



THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 54 Number 1

MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM
Where "I've Been Working On the
Railroad" Becomes a Reality.
MAY—JUNE 2021



The former C&IM No. 31 rumbles across the Camp Creek Bridge with a freight train in tow on this Throttle Time Day with a rail enthusiast at the throttle, operating this rare, two of a kind locomotive. Tom Binger photo

THE CONSIST
Volume 54 No. 1

Observation Platform

Getting Back On Track 3

THE BACK SHOP

Sou Locomotive 401 4

IT SW1200 784 4

IC Diner 4110 4

RI Coach 2541 4

Snowplow CP 40065 4

IC Coach 2920 5

RPCX 1827 coach 5

GATX 509 Tank Car 5

QOCX 127 Boxcar 5

THE B&B DEPT..

The Monticello Depot 6

THE CAR SHOPS

Quaker Oats Boxcar 7

Tank Car GATX 509 7

Snow Plow QC 40065 7

Coach RI 2541 7

The Space Suit 7

LESS THAN CARLOAD

Property Maintenance 8

The Mystery Train 8

NARCOA Tour 9

New Website On Line 9

THE CREW CALLER

Bill Crisp: Engineer 10

Arrivals & Departures 12

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**THE
OBSERVATION
PLATFORM**

**Getting Back on Track
George Roadcap**



June 2021

It is time to get the museum trains back on track. I won't dwell on the negative impact the Covid-19 pandemic had on the museum, I'll let the treasurer do that. Instead, I would like to highlight some of the amazing things that did happen despite the pandemic and what is ahead for this season. The biggest thank you goes to all the volunteers who kept the museum running during the pandemic by maintaining the buildings, keeping grounds in order, doing track repairs, repairing equipment, paying bills, and a thousand other jobs. On the revenue side, another big thank you goes to the crews who moved hundreds of storage cars in and out as the downturn in the economy caused ADM to send cars our way. Where would we be without all volunteers who have been involved with all of the projects you read about in the Yella Board, such as the turntable, the Rock Island coach, 401, the snow plow, 784, and the tank cars? Finally, I would like to specifically thank Doug Capuder and Phil Lopez for leading the charge to get the new website online in early May.

We are now well into the 2021 season and passengers are back in the seats. The first weekend in May was a little nerve racking because we didn't quite know what to expect. Fortunately, everything went smoothly thanks to an excellent job by the train crew and by John Downing in the ticket office. Our attendance for Mother's Day this year was on par with 2019 but we saw a significant jump in attendance for Father's Day despite the rain. With the increasing trend to more online buying during the pandemic and the introduction of our new mobile-friendly website, we see a shift from walk-up sales to online sales. Hopefully, this shift will translate to a continued increase in ridership. Another big factor has been the change in Covid-related restrictions, which we hope will continue to ease. I am particularly excited about two new initiatives using the diners; a dinner train organized by Bruce Backus and an early morning donut and coffee train organized by Dylan Cantrell.

A special message to past ICHS members: The Illinois Central comes alive on the Polar Express in what is one of my favorite moments on any railroad. As a PEX conductor on IC 892, I slip out to the vestibule and watch as the southbound train glides past Stair Tower and the signal changes from green to red, the light reflecting off the long line chocolate and orange cars. With the sounds of laughter and singing coming from the cars, I can't help but feel transported back in time to when these cars ruled the Main Line of Mid-America. If you want to get the experience of working on a fully loaded IC train in revenue service, please consider volunteering on the Polar Express. You can contact me at george.roadcap@mrym.org

	Mother's Day		Father's Day		Mother's Day		Father's Day		
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2021</u>	
Total Riders	*	456	621	694	Online Sales	253	227	189	332
Paying Riders	356	323	456	513	Passes	*	133	165	181
Walk -Up Sales	103	99	267	188	*Not recorded				



THE BACK SHOP

By Kent McClure

Chief Mechanical Officer

As you by now know, we began operating this spring with a busy weekend of throttle time utilizing the ex-Chicago & Illinois Midland RS1325 as a fundraiser for the expenses of acquiring and painting it. We opened the season on May 1st using F7A #1189, and added cars to the usual consist to make up for the absence of the Rock Island coach, and to allow for social distancing. Carol Jones, Syl Keller, George Roadcap, Daniel Frye and Dylan Cantrell marked off seating with signage and tape barriers to provide for separation in the coaches and

diner. As of this writing, the distancing requirement has been dropped, allowing for full capacity, but masking is still required of the crew by FRA rules, and of the passengers, by TSA rules. As of this writing however, FRA has eased it's rules regarding crews and other volunteers, allowing for masks to be removed on open cars, and outdoors, for example, on a station platform.

Southern Steam Locomotive #401 - was removed from service in 2020 to begin the 1472 service day inspection that is due May of 2021. Progress has been very slow due to the concurrent project of Rock Island coach 2541 being the priority. That said, Daniel Frye, Mark Jensen, George Roadcap, Paul Jones, Bill Lygros, Riley Kloepfer, Mike Long, Eric Larson and others have been plugging away at it as time allows. The latest work was removing the rear furnace bearers to allow cleaning and UT surveying the outer wrapper sheet behind the bearers, and repainting the firebox outer wrapper, throat and backhead. This has now been completed with the additional help of Jeff Tillman and Mark Jensen, by completing the cleanup/removal of the old coatings, and repainting and reinstalling the furnace bearers. The boiler interior has been painted, with the next step involves installing new tubes, and cleaning/touching up paint on the boiler barrel where it was removed to facilitate UT measurements. Ordering of new refractory for the firebox and new boiler insulation is also upcoming. Once the new tubes are installed, a hydrostatic test will be performed, then full re-assembly can commence.

IT SW1200 784 – This locomotive was one of the two acquired by MRM this past year for preservation. Paul Nelson has spent much of the spring/early summer working with this locomotive, getting the hood sections ready to lift off the frame to allow fully cleaning/painting the engine/main generator compartments, as well as blasting/bodywork/priming of the hoods to proceed as soon as we have indoor space for the locomotive. Philip Lopez and Mark Duve both were able to get Progress Rail to provide original electrical blueprints for this locomotive, which will be helpful in putting the electrical side of it back together properly.

IC Diner #4110 - Bruce Backus has continued working on refrigeration units for this car, with all of them now operational, but still need some detail work such as new door gaskets for all of the refrigerators and freezers. The new curtains are still in process, and the latest report from the vendor was they were weaving a sample of the fabric for our curtains for approval prior to running the entire amount.

Rock Island Coach #2541 - Rebuild work on this workhorse coach is ongoing. The faux wood-graining of the steel interior walls is complete, most of the windows are reinstalled, and the new ceiling is up. Getting the new ceiling up required Al Strange, Paul Jones, Syl Keller and Bruce put together a fixture built up out of an old computer rack mounted on a Vermette manual lift. The lifting fixture they built has an arched top on which to rest the rolled aluminum ceiling panels, and they were then raised into place with the Vermette lift. The next interior task is finishing up the remaining window installations, and masking the entire interior to allow priming and painting the ceiling. Bruce, Syl Keller, Paul Jones and George Roadcap sandblasted all the seat frames in June, and they will be repainted re-painted prior to reinstallation.

Snowplow CP 40065 – This car is nearly complete, with the remaining items being roofwalks and handrails, painting and lettering the steel portions of the plow, and smaller, detail stenciling. This car will likely be displayed in the Nelson car barn when complete.

IC #2920 - The air conditioning drive motor on this car stopped working early in the season, requiring it's removal and rebuilding. It turned out to just be a large amount of road dirt accumulated over the years inside the motor. After disassembly, cleaning and testing, all that was needed was replacing the armature bearings and baking the armature and field windings to make sure there was no moisture in them. It was in otherwise good condition for its age. It now runs considerably quieter, and the motor work was only \$700.00.

RPCX 1827 - This coach gave us some air conditioning fits early in the season as well with the condenser fan coming loose on the motor shaft, and sliding back until the blades were hitting the guard. This just required some quality time under the car fussing with the fan set screws and some locktite to make sure they didn't work loose again. Bruce has also been working on the car's water system, to have the car's restrooms available for special trains/charters this season.

GATX #509 - This is another tank car that has been here many years, and was due for new paint. The last paint job applied to this car was by Art Purchase, in 1996. 25 years was pretty good for a paint job that sits outdoors! It is a small car, only 4,000 gallons capacity, and a light weight of 18 tons. This was another job taken on by Bill Lygiros, Phil Lopez, Mike Long, and Eric Larson. Since the car was blasted prior to the 1996 paint job, the new paint job only required sanding the car, removal of rust, and acid wash the cleaned rusty areas with Ospho, a phosphoric acid solution that stops the rust, and etches the surface to better hold paint. They then painted the lettering color on the car, and after drying, applied the lettering masks, and painted the car black. Some minor touch up followed, as is usually the case with most paint jobs. It came out pretty good, and we're getting another group of volunteers who will be painting cars!

QOCX #127 - This car arrived at MRM in 1989, donated by the Quaker Oats Company. It was last used as our "Spook Car" in which we had our Halloween walk-through displays. The interior walls and passageways were removed by Lincoln Butzow, along with additional help provided by Jon SeEVERS, Syl Keller and Paul Jones. A fair bit of material was harvested for re-use. After the car was emptied, Bill Lygiros, Doug Capuder, Phil Lopez, Mike Long and Eric Larson attacked the car, working on the doors, painting the interior of the car white, and adding ceiling light fixtures. A special thanks to Eric for picking up and delivery of paint from our Waukesha, WI supplier. They then installed shelving, and began prepping the car for new exterior paint. In the course of prepping and sanding, they uncovered the car's heritage, that being the Frisco, or St. Louis San Francisco Railway. They were, unfortunately, unable to uncover the original number at that time. Donna McClure searched the car for a spot with the blue paint that was on the car which had been protected from the elements, then matched that to currently available paint. Bill's crew then applied a phosphoric acid wash to the car, and after it had dried, primed the car with a primer/sealer. They then applied the lettering color, followed by the lettering masks after the black had dried. Then the blue paint went on. And boy, is it ever BLUE! After that, came the removal of the lettering masking, and minor touch up work finished off the repaint. The plan for this car at this time is to act as additional storage space to allow for sorting and cataloging the contents of other cars and buildings, in an effort to get our collection of smaller items organized and inventoried.

In further plans for this season, we hope to get our IC three bay hopper repainted as well, but other projects may force that to next season. A big thank you to all those who have been helping, both physically and financially, especially at this time.
 Kent McClure
 CMO



Rock Island commuter coach #2541 interior, showing faux wood grained steel interior finish, and new ceiling installed. Bruce Backus is working on window installation. The interior of the car will be masked off soon to allow priming and finish coating of the ceiling .



One of the basic pieces of equipment that is always in short supply is: **RAGS!!** The museum as always in needs of rags for clean up purposes, so please consider donating them to the museum. Cotton is preferred but we'll take anything!



THE B & B DEPT. DONNA McCLURE

For the first time in memory, there is a new roof on the Wabash Depot in Monticello. When the Monticello Depot Association moved the Wabash depot to its current site on the Museum's right of way in May 1987, they knew the depot roof was old. They weren't sure old, but snippets of valuation maps they had seen seemed to indicate that the roof was already in place in the 1920's. The cement shingle roof was a durable material, resistant to weathering. But the roof had some damage, and the depot Association repaired broken shingles on the edges.

In the coming years Donna McClure and Doug Butzow undertook more significant repair to the south bay, installing new copper valleys, and re-installing the old shingles over new waterproof underlayment, and doing the same repair to the west edge. In recent years, its condition has gotten progressively worse – the cement shingles becoming so thin that they broke for no reason. Last fall, a donation was secured that would pay for a new roof. Beginning on a blistering hot day – May 25, workers from Advanced Commercial Roofing of Champaign began tearing off the old roof. Today, the new roof is almost finished – needing only the ridge and the gutters and downspouts.



The type of cement shingles used for the old roof – at least 100 years old – are no longer manufactured. Many people thought the roof was slate, and expected us to use slate for the new roof. But it was not slate. And the framing of the roof would not support the weight of slate even if we had the money to pay for it.

This time the roof is metal shingles. The metal shingles chosen have a similar appearance to the moss & dirt covered cement shingles, so it is likely that many folks won't notice. Metal shingles have a long-life span 50-years expected service life so we won't have to worry about a new roof until the next generation takes over.





**THE
CAR
SHOP**



Above Left: The Quaker Oats Boxcar QOCX 127 sports its new coat of blue paint. **Above Right:** The GATX 509 has been restored with new paint and lettering and ready for freight train service during Railroad Days.

Center Left: Restoration has now been completed and snow plow QC 40065 is receiving the final paint touch up before it is sent to be on display.

Center Right: The base ceiling panels have been installed in the RI 2541 coach.

Lower Left: Donning a “space suit,” Chief Mechanical Officer Kent McClure is sand blasting the seat frames of the Rock Island Coach 2541.



**(L C L*)
LESS THAN CARLOAD**

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

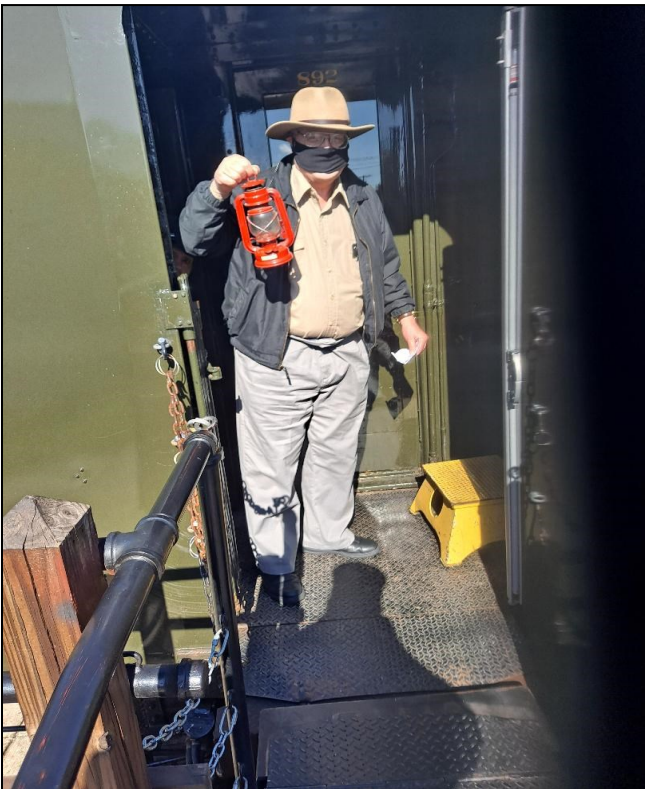
By Jack Huddleston

In service to the museum, I have been conducting improvements to the property in the White Heath area. When I attempted to mow in the area, I encountered a lot of tree stumps and railroad ties sticking up above the ground resulting in a broke deck belt and bent blades and mower decks. Several days later (amounting to 60 hours) 75 railroad ties were removed where an old siding track used to be. When I worked for the ICG Maintenance of Way department in 1976, the crew and I had installed some of these ties! After removing the ties, several loads of rock/dirt were hauled in to fill in the now vacant tie spaces.



I am now in the process of cleaning up the concrete pad where an old elevator use to stand by cutting down the trees and brush in the area. The pad will be used to store a variety of maintenance of way materials found buried under brush. This maintenance of may material will be evaluated for use or scrap.

Mowing and using a weed eater is a constant project in part trimming up the hedge row on the north side of the property, at the museum site and downtown. This also includes trimming low hanging trees and bushes around the property. In addition to the continual maintenance of the property, volunteering for train service is always a pleasure!



The Mystery Bus Tours have returned as the guest meet Miss Chievous and the Sheriff searching for that ornery bad-guy Klondike Kid. Julie Hardy is also owner of the Hardy Reindeer Ranch for the tours.



Matt Weaver photo

Above: The museum was host to the North American Rail Car Operators Association (NARCOA) for an inspection trip of the line.



Eric Schaffer

Above: Opening day is off to a great start as the parking lot at Nelson's Crossing is full as is the train. After a year of being shut down, the museum is back in full force to provide train rides.

HELP WANTED

This is a common sign sighted among local business across the country. In our case the sign reads **"VOLUNTEERS WANTED."** The museum is back in full operation after being closed for a year, and there is a need for additional help to maintain the complexities of the complex. Although the staff has been consistently busy last year with a variety of projects, additional duties has posed a limitation on man power. Would you consider coming out and joining us for where:

*"I have Been Working
On The Railroad Becomes
a Reality."*



NEW WEBSITE NOW IN SERVICE

www.mrym.org

Most Impressive can be the best way to describe the new museum website which went on line this Spring. The website has been totally reconstructed and not only presents the information in a professional manner; it is user-friendly. Come visit at www.mrym.org and explore the many options that places this site as "top of the line."

The **INTRODUCTION** page has impressive operating scenes of both steam and diesel trains rolling across the screen. The departments are clearly identified which takes the visitor to an array of subjects.

The **CALENDAR** page clearly indicates the dates of events and schedules which are combined with the ability to purchase tickets on line. For easy reference the events are also listed under its own page and again, linked to ticket purchase on line.

The **MONTICELLO** page is dedicated to downtown Monticello, with an aerial view map identifying area landmarks and lists the shops and restaurants, with a map identifying listed locations, a visitor can incorporate in their train ride to downtown.

The **NEWS** page offers a short story on the progress of various projects various complete with photos. This is in addition to the collection of the museum's publication **THE YELLOW BOARD** dating from 2008 to current issue.

The **ROSTER** offers a detailed list of the various pieces of rolling stock, locomotives and buildings of the museum. The history along with a photo is featured with each unit.

The **SUPPORT** page offers a link to membership with the invitation to come join us. As well the Wish List offers a list of useful items used.



**THE
CREW
CALLER**

**Bill Crisp:
Engineer
Extraordinaire!**

Being a native of Taylorville, I grew up near the NS and C&IM main lines. I had a paper route which would end near the railroad's depot, offering me the opportunity to watch the railroad's activity of the day. This would on occasion provide the coveted cab ride or the opportunity to help the C&IM crew by handling a switch during switching movements. *TRAINS* magazine would become my source of education for railroad knowledge.

In 1991, with my newly minted driver license in hand, I would venture towards the museum at Monticello, which I had visited earlier with my grandparents. That fall I attended Railroad Days and later in the company of Kent McClure and Paul Yost rode on the Bates & Rodger steam crane to move a sand tower to storage. That year I became part of the organization by working the Spook Car of the Ghost Train and later the Santa Train. With this, I now have found memories of the day's past, sleeping in the L&N caboose or dining in Ted Lemen's C&A Diner.

Working with the "old heads" was rewarding as in the case of working with David Mann, the "One Man" section gang. The museum was gifted a half-mile of former IT track near the north side of Springfield, and of course I volunteered to help Dave "survey" what needed to be done to move it. However, (and in life there is always a "However") I was not aware that his intent was to "break" it loose for later removal. Although I was unprepared, I couldn't leave him by himself, and with a pair of borrowed, well-worn gloves, I helped, take off bolts, pull spikes and roll the rail, only stopping a short time to go get a sandwich at a local gas station. Although Dave was use to this intense, hard labor, I was not, and really felt it that night and the next day.

While in high school, I had the opportunity to be an exchange student to Australia, where my sponsor's neighbor was a "driver" (engineer) for the South Whales Railroad. After a few cab rides, I now knew that I either wanted to be a drummer in a rock band or be an engineer. In 1994 the opportunity presented itself with an NS hiring session, leading to being a conductor on the West End: Decatur to Moberly, Missouri, and eventually, *the* engineer.

With this new found position in life, the opportunity to participate in museum activities was limited to a degree, but yet with the benefit of being able to help at the museum during the weekdays. In 1994, the first Santa Train on the NS was operated using the Wabash F-7A 1189, and I helped with the operation of the NKP Mikado steam locomotive 587. I would also serve on the museum Board of Director's and one term as Vice President. But the biggest challenge was yet to come: Railroad Days.



The Railroad days was the largest event next to the Polar Express, operating train rides over the two-day weekend. Taking it in a new direction, I wanted to make this more a family style event. With this, kid activities were added, such as the Hodge Cars for the mini-rail ride and the model train displays. The use of a train schedule was inaugurated, simultaneously operating three trains at one time. The Stair Tower added the perspective of a real railroad operation. The addition of food vendors was a welcomed relief for both train crews and patrons. The display of foreign road equipment's such as the UP Heritage units MP, MKT, NS OLS Locomotive and the NS Traveling Display car were a welcomed addition. The success Railroad Days has as well contributed to the growth of the museum and membership.



SW1200 was retired from the NS roster and yet a generation that never witnessed the history of the IT has worked to acquire, move and now restore this unit. In 1987 I had my first cab ride on the C&IM no. 30, but the second one was on no. 31. Now 34 years later, I am the engineer on the first Throttle Time revenue run of no. 31, with the "guest engineer" sharing the experience as I did on that locomotive.

My son Xander also shares my passion of railroad interest and can also be found on the grounds helping the same as I did 30 years ago, ranging from power washing the roof of a locomotive to participating in Railroad Days. The museum is family oriented: where members are like a family or a family visits the museum like a member. Volunteer: Start a family tradition by being part of our family and bring your family!

The Hobo, The Ticket, and a Police Car

During the operation of the Polar Express, Bill is the story's Hobo, which has now taken on a life of its own. This personality has started a canned food drive, and contributed to the enjoyment of countless number of families with his antics as the Polar Express Hobo. It was during a board meeting that he was informed that a Polar Express patron had called to request if a souvenir ticket could be acquired because her son had lost his after riding. Since this family lived in his hometown, he thought he could make this delivery extra special. Donning his Hobo outfit, his friend, whom was a city police officer, arrived at the patron's residence, and knocking on the door, advised the mother that he had picked up this hobo that had a ticket for her son. With this, the hobo left the back seat of the squad car to hand deliver the missing ticket, and had to now leave town or be arrested for vagrancy. Bill's recognition as the hobo has on occasion encountered a youngster the quickly identifies him as *the* hobo! Champaign television station WCIA has also documented this story which has become a social media success.

I consider myself very fortunate that I am in a "middle" position that I am with the elder members that are now seeing their visions become a reality from 30 years ago, and yet also with the younger generation that is picking up the mantle of responsibly to continue their vision into the next 30 years. In 1981, the IT

MONTICELLO
RAILWAY MUSEUM
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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES



STEAM SCHEDULE

401 in Steam: Ride behind our restored 1907-vintage steam locomotive!

Postponed until teardown and inspection is complete.

Donut Train Saturday — July 10: Join us for a unique breakfast experience in partnership with Industrial Donut on board one of our restored Illinois Central dining cars. You'll enjoy a selection of delicious donuts from Industrial Donut at your table, along with your choice of breakfast items such as fresh fruits and yogurt.

Railroad Days – Saturday, September 18 and Sunday, 19: Come enjoy UNLIMITED rides on our vintage passenger and freight trains and motor cars running on our former Illinois Central and Illinois Terminal track-age, enjoy kids' games and more!

Throttle Time Every weekend until the end of September

The Polar Express™ — **TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Read along with the story as the train makes its round-trip journey to the North Pole.

Lunch with Santa on the Train — **TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Enjoy a visit with Santa Claus while eating a kid-friendly sack lunch. This event is hosted by the Monticello Chamber of Commerce.