

# PRRTHS

# BUCKEYE CHAPTER

Volume 6, No 2 – May 2009

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## MEET JUNE 14 AT THE LONDON EX-PRR STATION

Our next chapter meeting will be in the ex-PRR station in London, Ohio, Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:00. Our agenda will be to introduce two new officers, to give thanks to two retiring officers, to plan for the 2011 convention in Columbus, and to hopefully see some great PRR slides. As always, members are encouraged to bring their models and PRR artifacts to share with the other members.

Also, yearly dues are now overdue, and should be sent to John Barriga, 375 Sheldon Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, 43207-1255. Or you can pay at the meeting. Our modest dues of \$10 per year pay the expenses of the chapter.

**DIRECTIONS:** The station is about four blocks south of the center of town on the east side of South Main. From the west, come to London on US 42 or Ohio 56 off Interstate 70. Ohio 56 is Main Street; US 42 intersects Main Street in the center of town. From the East, take US 42 off Interstate 70 to the center of town, and turn left on S. Main Street. The depot is on the left at the railroad.

Our first attempt at distributing the Newsletter by internet seemed to be a success, since I heard no complaints. Do let me know if there are any problems, and make sure I have your correct email address. We will continue to mail the Newsletter to members who do not have access to Email.

We want to welcome our new secretary, Gwennyth Patrick, and new treasurer, John Barriga. Our thanks go to retiring secretary, Gary Salzgeber, and retiring treasurer, George Bilderback III, for their dedicated service in fulfilling these posts during the formative years of our chapter.

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT: OUR MISSION**

President Al Doddroe wants to remind the members of the Preamble of the Chapter By-Laws, establishing Lines West—Buckeye Chapter as a part of the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society. Article I explains the purposes of the chapter:

A. To further on a local basis the scholarly learning and interests of the Pennsylvania Railroad and its predecessor companies through the research, recording and dissemination of technical, historical and other local information concerning the local operation of the Pennsylvania Railroad in a manner and form as prescribed by the Chapter and the Society.

B. To make this information available to members of the Chapter and the Society and other interested persons.

C. To foster communication and fellowship among Society members on a local and specific geographical basis wherever and whenever possible and to do all things necessary and proper to encourage interest in the Society.

These excerpts from our By-Laws outline clearly who we are and what we are about. We should, individually, consider what we can be doing in our study of the Pennsylvania Railroad to record and disseminate factual information on the local and Lines West operation of the Railroad. One good way of getting the information out is by doing articles for our newsletter. The editor is always in need of material to publish. Another way is to present a program to the members at our Chapter meetings. We have had some nice work done in the past by several of our members, for which they deserve our thanks. We need more to keep this Chapter and the memories of the Pennsylvania Railroad moving forward. An excellent way to being entertained is to help doing the entertaining! If individuals can contribute a little bit, then collectively we should be able to contribute much to the big picture. Hope to see you all at our next Chapter meeting in London, Ohio, on June 14th!

## THE LAST TRAIN--A LOOK AT PRR's MARIETTA DIVISION

By Daniel Adair

I got a call from my brother Roger, Friday night, May 14th, 1976. He told me that he and my other brother Dave, and a few other guys were going to go chase a train somewhere. Well, I was in! We discovered that there was an engine and a cabin going south on the PRR's Marietta Division, through Cambridge, Ohio, the result of a call from the Santa Fe railroad to the newly formed Consolidated Rail (Conrail). They advised Conrail there was a Santa Fe 34' covered hopper still at the Pennington bread bakery at Marietta. It had brought flour into the bakery, and Penn Central forgot it was there.

Well... This was very interesting! As far as we knew, the line was officially abandoned! Penn Central had run their so-called "clean up" train the day before Conrail started, March 31, 1976. They supposedly gathered remaining freight cars along the line, tied them on to an aging GP-9, and headed north.

Now, six weeks later, we were in search of a mystery train. A friend, Roger Knot, said a crew was called out from Dennison on Friday, with a GP-9 # 7042 and a cabin (N5c). It took them all day Friday to go down the line, approximately 75 miles from Town tower at Newcomerstown to Marietta, having to cut trees that had fallen over the line. Prior to the last Penn Central train running, the line south of Caldwell had become almost impassable. But they made it and laid up Friday night in Marietta.

The line started in 1872, at Marietta and was completed with the opening of the Postboy Tunnel, in 1878, linking Marietta and Dover. It was eventually known as the Cleveland & Marietta Railway.

We were on a county road with the track to our left, just about to go under the Interstate 77 freeway north of Macksburg when we spotted the headlight on a short train headed north. It was composed of Penn Central GP-9 # 7042, one covered hopper and one cabin car..... the last train. Befitting its

Pennsylvania Railroad heritage, Conrail used a GP-9 and a cabin car formerly owned by the Pennsylvania. We watched it go by, and it wasn't doing more than 5 mph! Its pilot was choked with branches, its walkway full of leaves. Riding the front pilot were two men and beside them was a wood barrel with track spikes and two chainsaws. With its slow speed, the train was very easy to follow and pass, making it easy to set up for pictures. We decided to set up at Caldwell to get some shots off a highway bridge. It offered a good overhead photo and was also a good view of where the depot was.

I have a clear picture of a northbound L-1s steam engine taken from this bridge. In another picture, on the rear of this coal train, is a Baldwin switcher/pusher, and behind it is an N6b cabin. At Caldwell, the narrow gauge Ohio River and Western Ry. came in from Bellaire. After the Pennsylvania railroad buyout of the OR&W, the two railroads combined for approximately 4 miles of dual gauge tracks.

The next stop was Belle Valley. Here, the narrow gauge track took a western turn on its way to Zanesville. Between Caldwell and Belle Valley, the railroad crossed Duck Creek 7 times in 4 miles. We passed the train at a small town called Coal Ridge. We arrived at Ava, well ahead of the train, got a quick shot, then started for the Ava Brick Co., just south of the Glenwood Tunnel. The Ava Brick Co. was still making rail shipments in 1975, long after most businesses had given up on the old Cleveland and Marietta. We got a shot of it going by the brickyard, then turned and watched it climb the 1.08 percent grade to the Glenwood Tunnel.

I always enjoyed visiting this tunnel. It was wood-lined, had lights inside which you could turn on from the south portal, and was on a curve. About 1967, a northbound coal train had just exited the north tunnel portal when the north side collapsed on the remaining coal hoppers, shutting the line down for weeks. During reconstruction, lights were installed.

As we watched the slow-moving train enter the tunnel at almost a crawl, we wondered if we could make it to the north portal to get a picture of it coming out. We loaded up and sped up the winding road that went over the hill. This road was once the old switchback line, used by the C&M to get over the hill prior to the tunnel being built. We could get close to the north portal, but it was in a very deep cut, and a shot of the engine was impossible to get from the road. I climbed down the embankment in time to catch the engine exiting the tunnel. Just north of the tunnel portal, the railroad had built a wood aqueduct that crossed the track to divert water from the tunnel. As a result of the 1967 wreck mentioned earlier, two badly damaged coal hoppers were pulled up the hill and were buried. You can still walk there and look into the bay of a two bay, upside down hopper, which is now full of water.

About one mile north of the tunnel is the town of Glenwood. At one time, there was a passing siding there controlled by a two-story tower. The C&M crossed the B&O's "Muzzie" branch, which started at Lore City, and ended at Cumberland. A one-story tower was located here along with a movable gate which blocked either the PRR or the B&O. As we pulled to the side of the road, the diamond was at least 200 yards to the east of the road. Again, my youth kicked in. I volunteered to run to the diamond to get the shot, with just seconds to spare. From there, we headed for Cambridge.

We were able to get to the Cambridge Union Depot about a half hour ahead of the train. Here stood the depot and, until 1963, "CB" tower, protecting the crossing with the B&O's Newark Division Line, which ran from Benwood, West Virginia, to Newark, Ohio, and points west. The diamond tilt signal was controlled by the B&O operator inside the station. By now, the train was close to making its way past the

Cambridge Scale yards north of Byesville. At Cambridge Scales, most coal that was mined in the area was weighed before being assembled for its northbound trip. The yard had 9 tracks, and the hoppers were "humped" after being weighed. The yard could hold 800 cars, and had a scale house and a water plug. It was very active from the 1910's until the 1950's, when most of the mines were "worked out."

Between Cambridge Scales and the depot were the Cambridge Shops, consisting of a car repair shop, a three stall roundhouse and a 90' turntable. In the 1950's, a 30,000 gallon fuel diesel fueling facility and a sanding/drying facility were built here. In the area there was also a timber coaling dock and a cabin car track, along with the business offices.

As we waited for this last train at the Cambridge Union Depot, we heard it blowing for the crossing at Woodlawn Ave., which is at the south end of the Cambridge shops, so we knew it would be here within five minutes or so. The operator inside the depot had the tilt signal lined up for it so there was no stopping for the B&O at the diamond.

After leaving Cambridge northbound, the line went by FA (Foster Ave) tower, which was the yard limit for all southbound trains. It then crossed Wills Creek three times, over three high trestles. I walked this section several times as a young boy, and still remember every tie!

From this point north, it was difficult to follow the tracks. Our next stop was going to be Pigeon Gap, a quite scenic spot. Here the tracks went through a deep cut, with a wooden bridge crossing the tracks just south of the cut. At Oldams the track crossed 8th Street. We caught it there and went on. I can still see the cast iron "Penny" style railroad crossing signs that protected this crossing.

Just south of the tiny town of Tyner, there was a timber "rainbow" bridge. Once we left here, we were able to follow the train at a closer distance. Eighth Street again crossed the line at Tyner. From there, we were above the track, and it was a great overhead view. I could see the 36" fans on the engine turning!

Our next stop was another "rainbow" bridge crossing the tracks at Jacktown. Here was one of the few mines north of the Cambridge coal fields. The line was not in too bad shape here, as you could still see the ties. Where the spur went to the mine, a three-span trestle crossed Wills Creek. On we went, and our next stop was "graveyard" curve, with a nice view of a cemetery and the train in the background.

We then got ahead and set up where the Kimbolton depot once was. There was a passing siding here. It is interesting how the railroad, C&M and the PRR, crossed or avoided this large hill. First, the Bird's Run line was built, then a switchback over the hill was built. To eliminate seven miles of mainline thru Birds Run and the switchback, a wood-lined tunnel was built in 1895. In 1898, the tunnel caught fire, collapsed, and was abandoned, and the line through Bird's Run was again opened. This line through Bird's Run was always subject to flooding, and was almost completely destroyed in the 1937 flood. A permanent solution was the construction of the Liberty Tunnel in 1938, shortening the line by more than five miles. All this caused the mile markers to be changed due to this line realignment. At mile marker 69.7, (just north of Kimbolton,) it becomes M.M. 75.

North out of Kimbolton, we were on a county road, that at one time, was the main line that went to the first tunnel. This road left the ex-roadbed, went up and over the hill and took us into the town of Guernsey, where the abandoned line from Bird's Run came back into the main.

We followed the tracks through what is called Guernsey Valley. We had to cross the tracks again, about two miles south of Postboy, and again got several friendly waves from all the crew members. At the site of Postboy Tower, Dave decided that he and Roger Knot wanted to get a picture of the train as it came up the 1.9 percent grade into the south portal of Postboy Tunnel. So off they went, and we stayed behind to get the shot at Postboy.

As we waited for the train, we were standing right where the tower once was. I can remember thinking how interesting it would have been to have worked this tower back in the days when they were dispatching coal trains out of Cambridge Scales every 20 minutes. Most northbounds were double-headed or had a pusher on the rear for this 1.9 percent grade. "PY" was a two-story tower and the operator had a nice view of both northbound and southbound trains that moved coal through the Guernsey valley. This was a line where the largest freight steam engine was an L-1s, but mostly "H" class engines were used.

We could see the Penn Central GP-9 approach for about 200 yards. Its slow and final march north was about over. It would stop at "Town" tower in Newcomerstown, then turn east and head for Dennison, Ohio. We got in position to take some pictures as the train got closer, and then, all of a sudden, it stopped right in front of us. Two men dismounted and walked up to us and asked us if we wanted to ride to Newcomerstown. I couldn't say yes fast enough! Roger and I quickly climbed up on the front of #7042 and it started up the grade toward Postboy Tunnel at a little more than a walking pace. I can remember being startled as the GP-9 blew its horn for a grade crossing in the small town of Postboy for the last time. From here the grade got stiff. Even though it was only pulling one car and a cabin, the engine was revving up. The tunnel was in sight now. I remember thinking that at this location (with the opening of this tunnel), the line was complete, and I thought of the thousands of trains that had made their way through here since then.

As we got closer, I saw Dave just inside the tunnel portal and saw the flash of his camera. We went by him as we entered Postboy tunnel, the GP-9's exhaust reverberating loudly off the tunnel's roof. As we exited the tunnel and started down the grade toward the Panhandle, we came upon Johnson siding. The GP-9 was idling now, as it was all downhill. We passed the location where there was a telephone booth. There also, Roger and Dave had found the "Newcomerstown Yard Limit" cast iron sign just over the hill a few years prior, partially buried. I later got this sign from Roger, and it is one of my most prized possessions, something I will never give up. It now guards the Newcomerstown yard limit on my basement layout, where I model the PRR from Cambridge to Newcomerstown. We passed the Novelty Brick Co, with its brick kilns still standing today, its spur track still intact. We then came to a spur that served an AEP substation.

The crew asked if I wanted to go inside #7042's cab and, as I was standing behind the engineer, we crossed the Tuscarawas River over a long trestle. A few turns later, the Newcomerstown yard began with several businesses on both sides. We worked our way through the deteriorated yard, with its uneven tracks and rotting ties, and then entered the eastbound Panhandle lead track coming to a stop just east of "Town" tower. The train came to a stop so the crew could check in with the tower there, and we got off. After securing permission to enter the eastbound track, the last train started on its way.

As I watched the N-5c cabin enter the main, I thought about all the trains that ever ran over this line, both freight and passenger, all the special moves made, and of all the men that ever rode on this railroad, over almost 100 years. How fortunate I was to ride the very last train on this line!



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

REPLY TO:

**LINES WEST - BUCKEYE REGION CHAPTER**  
**c/o JOHN BARRIGA**  
**375 Sheldon Avenue**  
**Columbus OH 43207-1255**

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

**REGULAR \$10.00, ASSOCIATE \$10.00, ORGANIZATIONAL \$25.00**

**NATIONAL PRRT&HS MEMBERSHIP # \_\_\_\_\_**

**NAME \_\_\_\_\_**

**ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_**

**CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_**

**TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_**

**E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_**

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