

# PRRTHS

## BUCKEYE CHAPTER

Volume 6, No 1 – February 2009

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### COME TO UPPER ARLINGTON, SUNDAY, FEB 22

For the next meeting we return to the Lane Road Branch of the Upper Arlington Library, Sunday, February 22 at 1 p.m. See the map and directions on the next page.

We will have two main topics on the agenda: The election of officers and further plans for the hosting of the national convention in Columbus in 2011. Al is lining up a program that is sure to interest PRR fans, and members are encouraged to bring their models and PRR artifacts to share with the other members.

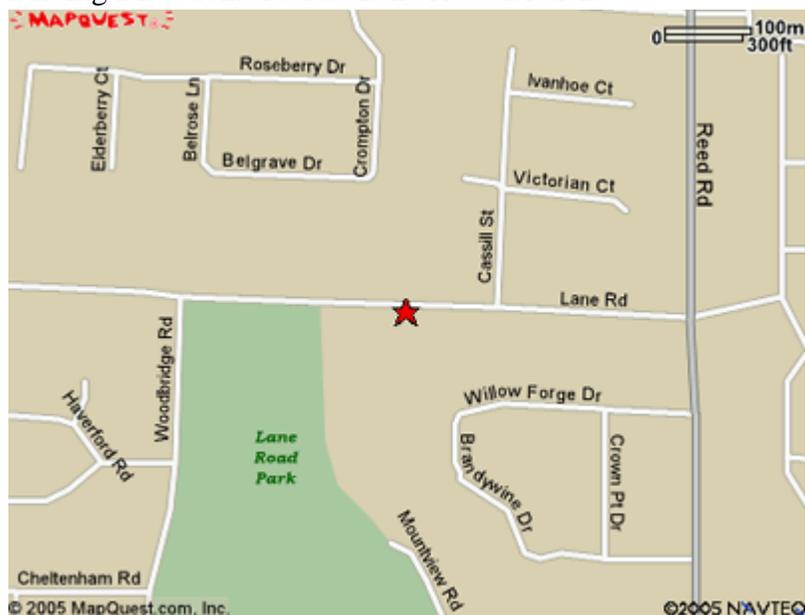
If any member is interested in one of the officer positions in the chapter, he or she should contact me at [genestebbins@att.net](mailto:genestebbins@att.net) Our present officers have done a fine job at getting the chapter organized and running, but new blood is always a good thing for an organization.

Also, yearly dues are now due, and can be sent to George Bilderback at 326 Bear Woods Drive, Powell, Ohio 43065, POWELL, OHIO 43065, using the form attached to this newsletter, or you can pay at the meeting.

This is our first attempt at distributing the Newsletter by internet. I suppose I could say that if you did not receive the Newsletter, please let me know, but somehow that sounds a little strange. But do let me know if there are any problems. If we do not have your current email address, please be sure to get it to me at the meeting, or if you cannot attend send it to me at [genestebbins@att.net](mailto:genestebbins@att.net). We will continue to mail the Newsletter to members who do not have access to Email.

Here is a map and directions:

### Driving Directions To The Lane Road Branch



**FROM THE NORTH** Take 71S to 270W to 315S. Exit west onto Henderson Road. Continue west, making a left onto Reed Road. Proceed on Reed to the second stop light at Lane Road. Turn right onto Lane Road. The library is on the left at the edge of Lane Road Park / Thompson Park.

**FROM THE SOUTH** Take 71N to 315N. Exit west onto Henderson Road. Continue west, making a left onto Reed Road. Proceed on Reed to the second stop light at Lane Road. Turn right onto Lane Road. The library is on the left at the edge of Lane Road Park .

**FROM THE EAST** Take 70W to 315N. Exit west onto Henderson Road. Continue west, making a left onto Reed Road. Proceed on Reed to the second stop light at Lane Road. Turn right onto Lane Road. The library is on the left at the edge of Lane Road Park / Thompson Park.

**FROM THE WEST** Take 70E to 315N. Exit west onto Henderson Road. Continue west, making a left onto Reed Road. Proceed on Reed to the second stop light at Lane Road. Turn right onto Lane Road. The library is on the left at the edge of Lane Road Park / Thompson Park.

### ARTICLES NEEDED

This is your newsletter, so we depend on members to supply articles for it. Share your knowledge and experiences with members of the chapter. You can Email them to me, Gene Stebbins, at [genestebbins@att.net](mailto:genestebbins@att.net) or mail them to me at 2075 Maplewood Road, Stow, Ohio 44224.

### LIFE ALONG THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD IN THE FORTIES. By Gene Stebbins

In the 1940's my family lived in Alpha, Ohio, on the Pennsy mainline from Pittsburgh to St. Louis. We could look across the field on the other side of our street to see the PRR trains coming from Xenia to the east or after they had crossed our street on their way from Dayton to the west. Just east of where our

street was crossed by the railroad was a passing siding, which was frequently occupied by a train waiting for its turn on the main line. At night we could hear a train ease into the siding, then a while later there would be another train from the other direction go by at full speed. Then the train in the siding would give a couple whistles, and a great rumbling would be heard as it drew the slack out of the train. Some agonized chugs would follow as the engineer struggled to get his train underway, and often there would be a sudden burst of chugs as he lost traction and spun the drivers. Then the process would begin again, and finally the train would chug out of the siding and onto the mainline and finally off into the distance. Moments later we would hear his whistle for the next crossing. During the war, a troop train occasionally was put into the siding. The guys weren't allowed off the train during these stops, but we had some interesting conversations with them through the train windows.

Our little village of about 300 people had a General Store which also served as a Post Office. Each day before 7:20, store owner and Postmaster Lauris Glass would put all the outgoing mail into a US Mail bag, and walk up the line about 100 feet to a little stand where he tied the bag between an upper arm and lower arm. I believe the mail was picked up by a mailcar in the Spirit of St. Louis streamliner. As the westbound train came along, a hook was raised from the doorway of the mail car, to snatch the bag from the stand, and the postal worker in the car grabbed it and brought it inside the car. As the car passed the crossing at the General Store, they pitched out a mail bag with any mail addressed to Alpha, Ohio. In the afternoon the eastbound train picked up the mail.

My grandmother lived near Eldorado, Ohio, in western Ohio, about forty miles west along the Pennsy mainline. If we wrote a letter or card to Grandma, and got it into the morning mail, it would be sorted enroute and tossed out at Eldorado that same morning, in time for the mail carrier to put it in his bag and deliver it before 10:30! Even more incredibly, if Grandma wrote a reply and got Grandpa to take it to the post office before 2:30, it would be put aboard the eastbound train and we would have the reply the same day!

Across the street from the General Store was the Alpha Seed and Grain elevator. They handled grain shipments, milled flour, and sold seed and coal. At wheat harvest time, there would be a line of trucks and wagons loaded with wheat waiting to deliver their loads to the elevator for shipment on the railroad. Their siding usually held several box cars and a coal car or two, since Alpha Seed and Grain also sold coal to area residents. A truck would be loaded with coal via a little portable conveyor that had a chain with buckets running up an incline to lift the coal into the bed of the truck. The driver would take the load to the buyer's house, place a chute from the truck into a basement opening. Then he would shovel the coal into the chute so it would slide into the coal bin in the basement.

Also running through Alpha were tracks of the B&O railroad along side of the Pennsy tracks, but these tracks did not see nearly so many trains as the Pennsy. And no passenger trains. I recall only one passenger train ever on the B&O tracks—a long blue train said to be detouring around a wreck somewhere.

Also alongside the two railroads was the Dayton and Xenia Traction line, with big electric cars. I can only vaguely recall their operation, as it discontinued service in the late 30's, being replaced by White (brand name) buses that ran on US 35 between Dayton and Xenia. I always found it peculiar that there was a big hump centered inside the front of these buses to house the engine. The roadbed and bridge abutments of the traction line were still visible in the late 40's, but they, along with the two covered bridges south of town are now gone, victims of the new four-lane US 35.

In the early afternoon, a two-car train toiled out from Xenia. It had a unique clanking sound as appeared across the field. It almost stopped at the crossing—just long enough to put any packages off at the Store,

and take on anything being sent via parcel post. In the event that there was a large box or several boxes, the train would have to stop, but usually it just slowed to a walking pace as it was unloaded. People said that in the twenties, you could board the train at Alpha, but that was no longer the case in the years I remember.

We saw many beautiful trains pass through Alpha. The Spirit of St. Louis and the Jeffersonian both had streamlined cars, and often streamlined K4's up front. Also the Sunshine Special went through on its way to Texas with a car or two painted in Missouri Pacific blue and white in addition to the usual tuscan cars. Later T1's made their appearance on some of these trains. Usually the Spirit was double-headed with a pair of K4's. I can recall "the diesel" with its flat blating horn being used on the Spirit, but I was too young to really know what model it was. We moved from Alpha in the summer of 1947, so I had assumed "the diesel" was a Baldwin centipede. But several years ago I learned that the first EMD E7 set was used on the St. Louis run for about four weeks in 1946 or 1947, before being assigned to the Detroit run, so I am wondering if this is the one I remember.

Today, both railroads are gone, with a bike and hike trail on the Pennsy roadbed. The General Store is now a bed and breakfast, and the elevator sits vacant while locals seek funds to preserve it. In 1947, we moved to Gibsonburg, Ohio, on the PRR line south from Toledo, with lots of switching at the lime plants and no passenger trains, but trains on that line are another story.

#### **PENNSY PASSENGER CARS IN OHIO by Bob Flores**

**A former Pennsylvania passenger car and a PRR business car have been donated to the Dennison Depot Museum, from the Ohio Rail Museum in Worthington, Ohio. Still at the Worthington museum are another former Pullman sleeper, Rail Post Office car 6510 and a N6B cabin car. The museum is located in Worthington Ohio just north of St Rt 161, adjacent to the former Sandusky branch of the PRR.**

**The Times Square, is a 6 compartment, 3 drawing room car built to Pullman plan 3523A, July 28, 1925, for use on the Broadway Limited. The car was sold to the Pennsylvania Railroad in December of 1948, numbered 8561, and leased back to Pullman for operation. It was used until November 1966, with its last use for the Army-Navy Football game in Philadelphia. On January 6, 1967, the car was sold to the Ohio Rail Museum. The car was recently donated to the Dennison Depot and shipped out on a low boy flatbed truck to Dennison, Ohio, where it will be refurbished at some point in time.**

**Former Business Car Williamsport, car number 7530, class Z62, (reclassified Z62R when the ice air conditioning was added) was a Division superintendent's car, built June 18, 1929, in Altoona PA, one of 11 cars built in the 1928 program. It was originally to be named Toledo, for use on the Chicago Terminal, Fort Wayne, Logansport Grand Rapids and Toledo Divisions, based in Toledo Ohio. The name was changed often, to Fort Wayne in 1930, based in Wilmington, Delaware, and Delmarva, Maryland, in 1933. Then in 1944, renamed Buffalo and based in Buffalo. In 1952, it was assigned to the Susquehanna Division, and renamed Williamsport. In 1955, it was stored in Wilmington, then later stored in Altoona in 1957, and donated to the Ohio Rail Museum in April, 1963. This car also was donated to the Dennison Depot where it will be refurbished.**

The second Pullman car, John Greenleaf Whittier, a 12 section, 1 drawing room, Pullman plan 3410B, was one of an order 225 cars and built January 21, 1929. The car was sold to the Pennsylvania Railroad in January of 1948. On October 14, 1967, the car was sold to the Ohio Rail Museum. It was kept in service for use as needed, quite late for a car of this type. The car remains at the Ohio Rail Museum.

The Rail Post Office car, 6510, was built in March, 1910, as a M70 car, one of 119 cars built in the class. In October 1937, the car was reclassified BM70m and renumbered 5464. In 1946, it was reclassified M70b and renumbered 8631 and in 1956, it was reclassified M70ba. The car made it to Penn Central service, but was soon retired. On November 11, 1968, the car was acquired by the Ohio Rail Museum, where it is part of the collection. The car is still in very good condition, and is open to the public, along with the John Greenleaf Whittier car.

The Museum at one time had a N6B center cupola cabin car that arrived at the Museum with a waybill that read, 1 black caboose. The car was towed in with no brakes, and set off at the siding at Worthington near the home of the former Passenger Station and Freight station, which both still stand, although altered over time. It had been used as an office in Northern Ohio before arriving at the museum. It was towed on fan rides on the Museum property in the early days. It was destroyed by fire, and the chassis was acquired by Dan Adair, who hopes to rebuild the car someday. If anyone has plans for a N6B cabin, please get in touch with me or Dan Adair.

Also included in the Ohio Museum collection is a Pennsy signal mast with head stored in the N & W combo car at the museum, and seldom seen. There also is a dwarf signal installed on a siding. I can provide additional information to anyone interested.



THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD  
TECHNICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
A PENNSYLVANIA NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

REPLY TO:

**LINES WEST - BUCKEYE REGION CHAPTER**  
**326 BEAR WOODS DRIVE**  
**POWELL, OHIO 43065**  
**OFFICE OF THE TREASURER GG BILDERBACK III**  
**Email: [ggb3@columbus.rr.com](mailto:ggb3@columbus.rr.com) Phone: (614) 718-1656**

**2009 MEMBERSHIP DUES RECEIPT**  
**PLEASE CIRCLE TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP APPLYING FOR:**

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**ASSOCIATE \$10.00**  
**ORGANIZATIONAL \$25.00**

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**AMOUNT PAID \$ \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_**

THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD SYSTEM



**INFORMATION**



**FOR EMPLOYEES AND THE PUBLIC**

**P.R.R.T. & H.S. LINES WEST - BUCKEYE REGION CHAPTER THANKS YOU  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT**