

QSME NEWSLETTER

Quincy Society of Model Engineers Volume 2010 Issue 3 May-June

Election Held

Modeling Classes

Can It Be Saved?

Full Scale Railroading

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The election has been held and we have old/new officers. By old and new I mean it's the same three officers but two are in different jobs. Jim Keller is in his second year as president, but we have a new secretary and treasurer. Barbara Stoll is now treasurer. Larry Stoll and Jeff Heine tied for secretary, and the tie was broken in favor of Larry.

Classes on the Friday after the business meeting resumed with Friday May 7th with a class on making trees taught by Barb Stoll. The club voted at the May 6th business meeting to postpone any further classes until September. We discussed many possible fall classes, but would rather know what you would like to learn about the hobby. We really need your input. We've got three months to plan ahead so let us hear from you. Call or e-mail me or the officers.

There is a new industry at Montmorenci.



as far as the wye and leave it for a connecting train on the C&LE.

Elk County Railway #147 leads a short train past the new Pratt Quality Feed Producers at Montmorenci. The plant will use incoming grains and minerals as well as making bulk and bagged shipment via rail. Good business for the short line. Nice building Gary! Also check the background scenery and buildings. #147 will take the train only

It may seem that we have more information on the big railroads than usual in this issue, but that's just how it occurred. I had a chance to check on the tie work being done by the BNSF from Macomb to Quincy. First Mary found that from 12th street to the Mississippi Bay Bridge approach, the crew installed concrete ties and a new crossing at 5th street..



This is a shot looking west from Fifth Street. David Fredrick says the reason they needed the concrete ties are, all the curves in the track from the bridge approach to the Twelfth Street overpass.

Apparently the weight of the trains puts a great deal of stress on the tie plates and spikes which as you know can eventually lead to problems in the track gauge. When I took this picture, the 5th street crossing had not been replaced, it now has a concrete plate crossing but a bumpy approach. Maybe the city will do something about the approach?

While not all the ties have been replaced east of 12th street they certainly put in a bunch of new ones. I tried to compare this work with the old track gangs back in the early days of our nation's railroads, but it is just not possible. Today everything is mechanized almost to an automatic process.

There were two crews working east and west along the main line. Self powered units are strung out along the track for almost a quarter of a mile. The first are two smaller rail vehicles and I'm sorry but I failed to get a decent picture of them. They remind me of two rail cars put together maybe less than 12 feet long. The first one with a man inside somehow selects which ties is to be replaced and sprays bright international orange paint on both ends and the middle of the tie. The next vehicle is a spike puller. All mechanical and what a change from using hand operated spike pullers. Hand operated meaning using muscles and leverage to pry the spikes from the tie. That was a tough job in the earlier times and track gangs hired strong men to work on the railroad.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe crews had already piled new ties along the track. There were sizeable stacks all the way to Macomb. Now there are stacks of well used old ties along much of the same trackage. They may well be gone by the time you read this. Several years back I had pictures in the newsletter of huge piles of used ties at Camp Point and other places between there and Quincy. They were sold to the highest bidder.



This is the toy I really like to talk about as a real time and work saver. This is basically what we use when we finish laying track and ties.

What do you use to make short work of getting rid of any small pieces of metal along your model tracks? A big magnet is what you use and that's just what the third

vehicle in the line is, an electric magnet that picks up all the spikes that have been pulled from the ties. You can see the spikes piled in the small gondola behind the power unit.

It operates by running the magnet at the end of the crane arm along the outside and inside of each track.



Depending on how many spikes have been pulled the operator can make all four sweeps without stopping to empty the magnet or he has to stop and swing the arm over the four wheel gondola.

Maybe we should build one for the club layout and Ed could use it in the steel mill complex. Okay so it's not a good idea.

I asked the supervisor how far they go in a day and he said it simply depends on

the number of bad ties to be replaced. He told me they can average about one mile to a mile and half per day. The major problem is finishing the main line then going back to work on any sidings. In effect those can double the time on the job. The sidings at Ewbanks are rather long but they were not going back for them the day I took these pictures. Apparently planning to come back and work on them later. It's hard to get questions answered while crews are working and I was just lucky enough the supervisor stopped long enough to answer a few questions.

Here's another view of the electro Magnet unit. The operator has a very good view of the track and can pretty well spot any missed spikes.

Below is the fourth unit in the lineup. This one really saves time and effort. I've got a second view that will help explain better.



New ties are close to the small building that houses the controls for a crossing signal and relays for the signals in background that indicate the position of the switch just left of the building.



This more clearly shows the operating part of the tie replacing unit. Almost in the exact center of the picture is an arm coming out of the right side of the machine just above the tracks. It works so fast I could not get it with a full tie in its jaws. First it grabs the old tie and shakes it to loosen the ballast. Then in about two or three quick movements it pulls out the old tie and discards it and grabs a new one of the right length and shoves it back under the rail. The one thing I did not ascertain

was if the old tie plates are still attached to the rail. I believe the old plates did remain attached to the rail because I did not see any being dumped from the electric magnet. The last unit in this line installs the new spikes. I'm sure there will also be either new ballast or more ballast dumped along the tracks and tamped in place. And to answer your question; no there is no large bottle of white glue to spread along the tracks before the ballast is put in place!

A Short Line we did not know about and another that never made it.

Mary and I have lately been trying to learn about our ancestors and toward that effort we spent a day recently in Northeast Missouri tracking down some of Mary's relatives. The search led us to the Shelby County Historical Society in Shelbina, MO. While Mary looked for her information I spotted an old sign from the Shelbina Depot and a display of railroad information on one wall.



At left is the south wall with the depot sign and various pictures and other memorabilia. Not everything pertains to railroads but I did find several rather interesting items

One was information on the Shelby County Railway which really did exist from around the turn of the century to August 30th 1938 when what remained was auctioned off. Originally it ran from Shelbina to Shelbyville, and then turned northwest to Leonard and Novelty. My 1910 Railroad Atlas shows the railroad only

from Shelbina to Shelbyville. It was originally founded as the Shelby Northwestern Railway Company. The first engine was an 0-4-2T wood burner and is in the museum at St Louis.



Left is the railroads second engine for some reason given number 3 and appears to have been a coal burner. It was built by Davenport Locomotive Works in 1903. This was the builders' photo taken before it was shipped to the railroad. There is also another picture of #3 taken in June of 1937 sitting derelict along a siding in the middle of high grass.

The sale bill for the auction listed 20.96 miles of railroad track on the main line all 60 lb Bessemer Steel plus 3300 feet of 70lb siding along with spikes and angle bars (may have been what we now call tie plates). There was also one loco weighing in at 47 tons. No word if it was in operating condition. They also listed the roadbed for sale along with

the right of way, switches, depots, bridges (one over the Salt River) and assorted buildings and shops. The depots were at Leonard, Cherry Box and Novelty.

Another item I found was what apparently was meant as a cartoon spoofing a proposal somewhere in the 1800s of a proposed Northeast Missouri railroad. It would have been called the North Missouri Railroad. The starting point was Hannibal to Palmyra, then west to Bethel, Leonard, Cherry Box, a town called Nickleton, another named Sue City, then La Plata and Kirksville, for a total of 60 miles. Kathleen Willham of the Historical Society said the man pushing the railroad couldn't get the financial backing despite laying about a quarter of mile of track east of Bethel.

Kathleen also told me that at one point a gentleman by the name of A.D. Long, who was a cattle buyer, shipped 400 car loads of cattle from Shelbina in 1913. There was also a poultry processing company in Shebina that owned its own billboard cars. We have one on the C&LE.

Can A Historical Structure Be Saved?

If some people have their way, an Illinois Historical Railroad Structure will be saved, even if it has to be moved from one town to another. Here's the story courtesy of the Expediter, the newsletter of the NRHS C&IM chapter of Springfield IL. There story came from the Springfield Register Newspaper.

"The Union Pacific Railroad is closing the Ridgely Tower in Springfield, one of the last manually operated rail switching towers in Illinois. The tower is south of Sangamon Avenue and west of 16th Street, controls rail traffic along the Union Pacific/Amtrak line between St. Louis and Chicago and the Springfield to Peoria line of the Illinois and Midland Railroad. One of five operators sits in the tower around-the-clock to control rail traffic using a series of levers. "We will be able to move the Ridgely Tower functions to the Harriman Dispatching Center in Omaha by the end of June," said Union Pacific spokesman Mark Davis. "The automation of the tower is part of our annual improvement projects and takes advantage of newer technology that enhances operations and safety."The tower has been in its current location since the early 20th century. It was rebuilt in 1930 by the then-owner, the B&O Railroad Co., and hasn't changed much since. The tower has not been well maintained over the years because the railroad companies that have owned it kept thinking it would close soon and they didn't want to spend money on the upkeep. The closing of Ridgely Tower does not come as a surprise. Manually operated towers have gradually been phased out. Thirty years ago, Springfield had five control towers that were operated by people. After June, it will have none; "Considering the advancements in technology over the years," said Davis, "these types of towers use antiquated technology, and replacement parts are not readily available."What will become of the Ridgely Tower once its operations are closed in June is unknown. But there is interest in preserving it as a historic artifact.

The Chatham Railroad Museum could take the tower, if it can find the funds. The museum is in a renovated railroad depot. A railroad historian, Dick Wallin of Rochester, has offered the museum \$1,000 seed money to move the tower to Chatham. "We sure would hope for it to be saved," says Bill Shannon, one of the railroad museum's organizers. "It's one of the last towers on the Union Pacific railroad. There are hardly any of them left. It's a Springfield icon, but, due to its location, many people don't even know it's there." The problem, Shannon said, is that it would be expensive to move the tower to Chatham. "Because of the size," he said, "we don't know if it could be moved in one piece. We'd need to get permission from the village. Then power lines would have to be moved out of the way." Wallin, however, thinks the tower could be put on its side and moved without any disruption to power lines. Perhaps, he said, a trucking company might be willing to donate moving equipment.

Wallin, co-author of "Chicago & Illinois Midland," a history of the C&IM railroad, says the tower will have to be moved or demolished after it closes because it's so near the tracks. He also thinks the Union Pacific could be persuaded to give the tower to a local historical preservation group."



This is the Ridgely Tower. It is not in the best of condition but it is still usable. I remember getting up in the tower at the Illinois Railway Museum and understanding just how great a view the operator had.

It looks like the levers are still in this tower and of course the connecting rods are still at the bottom of it running along the tracks to whatever switches are still controlled by its operator.

This picture is used with the permission of **Chuck Blagburn Thru the Lens Photography** NRHS, Chatham, IL.

Bill Shannon who is president of the C&IM chapter says there is a great deal of interest in moving the tower and

several people have already notified him of their willingness to help out financially. He does point out there will be much paper work to get it moved including first and foremost permission from Union Pacific. Then approval by the state to transport it on the highways, help getting it under overhead wires and approval by the village of Chatham.

If you wish to help please contact Jeff Heine by writing to him at 1291 W. Lake Shore Dr. Fowler, IL 62338 Or e-mail him at jeff1465@adams.net . Jeff is a member of the C&IM Chapter.

The June issue of *Trains Magazine* has a large number of pages devoted to short lines. Included are a picture and the announcement that Pioneer Railcorp which owns Keokuk Junction RR, now has a complete set of F units. They are an A-B-A lash and are assigned to the Peoria and Western which already operated two A units. The company has released PREX 1761 FP9B into service. All three units were from Algoma Central which was originally Canadian National. The two A's were still in Algoma Central paint when Mary and I found them in the riverfront yard at Keokuk. I take it all three will be painted in the yellow and black livery of Peoria Western.



On a recent trip to Fort Madison and Burlington IA, your editor and Chuck Fitch, had made our usual stop at Muddy Waters restaurant in Burlington and headed back to Ft. Madison. Nothing was happening at the Amtrak Depot so we started back to Quincy when Chuck spotted a westbound on the bridge. In the 4th and 5th spot behind a trio of BNSF diesels were two snub nosed motors painted in maroon with gold trim and lettering. Chuck pulled into an empty parking lot and shot these two pictures. The engines belong to the San Luis and Rio Grande.



Four of these modified ex-Amtrak F40PH locomotives were leased initially. They're designated as type F40M-2F. Note that the nose has been shortened, and a front porch added. A nose door allows easy access to the cab. If you wish to see more about the SLRG go to the web site. On Yahoo the 5th and 6th items give you a list of their motive power.

Okay, so much for full scale railroads, back to the hobby and club stuff.

At the May business session Chief Dispatcher and all around good guy, Hank Murray asked that we pass on this word to all members. When he suggests that operators take the copy of instructions with them, they should do it. The reason is that the traffic department will from time to time make minor adjustments in those instructions that no matter how many times you may have run a train it might be a good idea to review the instructions for each one.

The decision was also reached to inform all members or anyone interested that the club is going to get rid of our first analog walk-around throttles. Here's what is available. Six units: each includes a hand held throttle that has an increase and decrease speed control, direction switch, emergency stop button, and an on-off switch. The throttle uses 8 AA batteries. The chassis that goes with it replaces the power pack and runs off 110 volt AC power. These cannot be used with a DCC layout. If you are interested contact me at rbob9@adams.net or call 217 964 2879 by June 1st.

The club is planning a trip to Chatham IL to visit the Chatham Depot a very well restored depot and train museum on Sunday June 6. Plans call for those interested in attending to meet at Home Depot parking lot at 10:00AM. We will car pool to Springfield for lunch then spend 2 or 3 hours at Chatham. With some luck either Amtrak or UP will scream past the depot at track speed while we are there. There is a signup sheet in the club room or contact Jeff Heine at jeff1465@adams.net.



If you've wondered what is being accomplished on the Steel Mill Complex here is the interior of one of the buildings. It is the electric furnace operation. We are completing these buildings on homasote with track already installed. They are painted and at this point have a lot of the weathering done prior to installation. This building takes scrap metal and the powerful electrodes (triple row on top of round oven) melt it down.

The dark stuff is 3-D spills from the bucket which is put in place by an unseen crane. There are lights in the building and an arc light inside the oven that can be seen because we lined it with aluminum foil. There will also be a number of workers placed in the building. The tracks at right are used for ingot molds poured from the buckets. Scrap comes in on the track to the left. We have finished the blast furnace. The rolling mill is being worked on now, and the building above is also finished. The stripping mill is the next project. It is where ingot molds are removed. You'll be able to see lighted ingots where several molds are removed.

Correction: On the right side of page 5 of the last newsletter (the one including pictures from a tape made in the early 1980s) is a picture I identified as Bill Chezem and an unidentified yardmaster. Seems I didn't recognize our own Ed Dietrich wearing a ball cap. Of course Ed even told me he had to look at the DVD before he realized it was he who was the yardmaster at Portland Mills. Sorry Ed!

Second Correction: In the headlines of the last newsletter I promoted a story about the C&LE being filmed. I still don't have it for this issue, but I'll try for the July-August issue.

On May 19th Norfolk Southern railroad will run an Operation Lifesaver special from Springfield to Griggsville and return. Anyone wanting to get pictures in Griggsville should be there about 10:00 AM or a little earlier.

Here's a plug for a regional convention. Mid-Continent region will hold its annual convention in Cedar Rapids on June 10th-13th. A 100 table train show, two days of clinics and contests, 15 layout tours, a 3 hour excursion on the Iowa Interstate RR and other items. If interested go to eid.mcor-nmra.org .

Again please if you are interested in learning more about this wonderful hobby I urge you to contact me or the officers with suggestions for classes to be held beginning again in September. We've had good turnouts so far and all of us would like to see that continue.

Remember Model Railroading is Fun!