



THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 53 Number 2

MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM
Where "I've Been Working On the
Railroad" Becomes a Reality.
November - December 2020



"Our most recent acquisition has arrived the property"! The former Chicago & Illinois Midland no. 31 is one of only two RS1325's ever built by EMD.

Bill Crisp photo

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**THE
OBSERVATION
PLATFORM**



December 2020

The Past Meets the Future

Railroad names such as Norfolk Southern, Canadian National, Union Pacific or Amtrak are common among the railfan community today, but to the younger generation they are not aware of the history behind those names, which to an older generation were just as common. On October 16, 1964 the Nickel Plate and Wabash became part of the Norfolk & Western. Then on May 7, 1981, the Illinois Terminal was absorbed by the N&W, which in turn merged with Southern Railway in 1982, becoming the Norfolk Southern we know today. Just as the Illinois Central Gulf came about on August 10, 1972 with the merger of the Illinois Central and the Gulf Mobile and Ohio, which in turn became part of the Canadian National on July 1, 1999. The legacy of these railroads are still alive with former employees and railfans from different generations still among us to share these histories.

It is interesting when you look at this older generation whom have this devoted interest. There are those that have had the opportunity to ride pre-Amtrak passenger trains. Some have had the opportunity to ride freight trains as well, cabooses included! (What are those?) This all in addition to chasing and photographing them. My generation has witnessed the rise of the diesel age and the eventual demise of these fallen flags. But, what about a person younger than 45, whom would not had the aforementioned opportunities? With the model manufactures producing a variety of products with great frequency, as well as publications and history books to preserve this rich history, it introduces the younger generation to the railroad past. There is also social media, which introduces them to both the employees and avid railfans that are willing to share their stories and photos. Of course there are railroad historical societies and the Monticello Railway Museum.

The museum is a living history, with the actual equipment that carried these lost railroad names: reality in real time. Along with the historical displays are the personal histories from those who were there. The museum was started and built by those that wanted to preserve and present these legacies of railroads past. However, we are now aging, and although life is good, we are not forever. Like an old locomotive, parts need to be replaced every now and then, and it is just as true for us. For the museum to exist into the future, the younger generation has come forward to continue the legacy of these great railroads. This younger generation will also perpetuate the museum's legacy by the continual restoration and operations along with a youthful enthusiasm, which at one time we held. It is encouraging to observe this younger generation receive this mantle of responsibility and to share this with their brethren to join in. As an elder member, I feel a comfort to know that this younger generation will carry forward the future existence of this museum.

Dale Jenkins, Editor-Senior Conductor



**THE
BACK
SHOP**
By Kent McClure
Chief Mechanical Officer

Needless to say, this has been an unprecedented year. As some nameless wag chalked on the locomotive assignment board in the engine house “2020-The year that wasn’t”.

We did not operate, other than car storage moves, and some occasional charters and occasional throttle time sessions. Locomotives were maintained as needed. Paul Nelson took time to repair the leaking oil cooler in Green Bay and Western #308, and to also rebuild its radiator shutter mechanisms and operating cylinders.



ALCO FPA4 #6789 was also used in several car storage moves, and has otherwise been stored. Al Strange has also done some sheet metal repair work on this unit as well, fabricating a new fresh air intake for the cab heating system to replace the one that was badly bent. Both this unit and Wabash #1189 spent most of the summer/fall set up as a pair as a number of the storage moves required handling large blocks of cars.

Milwaukee Road NW2 #1649 was used for a few storage moves without mechanical issues.

Wabash F7A #1189 1189 was used for several car storage moves. Al Strange replaced a section of the rear engine room wall where it was rusting out.

IC GP11 #8733 The GP11 has been the primary storage move and charter/throttle time locomotive this past year. It has been trouble free for this year.



C&M RS1325 #31 This is one of the two new additions to the collection which is mentioned elsewhere in this issue. Paul has dug right in getting a radio installed. Bill Lygiros and Riley Kloepfer worked on general clean up of the locomotive, and removed the toilet to assist in cleaning and stopping corrosion that was present under and around said toilet. Paul is now removing the unique

standby heating system it came to us with, so when funds are available we can install a fully electric standby heating system that is compatible with our system, and useable inside a building. (The system it was equipped with burned fuel for the heat source, hence it needed to be outside to safely use that system.) This locomotive is in very good condition, and was clearly well cared for by the C&IM, and then I&M employees charged with its care. Bill Crisp has provided an old hood door still in original C&IM green for color

matching purposes, and is searching for class lights to re-apply to back-date the locomotive to its C&IM days. Bruce Backus is working on getting the lettering drawings from EMD, and Dale Jenkins has a person willing to at least loan us an original C&IM monogram for use as a pattern

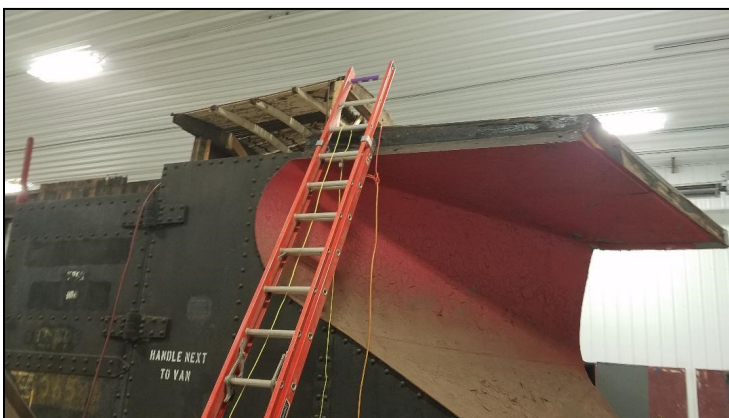


Southern Steam Locomotive #401 was removed from service this year to begin the 1472 service day inspection that is due May of 2021. Progress has been very slow due to the concurrent project of Rock Island coach 2541 being the priority. That said, Daniel Frye, Mark Jensen, Isaiah Bradford, George Roadcap, Bill Lygiros, Riley Kloepfer, Doug Capuder and others have been plugging away at it as time allows. They have removed all the jacket and lagging removed, cab plumbing removed, dynamo and sand dome removed, and smokebox cleaned out, to allow for grid-



ding the boiler in preparation for an ultrasonic thickness survey of the boiler and firebox. We still need to get the tubes out, but that work will begin soon.

IC Diner #4110 - Bruce Backus was working on refrigeration units for this car until Covid-19 presented us with the opportunity to rebuild the interior of our mainstay coach, Rock Island coach 2541. Speaking of Covid-19, the virus also affected our ongoing project in getting the new curtains made for this car. Last report from the vendor was they were just starting on our project, so we have hopes we will see them before this coming summer.



Snowplow CP 40065

Heavy progress has been made on this car. The exterior steel portions were sand blasted, and what a project that turned out to be. Paint was VERY thick, and took much effort to get it off. The interior is being reassembled, with painting starting on the inside wood work, as well as the outside. This has been a big project, but will be a very welcome display addition either in the Nelson display barn, or under the train shed.

Rock Island Coach #2541 - I won't go into much detail here as this is covered by Bruce in his article. But I did want to thank Jeff Tillman for all his hard work on this car, and Bill Lygiros and Riley Kloefer for their efforts on this car, particularly in running HEP cabling under the car. Also, a big thanks to Bruce for all he has done. A very large part of the work on this car has been done nearly single handedly by Bruce, and we all owe him a big thank you!

While it has been certainly a sad state to miss an entire season of revenue, particularly Polar Express, we have also been able to take advantage of the situation to rebuild the interior of the Rock Island coach, and to start the steam locomotive inspection earlier than originally planned. Also this year, we have seen additions to the collection, all with strong ties to central Illinois. They did not come free however. All of them required expenses for prep and shipping, loading/unloading, and outright purchase of the items in two cases, but the Board felt those pieces were important enough to spend the money even in a season of no operation and little income. So, if you can, please dig deep and donate to help offset the costs of acquisition of these pieces, all of which combined were approximately \$150,000.00 that we had not anticipated spending as of December of 2019. You can mail a check to the Museum's address, or go to our website here to donate directly:

<http://www.mrym.org/donation.html>

In regard to donations, this year also saw the donation of several new/used machines for use in our shops. Some new boiler tools were purchased to ease the upcoming boiler work on Southern #401, as well as the annual work on this locomotive, one of them being a self-feeding tube brush/vacuum, which all the guys who have done the annual tube cleaning can attest will be a welcome addition. Another item acquired is a CNC plasma table. After much research, we ended up with a machine made by Arclight, of Bend, OR. It only has a table size of 4' x 4', but a larger machine would consume too much valuable floor space. This machine makes it possible to cut out custom shapes in steel up to 3/4" thick, in house on short notice. We also purchased a used, but very good condition Bridgeport vertical milling machine, also with a CNC control. CNC stands for Computer Numerical Control. Both the plasma table and the mill have been utilized for a number of projects, ranging from leaf guards for drains to new center pin covers for the Rock Island coach. The most helpful thing so far was rebuilding 20 some-odd walk-over seat ends that had been torched loose from another car at some point, obliterating the pressed-in countersinks for the mounting screws. Both the CNC mill and plasma table were utilized, the mill to machine the seat ends to clean up the torch cuts, and the plasma machine to burn out new inserts that were then formed with the arbor press and a die to create a new countersink. This new "washer" was then welded into the milled holes in the seat end, six of them in each. This kind of repetitive work is just what these kinds of machines are designed to do.

A big thank you to all those who have been willing to continue working, widely separated, frequently by buildings, without incident this past year. While things have certainly slowed down, they have not stopped.

Kent McClure
CMO



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 CAR SHOP

By Bruce Backus

The Rebuild of RI 2541

Rock Island coach #2514 was acquired by the museum in 1972, right out of service and has been in service at the museum every year since. Outside of some painting, spot repairs, and seats recovered, the interior has

not seen a major rebuild since the museum received the car. When it started to become clear that in 2020 a season would be short if at all, the chance to give 2541 the interior rebuild it certainly needed would be possible. As the one car with the highest number of seats, 2541 is hard to give up. Looking at Fireworks trains and Polar, the income generated by this one car is not something the bookkeepers in all of us would want to give up.

Still, a walk through the car would show you;

Holes in the ceiling and just how many coats of peeling paint are up there?

Rust holes in the interior panels under the windows.

Several floor patches gamely trying to stay down.

A steam heating system that was brought back from the dead, by replacing 20' of it with reused material that we were lucky to have.

From this a plan was formed:

Replace the ceiling.

Replace all insulation in the car.

Replace the interior steel under the windows.

Replace the floor.

Remove the steam heat and replace with electric.

Replace window gasketing and broken or delaminated windows.

Repair car structure where needed.

Repair seats where needed.

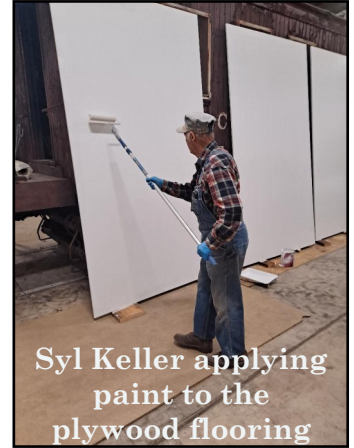
The 2541 entered the car shop on the 15th of July. First step was removal of the seats. This involved finding and removing the six bolts that held the seat frame to the wall. Lots of impact screwdriver work and several drill bits later, the seats were for the most part free from the wall. Then the (at least six) bolts that held the other end of the seat frame to the floor had to come out. By the 26th of July the seats were out. Next up were the windows, many gaskets were broken and quite a few windows themselves were either cracked or delaminating. Upper steel panels above the windows were then removed, these will be stripped of paint and reused. Insulation was then removed. It will not be reused. All windows were out of the car by the 9th of August.

By September the steel panels below the windows were removed and the insulation behind them was removed. On September 4th, the floor started to come out. On the 19th of September the floor was out as well as the bottom pan and a major cleanup began. All in all the now exposed frame of the car was in very good shape. The center sill has a casting date of 1928, so not quite a hundred years old, but in many ways it was better than some of the IC cars we have worked on that were built much later. Jeff Tillman paid several visits, and fixed or replaced what needed to be addressed on the frame. He also added conduit runs to accommodate the electric heat conversion, and changed the multiple small conduits for the HEP system to a single larger one to handle the additional trainline wires that were added. Many gallons of Stop Rust paint was applied through this time period with the entire frame painted. Jeff also started welding in the



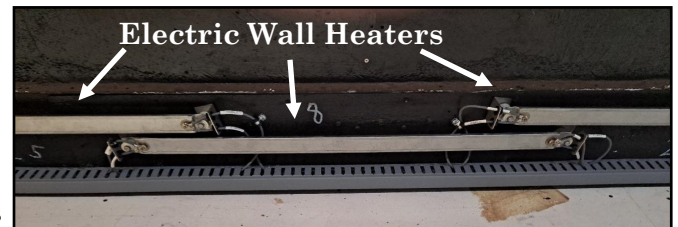


new bottom pans which was the first step in replacing the floor. On top of the bottom pans and the frame of the car, seven boards of various widths run the length of the car. The widest board is about 8' wide and is where the seats mount. These boards started to be installed by the end of October. The new floor of the car will consist of two layers of marine plywood (3/4" Okoume A/B). All Budd cars had a plywood floor, so this is nothing new. The sheets were painted before installation with the wood shop crew of Syl Keller and Paul Jones providing much of the labor. By the 12th of November the first plywood layer was down. By the end of November, the new floor was complete. About this time Kevin Steckel paid a visit and got the electric heaters mounted in the car. Most of these were working by the first of December. Work this December has been largely stripping paint from the end walls of the car. During the disassembly it was found that the interior was originally painted in a fake wood grain, like many of the first steel cars were. Plans are to restore the interior to this scheme. 2021 will see a concrete looking linoleum product applied to the floor. Once this is down, heater covers are on hand to install as well as the new steel panels below the



Syl Keller applying paint to the plywood flooring

windows. Panels above the windows need to be sandblasted yet, then the back side painted before they can go up. Efforts are under way to find a way to install the new ceiling. Sheets of hardboard are no longer made in the sizes used in this car's original construction. It also appears a form was likely used to pre-form the ceiling panels. The curve needed is beyond the material's normal bend radius as manufactured in flat sheets. Efforts are also under way to find the windows gaskets, which are a U-shaped channel made of pressed felt. We are also awaiting a quote from Adlake for new shades for the car.



At this point a lot of the "easy" stuff is done. Stuff that just requires labor and material is readily available, so progress has been swift. Now comes the time where material has to be hunted, quotes answered, and lead times start to apply. It is hoped that all things come together and the car can go back in service late this year. Thanks to all the members that stopped by to lend a hand. Those that I mentioned and those that I didn't.



Left: New lights and heat controls are being installed in the light switch box.

Right: Wiring for the electric wall heaters connect in the former battery box under the car.

(LCL*)

LESS THAN CARLOAD



Monticello Railway Museum Acquires Two Historic Locomotives

This fall the Monticello Railway Museum (MRM) acquired two new diesel-electric locomotives: Chicago & Illinois Midland Railroad RS1325 #31 and Illinois Terminal Railroad SW1200 #784. Both of these historically significant engines and their respective railroads have strong ties to Central Illinois. Their preservation is key to furthering the MRM's mission of interpreting the region's rich railroad history.

Chicago & Illinois Midland #31 is one of only two RS1325's ever built by Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD). A unique design of a light road switcher, the RS1325 combined design elements of both EMD's GP-series road locomotives and their SW-series switching locomotives. The #31 worked for the Chicago & Illinois Midland Railroad from 1960 until 1996, when the C&IM was acquired by Genesee & Wyoming Inc. and became the Illinois Midland Railroad. The unit was retired after 60 years of freight service in Central Illinois before being purchased by MRM and delivered to the museum on November 17th. The engine is operational and will soon be added to the rotation of operating locomotives used on MRM's historic passenger train rides. As time and funding allows, it will eventually be restored to the C&IM's classic green paint scheme.



RRPictureArchives.NET Image Contributed by Jack Smith.

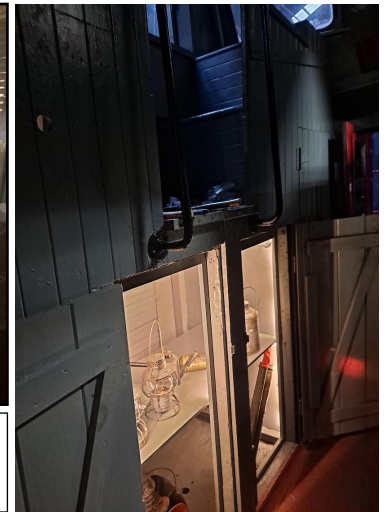


Illinois Terminal #784 is one of twelve SW1200 switch locomotives delivered to the Illinois Terminal Railroad. Built in December 1955, #784 operated throughout Central Illinois, including on the same trackage currently used by MRM's passenger trains. The Illinois Terminal renumbered #784 as #1210 later in its service life, before later serving with both the Norfolk & Western and Norfolk Southern Railways. It was retired in 1994 and sold to the Sequatchie Valley Railroad, where it worked in short line service before being acquired by Knoxville Locomotive Works. Acquired in a parts trade with Knoxville Locomotive Works, it is only the second Illinois Terminal diesel locomotive to be preserved.

A team of MRM volunteers including Bill Lygiros, Doug Capuder, Riley Kloepfer, Phil Lopez, and Eric Larson traveled to Alabama in mid-November to prepare the engine for shipment by rail to Monticello. Work on the locomotive included replacing brake valves, shoes, and hoses, installing coupler stop blocks, trueing a wheelset, re-stenciling the engine, and other minor tasks. At press time, the locomotive in Decatur, Illinois. The engine will undergo a mechanical and cosmetic restoration as funding permits before joining MRM's operating fleet. Significant restoration work on both of these historic locomotives will continue in 2021. Donations to assist with these restorations can be made via GoFundMe at [gf.me/u/y8pys9](https://www.gofundme.com/u/y8pys9) or mailed to: Monticello Railway Museum, P.O. Box #401, Monticello, IL. 61856.



Restoration of the wooden snow plow continues with the replacement of the window frames, replacement of decayed wood panels and reconstruction of the plow cab. Existing wood is having the existing paint removed and primed for a new coat of paint. This is a major restoration project being performed by a small group of dedicated members who “make it happen”.



Wabash 2824 is undergoing interior restoration for static display with a display cabinet beneath the cupola seats and electric lights.



Above: A baggage wagon has been restored for display purposes. Right: A computerized milling machine in shop.



Above Left and Lower Left: Side panels being applied. Above: Bearings for the Turntable base. Right: Members are working on the shutters of RS-3 Alco.

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!

Unknown

Spring Throttle Time - April:

School Days - May:

Opening Weekend - May: Saturday -

Mothers Day - May: Saturday - Sunday -

Fathers Day - June: Saturday - Sunday -

Fireworks Train - July: 3

Railroad Days - September: Saturday - Sunday -

Fall Throttle Time - October: Saturday - Sunday -

The Polar Express™ - To Be announced—Maybe

Unknown