

# The Sentinel



A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE PUBLISHED BY THE BALTIMORE & OHIO RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

\$8.00

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 1

FIRST QUARTER 2015



# Message from the President

Happy New Year! The past year was very successful and rewarding, with close to \$20,000 collected for the building fund, successful outreach to recruit new members and show the flag in throughout Maryland and Ohio, two great mini-cons, and a very well attended convention in Cumberland, Maryland.

Remember, the 2015 convention is going to be in the Cleveland, Ohio, area and the 2016 convention in the Buffalo, New York, area. The 2015 mini-cons are in development with the Ohio Mini-Con having the presenter set but a site to be determined. The Eastern Mini-Con will be August 8 in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, area.

We are still in need of a replacement editor since this is Harry Meem's last year. With more than 1,350 members, someone could manage four publications each year and Harry would assist in the transition.

One of the after-convention-hours topics of discussion was the future of railroad clubs, historical societies, and railroad museums five, ten, or twenty years into the future. How do we recruit more people to be members, and most of all participate? One point was continued outreach and education to the general public, not just to the organizations' members.

To spend and manage money wisely, rather than just collect it in a nest egg,

is critical to survival. We have managed to do quite well so far. The Society has a Facebook page that gets far more hits than our website. This is the trend of the future and we need someone to step forward to institute and manage our digital outreach.

We need to educate and motivate our youth to study this country's railroad heritage and maybe become members. To promote B&O history to them we have begun a Youth Historical Writing Challenge, information for which was mailed to selected schools along the B&O routes and is posted on our website. How best to get young people away from their electronic toys, then to wave a carrot in front of their noses?

The rest of this space is dedicated to details of the writing challenge. Displayed on page 33 are some thoughts from Society Director Wade Rice, who leads a youth outreach effort. Please read his comments and give us your support, assist in planning, and aid in instituting activities to encourage young people of all ages. Have a great year.—Greg Smith



The officers and directors of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Historical Society extend this challenge to all students ages 14 to 24. The purpose of  
*(Continued on page 35)*

# The Sentinel

The official publication of  
**THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO  
RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

P. O. Box 24225  
Baltimore, Maryland 21227-0725

E-mail: [info@borhs.org](mailto:info@borhs.org)

Website: [borhs.org](http://borhs.org)

Missing Sentinel: [borhsstore@borhs.org](mailto:borhsstore@borhs.org)

The Baltimore and Ohio Historical Society is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving and disseminating historical information about The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

Copyright ©2015 ISSN 1053-4415



## SOCIETY OFFICERS

**Greg Smith** - President  
[president@borhs.org](mailto:president@borhs.org)

**Henry Freeman** - VP Operations  
[operations@borhs.org](mailto:operations@borhs.org)

**George Stant** - VP Finance  
[vpfinance@borhs.org](mailto:vpfinance@borhs.org)

**Allen Young** - Secretary  
[secretary@borhs.org](mailto:secretary@borhs.org)

**Chris Winslow** - Treasurer  
[treasurer@borhs.org](mailto:treasurer@borhs.org)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Bruce Elliott** (2014)    **Mike Shylanski** (2015)

**Nick Fry** (2014)    **Chris Tilley** (2016)

**Wade Rice, Jr.** (2016)    **Bob Witt** (2015)

**Bob Hubler** (Past President)

Officers' terms expire annually. Directors' terms expire in October of the indicated year.

All directors may be reached at [secretary@borhs.org](mailto:secretary@borhs.org).

## EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor

[sentineditor@borhs.org](mailto:sentineleditor@borhs.org)

**Harry Meem**, Managing Editor  
[magazine@borhs.org](mailto:magazine@borhs.org)

**Al McEvoy**, Archives

**John Teichmoeller**

**Roberta Poling**, Graphic Design  
[roberta@thundergrafix.com](mailto:roberta@thundergrafix.com)

## CONTRIBUTORS WELCOME:

Articles, manuscripts, photographs, reviews, and other historical data are solicited for publication. Original material will be returned upon publication. Send all material to:

Harry Meem,  
2409 Birchwood Road, Richmond, VA 23294.

## COMPANY STORE

Orders: [Company Store link at borhs.org](http://Company Store link at borhs.org)  
[storemanager@borhs.org](mailto:storemanager@borhs.org)

## MEMBERSHIP

[membershipchair@borhs.org](mailto:membershipchair@borhs.org)

One year regular membership is \$35.00. For other classes or inquiries, write to the Society's P.O. Box address, or email [membershipchair@borhs.org](mailto:membershipchair@borhs.org).

For an address change, write to the P.O. Box address, or email [membershipchair@borhs.org](mailto:membershipchair@borhs.org)

Memberships, once accepted, cannot be returned.

## In This Issue

<b>THE B&amp;O IN SEYMOUR, INDIANA</b> <i>A Little Back-Scratching Leaves Bad Feelings</i> , BY EDWARD YOUNG.....	3
<b>A FALL WEEKEND AT A B&amp;O SHRINE</b> , BY JOHN TEICHMOELLER.....	15
<b>B&amp;O PASSENGER SERVICE TO THE SOUTHWEST</b> <i>The National Limited Takes on PRR</i> , BY FRANK A. WRABEL.....	20
<b>ENSURING THE SOCIETY'S FUTURE</b> , BY WADE RICE.....	33
<b>RUNNING LIGHT</b> , <i>Cincinnati Renovation Funds, More on Car 3303, etc.</i> .....	34

## On the Covers

**FRONT COVER:** Society conventioners and other passengers enjoy the view and fresh air aboard the open gondola car on the *Potomac Eagle* during the Cumberland convention. See page 15. (*Allen Young photograph*)

**BACK COVER:** Amid all the names of local railroaders in bricks on the sidewalk before the Brunswick Heritage Museum, that of B&O public relations director Robert Van Sant stands out; Running Light, page 34.

(*Harry Meem photograph*)



A watchman stationed in the shanty at the right-center of the photograph operated the tilting target signal to control train movements at the B&O/PRR crossing in Seymour, Indiana. He also controlled the movement of motor vehicles at the grade crossing. By the time this photograph was taken, around 1930, the roundhouse and coal dock had been removed. The Ebner Ice & Cold Storage Company is visible behind the shanty. The Milwaukee (SIRR) depots are on the far left.

# The B&O in Seymour, Indiana

## *A Little Back-Scratching Leaves Bad Feelings*

By Edward Young

Graphics from author's collection except as noted

One of the many Midwestern towns that owe their existence to the coming of the railroads in the 19th century is Seymour, Indiana.

Located in Jackson County about halfway between Louisville and Indianapolis, Seymour was once served by the B&O, Pennsylvania, and Milwaukee railroads.

First on the scene was the Jeffersonville Railroad, chartered in 1832 as the Ohio & Indianapolis Railroad with the intention of connecting the Ohio River at Jeffersonville, Indiana, with Indianapolis. The line was not incorporated until 1848, as the Jeffersonville & Indianapolis Railroad. Renamed the Jeffersonville

Railroad in 1849, it merged with the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad (the first railroad in the state of Indiana) in 1866 to form the Jeffersonville, Madison & Indianapolis Railroad.

Leased by the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati & St. Louis Railroad in 1871, these and two other lines joined in 1890 to form the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad. The PCC&StL was leased by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1921.

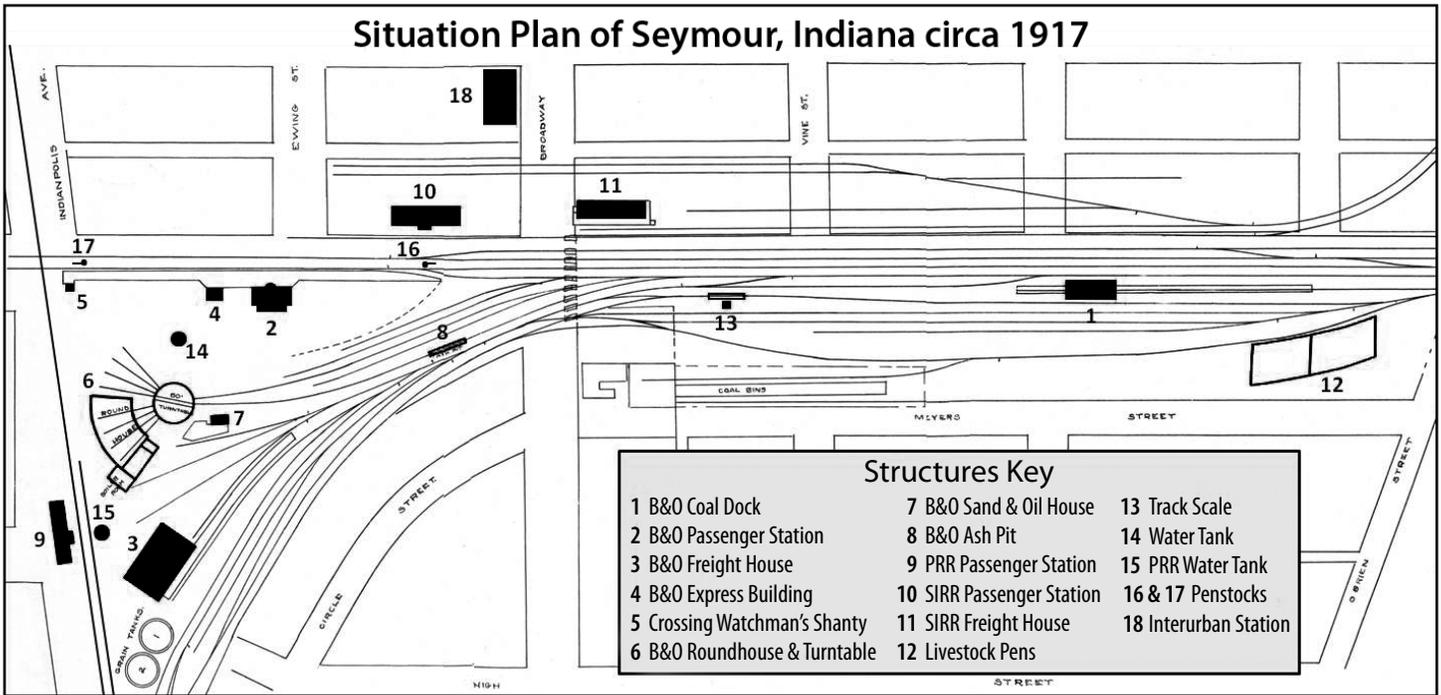
The Ohio & Mississippi Railway was the next to arrive and was most responsible for the creation of Seymour. Chartered in Indiana in 1848, with construction beginning in 1852, the O&M became part

of the B&O Southwestern Railroad in 1893. The B&OSW was absorbed by the Baltimore & Ohio in 1900.

A late arrival, the Evansville & Richmond Railroad, was established in 1888, reaching Seymour in 1890. The E&R became the Southern Indiana Railroad in 1897 and the Chicago, Terre Haute & Southeastern Railway in 1910. The CTH&SE was leased by Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad (the Milwaukee Road) in 1921.

The first settler on the land where Seymour would be established was James Shields, who brought his family to the area in 1816. His son Meedy White

## Situation Plan of Seymour, Indiana circa 1917



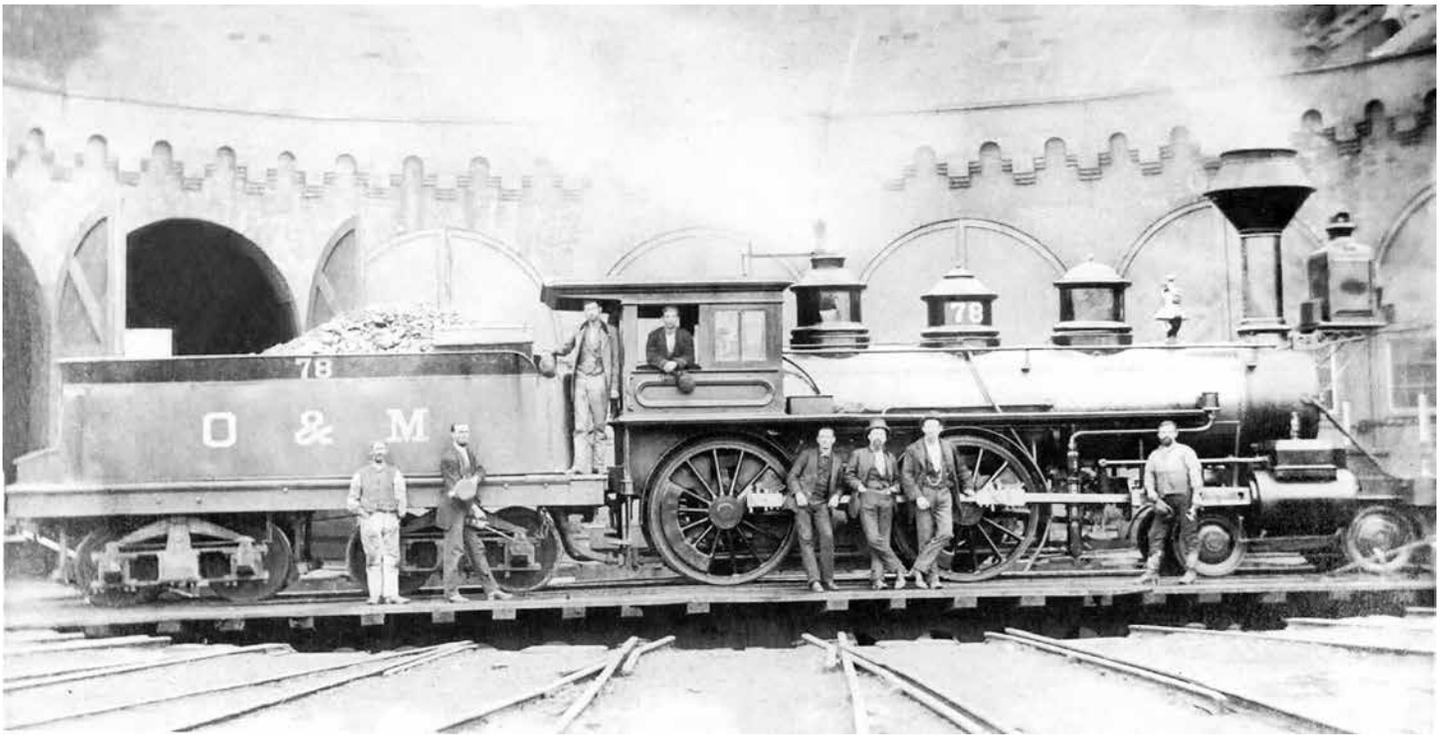
The Situation Plan of the railroads of Seymour, Indiana, in 1917. The portion of a map titled *Birds Eye View of Seymour, Indiana, 1886* shows the Ohio & Mississippi at the top and the Jeffersonville, Madison & Indianapolis on the left. The O&M passenger depot is to the right of the crossing, the JM&I station to the left. The O&M roundhouse, turntable and machine shop are just south of the depot; just below these structures is the joint O&M/JM&I freight house. At the upper right beside the main line is the massive O&M coal dock. (Courtesy Jackson County Visitor Center)



The Seymour B&O passenger station in early 1962, not long before it was replaced with a smaller steel structure and torn down. The former Pennsylvania passenger station can be seen at the far right. (*Jackson County, Indiana, Digital History Archive Project*)



This was the O&M/B&O express building in Seymour, Indiana, captured by photographer Otto White of North Vernon, Indiana, in 1919. It was just to the west of the depot, apparently with a small office for the agent.



O&M 4-4-0 Number 78 sits on the turntable at the roundhouse at Seymour, Indiana, in 1875. This was the original nine-stall roundhouse built by the O&M in Seymour around 1873. (B&ORHS, Robert Clark Collection)

Shields inherited the land and developed it into a prosperous farm.

In 1852, the Jeffersonville Railroad had been built as far as Rockford, a village of about 500 approximately two miles north of what would become Seymour. At about the same time, the Ohio & Mississippi Railway was being surveyed through Jackson County. John J. Kester, a major property owner in Rockford and staunch supporter of the Jeffersonville line, sought to have the O&M built through his town.

However, Shields persuaded the O&M to run through his property instead. In exchange, he provided the right of way for the new railroad and agreed to name the town to be built where the two lines crossed Seymour, for Henry C. Seymour, superintendent of construction for the O&M. Seymour was platted by Meedy and Eliza P. Shields on April 27, 1852.

Kester, the citizens of Rockford, and Jeffersonville Railroad officials were furious with Shields, the town of Seymour and the O&M for locating the line there instead of through their town. This brought about much controversy, hard feelings and petty jealousy.

The railroad refused to stop in Seymour or to build a depot there, construct-

ing only a small platform. Nevertheless, on June 6, 1854, the last rail was laid completing the Eastern Division of the Ohio & Mississippi between Cincinnati and Seymour. On June 29, the O&M ran an excursion between Cincinnati and Seymour, marking the official opening of the Eastern Division. A grand celebration was conducted by the citizens of Seymour.

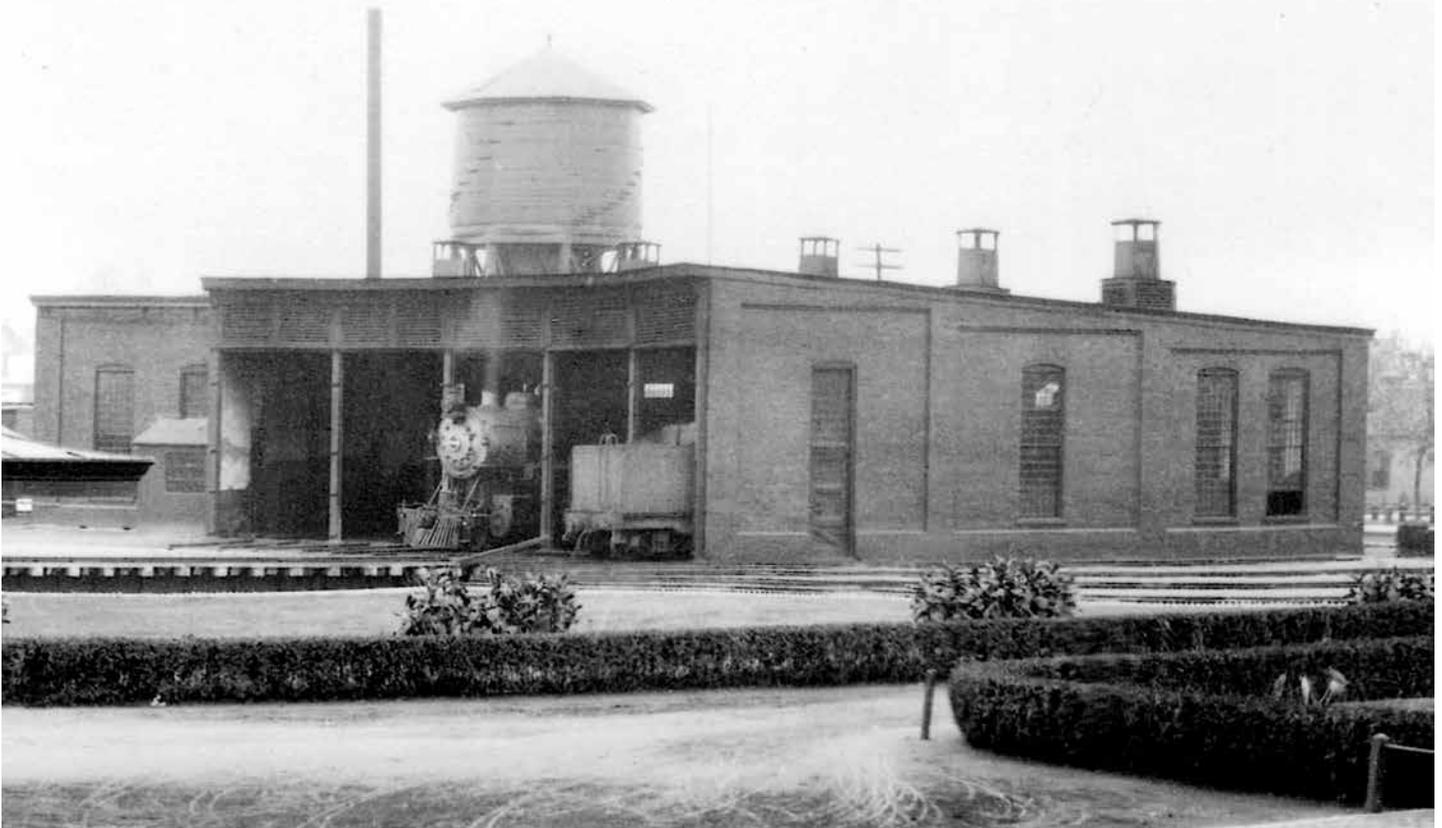
After considerable discussion and negotiations, the O&M began offering connecting rail service between Cincinnati and Louisville via the Jeffersonville Railroad on July 3, 1854. The financial benefits persuaded the latter line to put aside, or at least tone down their hostility toward the O&M.

In 1856 Shields, by then a state senator and member of the O&M board of directors, secured passage of a bill requiring all trains to stop at all at-grade railroad intersections in the state of Indiana. Not until well into the 20th century did interlocking and more reliable signaling eliminate this requirement at many locations. However, this law remained in effect for much of the state through the 1950s.

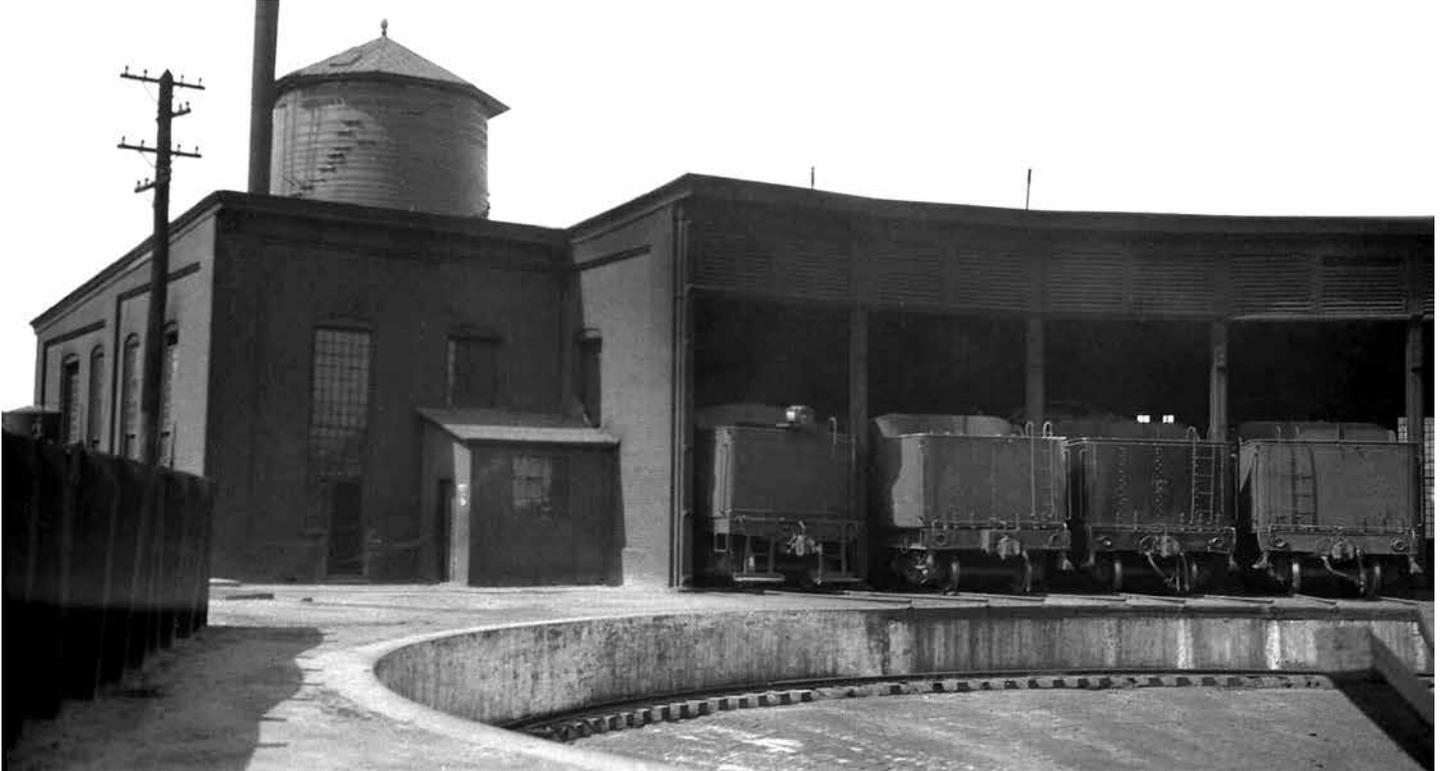
The Ohio & Mississippi built its original passenger station in Seymour in 1857. Located at the southeast corner

of the crossing with the Jeffersonville, the depot was a frame structure, probably of typical O&M board-and-batten construction. The Seymour depot was about 36 feet wide and 72 feet long and consisted of three sections. The west end contained a one-story restaurant; in the middle was a one-story waiting room; the east end contained an office for the ticket agent and telegraph operator. There was a second floor on the eastern section, probably for railroad officials. It was accessed by a set of outside stairs attached to the end of the building.

By 1888, the original O&M passenger station in Seymour was three decades old, and the townspeople were pressuring the railroad to build a new depot. The same pressures had been applied to the railroad for a new station by the people of North Vernon. They, of course got their wish, when the old depot there was destroyed by a "mysterious" fire in November 1887 and replaced with one that opened in May 1888. The construction of a new O&M depot in North Vernon and a new JM&I depot in Seymour in 1887 probably fueled their fire. (Seymour seemed to have forgotten that, as we shall see, it took almost 36 years for the JM&I to build its "first" depot in town.)



Another 1919 Otto White shot showing the new (1888) five-stall B&O roundhouse in Seymour. Locomotives could also be stored on the four tracks at the right (north) of the roundhouse. The water tank in the background belonged to the Pennsylvania Railroad.



This 1918 photograph shows the B&O roundhouse and turntable pit at Seymour from a different angle.

The O&M relented and, in 1888-89, constructed a replacement passenger depot in Seymour. Also on the south side of the main track, it was about 250 feet east of the original O&M passenger

depot. The new, two-story Seymour depot also was of frame construction, 24 feet wide and 52 feet long, with an 8-foot-wide and 30-foot-long annex in the rear. The first floor contained separate wait-

ing rooms for men and women; it also contained an office for the ticket agent, the women's toilet, a battery room, and the stairway leading to the second floor.

The second floor had a telegraph



This was the massive stone O&M/B&O freight house in Seymour in 1918. Formerly it was the O&M machine shop, built around 1873.

office, the trainmaster's office, the train dispatcher's office, and a storeroom. The men's toilet was located in a separate building behind the depot.

There were two small dormers both on the front and the rear roof. The annex extended into the second floor, forming a large dormer that contained the offices. On the front of the depot, the ticket agent's office had a semi-circular bay that continued through the second floor; it had a conical roof. It and the roof of the depot were covered with seamed metal sections; the metal roofing was replaced with shingles by the 1950s.

A brick platform, constructed in 1898, ran along the front of the station from what was eventually the PRR crossing to a point about 300 feet east of the depot.

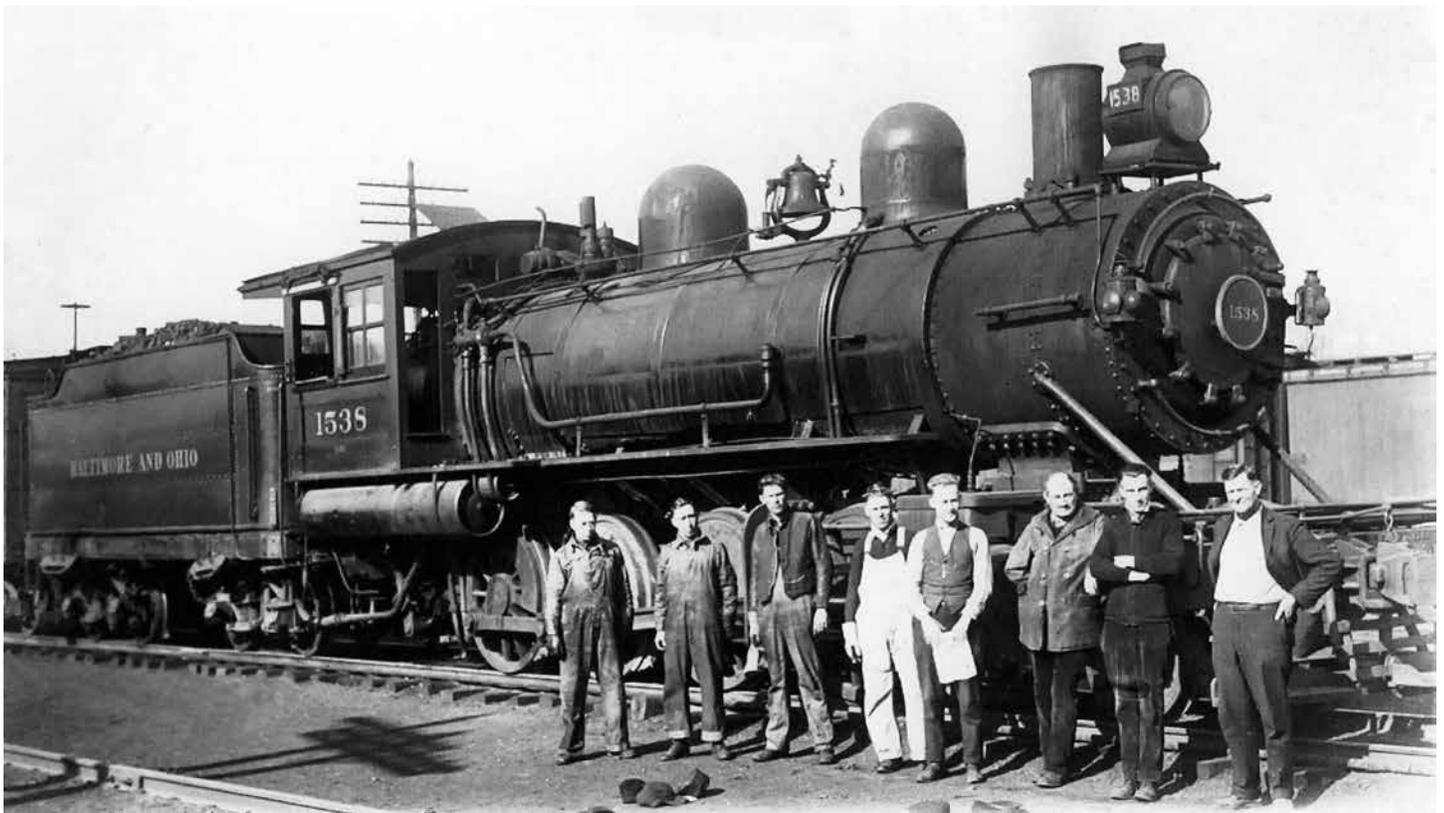
By the early 1960s, the depot was three-quarters of a century old, and falling into disrepair; with passenger service on the decline, there was no need for such a large passenger station in Seymour. In 1962, the railroad had a 28-foot-wide and 60-foot-long steel passenger station erected between the old depot and the PRR crossing. Fabricated by the Parkersburg Rig & Reel



Postcard view of B&O Indiana Division office building in Seymour, probably around 1910. Previously, the structure had been the Jonas Hotel. (*Jackson County, Indiana, Digital History Archive Project*)

Company, the structure—covered with flat sheet metal panels—was apparently used by maintenance of way forces and for storage after B&O passenger service ended in 1971. Through late 2013, the old steel depot sits beside the track, boarded up since at least 2000 and apparently unused, except maybe for storage.

A small—15 feet wide and 20 feet long—single-story, frame express building was about 50 feet west of the second depot, probably built at the same time. It, too, had a hip roof covered with seamed metal sections. A large sliding door was centered on the front of the building; there were no windows or doors on the



The B&O yard crew in Seymour takes a break in front of Engine 1538, an E-26-class Baldwin 2-8-0 used in yard service at the time, on a February day in 1921.

west end, but there may have been on the rear or east end. A brick chimney on the west end indicates that the building was at least heated during cold weather. An express agent may have had a small office in the building, but this is uncertain.

The express building probably was removed around 1962 when the passenger station was torn down and replaced with the “new” steel passenger station.

In April 1863, the O&M and Jeffersonville railroads built a joint freight house. It was a single-story frame structure, about 25 feet wide and 102 feet long, located between the Jeffersonville main and the O&M interchange track south of Tipton Street (US 50 today) and north of Bruce Street. A number of tall, concrete grain silos occupy the site now.

Around 1888, this building was abandoned. The JM&I built a new freight station two blocks to the south. The O&M converted its former machine shop to the new freight house. It was a two-story, stone building, 62 feet wide and 97 feet long, located just on the north side of Tipton Street.

Over the years the railroad also maintained several frame freight warehouses

and storage sheds just northeast of the large freight house. The stone freight house was torn down in December 1960.

In addition to the three Class 1 railroads in Seymour, the town was served by an interurban line that ran between Indianapolis and Louisville. In October 1907, the Indianapolis, Columbus & Southern Traction Company and the Indianapolis & Louisville Traction Company arrived in Seymour—from the north and from the south, respectively—and began operations.

Trains on the I&L ran over the Louisville & Northern Railway & Lighting Company between Louisville and Sellersburg, Indiana (via the Big Four Bridge at Jeffersonville), then paralleled the Pennsylvania route northward to Seymour over their own trackage. The line turned westward about six tenths of a mile south of town before reaching Chestnut Street. At that point it turned northward and ran to Second Street, where the line turned east and ran a short distance to its depot.

The IC&S ran southward from Indianapolis to Azalia, Indiana, where it paralleled the Southern Indiana (Milwaukee) to Seymour. It crossed the SIRR and ran

southward along Blish Street; the line then turned to the west onto Second Street, running several blocks to the depot.

The interurban depot was on the south side of Second Street just west of Ewing Street, a block north of the SIRR passenger and freight stations. The facility consisted of a covered shed for the loading and unloading of passengers and freight, situated between two, two-story brick buildings. The building on the east was the passenger/freight station, with a waiting room, ticket office, and a lunch room; the building on the west was the repair shop.

The facility was shared by the I&L and the IC&S. Both lines later became part of the Interstate Public Service Company, which in 1930 became part of the extensive Indiana Railroad interurban system that covered the state. The final interurban service in Seymour (between there and Indianapolis) was on January 19, 1941, the last day of operation for the Indiana Railroad.

Coincident with the completion of the line to Seymour in 1854, the O&M certainly built at least minimal engine servicing facilities there. In 1873, the O&M established shops in Seymour, moving the



Compare this photograph with the one on page 3. The watchman's shanty at the B&O/PRR crossing is gone, replaced by JO Tower, whose operator waits to hand up orders to a westbound passenger train around 1950. The tower, built in 1949, remained in service until 1991. (B&ORHS, Robert Clark Collection)

boiler shop and much of the equipment from the O&M shop complex at Cochran, Indiana, 27 miles west of Cincinnati. The shops were located within the area southeast of the O&M/JM&I crossing and included a large engine terminal.

The facilities included a nine-stall (each stall was 60 feet long) brick roundhouse with a 50-foot-diameter turntable, a sand house, an oil house, a pump house and three water tanks (which also supplied water to a water column across the main from the passenger station), two ice houses, and several tool houses and storage sheds. Attached to the roundhouse were a boiler house, a blacksmith shop, and the large stone machine shop that was later converted to the freight house.

After the O&M converted their locomotives to burn coal rather than wood in the late 1860s, the first coaling station in Seymour was likely a wood platform

with a crane that was used to dump coal into tenders from large iron buckets. According to a local newspaper, in May 1883 the O&M constructed a massive frame coal dock in Seymour, located on the south side of the main track between Bill (now Park) Street and O'Brien Street.

It was 30 feet wide, 75 feet long, and about 50 feet high, including the shelter on top of the structure. There was a 78-foot-long tail-track trestle on the west end of the structure that probably was capable of storing two or three loaded hopper cars. An approximately 350-foot-long inclined trestle was on the east end of the coal dock. There were two service tracks—one on the north side, one on the south side of the coal dock—used by locomotives to take on coal.

The railroad also constructed a new water tank, a sand/oil house, and a small blacksmith shop. There were two pen-

stocks on the main, one just east of the PRR crossing, the other east of the passenger station and west of Broadway Street; there also was one just east of the turntable.

When the O&M opened its new, extensive shop complex in Washington, Indiana, in 1888, there was no need to keep the shop facilities in Seymour. The old machine shop was converted to a freight house, but all the other facilities were torn down. A five-stall (each 70 feet long) brick roundhouse with a 70-foot turntable was built about 150 feet northwest of the original structure. Locomotives could also be stored outdoors on four tracks to the north of the roundhouse.

The Seymour coal dock and engine terminal were still present in February 1924. Shortly thereafter, the B&O closed the engine terminal, moving these jobs to North Vernon. The roundhouse and all locomotive servicing facilities, except



This was the Milwaukee (Southern Indiana RR) freight house in Seymour, built in 1901 along with the passenger station, which was just to its west. Restored in 2007-08, it is now the Jackson County Visitor Center. (Author's photograph)

water and coal, were torn down by June of that year. Employee timetables indicate that the coal dock was removed between 1927 and 1929.

In 1929, as at numerous other locations on the system at that time, the B&O constructed a water treatment plant at Seymour. Built in the area of the former engine terminal, it used the former turntable pit as the sludge pit for the plant. The brick treatment building and steel storage tank continued in service through the end of steam operations in early 1958. The plant was connected to the two penstocks on the main east and west of the passenger station.

After the O&M built its new passenger station in Seymour around 1888 and tore down the original depot, they constructed a watchman's shanty at the southeast corner of the crossing with the JM&I to control movements across the main lines. The watchman opened or closed gates over both tracks to allow trains to cross.

These gates were later replaced with a horizontal semaphore target signal that the watchman operated. Even after the B&O installed color position light signals and instituted automatic block signaling through Seymour in 1937, this form of crossing protection remained in operation for another decade.

Despite the B&O's attempts to have the crossing interlocked as early as mid-1944, its own bureaucracy and (primarily) procrastination by the Pennsylvania delayed the conversion for another five years. In mid-1949, the crossing shanty and target signal were replaced with a two-story, 14-foot-per-side brick interlocking tower. Designated JO Tower (for the telegraph call formerly used by operators at the passenger station), it was built by the B&O and manned by B&O operators.

The B&O continued to use CPLs to control the crossing, while the Pennsy installed its standard position-light signals. JO Tower opened on July 23, 1949 and closed in September 1991. It was torn down by 1994.

Between 1907 and 1913, the B&OSW established offices for the headquarters of the Indiana Division in Seymour. (The headquarters of the Illinois Division were in Flora, Illinois.) The offices were on the southwest corner of St. Louis and Jeffersonville avenues, west of the PRR main and south of the B&O main. They occupied what had been the Jonas Hotel, which was opened for business in 1876 by John Jonas. The Jonas Hotel (also known as the Hotel Jonas and the Jonas House) occupied the site of the Faulkconer House, an earlier hotel built

by Jonas in 1857. By 1869 this hotel had become the Carter House, which in the mid-1860s was the Rader House—hang-out for the Reno Gang, discussed later.

On January 1, 1922, the Indiana and Illinois divisions of the B&OSW were merged, forming the St. Louis Division of the B&O. In preparation for the merger, the railroad closed the office building in Seymour—as well as the one in Flora—and, by December 1921, moved virtually all division-level jobs to the newly established St. Louis Division Headquarters in Washington, Indiana.

The railroad vacated the office building in Seymour, and by June 1924, it had been refurbished and became the Hardesty Hotel. During the 1940s, it changed hands again, becoming the Walton Hotel. In the late 1990s, it was renamed the Centennial and was in the process of being refurbished, before being destroyed by fire on Christmas Day 1998.

Details regarding early yard facilities at Seymour are unknown, but the primary trackage probably was on the south side of the main and adjacent to the engine terminal between the JM&I/PRR trackage, High Street (Tipton Avenue/US Route 50 today), and Broadway.

According to the B&OSW Annual Report from June 30, 1897, three acres of

land on the east side of Seymour were being purchased to expand the yard. Two long tracks—one about 7,800 feet, the other about 7,100 feet—were added north and south of the main, respectively. A portion of the northern track probably also was used as a passing siding. The yard—including the downtown tracks—could accommodate around 650 cars at its maximum during the 'teens.

There were three car repair tracks south of the coal dock between Broadway and O'Brien Street. The yardmaster's office was at the east end of these tracks, just west of O'Brien Street. A 50-foot, 100-ton-capacity track scale was at the far west end of the southern coaling track a little east of the Broadway crossing. Southeast of the car repair tracks, the railroad also provided livestock pens until sometime between 1922 and 1935.

Several sidings and spurs served various industries in Seymour, some for nearly a century. The F.F. Buhner Fertilizer Co. and a furniture company were at the far eastern end of town. Two facilities owned by the Ebner Ice & Cold Storage Co., a large coal yard, and the Blish Milling Co. were served by the B&O in the downtown area.

On the west side of the PRR crossing, industries included the Seymour Gas & Electric Light Co. (later the Interstate Public Service Co., which also maintained the two interurban lines in town), several oil companies and feed mills, a coal yard, a lumber company, a veneer company and a meat packing plant.

Despite the initial refusal of the Jeffersonville Railroad to construct adequate passenger facilities in Seymour, it did build a narrow platform there after passage of the legislation requiring all trains to stop at all railroad crossings in the State of Indiana. The railroad did not, however, provide any buildings for passengers or freight for many years.

A small frame ticket office was erected in 1858. The JM&I finally erected a legitimate passenger depot around January 1887. The station was a single-story frame structure consisting of multiple sections; it was about 22 feet wide and 74 feet long overall.

At one point, the Pennsylvania had as many as five daily round-trip passenger trains between Chicago, Indianapolis and

Louisville, including the *Indiana Arrow*, the *Blue Grass Special* and the *Kentuckian*. Originating in Chicago, service continued beyond Louisville to Florida on the *Flamingo*, the *Florida Arrow*, the *Jacksonian* and the *South Wind*. That train continued its run through Seymour under Penn Central until May 1, 1971, when Amtrak took over. The train, renamed the *Floridian*, continued to run between Indianapolis and Louisville into 1975, when it was discontinued.

The PRR passenger depot in Seymour closed in 1978; it sat vacant through at least July 1982, and was torn down a short time later. The last passenger train through Seymour was Amtrak's *Kentucky Cardinal*, which ran between December 1999 and July 2003; it passed through Seymour, but it did not stop there.

As mentioned earlier, the JM&I shared a freight station with the O&M from 1863 until between 1887 and 1892. The JM&I built a new single-story frame freight station two blocks to the south on the west side of its main just north of Brown Street; it was 20 feet wide and 100 feet long, covered with corrugated sheet metal siding. Around 1900, a two-story office section, 20 feet wide and 30 feet long, was added to the north end of the building. The PRR freight station was torn down by the early 1960s. The Pennsylvania had interchange trackage with the B&O between Bruce Street and North Broadway.

Water for PRR locomotives was provided by an elevated tank directly across from the passenger station on the east side of the PRR main. It supplied water to a penstock about 200 feet north of the depot; there may also have been a penstock south of the depot. Additionally, a track scale was located on a side track in front of the passenger depot.

The Milwaukee main from Elnora, Indiana, through Bedford to Westport, Indiana, ran about half a mile north of Seymour. The line was built through the area between 1888 and 1892 as the Evansville & Richmond Railroad. This line became the Southern Indiana Railroad in 1897 and the Chicago, Terre Haute & Southeastern Railway in 1910. It was acquired by the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific in 1921. E&R service to Seymour began in July 1890; its pas-

senger and freight depots were located about eight blocks north of the downtown area on the east and west sides of Chestnut Street, where the E&R crossed the JM&I line.

A loop giving the railroad access to the downtown area was constructed southward parallel to the PRR, then eastward just north of and parallel to the B&O, and northward along O'Brien Street, where the line then continued to Westport. Around 1901 the section along the PRR was eliminated, leaving a spur with a wye at the north end for access to the downtown.

A new passenger station and freight house were constructed downtown. Both were on the north side of the SIRR trackage, to the west and east sides of North Broadway, respectively. The passenger station and the freight house—both single-story frame structures, 25 feet wide and 100 feet long—were built by the SIRR in 1901.

The Milwaukee had interchange trackage with the B&O between Ewing and Meyers streets; it also had interchange trackage with the PRR north of town near the location of the original E&R depots and the PRR crossing. At least through the 1940s, this crossing was controlled by a watchman operating a tilting target signal. As a further precaution, gates were swung across the tracks to control traffic. This crossing had not been interlocked, at least through 1954; it is likely that this operation remained in effect until the Milwaukee ceased operations to Seymour.

The last dedicated Milwaukee passenger service to Seymour was in August 1930, although the railroad continued to run mixed trains through 1939. Though officially downgraded to a freight-only line at that time, it continued to carry passengers until early 1950.

The trackage was cut back to Seymour from Westport in 1961; the portion between Bedford and Seymour was abandoned in 1978.

Although the passenger station was torn down many years ago (possibly in 1937), the former Milwaukee freight house is still present. Sold to the John C. Groub Co. in 1980, it was used as a warehouse until deeded to the city in 2002. It was placed on the National Register

of Historic Places in 2003, was repaired and restored beginning in 2007, and, since 2008, serves as the Jackson County Visitor Center.

Just over two miles west of downtown Seymour, the railroad crosses West Second Street. In July 1868 this spot earned a place in local history that lives on.

John Reno, who had grown up on a large farm close to nearby Rockford, led a gang of thieves and murderers that included three (Frank, Simeon, and William) of his four brothers. Members of the Reno Gang, which spent much of its time hanging out at the Rader House in Seymour, are credited with committing the first train robbery in the United States.

On the night of October 6, 1866, several of the gang boarded an eastbound Ohio & Mississippi train at Seymour. Once the train departed, they made their way to the express car, overpowered the guard, and stole some \$15,000 from a safe. Between then and July 1868, O&M trains were the target of the gang on at least four other occasions.

Their biggest heist was about \$96,000 taken from a JM&I train on May 22, 1868, at Marshfield, south of Seymour near Scottsburg, Indiana.

On July 9, 1868, six members of the Reno Gang attempted to rob an O&M train at a water stop near Shields Mill, Indiana, seven miles west of Seymour. The robbery was thwarted, and, with the help of Pinkerton detectives, three of the gang members were captured.

On the night of July 20, 1868, the prisoners were being moved aboard an O&M express train to the courthouse in Brownstown, Indiana, west of Seymour. The train was stopped by a mob of hooded men, calling themselves the Jackson County Vigilance Committee. The prisoners were taken about 200 yards south of the crossing and hanged from a large beech tree.

On July 24, 1868, three more of the gang were arrested by the Pinkertons. The next day, fearing the vigilante group would strike again, authorities decided to take the three were taken by wagon to Brownstown. As the wagon neared the same crossing, between 2,000 and 3,000 of the vigilantes—also known as the Scarlet Mask Society—were waiting.

First Quarter 2015



Abandoned and boarded up by May 2012, when this photo was taken, this was the replacement passenger station in Seymour, fabricated by the Parkersburg Rig & Reel Company in 1962. (Author's photograph)

Overpowering the guards, they took the three prisoners to the same beech tree and hanged them. The crossing on the O&M, just north of the necktie parties, became known as “Hangman’s Crossing.”

Later that year, four more of the gang were captured, including leader Frank Reno and two of his brothers, Simeon and William (John was serving time in a Missouri prison.). While the three were being held in the New Albany, Indiana, jail, a large contingent of the Scarlet Mask Society made its way from Seymour to New Albany via Jeffersonville over the JM&I on the night of December 11, 1868. In the wee hours of December 12th, the four were forcibly taken from their cells and hanged inside the jail. So ended the reign of terror of the infamous Reno Gang.

The beech tree is long gone, but the legend and the name “Hangman’s Crossing” live on. One of the New Albany Jail cells occupied by one of the Renos was moved to the Visitor Center in Seymour in 2009.

Nearly all of what used to make up the railroads in Seymour are all but gone today. The replacement B&O passenger station is still there, although abandoned. The former Milwaukee freight station has been saved, restored, and lives on as the Jackson County Visitor Center. On the southeast side of the US 50 grade crossing over the former Pennsylvania line to Louisville, a Chessie System caboose (former C&O) and a crossing shanty made up a small display in tribute to an era now long gone. The caboose remains, but the shanty has been removed.

All that remains of the former B&O (now CSX) trackage includes the main, a 5,600-foot-long passing siding on the south side of the main between Vine Street and Meadowbrook Drive, and a connection track with the former Pennsylvania line that begins at Park Street. There also are three short industrial spurs on the east side of town serving Agrico/Cargill, 84 Lumber and Kobelco Metal Powder of America. CSX serves no industries on the west side of Seymour.

The former Pennsylvania line between Indianapolis and Louisville was purchased from Conrail in March 1994 by a Class III carrier, the Louisville and Indiana Railroad. L&I trackage through Seymour consists of the main, the remnant of a siding that previously served the freight house, a siding a mile south of Seymour near the South O’Brien Street crossing used for interchange with CSX, and a spur from the siding extending westward to Freeman Field.

No former Milwaukee trackage remains in Seymour, although much of the old right-of-way is still discernible on Google Earth satellite imagery.

In better times, a significant number of B&O passenger and freight trains passed through or originated/terminated in Seymour. During the early days of the O&M, only two westbound and two eastbound through (between Cincinnati and St. Louis) passenger trains were scheduled. By 1885, this number had increased to five trains in each direction, holding constant until around the beginning of World War I, when the number

dropped to three. At the end of the war, four and then five westbound and eastbound through trains were in service. The numbers ranged between four and five through 1946. In 1947, the number dropped to four and never increased. The number dropped to three in 1958, two in 1961, and one in 1968.

Most notable of the through trains were the *National Limited* (numbers 1 and 2), the *Diplomat* (numbers 3 and 4), and the *Metropolitan Special* (numbers 11 and 12). The last run of the *Diplomat* was on April 30, 1961, the *Metropolitan Special* on September 11, 1968, and the *National Limited* (which under C&O control became the *George Washington* in September 1965) on April 30, 1971. On that date, with Amtrak opting not to run any trains on the St. Louis Division, passenger service on the line ended.

In addition to the through trains, there were a number of intermediate-run passenger trains that passed through Seymour. O&M Trains 7 and 8 ran the longest distance of these, between Cincinnati and Vincennes. Between 1918 and 1927, Trains 65 and 66 ran between North Vernon and Vincennes. And between 1939 and 1949, Trains 61 and 62 ran between Cincinnati and Washington, Indiana, with many of these runs behind Engine Number 2, the Lord Baltimore.

Initially the O&M typically ran four or five scheduled westbound and eastbound through (between Cincinnati and East St. Louis) freight trains through Seymour. By about 1900, this number had decreased to a single train in each direction. Through the 1920s, this number held constant for westbound trains, but the number of eastbound trains gradually increased to three. During the 1930s and 1940s, the number of both westbound and eastbound freights began to pick up, and by 1949 there were four trains in each direction.

The number of westbound and eastbound through freights increased to five and then seven in the mid-1960s. By 1974, the number had dwindled to four, and by 1977, there were no regularly scheduled freight trains on the line, all trains running as extras. The most commonly seen westbound through freights were Trains

91, 95, 97 and 99; the most commonly seen eastbound through freights were Trains 88, 94, 96 and 98.

A number of intermediate-run and local freight trains also passed through Seymour. At the turn of the 19th century and through the teens, a westbound and an eastbound train ran between Cincinnati and Seymour. In the late teens and early 1920s, there were trains that ran from North Vernon to Seymour and from Seymour to Washington, Indiana. Beginning in 1926 these trains were consolidated into a single train; it ran until 1967.

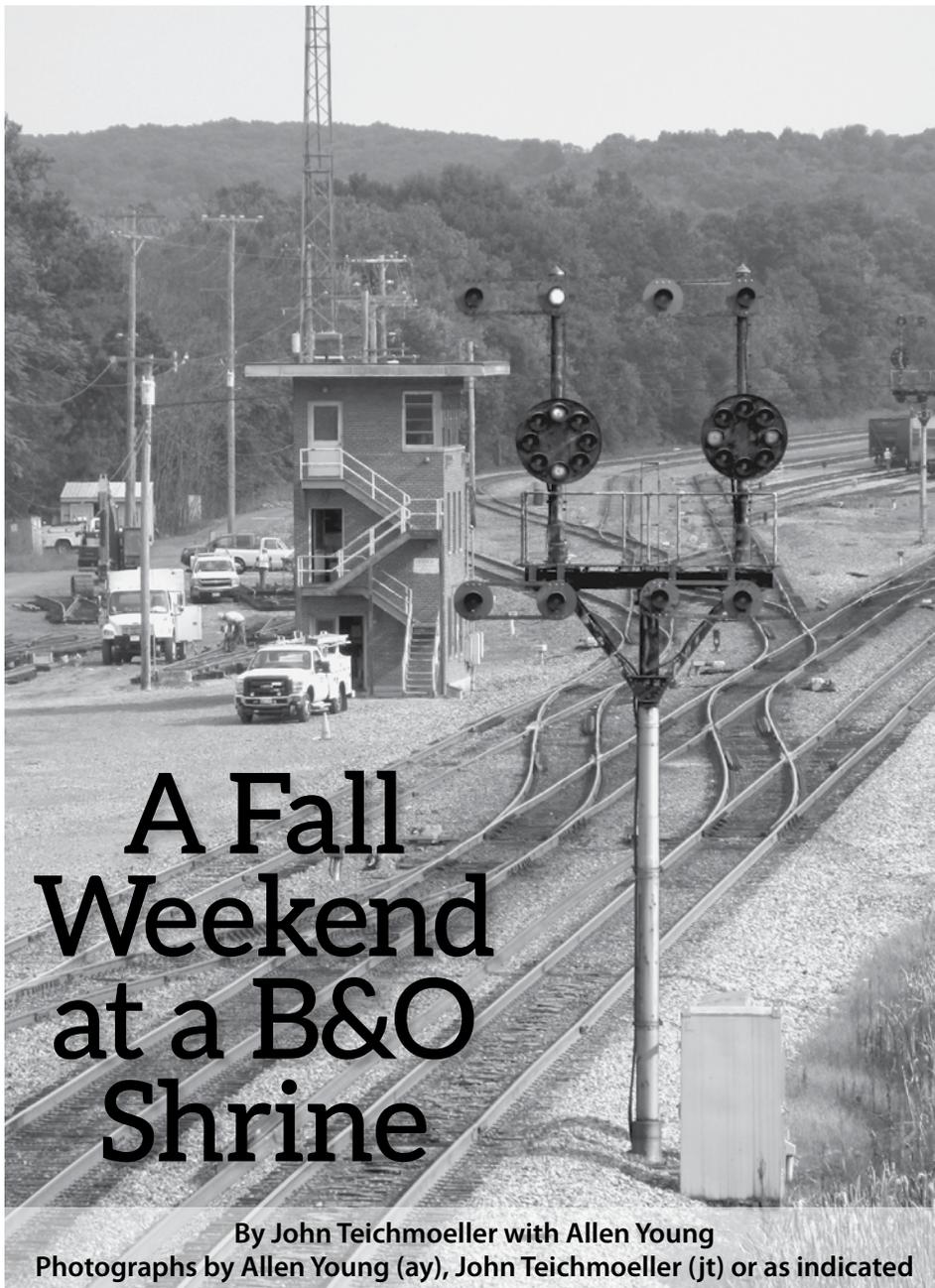
Other trains from North Vernon with much shorter histories included round trip runs to Mitchell in the early and late 1920s, and a round trip to East St. Louis in the early 1930s.

For the past several years, CSX traffic through Seymour has amounted to four trains a week—eastbound Train J780/22 on Tuesday and Thursday, between Mitchell and North Vernon, and westbound Train J780/23 on Wednesday and Friday, between North Vernon and Mitchell. Traffic on the L&I consists of Train CJ, a night train from Columbus to Jeffersonville and back. CSX interchange with them is at a point on the L&I a mile south of Seymour near the South O'Brien Street crossing.

Once a somewhat common occurrence, CSX trips over the L&I between Cincinnati and Louisville had become a thing of the past. Recently, however, the former B&O line between Cincinnati and Seymour has seen significant—and long overdue—trackwork improvements. In late October 2012, Train Q268 began running between Louisville (over the L&I to Seymour) and Cincinnati. And in June 2013, CSX and L&I officials reached an agreement to upgrade the entire L&I line. With a \$70 million price tag (funded by CSX), the project is slated to begin in 2015 and take seven years to complete. It will give CSX a more direct north-south route from Louisville to Detroit and Chicago, in time, increasing the number of trains on the line to as many as 15 per day. Then railfans will again be able to “see more” in Seymour!

## References

- Discussions between 1996 and 2010 with the late Robert Clark, retired B&O fireman/conductor, North Vernon, Indiana.
- Discussions between 2008 and 2013 with Tina Stark, Director, Jackson County Visitor Center, Seymour, Indiana.
- Various B&O Form 6s and Employee Timetables.
- Files from the Offices of the Vice Presidents of Operations and Engineering and Large-Format Drawings at the B&ORHS Archives, Arbutus, Maryland.
- Various Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps at the Library of Congress, Geography & Map Division.
- Various Interstate Commerce Commission Valuation Maps and Field Notes at the National Archives & Records Administration.
- Robert F. Smith, *From the Ohio to the Mississippi*, Mt Airy Printing & Lithographing Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, 1965.
- Walter G. Berg, *Buildings and Structures of American Railroads: A Reference Book for Railroad Managers, Superintendents, Master Mechanics, Engineers, Architects, and Students*, 1892.
- Jackson County, Indiana, Digital History Archive Project.
- Brant & Fuller, *History of Jackson County, Indiana*, Chicago, 1886.
- Descriptive Atlas of Jackson County, Indiana, American Map & Atlas Company, Chicago, 1900.
- Richard S. Simons and Francis H. Parker, *Railroads of Indiana*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1997.
- Craig Sanders, *Limiteds, Locals, and Expresses in Indiana, 1838-1971*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 2003.
- Harry Stegmaier, *Baltimore & Ohio Passenger Service, 1945-1971, Volume 1 – The Route of The National Limited*, TLC Publishing, Lynchburg, Virginia, 1993.
- William J. Watt, *The Pennsylvania Railroad in Indiana*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1999.
- Jerry Marlette, *Interstate: A History of Interstate Public Service Rail Operations*, Transportation Trails, Polo, Illinois, 1990.
- George K. Bradley, *Indiana Railroad: The Magic Interurban*, Central Electric Railfans Association, Chicago, 1991.
- Dr. Carl Bogardus, *The Scarlet Mask or The Story of The Notorious Reno Gang*, Austin, Indiana, 1960.
- John M. Lewis III, *The Reno Story*, Seymour Sesquicentennial Committee and Seymour Oktoberfest, Inc., Seymour, Indiana, 2002. 🌐



# A Fall Weekend at a B&O Shrine

By John Teichmoeller with Allen Young

Photographs by Allen Young (ay), John Teichmoeller (jt) or as indicated

One of the few remaining B&O color-position signals stands at the westbound (east end) approach to Cumberland yard at Mexico Tower, taken from the bridge over the tracks on Mexico Farms Road. It was one of the pre-lunch stops on Friday's Cumberland tour. (ay)

The Society met in Cumberland in 1989 and 2000, and I attended both of those conventions. So I wondered what there would be new to see in 2014. It turns out, plenty. And of course since Cumberland is pretty much a shrine to B&O fans, we had a record attendance of more than 130.

The convention headquarters was the venerable hotel located across the tracks from the site of the Queen City Hotel and Station. Here nobody complains about hearing trains going by all night—in fact, trackside views are usually preferred.

First Quarter 2015

As with past meetings, another splendid handout book was presented to attendees (available from the Company Store, No. 79614, if you couldn't attend), containing worthwhile reprints and a CD with digital images of reports and archival photos. (By the way, the handout book has a sturdy wire spiral binding, not the traditional plastic comb binding with which pages tend to loosen when you fold them backward.) I had forgotten about the comprehensive article reproduced from the Third Quarter 2000 *Sentinel* on Cumberland. (In addition,

our friend Bill Metzger from Confluence, Pennsylvania, was kind enough to arrange for us to have an 11x17 reproduction of the Cumberland yard map that appeared with John Hankey's article in the March 2012 issue of *Trains*.)

The convention mug tradition, chaired by Greg Smith, has been discontinued, replaced by a handsome enameled pin, this year celebrating the *Capitol Limited*.

## Evening Programs

Thursday evening, Dave Downton helped us understand that Cumberland was not just about the B&O, and described the history of the numerous other companies that served the Cumberland area, even the PRR. Henry Freeman then covered the B&O's Cumberland terminal area; a fitting orientation for our Friday tour.

Friday evening we were truly honored by a special selection of Bill Hopkins' slides of the B&O, mostly on the Old Main Line. Bill's photos have appeared over the years in numerous books.

Our Saturday after-dinner presentation was an impressive sound digital video presentation of David Parks' HO layout in California, which depicts the B&O and Western Maryland ca. 1953 in and around Cumberland. David is a faithful attendee at our conventions. There is a YouTube video of his layout (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYfqA4uUko>), but what we saw Saturday night was a brand new "fair use" production, complete with era-specific music. David has a large crew that helps him with this layout, and three of them attended the convention.

At the Saturday banquet, it is important to note that special service recognition awards were made to Bob Fry, Nick Fry, Nick Powell, Craig Close and Bob Hubler. This reinstitutes the practice of such awards that had been made some years ago. President Greg Smith noted that Harry Meem will be retiring as editor of *The Sentinel* with the first quarter 2016 issue and is looking for a replacement.

It should be noted that while some of the originally scheduled presenters had to cancel because of CSX work schedules, the shorter formal evening programs seemed to be most welcome to attendees.

They were left with more time to inspect the model display and make purchases in the room next door. Hopefully Company Store sales were above average this year.

## Model Display

Speaking of the model display, this year's featured a small number of modelers but a large number of excellent models. And all models had nice interpretative cards. Thank you! We have come a long way here.

John Schletzer brought a number of models that some may have recognized from his one-night stand at Somerset two years ago. An 18-piece welded-rail train was new, and 31 company service cars and 11 coal cars had been upgraded since Somerset.

Bill Carl and Ken Braden of Spring Mills Depot, who have favored us with some long-awaited, ready-to-run and state-of-the-art cars, with more to come, brought eight versions of their Canstock car offerings and ten versions of their I-12 cars to give attendees an idea of the variations. It is not always easy to figure out these variations from their commercial website or the Company Store's translation, so it was nice to see them spread out in front of us on the table.

Bruce Elliott had a fine model of upgraded heavyweight lounge car 3302, whose sister was at Hyndman, Pennsylvania, for many years but was regrettably most recently scrapped in-situ. Finally, Bill Craig displayed Coach 8845 with complete interior detail. Unfortunately, he removed the car before I could photograph it or record particulars. Advisory: time does not permit documenting all the models that are removed before Saturday night at our conventions. In truth, we need an official photographer on the modeling committee who will sacrifice dinner and presentation time to record the model display for posterity. Volunteers, contact Bruce Elliott. The PRRT&HS seems to be a bit ahead of us at their conventions, but after all, they have three times the membership.

## Friday

Our first destination Friday morning was the Viaduct in Cumberland, which carries the St. Louis line over Wills Creek.



The first stop of Friday's tour, the famous viaduct through downtown Cumberland that originally led west and south to St. Louis, Missouri—the route of the *National Limited*. Since most traffic heads east/west at the junction above the viaduct, and Amtrak doesn't use the route over the viaduct, it has been reduced to single track. (ay)

Our CSX contacts this year indicated business was so brisk that they did not have the staffing resources to escort us on a tour of the shops, roundhouse, car maintenance facility or hump tower as they had done in the past. So as a change of pace, the buses made a hopscotch “around the property tour,” led by Henry Freeman, John Hankey, Bruce Elliott and Greg Smith. Stops were made overlooking the hump, Mexico Farms tower and along the fence next to the roundhouse, office building, training center and shops on Virginia and Offutt avenues.

Friday afternoon found us across the Potomac River from downtown Cumberland at the shops of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, formerly the Western Maryland Railway's car shop. At first blush, this facility appeared to be a shade-tree blacksmith shop, but as our visit progressed we could develop an appreciation for their capabilities.

Bruce Elliott conducted a special tour of some of the passenger and freight cars in the “restoration line,” including a former B&O class A-14 coach. Fortunately, autumn has already visited the area and the weeds had browned out, although the burrs were abundant.

C&O No. 1309, the 2-6-6-2 that had traveled in pieces aboard two heavy-

duty flatcars this summer from the B&O Museum in Baltimore, was there, field-stripped in preparation for eventual placement in service on the Western Maryland Scenic.

The biggest surprise to me was a sparkling 4-wheel Plymouth Model CR-4 industrial switcher that the WM Scenic had recently purchased and placed into service as a shop switcher. This diesel is one of only four built and was originally purchased by Jones and Laughlin Steel Co.'s Aliquippa Works (but according to Steve Timko there is some fuzziness about whether it ever actually operated at Aliquippa).

The star of this visit, of course, was No. 734, a Lake Superior and Ishpeming Baldwin 2-8-0 not originally from the Western Maryland Railway but basically identical to those that did operate on the WM, including on the line now operated from Cumberland to Frostburg. We were able to see her in all her magnificence switching the dinner train that we would ride, then we saw her being coaled by conveyor.

Our diesel-powered dinner train took us on a sunset ride from Maryland Junction through the Narrows and back to the Western Maryland Station. Dave Downton and John Hankey discussed the railroad and industrial history and locations during the trip.

## Saturday

Saturday morning we took the bus to *Potomac Eagle's* Wappocomo Station on the South Branch Valley Railroad for a ride north to near Green Spring, then back south through the "trough." Unfortunately, we ended our northbound leg a mile or so from the wye junction of the South Branch Valley with the east end of the former Cumberland Division at Green Spring and the iconic site of the former B&O Railroad Tie Plant. This facility, now operated by Koppers, Inc., was the site of the B&O's 30" gauge 0-4-0. Lunch was served on the train.

The SBV has two locomotives painted for B&O and one for Chessie System and uses an I-5ba caboose body as its ticket office. In addition to our group, the train was quite well patronized by other passengers who boarded at Wappocomo on our southbound leg. The train was, nonetheless, by no means overcrowded. An open gondola was even available for the more adventurous. And the weather was stunning.

Following our train ride, the bus took us through Keyser, West Virginia. The B&O yard is gone, mostly converted to a shopping center; the station is still there but boarded up. We had stopped for photos last time. This time we did not stop due to time constraints.

## Business Meeting

All candidates for officer and director positions were re-elected—Greg Smith, president; Henry Freeman, vice president-operations; George Stant, vice president-finance; Allen Young, secretary; Chris Winslow, treasurer; and Bruce Elliott and Nick Fry, directors. Chris Winslow reported a satisfactory financial year. Going forward, the Company Store will be shifting to digital reproduction of stock items, as hard copy reproductions take up lots of space and tie up a lot of money in slow-moving inventory. All railroad publishers are reducing print runs of their books for the same reason.

Greg Smith described the need for new quarters for the archives and reminded the membership that donations to the building fund are generally tax deductible. He also suggested members think of the Society in their estate plans. Naming

First Quarter 2015



Bruce Elliott checks with a Western Maryland Scenic conductor about the possibility of employment. He was told to put on a tie, tuck in his shirttail and come back later. (Mike Shylanski)

the Society as beneficiary or contingent beneficiary on your retirement account is a technique worth discussing with your financial adviser.

Unfortunately, there was no mention of the status of the B&O Modeler, other than that content is abundant. All we need is a staff.

## Sunday Train Ride

A ride on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad was available from Cumberland to Frostburg and back on Sunday behind 2-8-0 No. 734. I decided I had seen enough trees already this weekend so passed on this activity, but presume this was a positive experience for many behind a steam locomotive quite appropriate for this section of the former Western Maryland. Several other "alternate tours" were offered, including one by John Schletzer to visit his home layout in Hyndman. There was an informal tour of various sites between Hyndman, Meyersdale and Sand Patch; an open house at the Maryland & West Virginia Model Railroad Association's HO and G scale layouts; and one by Allen Young and Marv Cadwell to Mt. Savage (formerly served by the Cumberland & Pennsylvania RR, later acquired by the B&O), featuring a personalized tour of the town's historical and preserved sites by Dennis Lashley and his sidekick Earl Pope, who are members of the local historical society.

## Acknowledgments

Andy White, as the overall convention chair, as usual wants us to make sure we acknowledge the large number of individuals who make our meetings as rich as possible, including his convention committee members, Henry Freeman (whom I encouraged to write this article, but he declined) and John Hankey. All previously mentioned individuals, and there are many who made this meeting a success, are duly acknowledged and thanked. In addition, we greatly thank Craig Close for schlepping the Company Store to Cumberland and dueling with the Quickbooks cash register; Allen Young for administration; Chris Winslow for writing checks to Subway, etc.; Mark Farris, Michael Gresham and Donnie and Jody Shaw at the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad; Al McEvoy and Dennis Fulton, Paul Denton, Richard Lind, Nick Powell and Mike Watoski for the handout book; and Mike Kotowski, Leo Pesce and Dick Zeren for their great work in producing the video and handling the technical setup for the presentation of the David Parks layout video. Dave Moore did a great job preparing the beverages for each day's lunch and conducting the normal lunch distribution without his sidekick Leonard DeWolfe, who couldn't attend due to an injury. 

# A Weekend in the Queen City





**The problem in Cumberland was that CSX was so busy, they didn't have time for visiting railfans.** But there were the tourist railroads. Clockwise from top left, Western Maryland Scenic Railroad Number 734 shows off some switching skills (aj); classic blue-black-gold paint jobs were on the point of the *Potomac Eagle* (Wade Rice); visitors get a briefing on the Cumberland future of ex-C&O 2-6-6-2 Number 1309 (jt); Bruce Elliott (white jacket, back to camera) conducts an informal briefing about WMSR's ex-B&O class A-14 coach (jt); Steve Tichenal takes a detail shot of South Branch Valley's Number 722, the ex-B&LE unit in B&O colors (jt); and (center) Society Company Store Manager Craig Close (blue shirt) was heard to harrumph, "Chesapeake Area Live Steamers wouldn't do it this way." (jt)



Behind P-7 Number 5309, Number 2, the eastbound *National Limited*, rolls toward Washington in this 1930 picture by Bruce Fales.

(Frank Wrabel collection)

# B&O Passenger Service to the Southwest

## The *National Limited* Takes on PRR

By Frank A. Wrabel

The *National Limited*...the name graced the mainline passenger schedules of the Baltimore and Ohio for more than 40 years. Today, more than 40 years since B&O trains Number 1 and 2 called on St. Louis for the last time, veteran travelers still fondly recall the *National Limited* as a more civilized and attractive alternative on the route to St. Louis.

Despite that honorable heritage, some critics have suggested that the *National Limited* service from New York to St. Louis was of a lesser status than that of other passenger trains within its system. In truth, the *National Limited* experienced service retrenchments earlier and had a shorter life than the *Capitol Limited*. The total number of trains the B&O fielded to St. Louis numbered less than the more lucrative Washington-to-Chicago route. But the quality of equip-

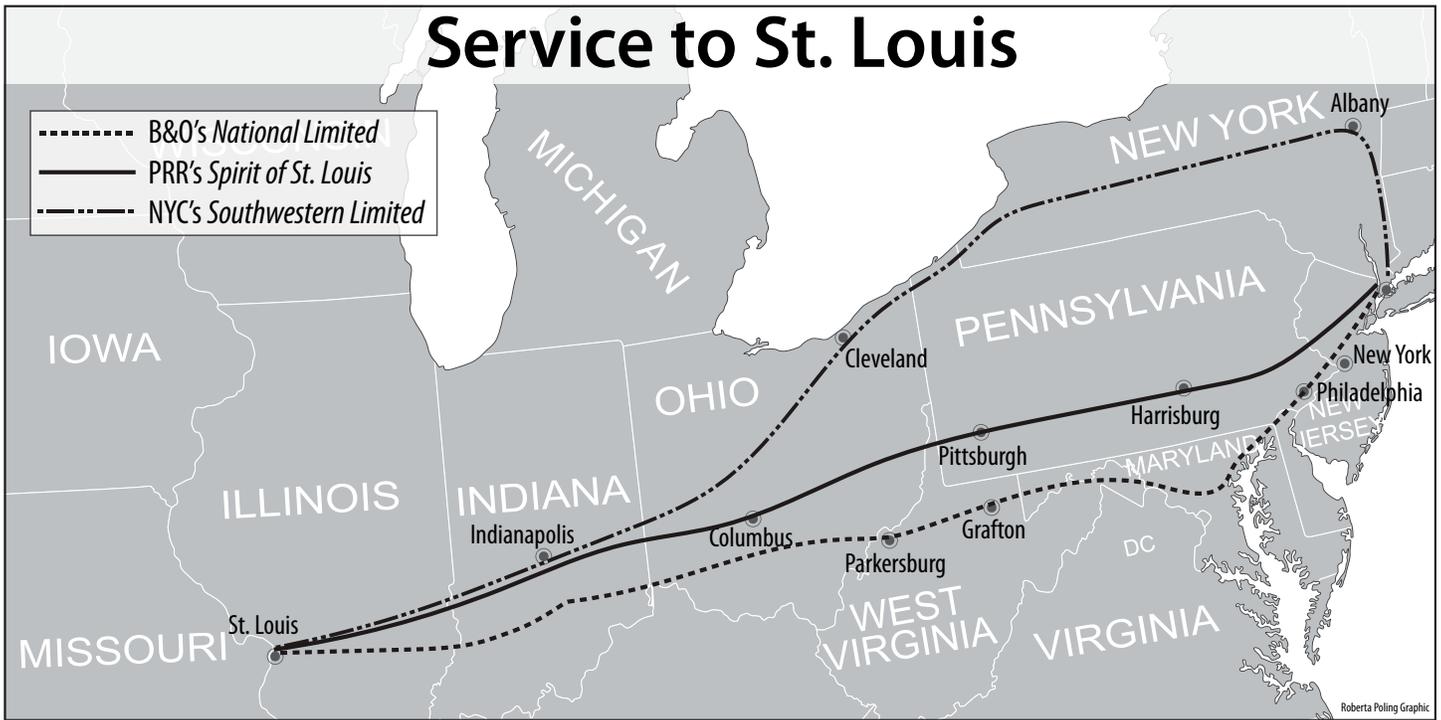
ment offered by the *National Limited* consistently matched the high quality of car service of the *Capitol Limited*.

The level of rail service to St. Louis was dictated by the Midwestern base for commerce and finance. But by 1900, it was clear St. Louis had lost the race to be the primary point of connection between eastern and western railroad networks. Chicago would forever be the leader. Although secondary, St. Louis remained an important goal for the westward expansion of eastern rail systems, since it was home to many emerging commercial enterprises, including some that left the congested, smoke-filled industrial valleys of the East and relocated where market share, plant expansion and general quality of life could flourish. As the Southwest became more active in the national economy, connections to railroads there and new, expanding markets were an enticing plum.

Earlier, the importance of St. Louis in reaching west beyond the Ohio River and Cincinnati had captured the attention of B&O management. To accomplish that expansion, the B&O acquired the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad and other lines to form the Baltimore and Ohio Southwestern. In reaching this goal, however, the B&O faced stiff competition from the dominant Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) and the wealthy, well-managed New York Central Lines (NYC).

The PRR assembled smaller lines to form the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad, frequently known as the Panhandle, since an earlier railroad starting west from Pittsburgh crossed the now West Virginia "northern panhandle" territory. Not to be outmaneuvered, the NYC acquired the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railway, better known as the Big Four Route.

# Service to St. Louis



The B&O faced substantial competition in offering travel from New York to St. Louis. By the 1930s, the *National Limited* ran from New York, through Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington before heading west past Cumberland and through Parkersburg in West Virginia; Athens, Chillicothe, and Cincinnati in Ohio; North Vernon and Vincennes in Indiana and across Illinois to St. Louis, taking 24 hours to go from New York to St. Louis.

The NYC offered service from New York on a more northerly route through Albany and Buffalo in New York; Cleveland, Galion, and Sydney in Ohio; Muncie, Indianapolis and Terre Haute in Indiana and across Illinois to St. Louis, on a 21-hour schedule.

The PRR traveled a route between the other two from New York through Philadelphia and Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania; Newark, Columbus and Dayton in Ohio; Indianapolis and Terre Haute in Indiana, and across Illinois to St. Louis in 19 hours, five less than the B&O.

B&O's early efforts at serving St. Louis were prominently displayed in 1904 on the occasion of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. The B&O extensively advertised its train service to that historic event with numerous colorful brochures and special schedules that were the epitome of Victorian print graphics.

More important, after passengers departed the varnished coaches and Pullman sleeping cars of this venerable carrier at their St. Louis destination, B&O was able to keep its distinguished corporate identity in the forefront by way of an impressive display at the Exposition.

In addition to its historic display of locomotives and cars from the monumental display at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago 11 years earlier, the B&O gave Exposition visitors a glance at the future through such exhibits as the first mallet locomotive in the U.S., Number 2400, the 0-6-6-0 known affectionately as Old Maude.

Consistent with the daily challenges of operating the railroad, B&O faced competition at the Exposition as well. The PRR display featured a full-sized cross section of its new Hudson River Tunnel, then under construction, complete with a mock-up of a coach within that short tube. It also displayed drawings of the proposed Pennsylvania Station in New York City, which would soon serve trains using the tunnels. A working locomotive test plant that accurately measured the performance of new steam locomotives emphasized the PRR's research in locomotive development.

The NYC tried to one-up its direct rival by displaying one of the new high-driven 4-4-2 Atlantic locomotives used

on the Big Four Route. To increase the visual impact of this handsome locomotive, it was displayed on a turntable bridge elevated above the floor of the exposition pavilion, beneath a large sign identifying the American Locomotive Works at Schenectady, New York, as the creator of the speedster.

When the Exposition closed, the B&O made certain that its keen desire to serve St. Louis passengers would endure. To showcase its Southwestern system, B&O introduced a southwest, region-specific version of its popular *Book of the Royal Blue*. The book became instantly popular with passengers, a valuable advertising tool and tangible reminder that the B&O was in that market for the long haul. Unfortunately, deteriorating finances, labor unrest and World War I sidetracked these passenger initiatives.

All of that seemed in the distant past as the new decade of the 1920s began. Increased earnings under the leadership of Daniel Willard created the perfect environment for upgrading passenger service. The B&O first selected the Chicago to Washington and Baltimore route to deploy its new version of passenger luxury. Willard was deliberate and succinct with his timing and clarity of mission, cautioning his subordinates that he did not want to copy the service offered by the PRR or NYC. Rather, he wanted



At the 1927 Fair of the Iron Horse, the B&O showed off locomotive Number 5501, a 4-8-2 that carried the *National's* Washington-Monument light box on its smokebox, and a fully liveried crew. (Frank Wrabel collection)

to offer passengers more personalized service. He acknowledged the B&O could not operate the fastest first class trains, nor could it afford the fleet of the newest equipment, but he resolved to offer the passengers a memorable travel experience.

The success of the all-Pullman *Capitol Limited* from Washington to Chicago starting May 6, 1923, gave the B&O managers the motivation to expand the lofty objective set forth by Willard with an eye toward

its St. Louis service. That effort advanced rapidly with the mid-'20s inauguration of the all-Pullman *National Limited* on April 26, 1925. In common with its senior counterpart, it featured the latest designs of Pullman club cars, sleeping cars, and observation cars. More important, orders of the famed *Colonial* dining cars allowed the B&O to expand that elegant and distinctive service to the St. Louis route.

Through Pullman car, parlor car and

coach service east of Washington were offered via connecting Royal Blue Line trains. To the west, parlor car service was offered between Cincinnati and St. Louis and a Pullman to Louisville was also featured. Contrasting the *Capitol Limited* and competing New York to St. Louis trains of the PRR and NYC, however, the B&O did not add the extra-fare feature to trains 1 and 2.

B&O selected a group of durable class P-5 Pacific locomotives, including Numbers 5200 and 5227 that were refurbished for the important assignment with a miniature light box on the smoke box door that featuring the new *National Limited* name. In a radical departure from its established corporate identification, the B&O employed as the logo for the *National Limited* an image of the Washington Monument, rather than the popular Capitol Dome.

Passengers accustomed to trains 1 and 2 prior to the April 1925 upgrade could not help but be impressed. To its credit, B&O would keep a watchful eye on the *Capitol Limited* and *National Limited* throughout the decade, introducing new services and features accordingly.

It seemed fitting in this heady economic environment that America's First Railroad would spare no expense in celebrating its 100th anniversary with the legendary Fair of the Iron Horse in 1927. More than a corporate celebration, Willard felt the need to remind the B&O headquarters city of the significance of the greater rail industry because "some people have forgotten."

In a characteristic spirit of being an accomplished industry statesman, Willard cast old rivalries aside and invited several railroads, including the PRR and NYC, to display examples of their historic and newest motive power.

Appropriately, Number 2400, the first mallet locomotive on the B&O, was featured once again. Renamed for the Fair to honor its designer, John E. Muhlfeld, Number 2400 quickly renewed its star-status with a new generation of visitors. Sadly, that priceless relic would succumb to the scrapper's torch in the middle of the next decade when the income from scrap metal exceeded its historic importance.

Still, that hard-nosed action on the



West of the mountains, USRA Pacifics, B&O class P-5, were the regular *National* power. Number 5200 shows off in St. Louis in 1938.

(Frank Wrabel collection)

part of Motive Power Chief George H. Emerson prompted Willard to place a permanent moratorium on any further disposition of the B&O collection of historic locomotives and cars. Interestingly, a second Muhlfeld design of 1927, for Delaware & Hudson, the high-pressure *John B. Jervis*, was displayed at the Fair as well. Muhlfeld was then employed by the D&H and this invitation by B&O to participate paid tribute to D&H President Leonor F. Loree, a dynamic turn-of-the-century B&O president.

Clearly the Fair was a B&O show, and to underscore its renewed commitment to first-class travel, the railroad introduced the *National Limited* to visitors. The new T-class locomotive Number 5501, named *Phillip E. Thomas*, constructed in the Mt. Clare Shops in 1925 and painted in the same olive green livery with gold and maroon striping that the new President-class locomotives displayed, headed the train. The light box of the *National Limited* was affixed to the front smoke box door. Significantly, Number 5501 preceded the *Capitol Limited* in the daily pageant of transportation history.

Visitors could also inspect Number 5501 in greater detail after the daily pageant since B&O would display this

locomotive in an impressive lineup of motive power that included Canadian Pacific 4-6-2 Number 2333 and Canadian National 4-8-4 Number 6100, as well as NYC 4-6-4 Hudson Number 5205, the newest locomotive design of 1927, and PRR class K-4 Pacific Number 5475, fresh from its Juniata Shops erecting floor, the first PRR locomotive to feature the famous keystone-shaped number plate that became a PRR classic. Many visitors selected the *Phillip E. Thomas*, largest B&O passenger locomotive of that era, with its distinctive *National Limited* light box, as the backdrop for a Kodak snapshot to remember a golden afternoon at B&O's landmark birthday celebration.

Almost as quickly as the trail of smoke and steam dissipated after the close of the Fair, new challenges faced the B&O's St. Louis service, with increased competition delivered in full force by the ever-present PRR. The all-Pullman, extra-fare *American* and the *St. Louisan*, both serving the New York to St. Louis route, were the recognized leaders of its fleet.

The PRR also fielded the *St. Louis-New York Express*, the *Keystone Express*, the *Commercial Express*, the *Gotham Limited* and the *Panhandle Express*. All of those trains featured coaches, sleeping cars,

dining and lounge or observation car service between certain terminals, and six featured through car service to Baltimore and Washington in direct competition with the B&O. These traditional services, however, were merely a preface for two entirely new trains late in the decade.

First, PRR revised the hierarchy of its St. Louis service on June 15, 1927, with the introduction of the *Spirit of St. Louis*, a new all-Pullman limited that was much more than another PRR standard-bearer. The new train featured a Washington section, offered travelers more sophisticated services and capitalized on Col. Charles Lindbergh's famous aircraft, the wonder of the transportation world in 1927. Within one year, the train name would also underscore the relationship between the railroad and Lindbergh since the famous aviator was later on retainer to the PRR as aeronautical consultant, a position charged with perfecting the PRR's leap into commercial aviation.

On July 7, 1929, the PRR introduced a combined rail and air service that offered travel coast-to-coast in 48 hours. PRR, Transcontinental Air Transport (TAT) and the Santa Fe Railway were partners in the service, which featured Pullman trains by night and Ford Tri-Motor



B&O Number 2, the *Lord Baltimore*, got an occasional crack at hauling the *National Limited* west of Cincinnati. It waits to depart on an uncertain day in the 1930s. (Dan Finrock collection)

aircraft by day. To serve the eastern nighttime leg of the route, the PRR established the *Airway Limited*, which was an additional, daily section of the *American*.

The PRR train left New York City with passengers bound for Columbus, Ohio. There, they transferred to TAT and made several daylight stops before arriving at Waynoka, Oklahoma, where they boarded a Santa Fe train for Clovis, New Mexico. From Clovis they flew on TAT into Los Angeles. The mixed-service route thus skirted the Rocky Mountains and saved time.

It was a novel service that attracted much public attention. At the time, the *Broadway Limited* was scheduled for 20 hours New York to Chicago. The Santa Fe Chief was scheduled for a Chicago-Los Angeles trip in 63 hours in 1926. So New York to Los Angeles took 83 hours compared to about 50 hours for TAT (reported anywhere from 48 to 53, but actual times were usually more)

NYC was active in the 1920s as well. The finest train on its New York-to-St.

Louis schedule was the all-Pullman, extra fare *Southwestern Limited*. Displaying the same commitment to perfection that the NYC established with the superb *20th Century Limited*, the *Southwestern Limited* was the popular choice among affluent Midwesterners.

The late-day departure of the *Southwestern Limited* from Grand Central Station was in every way, with the exception of the legendary red carpet, on par with the *20th Century Limited*. Many anxious NYC employees gave thanks each night when the *Southwestern Limited* departed without incident and the fading sight of the brass-railed observation car with the train name in twinkling, miniature blue lights, offset by a pair of glowing red marker lights, was a signal of another successfully completed chapter in deploying the famous “Great Steel Fleet.”

Other NYC trains included the *Knickerbocker Special*, *New York–St. Louis Special* and later the *Missourian*.

Regionally, the Big Four Route was also the popular choice with tour groups

and fraternal organizations that constituted an important market share in that era. The latter groups appreciated the good-natured spirit of Big Four management when the various lodges wanted to decorate the locomotives assigned to power their special trains with sheet steel fezzes around smokestacks, bronze stars on cylinders, sculpted scimitars, flags and colorful signs—all of which were strictly prohibited on the PRR.

The Big Four Route maintained an extensive branch network in the region and, in conjunction with parent NYC and affiliated lines, offered many inter-city services that featured efficient connecting services with other routes. Examples included Buffalo to St. Louis, Cleveland to St. Louis and Cleveland to Indianapolis.

Additionally, the NYC offered convenient through car service to Boston and New England over its pristine Boston & Albany affiliate. In this manner, the savvy NYC achieved more efficient car utilization and created a spectrum of attractive transportation options with-



Nearing its stop in Cincinnati, the *National Limited* rolls through suburban Winton Place in June 1940. (Dan Finrock collection)

out the expense of operating complete, dedicated trains over the entire length of a fixed route. In the process, the NYC would also retain its coveted record for serving more Pullman sleeping car passengers than any other railroad.

The NYC had the most indirect route to St. Louis since its mainline went directly north from New York to Albany before turning west to Buffalo and Cleveland. Just west of Cleveland at the Berea, Ohio, interlocking that was shadowed by a landmark gothic sandstone station, the NYC met the Big Four Route to Indianapolis and St. Louis. Thanks to its well-engineered “Water Level Route,” the NYC could effectively compete with the fastest schedules offered by the PRR.

To underscore the passenger comfort, the legend “You Can Sleep” was later added to its famous tag line. The NYC highlighted that concept by artfully enhancing its system map, featured in each passenger timetable, with the image of heavy mountains in the Allegheny region, a subtle implication that the PRR and B&O had to conquer that rocky summit, tossing sleeping car passengers around in the process, before achieving smooth running on their respective level tangent mainlines far to the west.

Although the NYC route was more roundabout, its trains moved more efficiently after the introduction of the first Hudson class 4-6-4 locomotives in 1927. Many mechanical engineers regarded the Hudson as the ultimate steam design for passenger service.

Finally, the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railway (NKP), known as the Nickel Plate Road, upgraded its single train between New York and St. Louis in 1929. Nameless NKP trains 9 and 10, like the NYC service, were less of a threat to the B&O since they did not serve the St. Louis-to-Washington corridor. Since the NKP mainline ended in Buffalo, the train was handed off to the Delaware Lackawanna & Western (DL&W), which took it across New York to a New Jersey ferryboat connection to New York City.

The sum total of all of that competition presented a huge challenge for the B&O and the St. Louis service, but fortunately the balanced approach to risk-taking, careful assessment of market potential on its own route and the constant focus on personalized service and passenger comfort would serve the railroad well.

Immediately after the 1929 delivery of three sunroom observation cars for the *Capitol Limited*, B&O quickly leased

three identical cars for the *National Limited*. The popularity that those cars enjoyed on the Chicago-to-Washington route was soon replicated when the three-compartment, one-drawing room and lounge observation cars entered *National Limited* service.

To make trains 1 and 2 as competitive as possible, B&O continued to route the *National Limited* over the Patterson Creek Cutoff to avoid one station stop and miss the congestion in and around Cumberland.

Since more power was needed for the expanding consists, B&O reassigned several of the President-class Pacific locomotives to serve western trains that originated in Washington. Locomotive Number 5309, the booster-equipped *President Polk*, was included in this transfer and acquired the lighted *National Limited* logo on its smoke box door to honor the finest B&O train to St. Louis.

B&O also remembered the needs of passengers destined for more remote locations, especially passengers wishing to travel to Cumberland. During the upgrades to Trains 1 and 2, the B&O improved St. Louis to Washington Trains 3 and 4 and assigned the name *Diplomat Limited* (later shortened to



EA-EB 54 and 54X make the *National's* Cincinnati stop on a 1937 trip. The B&O was quick to use, and nearly as quick to promote, smoke-free, smooth-riding diesel power.

(Dan Finrock collection)

*The Diplomat*). B&O also improved Trains 11 and 12 that later acquired the name *Metropolitan Special*.

The B&O wisely employed the *Metropolitan Special* to serve more remote stations and support the mail and express requirements on the St. Louis to Washington route. That train relieved Trains 1, 2, 3 and 4 of countless station stops and guaranteed these trains would never be encumbered with excessive head-end equipment and the longer pauses at station stops for loading and unloading mail and express packages.

If the B&O felt challenged with its eastern terminal arrangements in Jersey City and the ferryboat and motor coach service required to serve New York, managers could take heart from terminal arrangements in St. Louis. B&O and all of its competitors shared the monumental St. Louis Union Station and were on an equal basis with respect to connecting rail service to points southwest, west and north.

Despite its second-place status, St. Louis could take pride in an achievement that eluded Chicago: a true Union Station for all major railroad lines. St. Louis civic leaders had demonstrated greater vision than most of their contemporaries when they pressured the railroads to unite and support the Union Station concept. In 1889, six railroads formed the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis (TRRA)

and immediately took action by commissioning architect Theodore Link to create a new Union Station, serving all railroads entering St. Louis.

Union Station, completed in 1894, gave the appearance of an immense medieval castle and was quickly noted for its uniquely spacious interior appointments. Stretching to the rear of the station building was an equally massive train shed that originally protected 30 tracks, later expanded to 42. Traffic using St. Louis Union Station peaked at 269 trains per day in the landmark year of 1920.

B&O was encouraged by the popularity of its 1920s passenger improvement program and began contemplating additional refinements to keep up with the PRR and NYC. Soon, however, the color, excitement and the limitless prosperity and optimism that characterized the Roaring Twenties would be replaced by a harsh world no one clearly anticipated only months earlier.

The stock market crash and the resulting Depression sent the B&O into a tailspin. Revenues dropped substantially and large, imperfectly timed investments in the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh, the Buffalo & Susquehanna and the Chicago & Alton further diminished the B&O treasury. Worse yet, the economic downturn immediately impacted the St. Louis to Washington service, and by 1931

the *National Limited* lost its all-Pullman status forever.

B&O was not singularly impulsive, however, since the NYC soon followed by adding coaches to the consist of the *Southwestern Limited* and eliminating the extra fare.

PRR could not ignore the economic turmoil, and eventually, the *Spirit of St. Louis* also lost its all-Pullman status. PRR, however, stubbornly retained the extra fare on that train until 1932. More than the B&O and NYC, PRR had to initiate immediate and massive cuts to correct its overly expansive passenger program from the previous decade. The number of trains was reduced, lounge and observation-car service was eliminated and all-Pullman expresses over the old Panhandle to St. Louis became part of history.

The famed rail-air service became a financial disaster and PRR later divested itself of its ambitious but misplaced business adventure, much to the relief of critical regulators who were steadfastly determined to keep fledgling airlines aloof from the railroads. But in spite of its early problems, TAT eventually became the foundation for the successful Trans World Airlines.

Latter-day critics maintained that the railroads' plight in that era was compounded by excessive duplicity given the multiple services on the B&O, PRR and NYC on routes like St. Louis to Washington and New York. Before taking that position, however, one must consider all of that service in the context of the times.

The point of origination and the destination were only part of a successful transportation formula for profit since each railroad line served a different mix of cities and towns en route. Before paved roads, buses, wide-scale ownership of automobiles and established airlines, railroads were the ONLY way to reach many cities and smaller towns. That meant that in addition to families visiting relatives, all the business travel required to support commercial requirements in a specific location had to use the railroads.

Since advanced methods of communication like faxing, Internet and teleconferencing were still far in the future, businessmen had to make a personal appearance to complete many transac-



P-3 Number 5112 carries the *National's* light box on a 1931 trip. (Frank Wrabel collection)

tions; and the B&O, along with all the other railroads, counted heavily on each station and on the business traveler to bolster the revenue on all passenger trains.

The continuing effects of the financial meltdown were especially severe in the towns along much of the western route of the *National Limited*. It seemed that even sporadic signs of early recovery eluded much of that region as shuttered businesses, dark factories and deteriorating farms still dominated many locations. The B&O route had fewer larger cities to contribute to the revenue of the *National Limited* and other trains on the St. Louis line.

Unfortunately, St. Louis did not host a civic or commercial event similar to Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition of 1933-1934 to generate new passenger traffic.

Grasping for any signs of hope, some B&O managers optimistically believed that the late 1920s investment in the Chicago & Alton, known as the Alton, would stimulate traffic growth between Chicago and St. Louis. That lofty goal was never

fully realized since only a superficial integration of the two railroads occurred.

The Alton was also a troubled property; and clearly, the 1930s were not the time to adopt a weak, cash-hungry corporate sibling. B&O did utilize the Alton route during the testing of experimental steam locomotives, diesel-electric motive power and lightweight passenger car construction in the period from 1935-1940, but little else occurred. Economic pressures eventually prompted B&O to disown its expense-laden, Midwestern stepchild.

Still, much excitement was apparent early in the decade at the largest intermediate stop on the route of the *National Limited*. Culminating years of debate, the city of Cincinnati and the railroads were able to proceed with the construction of a new Union Terminal in 1929.

Completed in 1933, that new temple of transportation offered a capacity of 216 trains per day. It was the work of architects Fellheimer & Wagner, the same team that was responsible for the

new (1929) NYC Buffalo Central Station. Cincinnati's opulent interior, credited to designer Paul Cret, was embellished with colorful mosaic murals that depicted popular industrial and local themes.

Although B&O passengers would be well served by the new terminal, clearly the strain of the Depression and the new and increasingly hostile competition from automobiles and buses was taking its toll on the respected president of the B&O. Shortly after Cincinnati Union Terminal opened, an enthusiastic railroad official exclaimed, "People will travel from miles around to see this magnificent station!" Willard tersely replied, "Yes...by automobile!"

Doldrums or not, B&O could not retreat from the St. Louis to Washington corridor and hand what traffic remained to the PRR. Determined to capitalize on the success of the air-conditioned *Columbian* in 1931, B&O worked to introduce that novel feature on a much larger scale. On April 20, 1932, the *National*

*Limited* became the first long-distance air-conditioned train in the world. Two years would pass before competing PRR or NYC could match that level of commitment. B&O emphasized that travel on its trains was smoke- and cinder-free in a cool, comfortable environment.

Significantly, the *National Limited* and all B&O passenger trains would receive a major lift early in the decade by endorsement from a high-level statesman. Soon after Willard appointed Howard E. Simpson as eastern traffic manager in 1931, Simpson assiduously courted presidential candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt, taking great pains to execute the best possible traveling arrangements for the candidate.

The value of this proactive marketing effort became instantly apparent when a special B&O train carried FDR from New York (Jersey City) to Washington for his inauguration on March 3, 1933. From that point forward, the B&O would play a material role in managing lengthy tours and special trains for this president.

FDR and his staff truly respected B&O management and found its service, equipment and train handling far superior to that offered by its primary competitor. (PRR could be impersonal, demanding and sometimes tedious. Its passenger department once quibbled at length with the staff of President Hoover over an unpaid invoice for \$252.71.) FDR and his successor, Harry Truman, often used the route of the *National Limited* to reach the heartland.

While those special trains surely gave the men in the Operating Department ulcers, many noted that the popularity of the dynamic new president and the public's awareness and favorable opinion of B&O service rose throughout the decade. Many newspapers of the day featured a large photo of FDR with that broad smile, assuring Americans that they had "nothing to fear but fear itself," standing on the rear platform of a B&O special, with a large, illuminated B&O drumhead below. The most creative advertising executives on Madison Avenue, given all the money in the world, could not have conceived a script for more favorable testimony to promote the railroad.

During the difficult years of the

decade, the daily sound of the *National Limited* was a Big Ben of sorts, reminding each town along the line that the first-class mobility of life continued. The resonating sound of the locomotive's bell summoned youth from the nearby neighborhoods and farms to the station. By the time those young admirers reached the depot, the engineer was on the platform with his long-spouted oil can lubricating the valve gear and side rods to the steady beat of the pounding air compressor.

The fireman high on top of the coal pile would be at work with his scoop, pushing the mountain of coal forward to ease his job and to improve the functionality of the mechanical stoker as well. If need be, the fireman would take a fist full of cotton waste and clean the lenses of the classification lamps, the *National Limited* sign, the headlight lens and the brass bell before returning to his seat on the left-hand side of the cab.

If time permitted, the engineer would explain an aspect of the locomotive, the train or possibly mention the notables of the day on board to these aspiring, junior railroad superintendents. All too soon, the engineer would ascend the steps to his post in the cab and the deep-throated whistle would signal the on-time departure. Suddenly, with a burst of power and a rush of steam, the polished consist gradually gained speed and then the beautiful sunroom observation car glided by, its brilliant drumhead with proud train name reassuring all that the *Limited* would return the next day to break the innocent idleness of small-town America.

The reduction of active competition between New York and St. Louis ended on June 15, 1938, when the PRR added several new, lightweight, streamlined Pullman sleeping, lounge and observation cars to the older heavyweight *Spirit of St. Louis* consist (PRR Trains 30 and 31). The motivation occurred when the NYC commissioned the Pullman Company to construct a spectacular new *20th Century Limited* and the B&O modernized and dieselized the *Capitol Limited*.

PRR correctly reasoned that both roads would soon re-equip their St. Louis feature trains. Contrasting with the new NYC *20th Century Limited*, PRR would

not completely re-equip any one train with new, lightweight cars. Instead, four trains—the *Broadway Limited*, *Liberty Limited*, the *Spirit of St. Louis* and *The General*—would receive select new units from a large order of Pullman equipment intended to augment the older fleet of heavyweight cars.

Doubts about lightweight car construction aside, the PRR did place its faith in one of the most creative if not radical industrial designers of the era. In 1937 noted industrial designer Raymond Loewy was charged with designing the two-tone red "Fleet of Modernism." The *Broadway Limited* would receive almost entirely new equipment with the exceptions of the baggage-RPO car and the dining car, both dating from 1910, which were rebuilt and streamlined at the Altoona Shops. The lounge and observation car service would be permanently restored to the *Spirit of St. Louis* and *Liberty Limited*.

Unfortunately the "Modernism" theme was consistently compromised by commingling the new lightweight cars with the massive fleet of heavyweight Pullmans on the *Spirit of St. Louis*. This mix of equipment was so extreme that on the maiden run of Train 31, only the last four cars of the train were the touted lightweight streamlined cars. On one early ceremonial run of Train 30, PRR assigned its one Loewy-styled K-4 steam locomotive to the train, but on a daily basis the standard, non-streamlined K-4 class continued to power the *Spirit of St. Louis*. That train would remain a coach and Pullman car operation with a Washington section to compete for the *National Limited's* Baltimore-Washington passengers.

Improvement in the economy late in the decade, plus the New York World's Fair and Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco, offered the promise of new traffic to all major rail lines. That opportunity for revenue was not lost on the B&O, and in late 1939, work began on the diesel-powered, streamlined *National Limited*. B&O employed the same methods that were introduced to upgrade the *Royal Blue* in 1937 and the *Capitol Limited* in 1938. But B&O did not lease or purchase new equipment for the *National Limited*, electing instead to modernize the older

heavyweight Pullman sleeping cars and the railroad-owned coaches and dining cars.

Pullman rebuilt 19 cars, including the sunroom observation lounge cars (*Capitol Escort*, *Key Island* and *Palm Island*) and Mt. Clare Shop forces completed 16 cars, including eight coaches, four lounge-dormitory cars and dining cars 1077, 1078, 1079 and 1080. Those cars had a higher profile than the newer, streamlined lightweight cars that were capturing much attention in that era. Despite the best attempts to round off the rooflines and seal the space between cars with full width diaphragms, the riveted construction clearly dated the remodeled cars.

In Baltimore, depression-weary Mt. Clare Shop craftsmen welcomed the steady employment, since throughout the previous dark decade, motive power Chief George H. Emerson had punctuated each construction session between his experimental steam locomotives with furlough notices.

The streamlined *National Limited* entered service on June 28, 1940, and was truthfully advertised as the only diesel-electric streamlined train between New York and St. Louis. Later, author Robert C. Reed, in his book *The Streamlined Era*, gave a mediocre rating to the cost-effective makeover Pullman and B&O applied to the 1937-1941 diesel-powered trains. But Reed did concede that “B&O was never a chic railroad, but it always seemed to have an air of comfortable dignity and hospitality that outshone the cosmetic Hollywood glamour and gaudy excess that passed for sophistication on other railroads.”

Aesthetic debates aside, the new *National Limited* was largely judged a success and was striking enough to inspire an early admirer who would later guide the future of the B&O itself. In his memoir *Just Call Me Hays*, retired CSX Chairman Hays T. Watkins recalled being favorably impressed viewing the *National Limited* at North Vernon, Indiana, noting how the attractive train differed from other traditional, steam-powered trains of the era. Mr. Watkins’ positive impression was no doubt repeated over the entire route as that gleaming blue and gray streamliner, with its new train logo in elegant bronze



Number 1457 has the eastbound *National Limited*, train Number 2, in hand as it makes a 1962 station stop in Mitchell, Indiana, in the heart of B&O territory west of Cincinnati.

(Ed Young collection)

script, brought the promise of a brighter future to towns that remained stubbornly anchored in an earlier depressed era, still anxiously waiting for sustained prosperity to return. B&O also had justification to move quickly with the new *National Limited* since its rivals were also active once again.

The NYC entered the streamlined era in the southwest with a modernized *Southwestern Limited* (NYC Trains 11 and 12) beginning in June of 1939. New, lightweight streamlined coaches and sleeping cars built by both the Budd Company and the Pullman Company gradually entered service to St. Louis. The most distinctive cars on the train were the three Pullman-built observation, lounge, and sleeping cars that were acclaimed for their “30s modern” décor. The sleeping car configurations of the Pullman products assigned to Trains 11 and 12 were almost identical to similar new cars on the *20th Century Limited*.

NYC management took an early and active interest in the Budd shot-welded, stainless steel passenger cars that were far ahead of the lightweight steel cars from its historic rival in terms of maintenance

and durability. The bright Budd stainless steel passenger cars that originally boasted silver-painted trucks had a definite “Santa Fe” look to them and clearly brought true modernism to the rather drab Eastern railroad scene.

The lightweight cars from Pullman were clad in the newly adopted two-tone gray livery accented by white lettering and striping. The two-tone gray scheme underscored a more conservative approach to the streamlined motifs of the era, but when mixed with the fluted-sided Budd-built cars, the sum total was far removed from “an all matched consist,” one of the fundamental concepts of the new streamliner movement.

Then PRR upped the ante on April 27, 1941 with a new all-coach streamliner between New York and St. Louis named *The Jeffersonian*. The new train consisted of streamlined coaches, modernized dining cars and round-end observation cars that were all Altoona Shop rebuilds from older P-70 class coaches. Four more Loewy-styled K-4 class streamlined steam locomotives were added to the “Fleet of Modernism” on PRR trains, and for a brief period a pair was assigned to



The lighted *National* sign still graced the rear of what was by then Train 31, a revised version of *The National*, at Washington Union Terminal in 1967. (Frank Wrabel collection)

### *The Jeffersonian.*

But the B&O featured its streamlined diesel locomotives on the *National Limited*, while both PRR trains and the NYC train were still steam powered and continued to be a mix of new and older Pullman cars and railroad-owned coaches and dining cars.

Soon all the focus and attention for marketing and delivering first class passenger service became secondary as all the railroads were stressed beyond capacity with the war effort. Global conflict forced quick recall of stored locomotives to active service, with many passenger trains regularly operating in multiple sections.

Toward the end of the conflict, railroad managers, believing a new era of passenger travel would soon commence, started planning complete makeovers of their respective fleets and services. Interestingly two Eastern railroads began that process with an unresolved topic that dated back to the Driving of the Golden Spike on May 10, 1869. Despite the direct rail connection that was completed that memorable day at Prom-

ontory Point, Utah, some industry observers believed still greater potential was attainable since railroads of the 1940s still did not offer coast-to-coast through-car service and passengers were required to change trains in Chicago or St. Louis. Ironically, it was the outspoken, nonconformist chairman of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway who aimed the spotlight on that perceived deficiency.

Robert R. Young captured much attention with his famous, "A hog can cross the country without changing trains, but you can't!" campaign. While traditional railroad managers chafed at Young's brassy and antagonistic style, some privately admitted several of his ideas were intriguing. Eastern railroad managers eventually concluded that if any revenue could possibly be obtained

from expanded through-car service, they wanted to be first in line to claim that prize.

Though never fully disclosed, the PRR actually started that process in 1932 and continued negotiating with western railroads until 1939, when all parties determined that, among other valid concerns, insufficient passenger demand, complications with continued steam locomotive operation and older maintenance-intensive, friction-bearing passenger cars made such service impractical.

In 1945, the PRR and NYC took the dominant role in exploring connecting service through Chicago to western destinations in conjunction with the Burlington, Rock Island, Santa Fe, Southern Pacific and Union Pacific. Soon, several through-car routes were inaugurated, whereby loaded Pullman cars from New York would be switched into trains of the western roads for California or Texas destinations. New diesel-electric motive power and the expanded use of lightweight, roller-bearing equipped passenger cars eradicated several of the earlier drawbacks that historically had

hampered this service. The B&O *Capitol Limited* later handled a through Santa Fe car from *The Chief* between Los Angeles and Washington.

Progress at St. Louis was slower due to resistance from TRRA managers, who believed their terminal was too congested to efficiently facilitate the demanding requirements associated with additional switching moves to support the new service. But continued pressure from the eastern giants forced a change in attitude in St. Louis.

On July 7, 1946, through-car service from New York and Washington over the PRR and B&O to Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Tulsa and Oklahoma City was inaugurated. The *National Limited* carried sleeping cars from Washington that were interchanged with Missouri Pacific (MP), Texas & Pacific, Frisco and Katy. Those cars were handled west of St. Louis on the *Texas Special*, the *Texas Eagle* and the *Meteor*. Streamlined Pullman sleeping cars *Cascade Drive* and *Cascade Sound*, owned by the B&O, were painted in the colors of the MP, typical of the cars assigned to this service.

The two eastern giants then prepared for the greater elements of that new era of growth in the passenger sector. PRR was quick to announce plans to modernize its better mainline east-west trains by powering the new streamliners with the fleet of 50 class T-1 4-4-4-4 duplex-drive locomotives built by the PRR Altoona Shops and Baldwin Locomotive Works. Eventually the PRR sought the efficiency of diesel locomotives when the T-1 failed to live up to its expectations. Two diesels PRR had acquired in 1946 outperformed the new steam locomotives in long distance trains.

Despite the somewhat checkered characteristics of the St. Louis market, the PRR still considered the *Spirit of St. Louis* and *The Jeffersonian* to be feature trains within the "Blue Ribbon Fleet" and accordingly ordered more lightweight cars to replace the earlier 1938 and 1941 fleets. Raymond Loewy was once again charged with more restrained styling of the interior appointments of this massive passenger car fleet that was clad in the less-costly, single shade of PRR Tuscan red.

The lightweight sleeping cars rep-

resented the best talents of ACF, Budd and Pullman. Included in the orders for new equipment were 100 class P-85 coaches that seated only 44 passengers and were built by ACF; however, the builder assembled 50 cars and the components for the remaining 50 were sent “in kit form” to Altoona Shops for assembly. Unfortunately, shop men at Altoona could not master the newer welding techniques that were required for a smooth, continuous look and the Altoona cars could always be identified by their crinkled side panels.

The NYC also invested in the increasingly tentative St. Louis market. The new 1948-1949 *Southwestern Limited* was almost entirely composed of Budd-built stainless steel coaches and sleeping cars that memorably carried the streamlined “all matched consist” theme. Three Budd-built Brook-series observation-lounge-sleeping cars featured a raised rear observation lounge and were almost identical to popular Pullman-built cars *Hickory Creek* and *Sandy Creek* that graced the 20th *Century Limited*. The new NYC E-7 or E-8 passenger diesels and the bright, new Budd-built passenger cars symbolized the epitome of the postwar streamliners that linked the East Coast with St. Louis.

B&O carefully evaluated the period in 1948 and 1949 when the PRR and NYC inaugurated all-new diesel-powered trains including *The Jeffersonian*, *Spirit of St. Louis*, the *Southwestern Limited* and several lesser trains as well. B&O seriously contemplated the new car orders that its rivals placed but quickly realized that it simply could not afford a large investment for a somewhat questionable market.

B&O did add new streamlined lightweight sleeping cars of the ten-roomette, six-double bedroom and fourteen-roomette, four-double bedroom configurations to the *National Limited*. It also commissioned Pullman to renovate the older heavyweight open section sleeping cars and observation cars from the 1940 train once again.

In truth, the more conservative market that B&O served did not justify a massive equipment or service upgrade. Then, too, federal employees and military personnel still constituted a major

First Quarter 2015

Only DIESEL-POWER TRAIN TO THE SOUTHWEST . . . . .

*Now Streamlined*

**NATIONAL LIMITED**  
to Cincinnati-Louisville-St. Louis

New  
**COMFORTS**  
for Coach  
and Pullman  
Passengers

NEW-STYLE Buffet-Coach-Lounge. New-style Diner. Colorful decorations and appointments in Individual Reclining Seat Coaches and Pullmans. Stewardess-Registered Nurse. Radio. Diesel-Power for speed that's smooth—like gliding. Quiet that lets you sleep. The *perfect* train ride. Air-Conditioned, of course. Fares are low, too.

TELEPHONE PLAZA 0400  
J. R. HAYES, Division Passenger Agent  
Baltimore & Charles Sts., Baltimore, Md.

**BALTIMORE & OHIO** *Railroad*

source of revenue and the government would only reimburse those travelers for space in open-section sleeping cars. That forced the B&O to operate the old heavyweight cars long after such equipment had been retired from other railroads.

B&O seemed confident that untapped passenger potential existed between Baltimore, Washington and Cincinnati. Passenger managers noted that a daylight journey between those points through the scenic Alleghenies would be particularly spectacular. They also reasoned that the revenue potential would be greater for a coach train of no more than five cars (the most one reconditioned P-7 could handle west of Cumberland), with condensed dining-lounge service on a shorter semi-regional schedule.

Late in 1946, the respected B&O Engineer of Service Olive Dennis started to work on the concept for that adventure in postwar passenger luxury. Surprisingly, the B&O, now known as the route of the diesel-electric streamliners, reached back to steam, selecting four 1927 President-class Pacific locomotives to power this train, encasing each locomotive beneath an attractive streamlined bullet-nosed exterior. The train's consist consisted of a set of older coaches from the 1925-1927 era completely rebuilt into virtually new units to create *The Cincinnati*.

The gleaming new blue and gray streamliner proved popular throughout the initial year 1949. But soon ridership declined, and in 1950, the B&O transferred *The Cincinnati* to the Cincinnati-to-Detroit route, where it faithfully survived in its basic form, diesel-electric powered after 1956, until the end of long-distance service more than 20 years later.

Several of the B&O's competitors also had a fling at East Coast-Cincinnati service. First, the Norfolk & Western (N&W) placed the new *Powhatan Arrow* daylight coach train in service between Cincinnati and Norfolk. That was a bold adventure for this ultra-conservative coal-hauler, and soon N&W discovered that the modern train was too much too late. The consist was downsized and services cut.

A more dramatic and disheartening example was set by the C&O. That road planned what was, without question, the most luxurious daylight train in history between Cincinnati and Washington. The Budd-built *Chessie* streamliner of 1947-1948 was positioned to be the ultimate daylight cruise liner of the rails complete with two dome cars and uniquely stylish dining, lounge and observation cars, all clad in bright, polished stainless steel with a band of traditional C&O orange with dark blue lettering and powered by a set of huge streamlined steam turbine locomotives that Baldwin Locomotive Works built exclusively for that mission.

At the eleventh hour, however, cost-conscious executives had second thoughts about the profitability of the concept and ultimately challenged Chairman Young about his breathtaking, but totally unrealistic, quest to deliver the ultimate in passenger luxury. The *Chessie* project was scrapped before the new train could enter service; and soon the C&O sold most of the new cars to other railroads, including the B&O.

B&O avoided much of the expense that PRR, NYC, N&W and C&O incurred by maintaining a conservative approach to a massive investment in new equipment

and the disciplined practice of maintaining quality railroad service that would soon pay off. By 1954, both the PRR and NYC were forced to retreat from the St. Louis market. Initially, both eliminated some services and consolidated trains. Later, massive service cuts were imposed. In the process, both showed little regard for maintaining tight schedules or providing even the most basic passenger comforts to retain what passengers remained.

By 1956, both roads offered many of their newer feature cars, including bedroom sleeping cars, dining cars, lounge cars and observation cars, for sale at greatly reduced prices to other railroads and nations as well.

The *National Limited* would benefit from that process when B&O purchased three lightweight, streamlined observation-lounge-sleeping cars from the NYC in 1956. Ironically, those cars named *Genesee River*, *Maumee River* and *Wabash River* were originally built by Pullman in 1939 for the competing *Southwestern Limited*. Interestingly, all three cars were assigned to the 20th *Century Limited* from 1942 until 1945 and later were held in reserve to protect the *Century* and other NYC feature trains.

B&O would retain the names the NYC had assigned to the cars but added its distinctive "Baltimore and Ohio" script lettering to each exterior rear side and, of course, the illuminated tail sign was changed to the now-famous *National Limited* script logo. B&O also added newer Slumbercoaches to the train, but the coaches were mostly rebuilt units from an earlier era. More important, from the 1930s forward, the B&O took great pride in maintaining its personalized service and quality car maintenance; and as passengers left the more minimal, less friendly trains of the PRR and NYC, the *National Limited* would be the benefactor. But even this would not last.

Advances in air travel plus the ambitious Interstate Highway Act were taking their toll on the railroads. The need to serve smaller cities and towns en route and to have multiple train service between the East and the West on several different railroads was no longer a priority. The B&O managers especially mourned the loss of the business trav-

eler and the expense account revenue, and passenger agents sadly watched as the Baltimore-Washington to St. Louis traffic diminished. On April 26, 1958, the *National Limited* and *Diplomat* lost their New York through-car service when the B&O discontinued passenger service east of Baltimore.

It quickly became apparent that one St. Louis to Washington feature train would suffice and the *Diplomat* was finally discontinued on September 17, 1960. The *Diplomat* name would endure since later the B&O would assign it to Trains 7 and 8 on the Baltimore-Washington-Chicago schedule, retiring the former name *Shenandoah*.

In 1961 the B&O pulled the *National Limited* from the Patterson Creek Cutoff, rerouting the train through Cumberland. The increase in potential passengers was offset by the added time to travel the longer route. But by then, few cared. Later, the popular River-series observation cars were removed as well.

New B&O management in 1961 and later affiliation with the C&O in 1963 would provide the supportive environment to make one final effort at making passenger services a paying proposition.

B&O assigned Paul H. Reistrup to the task of evaluating its passenger services to determine if anything could be done to make passenger service profitable. Early in 1964, however, the train name was shortened to *The National* and the last service to San Antonio was discontinued.

The B&O did make a concerted effort to tighten maintenance and car service standards, introduce discount fares, add on-board feature motion pictures and advertise passenger services vigorously. A popular enhancement occurred early in 1964 when the distinctive River-series observation cars were restored. By early 1965, however, management concluded that these sincere, creative efforts could not stop the passenger exodus and long-distance passenger services would have to be adjusted accordingly.

Unfortunately, it was readily apparent that the service to St. Louis offered little promise and immediately steps were taken to reduce the expenses associated with *The National*. On June 29, 1965, the observation cars were removed from

the train once again and were placed in storage as management explored further methods to reduce expense. Management wrestled with the expense associated with operating a commissary to serve the shrinking food service requirements on the St. Louis route as well.

Eventually, C&O/B&O decided to add a Washington to St. Louis sleeping car to the C&O *George Washington* between Washington and Cincinnati and then extend that train service to St. Louis on B&O rails. The B&O would then introduce a new Washington to Cincinnati train. That change was not popular with travelers since the C&O train did not feature the more formal dining and lounge car options and more switching of cars en route was required. Finally, without much fanfare, *The National* made its last run between St. Louis and Washington on September 6, 1965.

Simultaneously a revised version of *The National*, Trains 31 and 32, entered service between Washington and Cincinnati. This downsized consist featured a combination baggage car-coach, one coach and one of the former observation, lounge, and sleeping cars from the previous train that still carried the proud, illuminated *National Limited* sign on the rear. The observation cars provided basic sleeping accommodations, lounge and limited dining service that was operated by the Pullman Company rather than the B&O. Those cars proved to be a cost-effective, all-in-one solution compared to operating a full sleeping car and a second B&O dining-lounge car on the route. Despite the diminutive consist, the classic observation cars still presented a regal appearance when passengers first encountered the train trackside at Washington Union Terminal.

Unfortunately, *The National* would lead a difficult life in its reincarnated form as ridership continued to decline and its short career would soon be tainted by tragedy. During the early morning hours of February 24, 1967, Train 31 was near Toll Gate, West Virginia, when the engineer reported a sudden jerk and the entire train tilted and derailed. Observation car *Wabash River* dropped from a bridge and came to rest on an embankment with its rear

lounge partially submerged in water. The derailment claimed the lives of two passengers and two employees and injured 50 passengers and employees, and was blamed on a rail that overturned due to inadequate track maintenance.

B&O had to scramble to replace the damaged observation car since its companion *Genesee River* was classified as bad-order and beyond reasonable repair. B&O used the observation car *Nappanee* from the *Capitol Limited* pool, and leased PRR *Maple Falls*, a sleeping-lounge car, to pair with the remaining observation car *Maumee River* to serve passengers during the final days of *The National*.

Conceived in a dynamic and expansionistic era of railroading to serve a more discriminating and civilized world, *The National* could not survive in the turbulent era that followed World War II. The train was finally discontinued in 1968 west of Cincinnati. Ironically, the *Metropolitan Special* would provide the last B&O St. Louis to Washington service. Trains 11 and 12 would serve in their intended role until September 11, 1968, when the train was discontinued west of Cincinnati.

The longevity of the *Metropolitan Special* attested to the wisdom of earlier management.

Given the unrelenting challenges the *National Limited* faced throughout its life and the respected record of service it achieved, one can easily conclude that this was a successfully completed mission, which speaks well for B&O management who applied their best efforts to maintaining quality service in the face of newer competition and changing tastes and values of travelers.

In the golden age of railroad passenger travel, definite class or social distinctions were often apparent on many of the famous limited and express trains that served our great Nation. Fortunately for passengers on the *National Limited*, a Midwestern air of informality blended with the personalized B&O service muting those undercurrents. Thus was created a truly likable train of fragrant memory. That quality is perhaps the most enduring legacy of the *National Limited*. 

# Ensuring the Society's Future

By Wade Rice

The BORHS and its Archives have never looked better. Efforts to catalog and make available electronically its vast holdings of documents, drawings, and photographs are under way, aimed at providing easier access for researchers. And a major campaign has been launched to raise funds for a new location for the Archives physical plant, which has become too small for the Society's needs. All of this comes from the efforts of a membership and officers that care and have a vision for the Society's future.



There is more to the last two words of that last sentence.

Yes, a group of individuals who care about the future of the Society is great. A vast percentage of that group is from the "baby boomer" generation, and earlier. The "boomers" in the Society are just entering retirement, and starting to have concerns about their own future that the oldest members have experienced for years.

Whatever the age, all Society members need to ask themselves, what have we (rather "I") done to foster interest in the B&O in coming generation(s)? Have we all done our part to share the wonderful world of trains, railroading, and particularly the B&O, with our own progeny? And particularly, if it involved working most of our lives for the railroad, have we done our part to share our experiences with our children and grandchildren?

Even if we didn't work for the railroad, there are other ways to help educate our youth about railroads. Beyond the "Day out with Thomas" program designed for young children, try restoring that old train set you may have stashed away in the attic, when your son or grandson reaches the age of being able to work with such an activity. Take your son/daughter or grandchild out on an afternoon of railfanning at a safe location.

Another way is to become a counselor for the Railroading Merit Badge in the Boy Scouts of America (<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/MeritBadges/mb-RAIL.aspx>). In addition to promoting Operation Lifesaver's message of safety around trains and railroads, it can be a rewarding experience seeing to what degree candidates for that merit badge respond to meeting its requirements.

There also is National History Day (which is like a school science fair, only for history), that has varying themes from year to year, where topics in railroad history can be tailored to the particular theme of that year (<http://www.nhd.org/>).

While some locales have been more blessed than others with having and maintaining a sense of railroad heritage, Society members living in or near such places can contribute to encouraging and fostering interest among youth about the history of the railroad that ran or still runs through the area. Become a volunteer or docent at the local railroad or town/county history museum, or contribute to its continued well-being through contributing not only your time, but any railroading items you may have that would be of more value educating future generations than sitting stashed away (not to mention what might be a decent tax write-off).

There are other ways to promote railroad history and the B&O's part in it. It takes people to run a Society, and the Society cannot be assured of a future unless there are individuals today to help foster interest among those who will be around in the future. Help preserve the heritage of the B&O—talk trains with a youth today!

Wade Rice is a Society director. 

# Running Light

*Running Light is designed to provide a forum for amplifications of articles, corrections, updates and late news briefs. Mail or e-mail them to Harry Meem, or Craig Close borhsstore@gmail.com.*



Voters in Hamilton County, Ohio, have approved a quarter-cent sales tax increase to stabilize and renovate Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, originally Cincinnati Union Terminal. The levy is predicted to raise about \$170 million through five years. Officials expect renovations to begin in 18 to 24 months.

The work is needed to correct damage in some walls, caused by design flaws in the steel used to build the terminal. Architects and engineers will need to finalize reconstruction plans.

The building, which reopened in 1990 after more than a decade of disuse, is home to Amtrak's Cincinnati station stop, as well as the Cincinnati History Museum, the Museum of Natural History & Science, an Omnimax theater, the Cincinnati Historical Society Library, and the Duke Energy Children's Museum. It also hosts the Cincinnati Railroad Club's meeting room in Tower A, and is the venue for the annual Summerail railroad multimedia slide show in August.

The Art Deco-style station opened in 1933.

Architect Alfred Fellheimer designed the building, which cost \$41 million. In its peak years the station saw 216 trains and 20,000 passengers daily from the Big Four, PRR, C&O, N&W, SOU, L&N, and the B&O. On 287 acres, it held 94 miles of track and 22 outbuildings.



**John Schletzer** offers some background about the destruction in place of B&O observation Number 3303 at Hyndman, Pennsylvania, in mid-July:

1. A deal with the Elkins, West Virginia, group to acquire the car fell through because they could not raise a needed \$40,000.
2. Kids in town were breaking into the car at night to have pot parties.



By coincidence, Bob Rathke sent along this Cincinnati Union Terminal view. "The owner of the post card says that its postmark dates it from the 2000s," Bob writes, "but the original photo may have been taken earlier. I wonder if the lights image could have been photoshopped, but I have seen similar railroad light displays on the annual CP Holiday Train. Anyway, it looks like a P-7d."

3. The Cumberland Western Maryland group found two large cracks in the center sill of the car. The car could not be picked up and moved without cracking into thirds, which eventually happened when the sides and roof were being removed.
4. I was told that the car could not be moved even 1½ blocks to my house without falling apart.

The owner and scrapper shared the profits from sale of the scrap.



Prowling in Brunswick, Maryland, one day, the managing editor was idly reading the names of B&O employees, their title, their spouses and whatever else folks had chosen to put on the bricks that compose the sidewalk in front of what is now the Brunswick Heritage Museum.

Amid all the routine jobs of a working railroad town, a name jumped out: Robert Van Sant, long-time B&O public relations official (see the back cover photo; it's misspelled there, according to the B&O Museum's **Dave Shackelford**). That

seemed incongruous. An e-mail led us to **Jackie Ebersole**, museum vice president and the person in charge of brick sales. We'll pick up on her e-mail:

"I went down and looked in the collection of information we have on bricks... The only thing was a handwritten letter from Mr. Van Sant's daughter, Mrs. Thomas Clayton (Kay) Spalding of Bloomfield, Connecticut, ordering a brick on October 18, 1997.

"The letter corrects her father's middle initial. She says it is an M, not a W as in an unexplained article.

"The letter is addressed 'Dear Charlie.' Charlie McLane comes to mind. It continues, 'Sorry I am so long in answering your ?????'. Am glad to support the museum - Daddy would be honored. Will send to you.'

"This has to be Charlie McLane. He was an FBI man. He was on our Board for about 10 years and was a terrific guy.

"I looked at Mr. Van Sant's brick and the company he is with are those honorees whose birth years fall in line with his, 1885. "

*The Sentinel* turned to **Herb Harwood** for

more details:

"I never knew Van Sant, except that he was a legend in the PR Department. He retired as director of PR long before I came to Baltimore. He was a Princeton grad ('07) and worked in PR for Prudential in his younger years before joining the B&O in 1913. His listing in *Who's Who in Railroading* gives no details on specific titles, although I know he was editor of the B&O employees' magazine along the way."

Next time you're railfanning in Brunswick, walk up Potomac Street to the museum and look down for a change.

◆◆◆

Greatly delayed for some reason, a

request to *The Sentinel* finally showed up in the in-box. It is from Society member **Thomas E. Hunt, Jr., M.D.:**

"My brother and I have been seeking information about an accident at Grafton, West Virginia, circa January 1, 1885. Our Great Uncle, Mr. Thomas Dorsey, we have been told, was the engineer of a B & O RR Express that derailed and overturned while approaching Grafton Station as a result of some individual(s) with bad feeling toward the railroad spiking a switch. Uncle Tom was severely scalded. He and our Great Aunt Kate resided in Piedmont and we are told the railroad very expeditiously got her to Grafton before he succumbed. We

have also wondered if the perpetrator(s) may have been apprehended, tried and sentenced."

Anyone with information can contact Dr. Hunt through *The Sentinel* or by e-mail at eaglehall@comcast.net.

◆◆◆

In re B&O models, **Bruce Elliott** reports that **David Grover** of Eddystone Locomotive Works has made preliminary castings of the S-1a cab, backhead, and the front and rear foot boards, to be followed by the Q-4 and the Q-3. All these "kits" will work with a Rivarossi Big Six; orders can be placed directly at eddystone@fairpoint.net. 

## Message from the President

(continued from page 2)

this activity is to encourage the youth of today to study, research, and write on the rich historical heritage of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and how it played a major role in the development of the eastern half of the country. This program is to provide the historical society with documents to be used in future publications to share knowledge of this beloved railroad, benefiting students by offering insight into research techniques and assistance in polishing writing skills. We are seeking manuscripts of no less than five page of single-space typed text or the electronic equivalent. The following will explain in detail the expectations, requirements and acknowledgments for submitting completed documents.

### Subject Matter

The Society is seeking historical research into the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad history and operations between Cumberland, Maryland, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Cincinnati, Ohio, and St. Louis, Missouri; Cincinnati, Ohio and Indianapolis, Indiana; Willard, Ohio and Chicago, Illinois; and the Baltimore and Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad. Specifics can be found on our website—www.borhs.org.

### Requirements

Documents of 5–9 pages, or 10–14, based on primary resources such as

charts, maps, B&O Railroad documents, employee communication or diaries, time period newspaper articles, Federal Railroad Administration documents and reports, Interstate Commerce Commission documents and reports, town and county records, local historical societies, and interviews with employees of the railroad. Text must include supporting resources: appropriate photographs, charts, and maps. Writer must have written permission to use any photos or documents and present all rights to the Society, in writing, for future publication.

### Review Committee

The purpose of the committee is to help young writers refine their research and writing skills.

- **Gregory Smith**, *Society president, retired high school teacher.*
- **Henry Freeman**, *vice president of operations, retired newspaper editor and publisher.*
- **Harry Meem**, *editor of The Sentinel, retired newspaper desk editor.*
- **Gene Stebbins**, *retired professor of journalism, Kent State University.*
- **Nicholas Fry**, *Society director, Curator of Barringer Transportation Collection at University of Missouri St. Louis.*

### Submitting Documents

A digital document must be submitted to the Society % the president through the web page, including photographs,

charts, and maps for review by the editorial committee.

### Recognition

Upon final review and acceptance the Society will provide the following to each writer:

- A letter of acknowledgment and gratitude for their time and effort.
- A student membership in the Society, One Year for 5–9 pages and Two Years for 10–14 pages.
- A one year subscription of *The Sentinel* to their school.
- A copy of the publication their work appears in.
- Payment of \$50 for a manuscript of 5–9 pages and \$100 for a manuscript of 10–14 pages

### Copyright

The B&O Railroad Historical Society will hold all copyright, publication rights, and usage privileges of any part or whole materials submitted by the writer. 

### Additional Information

A printable version of this article, with an introductory letter and participation forms, are available by emailing magazine@borhs.org or by mail; send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to

Harry Meem  
BORHS Writing Challenge  
2409 Birchwood Road  
Richmond, VA 23294

SAM & EVA ROSE  
B&O ENG & WIFE  
1883 - 89 1954 - 61

THOMAS M. BAKER  
B&O BLACKSMITH  
1883 - 1943

CHARLES L. MOATS  
BRAKEMAN JUDGE  
1883 - 1955

M. E. MULLLEN  
GEN LOCO FOR  
1883 - 1954

WM. H. FOREBACK  
B&O ENGINEER  
1884 - 1964

JAMES A CALHOUN  
B&O RR ENGINEER  
1909-1939

J. ROBERT COATES  
B&O CALLER  
1884 - 1943

WILLIAM E SPRING  
42 YES SIGNAL  
MAINTAINER

JOHN E. BARTLETT  
BRAKEMAN B&O  
DAUGHTER BETTY

HOMER T. MURPHY  
AIRBRAKE INST.  
1885 - 1971

LOVING MEMORY  
BESSIE HEFFNER  
GEORGE HEFFNER

ROBERT M. VANSANT  
PUBLIC RELATIONS  
1885 OFFICER 1901

EARL C GRAMS  
1885 - 1955  
1906 CARMAN 1950

MAURICE A. HANES  
"FOXY" 1885 - 1955  
B&O BRAKEMAN

LEWIS CORNELIUS  
ENGINEER B&O RR  
1885 - 1959

DAISY CORNELIUS  
WIFE  
1887 - 1959

GEORGE W. HOLLAR  
B&O ENGINEER  
1885 - 1953

GEORGE W PIPER  
1885 - 1964  
B&O ENGINEER

LOUIS A. HOUSE  
MILLVILLE DIGGER  
FLAGMAN 1886 - 1984

ROBERT T FOSTER  
1886 - 1971  
B&O YARDMASTER

MARTHA NELSON  
POCAHONTAS 1946  
1886 - 1971

JF JIM MCCORMICK  
1886 - 1983  
BRAKEMAN B&O RR

CE HURLEY SR  
1930 - 2011  
WE LOVE YOU DAD