

The Black Diamond

Official Newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society

October 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The October 2017 edition of "The Black Diamond" features full details about all Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society events during the year. The LVRRHS will be sponsoring Santa train excursions over the Finger Lakes Railway from our station museum in Shortsville on November 25th. Please send any Society news and/or historical articles about the Lehigh Valley Railroad to me by U. S. Mail at P. O. Box RR, Manchester, NY 14504 or by e-mail at kemay59@hotmail.com. Thank you for your contributions.

Ken May, Editor/Trustee

SANTA TRAIN EXCURSIONS TO RUN OVER FINGER LAKES RAILWAY BETWEEN SHORTSVILLE AND PHELPS ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2017

The Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society, in cooperation with the Finger Lakes Railway, will sponsor Santa train excursions over the former New York Central Railroad "Auburn Road" branch line between Shortsville and Phelps on Saturday, November 25, 2017. Four passenger train excursions will be operated from Shortsville to Phelps and return over the Finger Lakes Railway using two diesel locomotives and three passenger coaches. Santa Claus will be onboard the trains to visit with children.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society museum in the old New York Central freight station at 8 E. High St. in Shortsville will be open to passengers during the excursions. The station museum will be decorated for the holidays and will have an expanded operating N scale model train display. Operation Lifesaver will have a railroad safety display. The museum gift shop will be open, accepting cash or personal checks (no credit cards).

Each train ride will last one hour and will be an 18-mile round trip. Departure times are 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 2:30 p.m. All trains will load and unload at the LVRRHS station museum. Passengers are requested to arrive at the boarding location at least 20 minutes before departure time to pick up their tickets. The freight station is located one block south of Main St. in downtown Shortsville via Sheldon St. to E. High St. Free parking is available at this location.

Fares are \$18.00 per person for adults and children age 3 and over. Children age 2 and under on lap are free. The ticket price includes the train ride and admission to the museum. Tickets can be purchased by visiting the Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society website at www.lvrrhs.org and clicking on the Excursions link or by calling 585-289-9149 and leaving a message. Seat Yourself credit card charges will appear as Theatre-Tix.com in New York on statements. If the rides are not sold out in advance, walk-up tickets will be available at the LVRRHS station museum at the time of the scheduled trip.

Snacks, beverages, and gift items will be sold at the station and onboard the trains. The Shortsville Presbyterian Church will operate a concession stand at the station. No smoking or alcohol is allowed. There are restrooms at the station and in the passenger coaches. Passengers are advised to dress appropriately for the weather.

See Santa Trains flyer on Page 6.

2017 STATION MUSEUM OPEN HOUSES

The Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society Station Museum was open to the public one Sunday afternoon a month from May to October this year. Open house dates were May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17, and October 15. Attendance at all of the open houses was good. Thanks to the LVRHRS members who volunteered at the open houses.



LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD MEMORIAL NIGHT

The Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society hosted the 41st annual Lehigh Valley Railroad Memorial Night at our station museum on the evening of Saturday, April 22, 2017. The free event was a celebration of the history of the Lehigh Valley Railroad with a program of slides, movies, photographs, and discussions. Around 40 people attended the event.

Some of the attendees brought Lehigh Valley Railroad memorabilia to share. Bernie Beikirch brought his full-size replica of a Lehigh Valley Railroad speeder constructed of plywood along with full-size replicas of a telephone box, a dwarf semaphore, and a battery box made of Styrofoam. Dave Halderman displayed his HO scale model LVRR engines at the event.

Lehigh Valley Railroad Memorial Night was hosted by Guil Mack of Phelps, New York, at his home from 1977 to 2016. The Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society was pleased to continue the tradition. Guil Mack gave tours of his HO scale model railroad layout at his home on the afternoon of Saturday, April 22.

Photographs on Page 2 and 3 by Dave Halderman.



ROBERT GONGLESKI POSTCARD COLLECTION PRESENTATION

A presentation about early 20th Century railroad postcards was given on Sunday, July 16, 2017, during the Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society Station Museum open house. The free program, titled "Along the Line of the Lehigh Valley Railroad from New York to Niagara Falls - A Postcard View of the Lehigh Valley Railroad," was presented by Robert Gongleski of Vestal, New York, a member of the Susquehanna Valley Railway Historical Society since 1988. An estimated 30 people attended the program.

The PowerPoint presentation included 280 vintage postcard views of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, sequenced in order from the eastern terminal of the railroad near the Hudson River and New York City, along the main line to Buffalo and including glimpses of towns and stations along the branch lines.

Gongleski became interested in railroading and model trains as a youngster and recalls his first miniature operation under a Christmas tree at the home of his grandparents in 1951. He lived close to the West Pittston branch of the LVRR and witnessed the railroad operations in anthracite coal country.

Gongleski brought his entire collection of over 850 postcards as well as system maps of the LVRR from 1928 and 1955. He also collects and models the LVRR and is interested in the Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley Railroad (the Laurel Line) that ran between Scranton and Wilkes-Barre. Other history-related interests include the Wilkes-Barre and Hazelton Railroad, Northeastern Pennsylvania coal mining history, and street railways of Wilkes-Barre and the Wyoming Valley.

Historic Manchester Roundhouse on Five to Revive List
By Steve Buchiere
Finger Lakes Times, October 22, 2017
(Reprinted with Permission)

Manchester - A massive, but decaying piece of railroad history that dates back to this Ontario County village's days as an industry hub is one of five on a preservation organization's priority list for 2017.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad Roundhouse is on the Landmark Society's Five to Revive list for 2017, the organization announced this week.

"This is the fifth year that The Landmark Society of Western New York is announcing the Five to Revive list to draw attention to key priorities for revitalization in western New York," said Wayne Goodman, executive director of the organization.

"The Five to Revive initiative is proving to be very successful and continues to demonstrate that preservation and adaptive reuse are key strategies for revitalization in western New York," added Tom Castelein, president of the Landmark Society Board, who also chairs the Five to Revive initiative.

The list goes beyond mere buildings, also delving into landscape and preservation issues. For example, one of the Five to Revive for this year includes the venerable front porch.

The former Lehigh Valley Railroad Roundhouse, constructed in 1916 and replacing a previous roundhouse, is a horseshoe-shaped building with about 44,000 square feet where locomotives were serviced. It closed in 1970.

The building has been vacant since, serving mostly as a reminder of Manchester's once-dynamic railroad industry, which at one time provided hundreds of jobs in Ontario County. Rail aficionados know it well, as it is one of the few remaining roundhouses in the Northeast, said the Landmark Society.

"The LVRR Roundhouse is a highly significant and rare building type, with potential for future redevelopment," the society said.

Indeed, Ontario County and Manchester officials see the roundhouse as part of an effort to redevelop the rail corridor in the Manchester area.

Waterloo-based Finger Lakes Railway, which operates on the rail line that runs near the roundhouse, is interested in using the facility for storage. The line is owned by the county.

A museum focusing on Manchester's rich railroad is another possibility.

In its heyday, the Manchester rail yard had a dispatcher/control tower, provided fuel service and was a maintenance center for freight cars and locomotives as well as track and signal repair.

The roundhouse and former fuel house property nearby are likely contaminated and on the Department of Environmental Conservation's "spill list." Those involved in the rail project will work with the state Department of Environmental Conservation and federal Environmental Protection Agency on getting the site cleaned up through grant money and possibly back on the tax rolls.

The Landmark Society said the goal of the Five to Revive list to ensure significant properties are not lost to neglect.

“Being part of the list gives these properties more visibility and, as a result, may expand their funding options,” said Castelein. “Placement on this list draws the focused attention of government officials, developers, and preservation advocates and, in many cases, unlocks resources to effectively preserve our heritage and promote economic development.”

LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD BRANCH LINE ABANDONMENTS IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

Correction Submitted by Paul Worboys

Rochester Branch:

Hemlock – Lima, 1968

DONATIONS

Thanks to Joe Colasacco and his landscape business, Kingdom Proprietors, for mowing the station museum lawn during 2017.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

If you have not already renewed your membership for 2017, we hope that you will consider renewing for 2018. Memberships received after September 30 will be considered good through 2018. We thank all of our members for their continued support of the Society.

LVERRHS MEETINGS

Society meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month at 3:00 p.m. at the LVERRHS Station Museum, 8 East High Street, Shortsville, New York. All members are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings.

Visit the Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society website at www.lverrhs.org for the latest information about Society activities.

“The Black Diamond” is published by the Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society, P. O. Box RR, Manchester, NY 14504-0200. Displays and archives are located at 8 E. High St., Shortsville, NY. Hours by appointment. Contact Deb Halderman, Treasurer, at 585-289-8022.

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Lehigh Valley Railroad
Historical Society



Ride the train with Santa!

Santa Claus Train Excursions



***** Saturday, November 25, 2017 *****

*1 hour, 12 mile round trip from Shortsville to Phelps and return over Finger Lakes
Railway*

Departure times at 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm, and 2:30 pm

Fare - \$18 per person

Children age 2 and under (lap-sitters) free

Tickets available on-line at www.lvrrhs.org

Click on the "Excursions" link!

Museum decorated for the holidays

Expanded Operating N Scale Model Train Display

Operation Lifesaver Exhibit

Gift shop open (accepting cash & personal checks)

Concessions stand by Shortsville Presbyterian Church

LVRRHS Station Museum, 8 East High St., Shortsville, NY

Sponsored by Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society

For more information, please call 585-289-9149 to request a return call.

Visit our website at www.lvrrhs.org

