at the siding in North

Adams awaiting being overtaken by Boston-bound train NE-84, I approached the cab and asked the engineer how much assistance the 2,000 h.p. EMD was giving the big 4-8-4.

With a broad grin he quipped, “Kid, I'm just along to drink coffee and whistle for the crossings!”

Carl Byron

## Spring 2025 correction

¶ Regarding the cover of the Spring 2025 issue, the photograph was originally a black-and-white image made by Wharton Separk at Raleigh, N.C., in April 1966. The image was subsequently colored by Tom Alderman, as seen below. — B.M.S.



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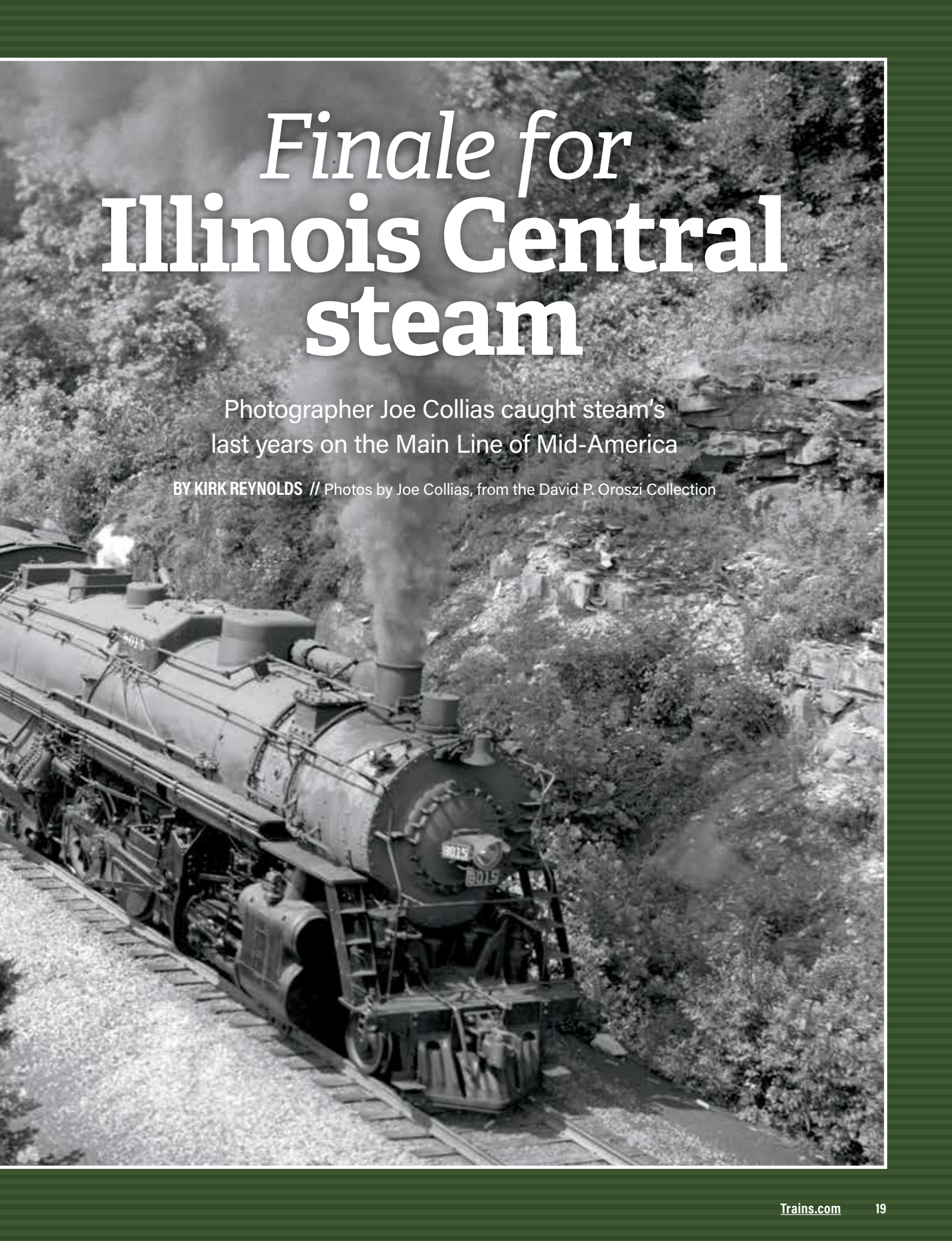


**Five trains and a streetcar** line up at Kansas City Union Station on April 25, 1954. Left to right are: Kansas City Terminal Alco S1 No. 44, Santa Fe EMD E8m No. 81 (rebuilt from a 1938 E1), Kansas City Southern E8 No. 27, St. Louis-San Francisco E8 No. 2021 (named the *Gallahadion* after a race horse), and Milwaukee Road coaches, still painted orange and maroon prior to the 1955 operation of Union Pacific streamliners. Above is a PCC streetcar. — *Bon French*

Richard Neumiller, Bon French collection



No. 8014 on a southbound freight  
with 68 cars on June 14, 1952.



# *Finale for* **Illinois Central steam**

Photographer Joe Collias caught steam's  
last years on the Main Line of Mid-America

BY KIRK REYNOLDS // Photos by Joe Collias, from the David P. Oroszi Collection

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**Illinois Central was one of the last Midwestern Class I railroads to convert to diesel locomotives.**

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**Smoking 2-6-0 No. 484 handles a westbound local at Penfield, Ill., on Oct. 3, 1950.**

**M**any railfans who grew up in the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century will recognize Joe Collias' name from his black-and-white photographs that documented steam during its final years, primarily those in the Midwest. Collias lived in St. Louis and traveled in all directions to capture the last years of the iron horse.

Illinois Central was one of the last Midwestern Class I railroads to convert to diesel locomotives. Steam on the IC made its last stand in southern Illinois at Centralia and Carbondale, while the end finally came in western Kentucky at Paducah. Joe spent a good deal of time looking for locations to shoot IC steam, some of which were far off the beaten path.

As Joe traveled across the country to shoot steam, the

transition in motive power was only the beginning of many big changes ahead, not just for the IC but also the entire rail industry. The images presented here are a glimpse of a steam-powered IC that would disappear by the early 1960s.

Conceived in 1851 to open central Illinois to settlement, the IC was originally only supposed to run from the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers at Cairo, Ill., at the southern end of the state, to the northwestern corner at Galena. But before construction began a branch from the main line to a small town on the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan was added to the new railroad. As that small town grew into the nation's second-largest city, the IC became the principal route from Chicago to downstate Illinois.

The IC grew across Illinois

as it bought up smaller lines in the years following the Civil War. When it gained control of two southern railroads in 1877, the IC became the most direct line from the Midwest to the Gulf Coast.

The IC invested heavily in its physical plant during the 1920s. Among the most notable projects were the Chicago Terminal Improvements, which included elevating all mainline and suburban tracks above grade crossings and electrifying the suburban service between Chicago and the south suburb of Matteson. One of IC's boldest construction projects, the 169-mile Edgewood Cutoff through southern Illinois, years later would provide Joe with some extraordinary Prairie State vistas. Other improvements included a new backshop at Paducah, where both steam and diesel locomotives would be overhauled.





The southbound *Panama Limited* is in the care of 4-6-2 No. 1150 on Chicago's south side in 1938.



Smoking No. 1415 pushes train 81 across a wood trestle on May 5, 1950, at Church, Ill., southeast of East St. Louis.

Coming and going: 4-6-4 No. 1 handles a 34-car mixed freight at Springfield, Ill., in an undated view. The One Spot was rebuilt from 2-8-4 No. 7038.



While the IC managed to avoid bankruptcy during the Depression, it carried a lot of debt. As roads improved and competition from motor carriers increased, the IC needed more capable locomotives to accelerate its merchandise freight schedules, but it couldn't afford to purchase new ones. As a result, the railroad embarked on a program to rebuild its locomotive fleet at Paducah in the late 1930s.

Many of Joe Collias' best-known IC images involved those Paducah rebuilds. Boilers from World War I-era 2-10-2s were used to create the 2500-class 4-8-2s between 1937 and 1942. In 1943, Paducah produced the epitome of IC steam power when it built the completely new 2600-class 4-8-2s.

Not all of Paducah's steam rebuild programs turned out



**A wall of steam locomotives simmer by the massive Bluford, Ill., coal dock in August 1953.**



**A magnificent plume of smoke trails over the tender as No. 1 handles a 34-car freight at Springfield, Ill., in an undated view.**

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Unlike the 2-8-4s of the 1930s and 1940s, IC's 2-8-4s were built for hauling slow-freight.

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as intended. Most notable was the attempt to build a class of fast 4-6-4s utilizing boilers from 2-8-4 Berkshires built in back 1926; IC was among the first railroads to acquire these classic Super Power engines. However, unlike the 2-8-4s of the 1930s and 1940s built for fast freight service on the Nickle Plate and the Pere Marquette, IC's 2-8-4s were built for hauling slow-freight. The first example of the new class of IC 4-6-4s was assigned No. 1 and rolled out of Paducah in May 1937. Although the railroad had hoped to expedite freight schedules with its new 4-6-4s, that first example was also the last, as the engine failed to live up to expectations.

The war years provided the cash flow that allowed the IC to survive. When John L. "Jack" Beven passed away on Jan. 3, 1945, Wayne A. Johnston succeeded him as president. The IC had long been recognized for its frugal management and Johnston continued the tradition by

paying down the debt in the postwar years when times were good. He also made improvements to the railroad and bought new equipment in the 1940s and 1950s, thus creating the iconic IC most are familiar with.

Nonetheless, Johnston was a pragmatist. He was a strong advocate for deregulation of the rail industry. When that failed to happen, a holding company called IC Industries was created, with the railroad itself being a subsidiary.

What Joe was able to preserve in his images is the quintessential IC of the late 1940s and the 1950s, before IC Industries changed everything. Joe's passion was steam, as this essay shows, but he did occasionally get shots of diesels.

The IC's earliest diesel acquisition was a half-dozen 600-hp box-cab switchers purchased from General Electric in 1929 and powered by Ingersoll-Rand diesel engines. The new power helped satisfy the requirements of Chicago's

municipal smoke abatement ordinances. Within a few years, the efficiency of internal combustion power had proven itself to IC management.

As these locomotives worked the Chicago lakefront, their reliability impressed IC management enough to prompt them in 1936 to order the railroad's first streamlined train, the *Green Diamond*, for daily service between Chicago and St. Louis. The success of the motor train was the precursor to the conversion of IC's main line passenger trains to diesel power and light-weight equipment.

More diesel-powered streamliners would follow the *Green Diamond*, but the IC would continue to rely upon steam locomotives to move freight through the 1950s. Joe worked passionately to photograph the IC before steam disappeared and went to the trouble of finding it in obscure places. The selection of photos presented here is only a sampling of his coverage of the last of IC steam. 📷

**An interloper: the new *Green Diamond* streamliner appears at Litchfield, Ill., in November 1945.**



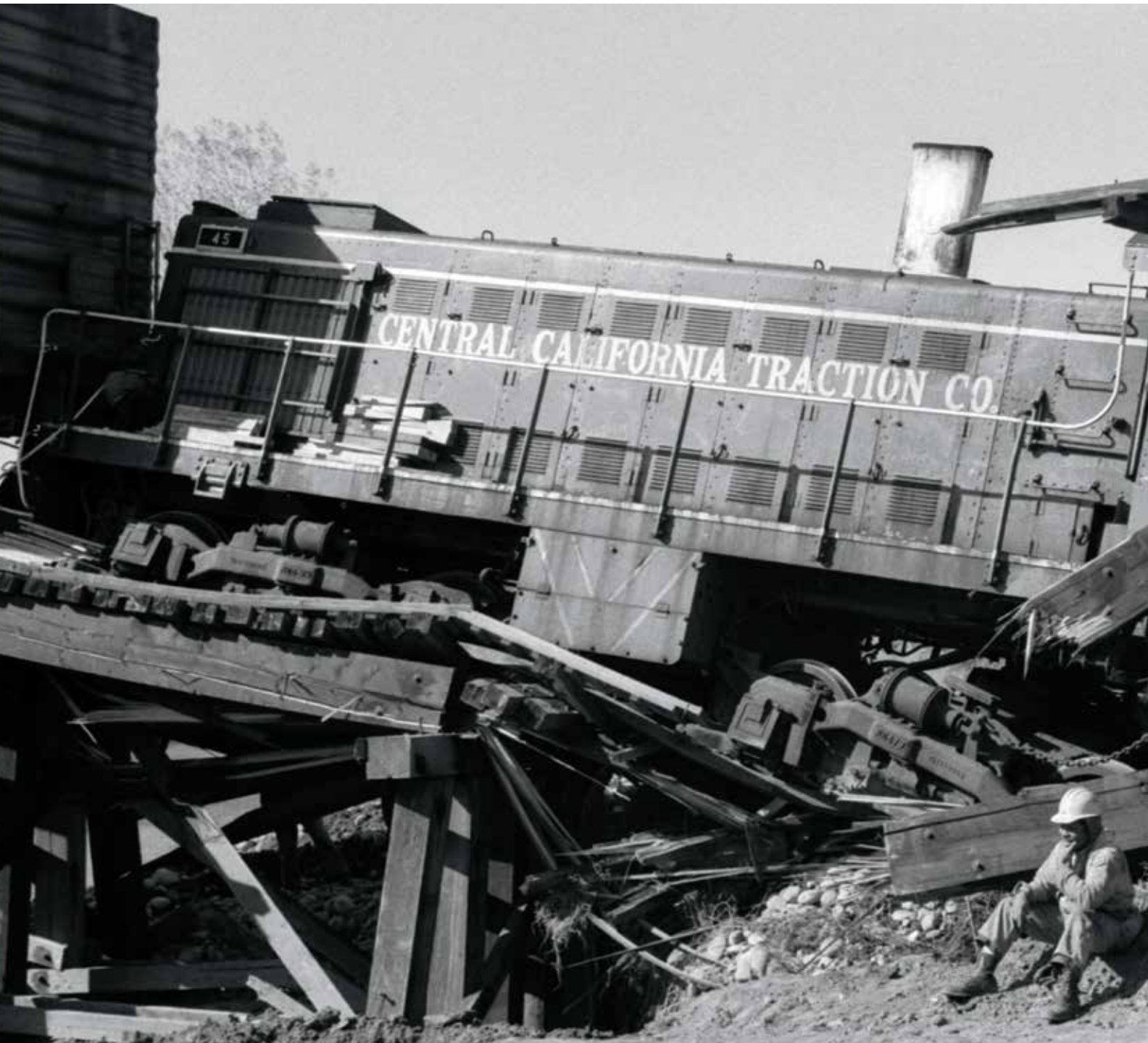


Two black-and-white Geeps led by No. 9223 bring a freight train through Greenup, Ill., in June 1960.



Farewell Illinois Central: Distinctive side-door caboose 9742 passes the diminutive Kegley, Ill., depot on May 19, 1951.

# Catastrophe at



"Let's see...what to do first?" As a member of the cleanup crew strikes a classic pose alongside the tangled mess at bridge 21b, a rescue train is en route from Stockton to retrieve SFRC reefer 56454.

# Milepost 21



HOW A FORMER INTERURBAN  
SURVIVED A TUMULTUOUS DECADE

BY DAVE STANLEY // Photos by the author

During the years 1971 through 1976, the Central California Traction Co., a former electric interurban road connecting Stockton and Lodi to the state capitol in Sacramento, experienced a chronic locomotive shortage and came dangerously close to being eliminated from the railroad landscape.



As the structure collapsed, a stringer pierced the locomotive cab, barely missing crew members Ruiz and Sanford.



**Head brakeman H. T. Hastings prepares to flag the SP lone Branch crossing at Herald as borrowed SP SW1200 2274 charges up to the diamond with a trainload of earth fill for the bridge 21b renovation project. Right: Engineer Jackson has the 1200-horse EMD in the company notch as the southbound work extra clears the SP crossing and recaptures its 25 mph gait.**

Incorporated in 1905 and jointly owned since 1928 by Santa Fe, Southern Pacific, and Western Pacific, the 53-mile line originally was powered by a 1,200-volt D.C. third-rail system, offering high speed freight and passenger service. In addition, 600-volt streetcar operations were maintained in Sacramento and, for a brief period, Stockton.

The railroad dieselized in late 1946 with a small fleet of General Electric 44- and 70-ton models that served the company well for the better part of two decades. Over a two-year period from 1963 to 1965, the GEs were replaced by a trio of second-hand Alco S1s, two purchased from San Francisco Bay area's Alameda Belt Line while a solo unit was acquired from Northern Pacific Terminal Company of Portland, Ore. These veteran engines, constructed in 1942 and numbered CCT 40-42, had already amassed thousands of miles and would only survive a few years at best hauling the demanding traffic of canned goods, wine, and raw material way-billed over the Traction Co.



In the spring of 1971, S1 40 was pulled from service with prime mover issues and weary sister 41 failed the following year. With but one operable locomotive on the roster, CCT turned to its parent railroads for motive power assistance to protect its three daily assignments and extra jobs operated during the late summer perishable harvest. Alcos and EMDs leased from the three carriers were soon roaming the CCT joining survivor S1 42, assigned to the Fruitridge road switcher at the north end of the line in Sacramento.

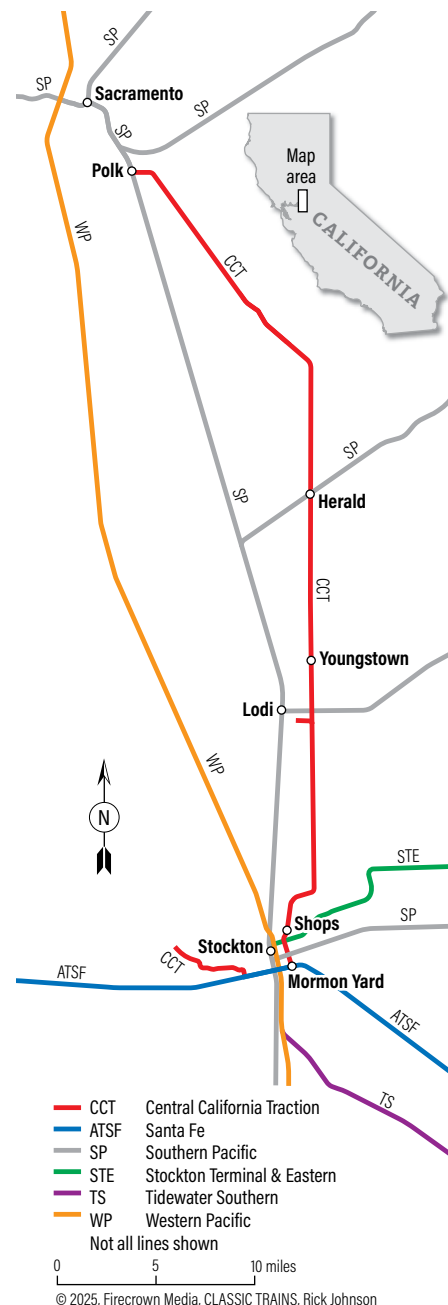
With the price tag of leasing engines quickly adding up, the Traction Co. wasted little time once again shopping the used locomotive market. Joint owner SP was retiring and offering for sale its Alco S3 fleet, but upon close inspection by CCT and WP mechanical officers none were found worthy of purchase. Several short lines also had low-horsepower Alcos available but all either carried too high of a price tag or were just unreliable creatures. Santa Fe, however, was willing to part with a recently shopped S2 and made the price appealing to CCT's bud-

**For poor Ruiz, a WP trainman who borrowed out to CCT during times of manpower shortages, it was a call he probably wished he'd missed!**

45's brief spell on CCT would come to a horrifying conclusion.

Barely a year and a half into its new career, the Alco's demise was at hand. On the evening of March 8, 1973, at about 10 p.m., engineer Carl Sanford eased engine 45 and the Sacramento-bound local onto the 64-year-old, 2,061-foot trestle. The footings of bridge 21b had taken a beating from debris washed downstream during late winter storms in the Sierra Nevada

Within days of the accident, a 29-mile detour was created providing a route to Sacramento for CCT's six-day turn-around Local, utilizing existing CCT-SP interchange tracks in both Lodi and Polk on SP's Stockton Subdivision. Repairs to bridge 21b became a heated topic among the members of the operating committee. Southern Pacific's representative lobbied for abandonment of the line between Youngstown (milepost 16) and Elder Creek (milepost 41), suggesting the de-



**Borrowed from co-parent Santa Fe, Alco S2 2345 assists power-short CCT as it hustles three idler flats and caboose 24 through Bear Creek en route to the collapsed portion of Bridge 21b. Once there, the train will pull an SFRC reefer off the damaged structure.**



**Top: Engineer J.M. Jackson watches from the cab of GP7 70 as ATSF air dump hoppers are emptied at Willow Creek, the Bridge 26 fill project. Roadmaster Howard Menking oversaw the filling and strengthening of at least four additional trestles, including this one, following the 1973 collapse at Dry Creek. Above: A B&B worker pulls the trigger on a Santa Fe air dump at Willow Creek, north of Herald at milepost 26. This fill project was one of several during the decade.**

tour now in place remain permanently. Santa Fe, however, made it clear that it did not want to lose its connection to Sacramento fearing that its lucrative north-end business, now handled by the Traction Co. but within a few hundred yards of an existing Espee connection, would fall into the latter's hands. Along with the detour came soaring labor costs as CCT crews were expiring on their hours-of-service almost daily due to delays on the SP and its high volume of traffic. Traction Co. General Manager

Cory Thompson stated he would need to bulletin a new assignment just to get the local over the road if the reroute were to be made permanent. Hearing this, Western Pacific President Alfred E. Perlman stated that reconstruction of the damaged portion of the bridge, estimated at a cost of \$20,000, was a wiser investment than the continued expense of re-crews for the local's 88-mile round-trip.

Perlman convinced the operating committee that the line should be reopened as soon as possible and requested that Santa Fe's engineering department be placed in charge of the project, working with CCT Roadmaster Howard J. Menking. On May 7, 1973, just two months after the errant locomotive fell to earth, Bridge 21b was reopened for service. However, the future didn't bode well for the severely damaged Alco. With its cab demolished by a bridge stringer, S2 45 was stricken from the roster in September 1973 and sold for scrap.

Following the restoration of service, a loosening of the purse strings by the operating committee, and a change at the local management level, a program of filling or strengthening all trestles on the line commenced. Thompson's successor, Kenneth J. Tinker, a Western Pacific operating manager, pushed through many needed improvements during his tenure at CCT.

Besides his bridge reinforcement schedule, Tinker also acquired much needed grade crossing protection. Larger locomotives in the form of ex-Reading EMD GP7s and former Rock Island GP18s — along with a classic Alco RS1 from the Tidewater Southern — were added to replenish CCT's meager locomotive roster. The Geeps would soon be pressed into service to muscle increased tonnage interchanged from Santa Fe, specifically unit trains of export coke and grain destined to the Port of Sacramento.

Today's Central California Traction Co. has been dramatically reshaped since that fateful evening in 1973. Its route north of Lodi became redundant after the 1996 acquisition of SP by Union Pacific and the resulting track-age-right agreement granted to BNSF allowing it direct access to Sacramento. The final CCT train to operate through to Sacramento ran on June 12, 1998, leaving in its wake 27 miles of embargoed right of way. Under agreement, UP continues to service the few active CCT customers at

**Perlman convinced the operating committee that the line should be reopened as soon as possible and requested that Santa Fe's engineering department be placed in charge of the project**

Polk, accessed from the former SP connection used in the 1973 detour. Although camouflaged by heavy vegetation, the railroad to Polk, including the trestle across Dry Creek, remains intact today, albeit with an uncertain future.

In 2004, funded by state issued transportation improvement bond monies, 14 miles of CCT's line from Stockton to

Lodi was rebuilt with heavy rail, new ties, and fresh ballast to better serve the current traffic base of canned goods, wine, plastics, and liquid sugar. Following the 1998 north-end embargo, UP and BNSF (now sharing joint ownership of CCT) transferred all the switching duties at the Port of Stockton to the Traction Company in November of that

year. Since that time, rail business at the Port has increased dramatically and all parties involved are happy with the arrangement. The Geeps and Alcos have all departed, replaced by SW1500s and Brookville Gensets, but had fate and time not intervened, old 45 would've felt right at home here! 📺

**Three years following the catastrophe, Bridge 21b is now strengthened to a 263,000-pound capacity, as viewed from the cab of GP7 70, crossing the Dry Creek floodplain en route to Sacramento.**





On March 7, 1990, large pine trees from the Coconino National Forest about 12 miles east of Flagstaff made giant shadows for Q-LANY (Los Angeles-New York) with trailing Conrail unit headed to Chicago.

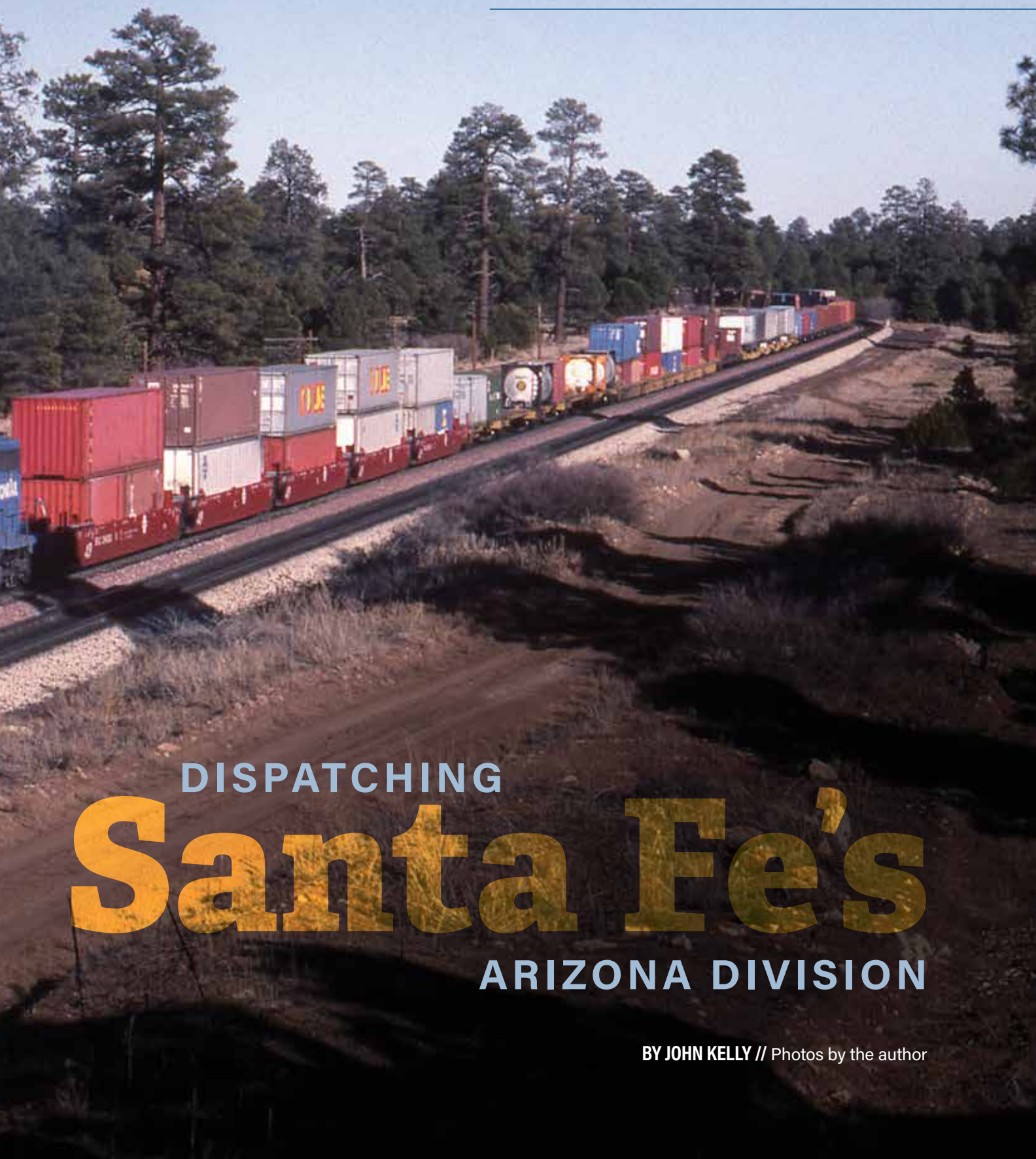
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TRACKING OPERATIONS ON A BUSY

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MAIN LINE IN THE EARLY 1990s

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DISPATCHING  
**Santa Fe's**  
ARIZONA DIVISION

BY JOHN KELLY // Photos by the author

**F**or many railfans visiting New Mexico and Arizona, the name Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe conjures images of bright red-and-silver Warbonnet diesels followed by gleaming stainless-steel passenger coaches and fast intermodal trains passing the Red Cliffs of New Mexico and pine-covered forests of Northern Arizona.

Prior to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe merger in 1995, Santa Fe's Arizona Division headquarters was located at Winslow, Ariz., in the former Fred Harvey House known as La Posada. The Arizona Division was one of six Santa Fe operating divisions on the Chicago-Los Angeles transcontinental route. In March 1990, I was invited to view operations on this busy railroad. There was plenty of action with "Q-Trains," intermodal hotshots, and Amtrak's *Southwest Chief*. I met with Jim Hankins, road foreman of engines at his office in the former Harvey House. Jim told me the Arizona Division comprised five subdivisions (Belen, Gallup, Parker, Phoenix, and Seligman) on well-maintained, mostly double-track from Belen, N.M., to Needles, Calif. Motive power on the Arizona Division was a colorful mix of older Santa Fe blue-and-yellow units and some newer GP60Ms in the reintroduced Warbonnet paint scheme.

Most Santa Fe trains had four locomotives though, depending on tonnage, some trains had larger consists of seven and eight units. The Arizona Division's mountainous terrain demanded more train-handling skills from its engineers than other parts of the Santa Fe system. The Seligman Subdivision between Kingman, Ariz., and Needles was the most difficult with 1.42% ruling grades, the first of five such grades leading to the top of the Arizona Divide. Jim explained how

Santa Fe used the locomotive events-recorder tapes to monitor train handling. The tapes were transferred from locomotive cabs and read at diesel service facilities. Graph output showed speed, direction of travel, amperage, power, and braking on the locomotives.

### DISPATCHER DUTIES

Prior to Santa Fe's centralized dispatching in the early 1990s, trains moving over the Arizona Division were managed by dispatchers at Winslow. Four dispatcher offices were separated by partitions with computer terminals in each office and a large schematic map of each subdivision on the wall.

Train dispatchers controlled the subdivisions with a combination of Centralized Traffic Control (CTC), Track Warrant Control (TWC), and Automatic Block Signals (ABS). Outside the dispatcher offices were one chief dispatcher and one assistant chief dispatcher who supervised the four dispatchers and operation of the entire Arizona Division. There was also a communications coordinator who assisted dispatchers with radio and telephone communications but did not control signals or manage train movements. Dispatcher offices were staffed 24/7, including holidays. Winslow dispatchers were cross-trained and capable of dispatching all Arizona Subdivisions.

The Seligman West dispatcher managed Seligman Subdivision trains on the western section from Seligman to East Needles and the Phoenix Subdivision (Ash Fork to Phoenix) along with the Parker Subdivision (Mathie to Parker). Dispatching trains from Seligman to East Needles was TWC-ABS. The Phoenix and Parker Subdivisions were TWC dark territory (no block signals). The Seligman East dispatcher coordinated trains on the eastern portion of the Seligman Subdivision from Seligman to Winslow, Arizona. Except for a short segment of three main tracks through Winslow, the territory was CTC with two main tracks. In addition, Seligman East dispatcher routed trains from Williams Junction to Ash Fork with TWC.

The Gallup West dispatcher oversaw trains from West Gallup, N.M., to West Winslow. That was CTC controlled over two main tracks from Gallup to West Defiance. It was double-track TWC-ABS from West Defiance to East Coronado Junction, then CTC with two main tracks from East Coronado to West Coronado and TWC-ABS from West Coronado to Winslow. Gallup West dispatcher also managed the Defiance Spur to the coal mines and the Coronado Spur with TWC.

The Gallup East dispatcher territory covered East Winslow to East Gallup. Gallup East DS also controlled the single-track CTC between Dalies and Isleta including the control point of Isleta on the Belen-Albuquerque line. Dalies is located west of Belen and is the junction separating the former Santa Fe passenger line over Raton Pass from the freight route via the Belen Cutoff. The Cutoff was only six miles shorter than the passenger route over Raton Pass but avoided the steep grades of Raton. From Chicago most westbound priority freights were



Gallup East dispatcher Rich Pennisi authorized train movements between East Winslow and East Gallup.



Santa Fe Arizona Division offices were in the former Fred Harvey House - La Posada - at Winslow, Ariz., on March 7, 1990.

# Santa Fe Arizona Division

## Santa Fe Arizona Division – Scheduled Trains - March 1990.

*Source: Santa Fe Railway - Winslow,  
Arizona.*

### The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway

was a premier intermodal carrier. The Chicago-Los Angeles mainline was designed to meet the needs of time-sensitive trains. Before the BNSF merger, intermodal business provided 40% of Santa Fe revenues. The railroad had its Quality Service Network of dedicated trains in several corridors and its Quality Stack Service, both operated over the Arizona Division. The "Q" hotshots departed from Chicago and Los Angeles on set schedules. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday were the busiest days for train movements over the Arizona Division with 45 to 60 Santa Fe trains on a typical weekend.

TOFC traffic included United Parcel Service, J.B. Hunt, BN America, Conrail, and Santa Fe. Double-stack containers marked Evergreen and Hyundai also plied the Arizona Division. Shipped from the Pacific Rim via the Port of Los Angeles to Chicago (Corwith Yard), some of the container trains were forwarded to Conrail for delivery to the East Coast. Santa Fe employed two different types of train symbols. The most common was the three-digit sequence, indicating point of origin (first digit), type of train (second digit), and destination (third digit). Train symbols with middle "9" were usually United Parcel Service trailers. For Q-Trains, Santa Fe used all-letter symbols to designate train type using the first character, then origin and destination. — *John Kelly*

### WESTBOUND:

| SYMBOL  | ORIGIN       | DESTINATION | FREQUENCY | TRAFFIC            |
|---------|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Q-NYLA  | Corwith      | Los Angeles | Daily     | Conrail-ATSF       |
| V-CWPX  | Corwith      | Phoenix     | Daily     | TOFC-Autos         |
| Q-HOLA1 | Houston      | Los Angeles | Mon-Sat   | Expedited Manifest |
| V-KCPX1 | Kansas City  | Phoenix     | Daily     | TOFC-Autos         |
| 148     | Corwith      | Los Angeles | Sat       | Hyundai-Mixed      |
| 158     | Corwith      | Los Angeles | Sat       | TOFC               |
| 168     | Corwith      | Los Angeles | Tue-Sun   | COFC-TOFC          |
| 169     | Corwith      | Richmond    | Daily     | COFC-TOFC          |
| 188     | Corwith      | Los Angeles | Daily     | TOFC               |
| 189     | Corwith      | Richmond    | Daily     | COFC-TOFC          |
| 198     | Corwith      | Los Angeles | Daily     | TOFC               |
| 199     | Corwith      | Richmond    | Daily     | UPS Trailers       |
| 389     | Kansas City  | Richmond    | Mon-Fri   | TOFC               |
| 448     | La Junta     | Barstow     | Daily     | Manifest           |
| 468     | Waynoka      | Barstow     | Wed-Mon   | COFC-TOFC-Manifest |
| 578     | Dallas       | Los Angeles | Tue-Sun   | TOFC               |
| 588     | Pearland, Tx | Los Angeles | Wed-Fri   | COFC-TOFC          |
| 589     | Pearland, Tx | Los Angeles | Tue-Sat   | COFC-TOFC          |
| 708     | Phoenix      | Barstow     | Daily     | UPS                |
| 807     | Barstow      | Phoenix     | Daily     | UPS                |

\*Both 708-807 were run through trains with Arizona & California Railway. They exchanged locomotives and crews at Castle Hot Springs, Ariz., and Cadiz, Calif. These trains handled one to three UPS trailers daily to and from Phoenix.

### EASTBOUND:

| SYMBOL  | ORIGIN      | DESTINATION  | FREQUENCY | TRAFFIC                 |
|---------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Q-LANY  | Los Angeles | Corwith      | Daily     | ATSF-Conrail            |
| Q-BAHO1 | Barstow     | Houston      | Tue-Sun   | Expedited Manifest-TOFC |
| Q-LABH1 | Los Angeles | Birmingham   | Mon-Sat   | TOFC-COFC               |
| 841     | Los Angeles | Corwith      | Tuesday   | Hyundai-Mixed           |
| 851     | Los Angeles | Corwith      | Mon-Sat   | COFC-TOFC               |
| 861     | Los Angeles | Corwith      | Tue-Sat   | COFC-TOFC-Manifest      |
| 866     | Barstow     | Amarillo     | Daily     | Manifest                |
| 881     | Los Angeles | Corwith      | Tue-Sat   | COFC-TOFC               |
| 884     | Barstow     | La Junta     | Daily     | Manifest                |
| 885     | Los Angeles | Houston      | as needed | COFC-TOFC               |
| 891     | Los Angeles | Corwith      | Daily     | COFC-TOFC               |
| 893     | Los Angeles | Kansas City  | Tue-Sat   | UPS-USPS-TOFC           |
| 951     | Richmond    | Corwith      | Daily     | TOFC-Autos              |
| 961     | Fresno      | Corwith      | Mon-Fri   | TOFC                    |
| 971     | Fresno      | Corwith      | as needed | TOFC                    |
| 973     | Richmond    | Kansas City  | Mon-Fri   | TOFC-Mixed              |
| 975     | Fresno      | Pearland, TX | Mon-Fri   | TOFC-Mixed              |
| 981     | Richmond    | Corwith      | Friday    | TOFC                    |
| 991     | Richmond    | Corwith      | Daily     | UPS Trailers            |

**Location codes** (first and third digits) 1) Chicago, 2) Illinois-Iowa-Missouri, 3) Kansas City, 4) Kansas-Col-orado-Oklahoma, 5) East Texas, 6) West Texas 7) New Mexico-Arizona, 8) Southern California, 9) Northern California, Q-Quality Network Train, S-Quality Stack Service (schedule not available), V-Vehicles.

**Type of train** (second digit) 0-4 mixed freight-locals, 5-7 COFC-TOFC, 8-9 high priority intermodals.



Train 199 (Corwith-Richmond) with UPS trailers changed crews at the east end of Winslow Yard on March 7, 1990.



routed via Santa Fe's mainline to Ft. Madison, Iowa, through Kansas, Oklahoma, and Amarillo, Clovis and Belen, then across the Arizona Division into California. Freight crew changes were at Clovis, Belen, Winslow, and Needles.

Arizona Division first shift train dispatchers had the most maintenance-of-way, signal maintainers, and B&B crews working. Additional radio and phone calls from those crews made train dispatching more challenging. Second-shift dispatchers normally finished up paperwork for track-time limits, train lineups, Form B's,

Form C's, and changes to track condition messages. Third-shift dispatchers had less maintenance windows to manage so focusing on dispatching trains was easier, although third shift could get busy especially in early morning when maintenance-of-way, signal, and B&B crews started work. During my visit I observed first shift Gallup East dispatcher Rich Pennisi on a busy Wednesday. I watched as Rich lined the signals for three Santa Fe freights traveling between Belen and Gallup. In addition, a Santa Fe signal maintainer called and requested 40 minutes of

track time on the eastbound main. Another dispatcher informed Rich that Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* (train 4) had entered his dispatching territory, plus the Q-NYLA 1-06 train was approaching from Belen to Dalies. At that moment I realized what a responsibility train dispatching can be. I was impressed at how efficiently Santa Fe dispatchers routed trains over the Arizona Division.

### CENTRALIZED DISPATCHING

In the early 1990s, Santa Fe started a program to restructure their railroad to

SD40-2 No. 5158 and two "Kodachrome" units led eastbound manifest past the Flagstaff depot as passengers waited for Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* to Chicago on March 8, 1990.





become more efficient. The railroad's headquarters were moved from the Railway Exchange Building in downtown Chicago to a smaller, modern office building in suburban Schaumburg, Ill. Operating regions were combined and train dispatching centralized in Schaumburg by Fall 1993. Maintenance was consolidated in Topeka, and the entire workforce reduced by 20%. Santa Fe sold unprofitable lines and reduced its core mileage from 11,000 rail miles in 1980 to 8,000 miles in 1992. While the consolidation was cost-effective from manage-

ment's point of view, it presented its own problems for Santa Fe train dispatchers. One of the drawbacks was limited office space in the Schaumburg facility. Because there was not enough room in the new offices for all the dispatchers, some dispatching territories were merged with other territories increasing the workload for those dispatchers. Another issue was the problem of the new Computer Aided Dispatching (CAD) system that helped manage train dispatching. Initially some trains came to a stop when the CAD system failed due to telephone and data link problems or when backup systems and leased telephone lines did not work properly. The consolidation caused another dilemma for Schaumburg dispatchers operating in the same time zone as the territories they were controlling for example: (Central Standard Time for dispatchers controlling trains operating on California Pacific Time). That was critical in issuing track warrants and track bulletins when track warrant time had to agree with time in the field. Those initial issues were quickly resolved as dispatchers learned the new CAD system.

### SANTA FE'S SUPER FLEET

Santa Fe was also a leader in intermodal, land-bridge container trains with "Six-Pack" and "Ten-Pack" articulated rail cars. They focused on profitable TOFC traffic and formed partnerships with trucking firms J.B. Hunt and United Parcel Service. In 1989, three Santa Fe

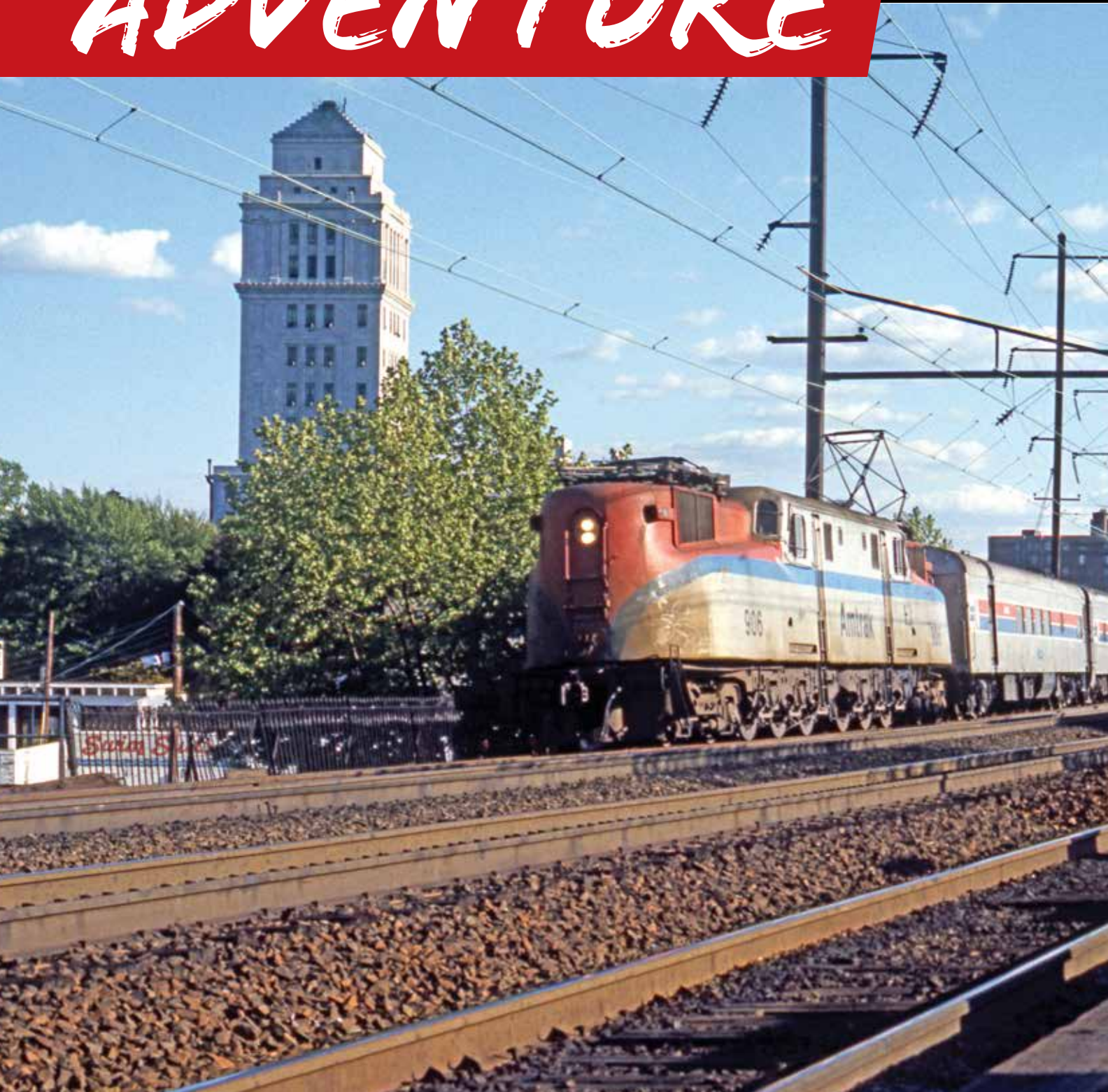
officials — President Mike Haverty plus Mike Martin, and Homer Henry — helped reintroduced the proud red-and-silver Warbonnet colors to "Super Fleet" locomotives leading fast intermodal trains between Chicago and California. In 1993, Santa Fe's total revenue grew to \$2.4 billion with net income of \$338.8 million. Stock analysts' viewed Santa Fe's management team as the best in the industry. So, it was no surprise when both Burlington Northern and Union Pacific wanted to buy Santa Fe. After a bidding war between the two larger railroads, Burlington Northern surfaced as the winner. On September 22, 1995, the railroad holding companies merged and on Dec. 31, 1996, the railroads were combined as Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway with headquarters in Fort Worth. All Santa Fe Railway train dispatching was then centralized at the new Texas facility. In 2009, BNSF Railway was purchased by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc. ■

*JOHN KELLY is retired from the Wisconsin Technical College System in Computer IT support. He lives in Madison, Wis., and has volunteered at the Center for Railroad Photography & Art writing captions for several collections. John thanks former Santa Fe employees Jim Hankins and Rich Pennisi for his visit to Winslow and assistance with this article.*



# A Seventies USA

## ADVENTURE



# Rail Pass

**A TRIP TO SEE PRR GG1 NO. 4935 YIELDED A BOUNTY OF EAST COAST TRANSIT AND PASSENGER SERVICE**

**BY LOU GERARD //**

Photos by the author

**B**ack in early 1977, friends Don Ellison, Steve Balmes, and I decided that a trip out east to see and photograph GG1 electrics on the Northeast Corridor was in order. This was around the same time the “Friends of the GG1” convinced Amtrak to repaint No. 4935 in the Pennsylvania Railroad’s classic Brunswick green, five-stripe scheme. The idea was born in an opinion piece for *Trains* written by Howard Serig.

So, when the news came out that 4935 would be dedicated on May 15 in Washington, D.C., we decided to coordinate our trip with this event. We also decided that stopovers in Pittsburgh to see the PCC cars of PAT Transit and Philadelphia to sample the transit scene there would be a good idea as well.

In April, we purchased USA Rail Passes at Milwaukee’s Amtrak depot while on a photo outing. On May 6 we began our eastern odyssey aboard the *Broadway Limited*, departing from Chicago Union Station behind an A-B-A set of Amtrak E units. We upgraded to a Slumbercoach for the overnight trip to Pittsburgh, our first stop. The ride was great and dinner in the diner and breakfast were certainly high points of the ride. As we got closer to Pittsburgh on Saturday morning, we occupied the vestibule of our car to photograph Conrail freights as we neared the big Conway Yard.

We arrived in Pittsburgh and, after posing for a shot standing by the *Broadway*’s E units, we were greeted by a PAT PCC streetcar right outside Pennsylvania Station — things were starting out very well. At this time, streetcars were still running around the downtown area, so getting photos was easy pickings. We covered as much of the street running downtown as possible, because there was talk of a downtown subway that would take



All-Amtrak-painted consist with GG1 906 in “W.C. Fields” scheme with northbound train at Elizabeth.



Blue Conrail E8 No. 4022 led the eastbound *Broadway*; it is pictured at Harrisburg prior to the change to electric motors for the continued trip to Philadelphia.



A Port Authority of Allegheny County Flexible bus and PCC operate in front of P&LE depot in downtown Pittsburgh.



The *Broadway Limited* rolls around Horseshoe Curve with Conrail E8 No. 4022 leading and Pennsy K4 No. 1361 on display.



An eastbound B&O freight sporting bright Chessie System colors of the 1970s passes the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie depot in Pittsburgh.

PCCs off the streets. After getting hotel accommodations downtown at the Carlton House, we headed to South Hills Junction, where the streetcar lines passed through enroute to downtown. This spot was a flurry of activity, with cars and buses stopping to exchange passengers. In the middle of the junction was a neat brick waiting room and operators' room and office, like a depot. In a short distance in one direction was the portal of the South Hills Tunnel, great for shots of emerging PCCs. In the other direction was the South Hills car barn and yard.

A PAT operator saw us and asked if we would like to see the South Hills car barn. The answer was "yes," of course, so he told us to meet him there Sunday morning. We spent the rest of the day riding and photographing PCC cars on all the routes. The Smithfield Avenue bridge over the Monongahela River and in front of the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie station were favorite spots to get cars coming and going out of downtown.

On Sunday morning, before we met our new friend, we spent an hour or so at the east end of Penn Station photographing a parade of eastbound Conrail freights, including one with an Alco C628 leading. We then made our way to South Hills car barn and met our operator friend, who took us on a tour of the shop and yard. Being a Sunday there was an impressive lineup of PCCs in the yard in all of PAT's multicolored paint schemes. The sought-after sunburst or "psychedelic" PCC was at the head of one of the strings of cars, so posing by that was a must.

Afterward, we rode with the operator on the Arlington/Warrington line, which ran over the hill instead of through the tunnel and into downtown. The rest of the day was spent riding and photographing streetcars on the many routes into the outlying areas. The Pittsburgh system was very interesting, with a lot of private right-of-way running, tall bridges, as well as segments of street running. I wished I had come there years earlier.

On Monday morning the 9th we moved on to Philadelphia on the *Broadway Limited*. To our surprise the three E units pulling the *Broadway* were led by blue Conrail E8 4022, quite a nice bonus! After lunch in the diner, we rode in the vestibule at the Dutch door around Horseshoe Curve and saw K4 4-6-2 No. 1361 on display there at the time.



SEPTA "Bullet" car 203 makes a pass at Radnor on Norristown High Speed Line. The operation was a throwback to the Midwest interurbans of an earlier time.





A former Reading Co. FP7 leads a commuter train from Reading under catenary at Norristown.



Amtrak GG1s at Harrisburg getting on the Washington Section of the Broadway at right and other GG1 backing onto the New York section.

The epic moment for us came when we arrived at Harrisburg, the location of the engine change from diesel to electric, and where the *Broadway* split, with one section going to Washington and the main portion continuing on to Philadelphia and New York. For us this meant GG1s!

We were able to get off the train and witness the change and get a good look at the big G motors. It was exciting, to say the least. While we were watching the Gs we forgot all about the E units as they passed by, like they didn't even exist.

After getting back on the train we continued to Philly. After arriving at 30th Street Station we needed to find a room, so we rode a SEPTA subway/surface PCC downtown, only to find that no hotel rooms were available due to some big doings in town. We hadn't planned any accommodations since we didn't know how long we would be in any one place. Eventually we found rooms in the YMCA for one night, which we were happy to escape early the next morning. Later, we did find a nice place that became our base for the next few days.

On Tuesday morning the 10th we went to Reading Terminal and boarded an MU train of old Reading Blueliner cars under the big trainshed for the ride to Norristown. At Norristown we photographed the commuter train from Reading that had a former Reading FP7 on each end, still in RDG colors, and also caught a few MU trains, including our Blueliner consist as it headed back to Reading Terminal.

Next we walked to SEPTA's former Philadelphia & Western terminal of the Norristown High Speed Line to ride the famed Brill "Bullet" cars to 69th Street. The ride was fantastic and was truly at high speeds, a real throwback to the interurban era. The trip reminded me of what the Chicago Aurora & Elgin must have been like: high-speed running and open third rail in populated as well as rural areas.

Arriving at 69th Street, we photographed a neat variety of older light-weight suburban trolleys built by Brill and St. Louis Car Co. coming and going on the Media and Sharon Hill lines, plus the "Almond Joy" cars of the Market Frankford subway line. We also went over for a look at the Norristown line shop at 72nd Street, where a Libertyliner (one of the former North Shore Electroliners)

I REMEMBER LOOKING OUT OF THE



Two Conrail E44s with No. 4414 in new paint, lead a southbound freight at Elizabeth.



Conrail bicentennial GG1 No. 4800, nicknamed "Old Rivets," trails GG1 4801 on a southbound freight at Elizabeth. It was the first such motor built.



A "North Jersey Builder," so nicknamed for its former Great Northern equipment, passes Elizabeth for South Amboy.

*WINDOW AS WE CROSSED HELL GATE BRIDGE IN DARKNESS, WHICH MADE QUITE AN IMPRESSION.*



was sitting out of service next to the shop. We also watched a Bullet and Stratford car switching around the shop leads, as well as Bullets on the main line passing under the street bridge. The other Libertyliner was inside the shop; we were told it might operate during the p.m. rush.

We were hopeful and later rode out to the graceful curve at Radnor to photograph the Bullets and Older Stratford cars. Unfortunately, the 'Liner never came out, but we did get great shots of the native cars anyway.

The next day, Don and I set out early for 30th Street Station; Steve decided to stay in Philadelphia for the day. We boarded an Amtrak train for Newark and then doubled back to Elizabeth, where our first shot was a pair of northbound Conrail GG1s on a freight train. Not a bad way to start! We spent the rest of the day watching an endless parade of Amtrak and NJ Transit GG1s, some running in pairs on passenger trains and Conrail Gs and E44s on several freights. We also caught Amtrak's fairly new E60s and Metroliners, plus a variety of MU trains and some elderly ex-Pennsylvania MP54s and CNJ engines powering Jersey Coast trains, one with second-hand coaches still in Great Northern and Burlington Northern paint, known by fans as the "Bay Head Builder." CNJ RDCs were also shuttling on the old line that passed under the corridor and stopping at the old CNJ depot. We were so overwhelmed by all the activity that we barely had time to run downstairs for a quick burger at a local diner.

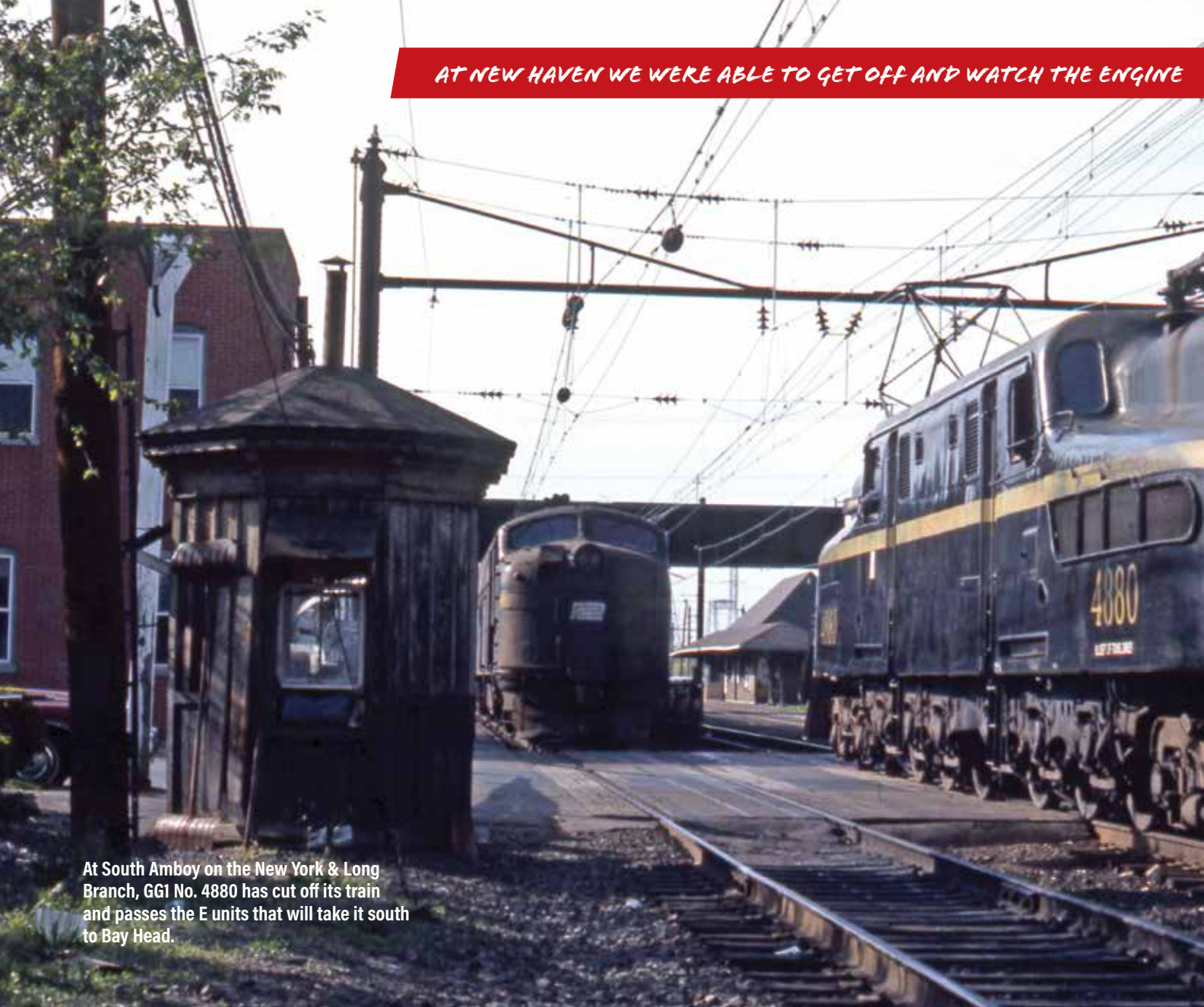
We saw more than 40 different Gs that day, including No. 4800, "Old Rivets," in Bicentennial colors trailing on a southbound freight led by 4801. All in all, it was a full day with hardly any down time. We returned to Philly that night fairly late and very happy.

The next day the three of us set out for Princeton Junction, N.J. This was where the Metroliners were really moving, not to mention other trains as well. Once again we saw an endless parade of Gs, E60s, *Metroliners*, and MUs, plus the single Arrow 1 MU shuttling back and forth to Princeton University in "Dinky" service. The only things missing here were electric freights. We saw a few diesel-powered freights, including one with a six-motor DL 701 leading. Later in the afternoon we took a train to Penn Station in New York, where we boarded an NJ Transit train to South Amboy on the New



**A northbound Metroliner glides through the famous S curve at Elizabeth, N.J., en route to New York City. The tall building is the Union County Court House.**

*AT NEW HAVEN WE WERE ABLE TO GET OFF AND WATCH THE ENGINE*



At South Amboy on the New York & Long Branch, GG1 No. 4880 has cut off its train and passes the E units that will take it south to Bay Head.



RSD12 No. 6876 handles a southbound freight at Princeton Junction, a popular railfan spot on the Northeast Corridor.



Amtrak GGIs meet with opposing trains at Princeton Junction. Their spacing accentuates the broad, four-track right-of-way.

CHANGE FROM THE DIESELS TO A SINGLE GG1, WHICH HANDLED THE REST OF THE TRIP TO WASHINGTON.



York & Long branch. This was really neat since we got to ride in an old PRR P70 coach right behind a GG1.

We spent that afternoon's rush at South Amboy watching the switch from GG1s to former Penn Central E units for the trip down the Jersey Coast. South Amboy was a place that time forgot, with manual crossing gates and gatemen's shanties, GG1s and E units. It was another fun and productive day, with a late arrival back in Philly.

On Friday the 13th we decided to take Amtrak up to Boston and check things out. We had our first ride behind an E60 from Newark up to New Haven, where a pair of F40s were put on for the trip to Boston. Our afternoon arrival at South Station gave us the chance to ride and photograph MBTA PCC streetcars and the then-new Boeing Light Rail Vehicles. Next we headed back to South Station to get the afternoon rush trains departing behind ex-PC E units, ex-New Haven GP9s and RDCs (some wearing the "T" logo), plus Amtrak E units, F40s, and an Alco RS3 working as the depot switcher. Quite a show! After watching all of this activity, we went back out to ride and photograph PCCs on the Commonwealth Avenue line. We also decided at this time that we needed to think about starting to head down to D.C. Instead of staying overnight in Boston, we got tickets to ride Amtrak's *Night Owl*, which left Boston later that evening and would get us to Washington early on the morning of the 14th.

That evening our *Night Owl* departed South Station behind a pair of E8s, ones we had seen earlier in the day. At New Haven we were able to get off and watch the engine change from the diesels to a single GG1, which handled the rest of the trip to Washington. I remember looking out of the window as we crossed Hell Gate Bridge in darkness, which made quite an impression. Arriving at Washington Union Station, we were greeted by Washington Union Terminal Alco RS1s and an Amtrak Alco S2 scurrying about the station tracks, another nice surprise. We then did the tourist thing, visiting as many landmarks as we could, including the Smithsonian Institution and the Capitol rotunda, back when you could just stroll in.

Steve had to head home on Saturday so he wouldn't get to stay for the GG1 ceremony, although he did get to see the



MBTA PCC on Commonwealth Ave. in Boston.



Industrial designer Raymond Loewy poses with GG1 4935, repainted in Brunswick Green and pin stripes, at its dedication ceremony in Washington, D.C.



Amtrak President Paul Reistrup at the 4935 dedication ceremony.

LATER THAT NIGHT WE BOARDED AMTRAK'S JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY FOR OUR JOURNEY HOME.



Amtrak E60 955 arrives in Washington, D.C., with the overnight *Night Owl* from Boston.



An Amtrak-painted Alco S2 diesel switcher moves new Amfleet coaches under wire at Washington Union Station.

4935 in the depot before his train departed. Don and I then spent the rest of the afternoon at the end of one of the station platforms photographing all the activity. We were able to get a hotel room across the street from Union Station, which made it convenient for us the next morning.

Sunday dawned sunny and warm. We walked across the street to the station, where lots of people were gathering for the dedication ceremony. No. 4935 looked absolutely stunning in the sunlight, so we clicked a lot of shots of her from a high-level platform. Then the famed industrial designer Raymond Loewy — who redesigned the GG1's riveted appearance into its famous smooth, welded look — posed with her. We listened to all the speeches given from the observation platform of former Pennsylvania Railroad business car 120. Speakers included Loewy, Howard Serig, Amtrak President Paul Reistrup, and author Karl Zimmermann, to name a few. After the speeches a loud blast came from 4935's horn as Mrs. Reistrup broke a bottle of champagne across her coupler. We were also able to meet Loewy and he graciously signed our programs.

After the ceremony, No. 4935 was put on the head of a northbound Amtrak Amfleet train and departed. Don and I hung around at the end of a platform and watched several GG1s and Metroliners arrive in nice afternoon light. The only disappointment came as four beautiful Southern Railway E8s from Ivy City backed into the depot for the *Southern Crescent* in nice afternoon light, only to be blocked by a switch move of Amtrak's *Palmetto*. Despite that, we had another great day and a great way to wrap up our trip.

Later that night we boarded Amtrak's *James Whitcomb Riley* for our journey home. It was a long ride in an Amfleet coach, and somewhere in Indiana on the C&O the head-end power on our GE P30 "Pooch" gave out, so no air conditioning for the rest of our trip.

We were glad it happened then and not at the beginning. We arrived in Chicago on May 16 and the final part of my journey was the ride home on the CTA North-South "L"; Don's was on the C&NW North Line to Waukegan. All in all, it was a fun trip all done by public transportation and a USA Rail Pass! 🇺🇸

# The *Evolution* of the 'Empire Builder'



## From heavyweights to Amtrak, Great Northern's flagship kept changing

BY STEVE GLISCHINSKI // Photos from the Lake States Railway Historical Association collection

**In the post-World War II era**, you'd be hard pressed to find a more pro-passenger railroad than the Great Northern. Consider that prior to the end of the war the railroad possessed no streamlined passenger trains. The flagship Chicago-Seattle/Portland Empire Builder, inaugurated in 1929, was still a heavyweight train, as were all other GN passenger trains. By the mid-1950s, the Empire

Builder had been streamlined twice, had gained a new running mate in the Western Star, plus a host of regional streamliners such as the Red River between the Twin Cities and Grand Forks, N.D., and the Internationals between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. Other trains, such as the Winnipeg Limited from St. Paul to Winnipeg and the Gopher and Badger trains between the Twin Cities and Duluth, carried a mix of streamlined, heavyweight, and semi-streamlined heavyweight cars.

Even though GN founder James J. Hill famously quipped that "the passenger train is like the male teat — neither useful nor ornamental," his successors went whole hog on passenger trains.

The archives of the Lake States Railway Historical Association based in Baraboo, Wis., contain photographs and slides that illustrate the evolution of Great Northern's flagship from its creation in 1929 to the Amtrak train of today. These and other photos can be purchased at the Association's website.



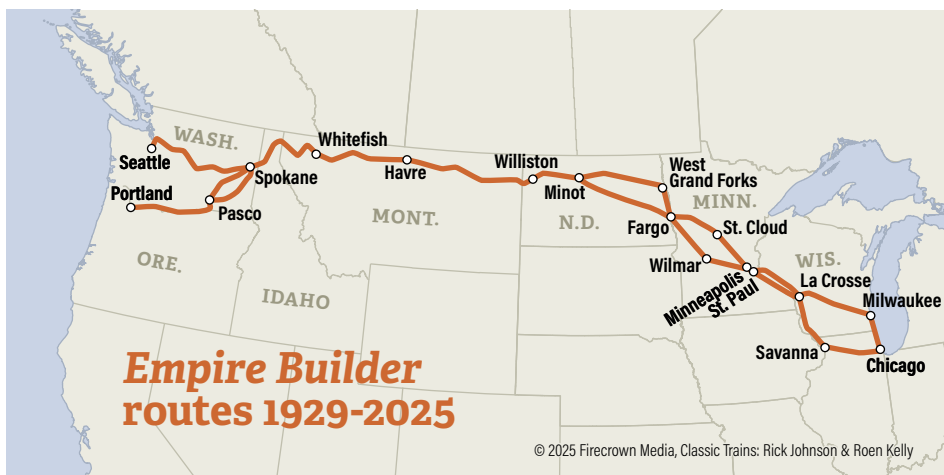
Visitors alight from buffet-lounge observation car *Mississippi River* during an open house to show off the new *Empire Builder* at Seattle in 1947.

John Endler, LSRHA collection

Crowds surround the new *Oriental Limited* at Chicago in 1924. The *Limited* was then Great Northern's flagship, but in four years it would be overtaken by the new *Empire Builder* and discounted entirely in 1931. Carl Ulrich Collection, LSRHA collection



It's a mob scene in Seattle as hundreds line up to see the new streamlined *Empire Builder* in early 1947. John Endler photographed the scene from atop a string of boxcars. John Endler, LSRHA collection



From the new observation cars, the longest yet built, to the powerful locomotives that will haul it over the Rocky Mountains it is a new train, a train dedicated entirely to the comfort of its patrons and designed to meet the requirements of the faster schedules demanded in transcontinental service.

## THE HEAVYWEIGHT 'EMPIRE BUILDER'

In 1929, GN Vice President C.O. Jenks heralded the arrival of the new *Empire Builder* in the employee publication *Great Northern Goat*: "Today the Great Northern Railway announces a superb running mate to the *Oriental Limited*: a train that is conceived in the same progressive spirit that has made the *Oriental Limited* famous — a combination of substantial fundamentals of construction and operation and luxury in appointments and decoration. It is a train that embodies all the latest improvements that the skill of the Pullman Co. has created. From the new observation cars, the longest yet built, to the powerful locomotives that will haul it over the Rocky Mountains, it is a new train, a train dedicated entirely to the comfort of its patrons and designed to meet the requirements of the faster schedules demanded in transcontinental service.

Coincident with the inauguration of this new train on June 10th, a sixty-three hour schedule will go into effect between Chicago and the cities of the Pacific Northwest. This will mean the saving of a full business day, yet with the increased speed of the train there will be added travel comforts due to the ample motive power of the locomotives which make for easy starting and stopping and the maintaining of uniform speeds; the easy grades and curves, the heavy washed ballast and rails on the lines it will traverse; the fact that the route of the new train is protected all the way from Chicago to Puget Sound by automatic block signals; and that for more than 1,200 miles of the distance which the train will travel it will be hauled by oil-burning and electric locomotives.

On the sides of each new car will appear the name of some men illustrious in the building of the Northwest, including James J. Hill and his associates in build-



The *Mountain* series observation cars of the 1951 *Builder* featured high windows in the rear and interior decor that included solid drapes, hidden valance lighting, and carved glass partitions featuring the official flowers of the states and Canadian provinces served by the GN.

Bob Milner, LSRHA collection



Crowds have gathered to watch the new *Empire Builder* leaving Seattle's King Street Station early in 1947. To power the new train EMD delivered 10 E7s in 1945, with an additional three added in 1947. John Engler, LSRHA collection



The streamlined *Empire Builder* reached its zenith with the introduction of dome cars in 1955. A view from a dome coach shows the train in all its glory emerging from a snowshed near Nimrod, Mont. in 1960.

George Strombeck, LSRHA collection

ing the Great Northern; some explorer who led the way into the unknown, some pioneer who opened up new areas to settlement, some soldier whose protection was so necessary to the growing communities, or some man of vision who built up the great industries of the region.

These men found the Northwest a wilderness and they have left it an empire, so, to honor them and to honor particularly the greatest of these practical dreamers — Mr. James J. Hill — the new train will be known as “The Empire Builder.”

The *Empire Builder* began service on June 10, 1929, leaving the new Chicago Union Station and heading west to St. Paul on the rails of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (Burlington Route) jointly owned by GN and Northern Pacific. After an overnight journey, the Burlington locomotive came off and GN locomotives were coupled on at St. Paul Union Depot

for the trip west.

In its first three years, the Builder went west to Fargo through St. Cloud, Minn., using GN’s line on the west bank of the Mississippi River, then through Alexandria and Fergus Falls, Minn. From Fargo, it headed west via the Surrey Cutoff directly to Minot, N.D., rather than use the GN line through Grand Forks and Devils Lake. It arrived at Glacier National Park, the only national park on the main line of a western railroad, at midday westbound. At Spokane, Wash., a Portland section of the train split off for that city via the Spokane, Portland & Seattle, while the main section headed to Seattle via the new Cascade Tunnel, which was handled by electric locomotives over the 82 miles of line between Wenatchee and Skykomish, Wash., that included the new tunnel.

The inauguration of the *Empire Builder* gave second-fiddle status to the com-

panion train on the transcontinental route, the *Oriental Limited*, which had been re-equipped just five years earlier. In October 1929 the stock market crashed and the subsequent arrival of the Great Depression cut into passenger loadings, and on March 29, 1931, the *Oriental Limited* was discontinued. At that time the Builder was re-routed from the St. Cloud route to the main line through Willmar, Minn. where it would remain until 1979. In the mid-1930’s the *Builder’s* heavy-weight cars were air conditioned, and semistreamlined luxury coaches built by Pullman were added in 1937.

## STREAMLINED EMPIRE BUILDERS

On Feb. 23, 1947, the streamliner era dawned on the Great Northern with the introduction of new streamlined *Empire Builders*. Dressed in GN’s beautiful orange and green colors, first introduced in



The Big Sky Blue era has arrived on the Great Northern, demonstrated by the six blue cars of the *Empire Builder* trailing NP's *North Coast Limited* as the combined train leaves Chicago in 1969. More cars will be added when the train arrives at St. Paul. J. David Ingles, LSRHA collection



Two Burlington Route E units power train 32, the eastbound *Empire Builder*, at Belmont Avenue in Downers Grove, Ill., in 1967. Ed DeRouin, LSRHA collection

the 1941 on FT diesels, the trains were built by Pullman-Standard at a cost of \$7 million. GN had gotten a jump on its competition by ordering the trains back in November 1943 for postwar delivery.

There were five sets of streamlined consists: four owned by GN and another owned by Burlington, each comprising 12 cars. They included a baggage-mail, four coaches, a coffee-shop-lounge dormitory, dining car (which featured a portrait of James J. Hill himself staring out at the patrons), four sleepers of different configurations, and a 2 double-bedroom, 1 drawing room buffet-lounge *River* series observation car. All of the train's assigned cars carried the *Empire Builder* name centered on its letter board. The new train was placed on a 45-hour schedule that was 13½ hours better than the old heavyweight trains.

Prior to entering service, Great North-

ern sent the train on tour to on-line cities, beginning in Minneapolis/St. Paul and working west to Seattle, and even to off-line cities such as Duluth and Great Falls, Mont. In a series of photographs in Seattle from the John Engler Collection in the Lake States archives, the train is mobbed by visitors anxious to tour the new streamliner.

With the new faster *Builder* schedule, many stops were skipped, so to cover them and offer double daily service GN took the old heavyweight cars from the old *Empire Builder*, revived the *Oriental Limited* name, and used it as the secondary train on most of the route.

While five 12-car sets were enough to protect the new schedules, there was little margin for error if a car went out of service. Consequently, GN shops built Railway Post Office baggage car number 1108 in December 1948, and coffee-shop-di-

nette-dormitory 1148 and dining car 1155 in July 1949. In January 1950, two sleepers arrived from Pullman-Standard, including one owned by SP&S, that railroad's only contribution to the 1947 *Empire Builder* pool.

A little over four years after the first streamlined *Empire Builder* entered service, Great Northern took the extraordinary step of placing another brand-new streamlined *Empire Builder* into service. Making its debut on June 3, 1951, the "Mid-Century Empire Builder" featured five 15-car sets built by both Pullman-Standard and American Car & Foundry at a cost of \$12 million.

The new train included two feature cars: the "Ranch" diner lounge for coach passengers and Mountain series lounge-observation cars for Pullman passengers. There were six of these observation cars named for mountains in GN ter-

Amtrak's westbound *Empire Builder* is changing crews at Portage, Wis. in summer 1971 behind a former Northern Pacific F9. It looks very much like the BN version of the train, except it's using the Milwaukee Road across central Wisconsin rather than the former Burlington tracks along the Mississippi River in the western part of the state. Henry E. Balinski, LSRHA collection



Burlington Northern EMD E8 locomotive No. 9941 leads Amtrak train 8, the eastbound *Empire Builder*, with three trailing F units into Chicago Union Station in 1972. BN E units were a common sight at the south side of Union Station on Aurora commuter trains. George Strombeck, LSRHA collection

ritory. Their high windows were similar to those on the observation cars built in 1948 for New York Central's *20th Century Limited*. Even Amtrak recognized these unique cars, using them on trains such as the *Builder*, *North Coast Hiawatha*, and *Twin Cities Hiawatha* in the early 1970s, although it didn't purchase them.

The Ranch lunch-counter lounges were the most unusual cars on the train. They were decorated with lodge-style wood panels, cedar beams, pinto leather seats, and authentic branding irons to give it a Western decor. There was even a "G-bar-N" brand, which the railroad registered with the Montana Livestock Association in Helena!

With the debut of the new *Builder*, the cars of the 1947 version of the train went to a new secondary train, the *Western Star*, which replaced the *Oriental Limited*. However, since the slower *Star* would require a sixth train set to cover its schedules, GN went ahead and ordered a new extra train set, right down to a sixth *River* series observation-lounge car. Still, Great Northern wasn't done.

In 1955 the *Empire Builder* received dome cars. At a cost of \$6 million, a total of 22 domes came to the train, with GN owning 17, Burlington 4, and SP&S 1. In May, each train set received three "short" domes used by coach passengers. In October came full-length domes with seats for 75 in the dome and a 34-seat lounge on the lower level, all for use by Pullman passengers. Thus, the *Empire Builder* became the only train to be equipped with two types of dome cars, all of which it referred to as "Great Domes." Take that, *California Zephyr*!

With the new full-length domes providing plenty of lounge space for Pullman passengers, the 1951 *Mountain* series observation cars were removed and entered service on the *Western Star*. The five *River* series observation-lounges that had been moved to the *Western Star* in 1951 (and the sixth new car) were rebuilt into sleeping cars with a very small lounge section at the rear, renamed in the *Coulee* series, and moved to the *Empire Builder*.

With increased airline and highway competition in the 1960s, cost-cutting measures came to the *Builder*, although the quality remained high. Beginning in 1960, the observation cars came off during the winter season. In 1960 and continuing through 1966, the westbound *Builder* and *Afternoon Zephyr* were consolidated during the winter season between Chicago and St. Paul; the eastbound *Builder* was combined with the

*North Coast Limited* between St. Paul and Chicago. Beginning in the 1966-67 winter season and through the summer of 1967 the *Builder* was consolidated with the *North Coast Limited* in both directions, and finally, in fall of 1967, the *Zephyrs*, *North Coast Limited*, and *Builder* were consolidated year 'round between Chicago and St. Paul.

The only downgrading was the permanent removal of the observation cars after the summer 1966 summer season, since the lounge section added little value and switching the cars in and out with all the train consolidations east of St. Paul would have been a chore. With more coach passengers and fewer sleeping car customers, GN had Pullman-Standard rebuild its five *Coulee* observations into coaches in 1967-68; the sixth car owned by CB&Q was eventually scrapped. The full-length dome cars were opened to coach passengers, and in 1968 the train began stopping at Glacier National Park each summer (previously only the *Western Star* made the stop).

In 1967, GN bought eight 3,600-hp SDP45s and assigned them to the *Builder*. These engines arrived in GN's new "Big Sky Blue" colors, introduced in May 1967. Even at this late date, GN still hadn't given up. It ran newspaper ads with the dome cars in Big Sky Blue, posed an all-blue consist for photos in Glacier National Park, and produced postcards featuring the blue *Builder*. Timetables, menus and other paraphernalia all got the blue treatment.

The blue colors didn't last long, how-

In the 1960s with increased airline and highway competition, cost-cutting measures came to the *Builder*, although the quality remained high. Beginning in 1960, the observation cars came off during the winter season.

ever. On March 2, 1970, Burlington, GN, NP, and SP&S merged to form Burlington Northern. For the first time the *Builder* operated over a single railroad across its entire route. BN chose Cascade Green as its official color, but scarcely had the paint had time to dry than Amtrak took over BN's passenger service on May 1, 1971. The new government railroad acquired a number of BN passenger cars, including all of the ex-GN dome cars, most of which survive today.

Amtrak continued to operate the *Empire Builder*, changing its routing several times, and bringing new Superliner equipment to the train on Oct. 28, 1979, the first Amtrak train to receive the new cars. Superliners remain in service today — much longer than GN's streamlined cars ever did. For now, the *Builder*'s evolution has stopped, but perhaps it will survive to see a new generation of passenger cars along James J. Hill's railroad. ■



EMD F40PH No. 332 leads the westbound Amtrak *Empire Builder*, train Nos. 7 and 27, at Sturtevant, Wis., in 1982, with bi-level Superliner equipment. Roger Rasor, LSRHA collection



# Superhighway for

**In late 1902**, the Columbus, Sandusky & Hocking Valley in Ohio — a superhighway for iron ore coming off Lake Erie — was sold at foreclosure to the Pennsylvania Railroad (lines north of Columbus) and the Hocking Valley (lines south). The purchase price was \$2.75 million.

Under Pennsy ownership, the line and associated facilities were on a fast-track to improvement: in 1903, the PRR installed “whirlies” (one-ton bucket unloaders) in Sandusky to replace the

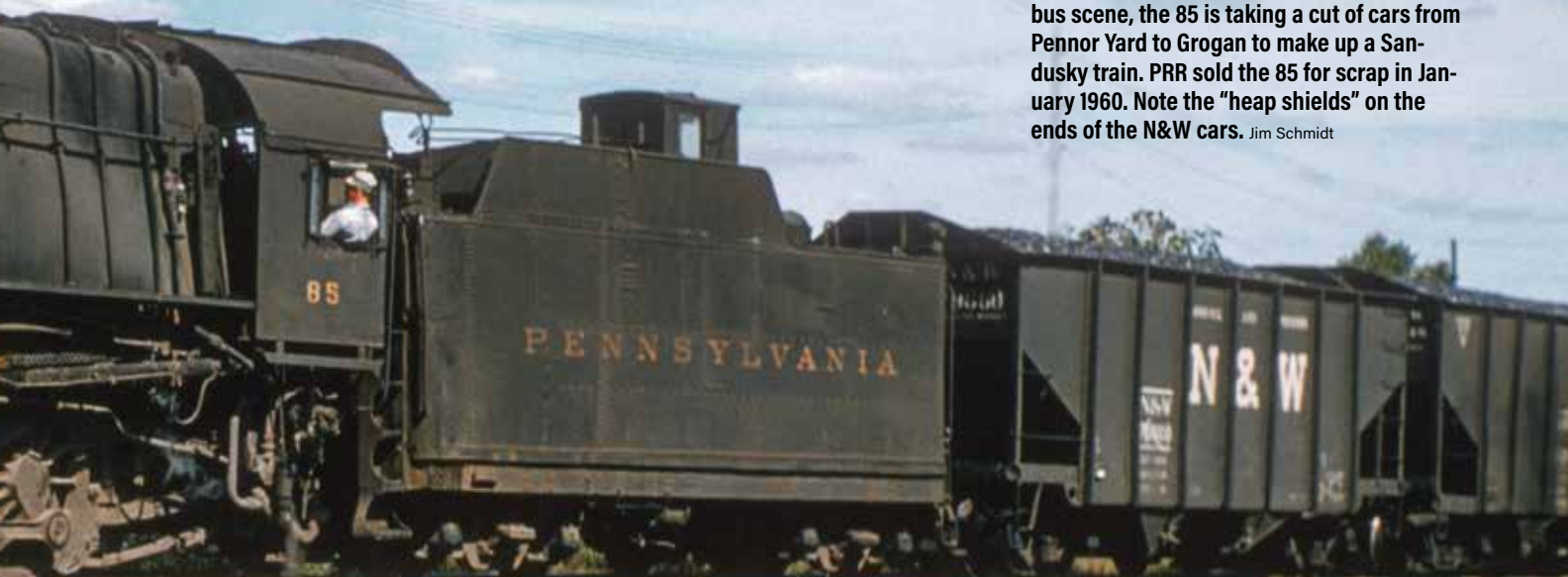
wheelbarrow unloading at this location. By mid-1904, two new tracks had been added to Sandusky Yard, expanding the capacity by 200 cars. In 1907, PRR installed a McMyler 70-ton coal dumper

on Dock 1, significantly reducing the cost per ton to unload to just \$0.06; the previous generation of mechanized unloading systems such as the Brown Electric Fast Plant (later, Brownhoist) had brought the cost for unloading iron ore down to \$0.18 per ton. Just seven years later, the PRR equipped Sandusky Dock 2 with a 100-ton Wellman-Seaver-Morgan coal dumper.

At the end of 1917, the Sandusky Line, along with the rest of the Pennsy empire,

## THROUGHOUT THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY, THE SANDUSKY LINE DID HEAVY LIFTING

PRR IIsa 85, the fifth occupant of the “85-slot” on the Pennsy roster (the first had been a 4-4-0, dating to 1854), was a June 1918 graduate of Altoona. It was rebuilt to an IIsa in November 1943. In a typical 1950s Columbus scene, the 85 is taking a cut of cars from Pennor Yard to Grogan to make up a Sandusky train. PRR sold the 85 for scrap in January 1960. Note the “heap shields” on the ends of the N&W cars. Jim Schmidt



# IRON ORE

ART PETERSON

photos from the Krambles-Peterson Archive

came under the operating control of the United States Railroad Administration, charged with overseeing U.S. railroads during World War I. This lasted until the end of February 1920, when President Woodrow Wilson signed the Transportation Act of 1920, returning the railroads to private control on March 1. The year 1920 also saw the PRR locomotive fleet reach a peak of 7,667 engines; that same year, the Interstate Commerce Commission made an emergency order giving

priority to lake-bound coal shipments, to avoid a coal shortage in the eastern U.S. and Canada. Postwar inflation labor issues plagued the industry in the early 1920s, with PRR laying off 84,000 employees. During the summer of 1922 there were simultaneous coal and shop craft strikes that were not settled until September of that year.

Despite these issues, the Pennsy continued to improve facilities at the south end of the Sandusky Line, including com-

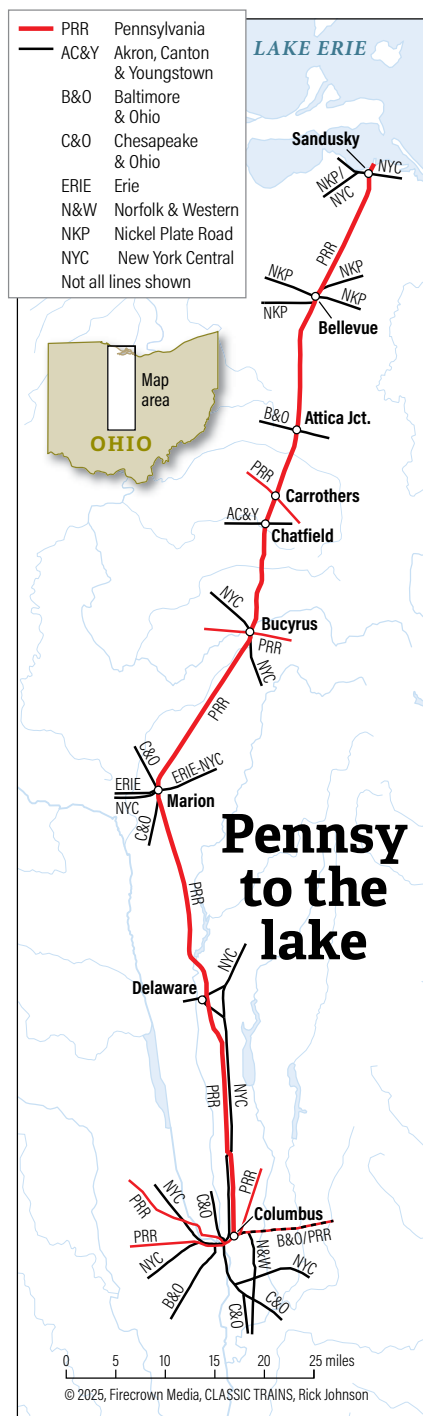
pletion of the Spruce Street Engine Terminal in 1923. Grogan Yard in Columbus, where the Sandusky Line trains tied up, was nearly doubled in size in 1930 to a 2,105-car capacity. Pennor Yard was also built at this time as an expansion of Grogan Yard, to expedite flow of coal traffic. Pennor was located adjacent to the Norfolk & Western's Joyce Avenue facility in Columbus. Coal from the Louisville & Nashville was routed through Joyce Avenue and into Grogan as well. Also in-





An unidentified H10s has a healthy cut of C&O hoppers in tow near Huron Street in Sandusky where the coal line crossed the NYC and the LE&W. Subject-matter experts believe this was coal destined for a local industry. Bill Vigrass

Pennsy J1 6474 draws up to the Bogart Road crossing, near the south end of the Bay Junction Yard, circa 1953. Lima delivered the first T-1 to the C&O in August 1930 (which, in turn, was based on an Erie Railroad locomotive design). In November 1941, the T-1 was one of eight designs evaluated by the Mechanical Engineering Committee. Bill Vigrass



involved was Grandview Yard, the Chesapeake & Ohio's interchange point for Sandusky-bound trains. Empties for the C&O were dropped by the PRR at Scioto Tower.

In 1927 and in the spring of 1930 PRR rebuilt Sandusky's coal pier, more than double the size of nearby Bay Junction Yard, enabling it to handle 1,474 cars. These investments were well-timed, as 1930 saw a record number of cars — a total of 1,181 — dumped at Sandusky. In May of the following year, the Columbus-Sandusky motor car made its last run, leaving the line freight-only. Despite the Depression, Pennsy lake port-bound iron ore traffic increased steadily; in late 1933, the total was 4.5 million tons, more than quadrupling the previous years' total.

Investment continued throughout the 1930s, as well as during the early days World War II. During 1939, a new one-mile-long pier No. 3 was constructed on rock and equipped with another McMyler Coal Dumper; McMyler had been merged into Industrial Brownhoist in 1929. Further expansion of Grandview Yard was also authorized, as was an expansion of capacity at Bay Junction Yard. Record traffic was handled through the Sandusky coal pier during the war, with 2.1 million tons handled in August 1944, only to be surpassed by October's 2.2 million tons. The single-

C&O T-1 3018 began a five-day testing regime on the PRR-Middle Division on February 24, 1942. One month later the Pennsy Board approved spending \$10.6 million for 50 J1s based on the C&O design. The 6474 was part of the 25-locomotive Altoona build and dated to February 1943. It was retired in June 1957. That trailing Clinchfield hopper is very clean and with a March 1953 builder's date, helps to date this image sequence. Bill Vigrass





**Top:** PRR J1a 6403 returns a load of empties to Columbus. The 6403 was part of the June 1943 production for J1a's delivered by Altoona. As a J1a, this engine has the cast bed frame. As of July 1, 1957, 41 J1s and 40 J1as remained serviceable and assigned to the Buckeye Region. The locomotive was retired in April 1958. *Jim Schmidt*

**Above:** That thick layer of coal smoke bodes well for a lot of action in and around Sandusky on June 24, 1956! At the head of the line is the 9943, an H10s dating to 1910 (built as an H8c by Alco-Pittsburgh and rebuilt to an H10s in December 1918). As late as July 1957, at least five H10s locomotives remained assigned to the PRR Buckeye Region, though the 9943 was inactive by that time. *Sandy Goodrick*

**Below:** A favorite place for the dispatchers to hold southbounds was in the Worthington area, which is exactly what the 6424 is doing on Aug. 4, 1957. The Sandusky Line was double-tracked through here (extending another 20 miles to the north at the time). Time was running out for PRR steam, in late November of that year — sources vary as to it being on the 25th or the 27th — Ilsa 4271 pulled a final 50-car coal train to Altoona and then tied down. G. Niceley

**Bottom:** One of the 12 Santa Fe 2-10-4s leased by PRR, the 5014 was a 1944 product of Baldwin. Crews found the Santa Fe engines could make the Columbus-Sandusky run faster than the JIs. The Santa Fes were about 9 tons heavier than the JIs and could develop nearly 109,000 pounds of tractive effort, compared with around 95,000 pounds for the JIs. Jim Schmidt



day traffic record at Sandusky came on Oct. 25, when 2,071 cars — or one every 42 seconds — were dumped.

During 1945, a new concrete coaling tower was put in service at Harvey, Ohio, north of Marion, replacing an older structure at Carrothers. Despite labor unrest, including a brief three-day period of government control of the railroads, 1946 saw another record year for coal traffic as the Sandusky docks handled 2.3 million tons.

The Pennsylvania's march to dieselization also began in this era. The carrier's first freight F3s were ordered from EMD a little over a month after the model's introduction. The spring of 1947 saw construction of diesel facilities, including in Columbus. In April 1948, PRR Vice President-Operations James M. Symes noted the road had transported 10 million tons of coal the previous year, while consuming 16 million tons, and that the price of coal had increased 123%. In 1947, PRR had just 73 diesels; by 1949, the road was on track to roster 594 units. Despite this, steam would remain in command of Sandusky freights until nearly the end of the steam era on the Pennsy.

Operation of the line using a mix of EMD and Fairbanks-Morse diesels continued while merger and sale talks proceeded involving N&W-Nickel Plate and New York Central-PRR. On Sept. 14, 1964, the PRR agreed to the line sale and the N&W takeover of the Sandusky Line was effective Oct. 16, 1964. ■



**Top:** Dispatchers would hold trains shy of the Big Four crossing at Worthington (MP 8.6). Between May and December 1957, the Pennsy took delivery of 220 new diesels. This and the traffic downturn ensured that steam would not be revived. G. Niceley

**Bottom:** Enola was PRR's top-dog diesel shop, generally receiving the newest units. Subsequent deliveries bumped the Alcos, Baldwins and FMs to other points in the system. Ken Douglas has observed that the class FF-3a locomotives initially worked Pennsy Eastern, Lake, Panhandle, and Pittsburgh Division assignments. Reclassed as FF-16, three A-B-A sets first migrated to Columbus area rotations in 1952. This CFA 16-4 ran for slightly less than 15 years, being retired in May 1965. J.W. Vigrass

**Below: TOFC was a presence on the Sandusky Line during its final decade under PRR ownership. On Nov. 9, 1955, Pennsy, N&W and Rail-Trailer incorporated Trailer Train in Delaware; one year later, PRR was reporting trailer traffic of 4,000 units per month. The Pennsy 35-foot Fruehauf trailer closest to the cameraman still has the "sway chain" or "disaster chain" in use circa April 1963. PRR's Tom Harley conducted testing of this equipment, which led to TTX's agreement to discontinue its use on Oct. 9, 1963. J.W. Vigrass**



*Acknowledgments: Special thanks are due to Ken Briers for help in bringing life back to some fungus-infected slides, as well as retouching a pair of off-brand-processed images. Bob Holzweiss, Jim Panza, Greg Sommers, and Bill Volkmer assisted on the PRR roster and operating subjects, while the members of the on-line PRR group provided insight on several topics. Chronologies of the Pennsylvania Railroad Historical & Technical Society were invaluable in preparing this piece. Wes Barriss' "Steam Locomotive" site was an extremely-helpful resource. Lastly, I'm delighted that the Ohio Railway Museum drew the attention of Glenn Niceley and Bill Vigrass to the adjacent PRR line so frequently!*

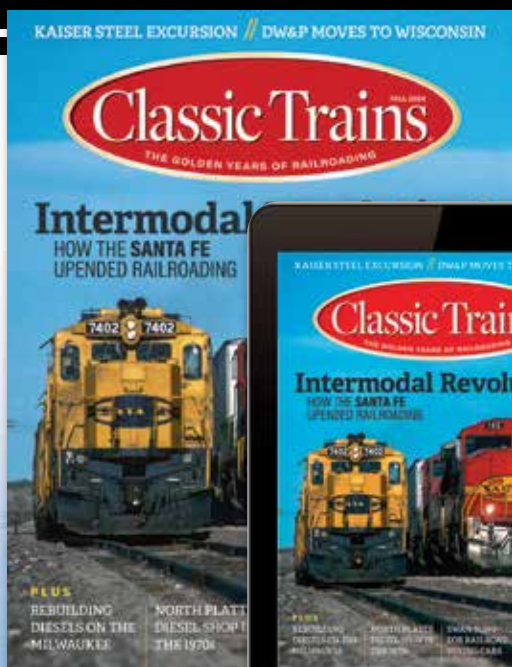
**Bottom: Pennsy ordered its first Erie-built in April 1947; the 9482 was a member of the third order for Erie-built, numbering 12 A-units, which were ordered in February 1948 and delivered between September and December of that year. Initially, the members of this third order were concentrated on the Pittsburgh Division. Later migrating to the Buckeye Region, the 9482 has just a half-year of service left at the time of this May 1963 image, leading a northbound through Worthington. J.W. Vigrass**





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# Classic Railroad Dome Cars

Riding on top of postwar passenger trains

**Railroad dome cars** are a gleaming symbol of postwar passenger train status.

The streamliner era in North America bookended the World War II era in the U.S., since new streamlined passenger cars were not a priority between 1942 and 1945. Following the end of the war in the latter year, they began to appear again, with the railroads' hope that the banner traffic experienced during the war would continue during peacetime.

In 1945, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy brought forth something both new and novel, in the form of the dome car, when it introduced a pair of Budd-built pre-war stainless-steel coaches with glass-topped domes (including seating for passengers) added above the cars' previous rooflines. The "Q" then followed up in 1947 by taking delivery of its *Twin Zephyrs*, which plied the railroad's route between Chicago and the Twin Cities of Minnesota via the scenic upper Mississippi River valley.

Each set of equipment made a round trip daily and typically featured four dome coaches and a dome parlor observation; only the baggage-lounge and the dining car did not feature the new innovation. In the same year, Pullman-Standard built a four-car trainset that could be described as a proof of concept/demonstrator in

conjunction with General Motors; this included a chair car, dining car, sleeping car and observation car, each with a dome. Following a barnstorming tour of various points in the U.S., the Union Pacific acquired the equipment in 1949 and used it in its "pool service" with the Northern Pacific between Seattle and Portland, Ore.

In 1948 a pair of other varieties of dome equipment appeared. Passenger service proponent Robert R. Young's Chesapeake & Ohio took delivery from Budd of its planned *Chessie* daytime streamliner service which included both dome observations and dome sleepers, which were to be used as private day rooms.

Since the *Chessie* never entered regular service, the sleepers were sold to the Baltimore & Ohio, which used them on its premier *Capitol Limited*, while the Denver & Rio Grande Western acquired the dome observations. Budd also supplied a trio of dome coaches to the Missouri Pacific for use on the Colorado Eagle between St. Louis and Denver.

The next year, 1949, the B&O took delivery of two dome coaches for use on its new all-coach Washington, D.C.-Chicago Columbian overnight streamliner. These were built by Pullman-Standard and had "low-profile" domes (as did the *Chessie*) due to tight clearances on this route. Inter-

estingly, these two cars, along with eight other "regular" coaches were the only postwar lightweight coaches acquired new-from-the-manufacturer by the B&O.

The big news in 1949, however, was the delivery of the cars for the *California Zephyr*, utilizing a trio of railroads (Burlington; Rio Grande; Western Pacific) for this service between Chicago and the San Francisco Bay area. Each consist had five domes: three coaches, a lounge-dormitory, and a sleeper observation.

Surprisingly, in 1950, the Wabash became a dome operator with the launch of its Budd-built *Blue Bird*, operating a daily round trip between Chicago and St. Louis. The consist bore more than a superficial resemblance to the *Twin Zephyrs*, with a flat-topped baggage lounge and diner, plus a dome parlor observation and dome coaches, although only three of the latter for the Wabash version, as opposed to four on the Burlington's trains.

Surprisingly, except for the *California Zephyr*, the only other dome cars that regularly ventured west of the Mississippi River at this point were the Mopac's on the *Colorado Eagle*, and they didn't get west of the Continental divide. This situation was altered by the Santa Fe's acquisition of the Pullman-Standard dome lounges for the railroad's *Super Chief* in

**Multiple stainless Burlington dome cars congregate outside Chicago Union Station with lowly bilevel commuter equipment.** George W. Hamlin



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1950; these "Pleasure Dome" cars also contained the famous premium-service Turquoise Room dining accommodations.

However, it's interesting to note that as of 1951, many of the trains in the west that we now look back on fondly as dome-liners had yet to have this type of equipment added to their consists. 1952 featured several re-orders from roads already operating dome cars, including the Missouri Pacific for additional dome coaches, this time from Pullman-Standard; an additional CZ sleeper observation; and a dome-parlor for the *Blue Bird*, also from Pullman.

There was a noteworthy "new in '52" event on the dome front, in the form of the Milwaukee Road's acquisition of 10 full-length "Super Domes" from Pullman-Standard. Six of these were for the road's *Olympian Hiawatha* between Chicago and Seattle/Tacoma, thus introducing dome service on the "northern transcon" route.

1953 featured only the addition of a pair of dome-coach/dormitory/buffet lounge cars for the Burlington's *Kansas City Zephyr*. 1954 was a banner year for new dome cars, however, with the Union Pacific adding dome coaches, observation lounges and what would be the only dome diners. The Santa Fe acquired full-length dome coach/lounges in two slightly different configurations, and the Northern Pacific met the Milwaukee Road's competition with the addition of both (regular/short) dome coaches and sleepers.

By 1955, the Great Northern had gotten the memo, and put both dome coaches and full-length dome lounges into service on the *Empire Builder*. In chromatic terms,



Advertisement for Great Northern's full-length domes on the *Empire Builder*.

certainly the Chicago-Pacific Northwest route took the prize for best-looking domeliner, with the *Builder's* green/orange with yellow stripes, the NCL's post-1956 two-tone green paint scheme devised by famed designer Raymond Lowey, as well as the Milwaukee Road's initial maroon and orange, as well as the Milwaukee's later adoption of UP's Armour yellow.

Two other noteworthy events in 1955 were the Southern Pacific's rebuilding of various early lightweight cars into semi-full length low-profile domes (to deal with clearance issues), and the large (18 trainsets) for the

new *Canadian* transcontinental streamliner, and re-equipping of the *Dominion*; each set included a dome coach and a dome sleeper-observation much like those on the *California Zephyr*.

1956 brought the re-equipping of the Burlington's *Denver Zephyr*, which added a pair of three kinds of dome cars, including buffet lounges, coach and parlor observation to the Burlington's substantial roster of Budd dome cars. That year the same manufacturer also introduced the "Hi-level" *El Capitan* for the Santa Fe, which offered upper-level accommodations to the full length of the train; this arguably prefigured the later Amtrak Superliners.

Finally, to use a musical term, there was a coda for domes in 1958, when six dome coaches arrived to make the UP's *City of St. Louis* a domeliner (one was owned by the Wabash). The fact that the UP was willing to invest in new, and beyond-the-ordinary equipment for a train that had no effective competition at its namesake city this late in the postwar passenger service game (the so-called Hosmer Report, with its famous "no passenger trains by 1970" prediction appeared in the same year) suggests that not all rail management fit the "heartless robber baron" description. ■



Two advertisements highlight new domes on the Baltimore & Ohio and Union Pacific. Three photos, George W. Hamlin collection

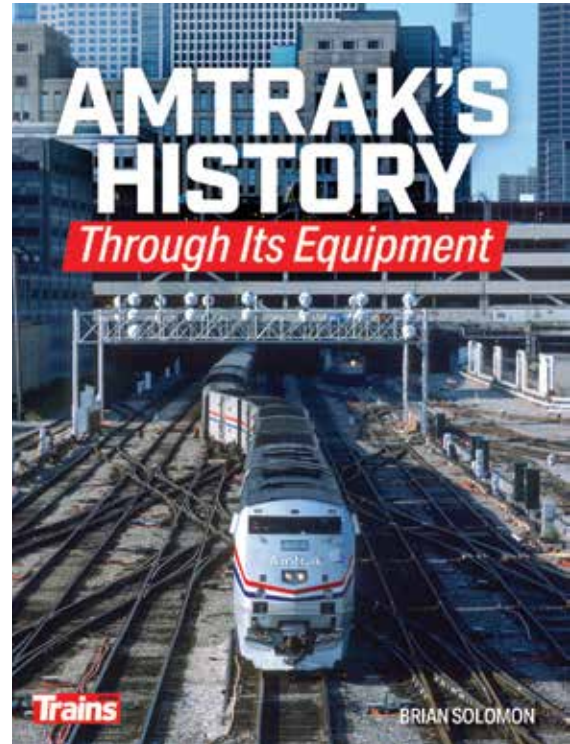
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Illinois Central E6 No. 4003 was the subject of a young railfan's admiration ... that led to a lost ticket!



## In the care of conductors

Three stories of professional discretion riding the rails

By Steve Mueller

**"Would you like to take the train to Chicago** after school and spend the weekend with your Dad?" It was 1968. I was a sophomore in high school. At that point I'd had only two bona fide train rides: a second-grade field trip on the Illinois Central from Carbondale to Anna, Ill., and a *Hiawatha* ride on the Milwaukee Road from Tomah to Sparta, Wis. There also were a few museum rides at North Freedom and Green Bay, Wis.

I immediately answered "yes!"

I don't recall anything of the trip north or even the details of the weekend, but knowing Dad, it would be great fun, replete with a meal or two at The Berghoff on Adams in the Loop. Sunday morning arrived way too soon and it was time to head to IC's Central Station off Michigan

Avenue for the train ride home. Being 15, I had my learner's permit, so Dad had me drive to gain some city driving experience. We made it to Central Station without mishap.

Train boarding was announced and Dad and I said goodbye, then I boarded a coach, finding a seat on the west side. Lost in my reverie through the near south-side neighborhoods, I did not pay much attention to the conductor when he entered the car — at least not until he bellowed in the most stentorian voice, "Is there a Steve Mueller in this car?"

When a teenager hears his name called in that manner, he immediately thinks "What did I do?" The next thing is a reflexive raising of the hand. Spying me, he strode toward my seat yelling in the

same stentorian voice, "Your Dad needs his car keys!" Oh s—!

I reached in my pocket and, sure enough, found them. Somewhat modulating his volume and intensity amid the chuckles of those in the coach, the conductor reached out his hand. "Give me the keys. I'll hand them to a northbound commuter train conductor at Homewood. He will get them to your Dad." He grabbed the keys while I slunk down and tried to blend with the coach interior.

When we arrived at Homewood, I peered over to the waiting commuter train and saw that he did indeed transfer the keys. I'm sure there were chuckles and winks between them as they made the switch. I don't recall when Dad returned home but he smiled and confided

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 of tkt Form 961-3 #4075.  
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 B. Conelstone  
 tkt was Purchased AT (Carbonale)

**"Exhibit A": A conductor's handwritten note on Illinois Central Standard Passenger Train Delay Report, Form 107, S-11-69 substituted for a lost ticket.**

the wait was not too long. So went the first time my butt was saved by the ingenuity and dedication of conductors.

Another standout experience occurred not too long afterward, on April 24, 1971. I had run into someone else interested in trains, a student at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. He told me there would be a steam excursion out of Chicago on April 25, 1971. I ordered and received tickets using the information he provided. Having cleared the trip with my folks, I met my fellow railfan at the station for the Friday afternoon train to Chicago. He pointed out that the trailing unit was a rare EMD E6: IC No. 4003. Being not too bright, this did not sink in.

After we boarded the train and tickets were collected, my friend

suggested going to the first vestibule to watch the unit as we departed Carbondale. I can still recall the E6 nose dancing in the vestibule doorway as we accelerated north. When the speed and gyration of the train became too great, we returned to our seats. I reached for the ticket I had hastily shoved in my shirt pocket and found it gone — sucked out in the vestibule and now residing somewhere on the IC right-of-way.

After berating my stupidity, I realized the only option was to find the conductor and explain what happened. After a brief search I found him tending to his re-

cords. Apologizing for the interruption, I spilled out my story featuring the significance of the 4003. He stopped his clerical accounting, serenely looked up, then, almost lotus-like, he turned and lit into me about unauthorized vestibule occupancy and improper Dutch-door operation; this is a polite, civilized, and sanitized summary of his response. He then turned face-forward, reassuming his serene countenance. Suddenly, he grabbed a piece of paper and scribbled out his solution, his hand carefully timed to the violent lurching of the car. With a brief consideration of his response, he grabbed his

**I can still recall the E6 nose dancing in the vestibule doorway as we accelerated north.**

punch, validated the piece of paper twice and thrust the ersatz ticket to me, growling "Here! Maybe this will help." I was dismissed.

I returned to my seat somewhat buoyed by the piece of paper in my hand. When I viewed and read his creation, though, my hope sank. What do I do now? There's no way this will work (see "Exhibit A" above, written on Illinois Central Railroad Standard Passenger Train Delay Report, Form 107, S-11-69). I have no memory of arrival in Chicago, where I stayed, or what I ate. I do remember going to the indicated platform for the excursion only to find a sign stating it had been annulled. After some discussion, my friend and I concluded that returning home on the next train south was the only option. Thus, a short time later

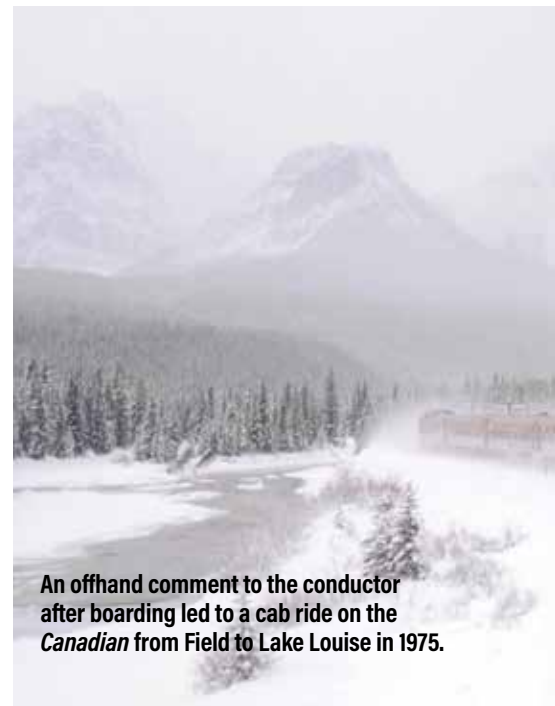
we found ourselves departing Chicago for Carbondale, seated in a club car, with me attempting to disappear in a corner at the end of the car. The conductor and his assistant soon appeared.

Hoping to be overlooked, I shrunk as much as possible into obscurity, but to no avail. He lifted my friend's ticket, then turned to me demanding "Tickets, please." I offered up Exhibit A. Startled, he stared at me, looked down at Form 107, looked at me again, looked down at the form again, then forcefully punched it twice and moved on. I'll be damned! It worked. I started breathing once more. Butt saved by conductors ... again.

One final encounter came on Jan. 8 and 9, 1975, on Canadian Pacific. I departed Vancouver in roomette 4, car 262 on CP's *Canadian* bound for Winnipeg. When the conductor lifted my ticket, I uncharacteristically blurted out "How about a cab ride?"

Somewhat stunned, he responded, "These are usually arranged in advance. I'll have to check."

I concluded my request was dumb and wasn't going to happen, so I resumed my enjoyment of the dome car. In spite of my rare, cryptic, and incomplete notes, the details remain vague, so I don't know when I was approached by the same or different conductor and asked "Are you the one wanting a cab ride?" Startled, I gave an affirmative. "How about from Field to Lake Louise?" I managed a meek "OK." He continued: "When we get to Field, walk up the head engine. They'll be



**An offhand comment to the conductor after boarding led to a cab ride on the *Canadian* from Field to Lake Louise in 1975.**

expecting you.”

When we arrived at Field, B.C., I detrained and walked up to the front end. I was disappointed to find a Geep in the lead instead of an E-unit, but a cab ride is a cab ride. I was met by the head brakeman, who instructed me to take the fireman’s seat. He would ride in the second unit. We departed Field with the mountains under a decent cover of snow so that only two dark lines of rail indicated our path. My memories are dulled somewhat, but some things remain vivid: being regaled by the crew pointing out mountain scenery highlights, wildlife, and

**I’ll be damned! It worked. I started breathing once more. Butt saved by conductors ... again.**

tales of their time on the railroad; the peaceful glide through the mountains; and, most of all, traversing the Spiral Tunnels, marveling at the engineering involved. My recollection of the headlight washing across the curving rough-hewn rock tunnel walls is still as sharp as ever, although the Super 8 movie footage I filmed also helps.

Sadly, I failed to write down the names of those railroaders who had extended such extraordinary courtesies and experiences to me. However, I have never forgotten them and still marvel how they performed, well above and beyond the normal scope of their duties. I thank them to this day. 📷



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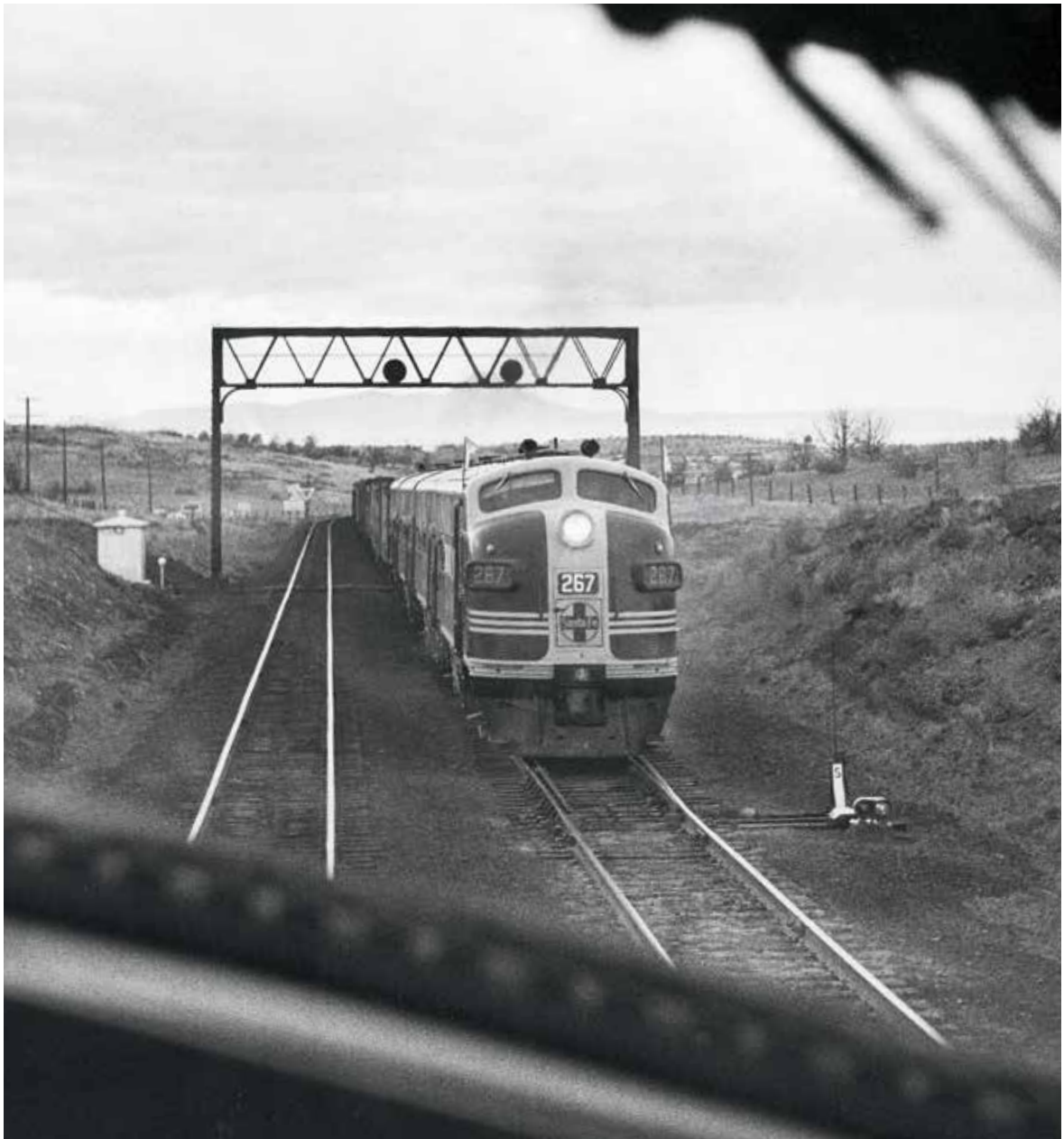


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