#997 AND COUNTING

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THE magazine of railroading

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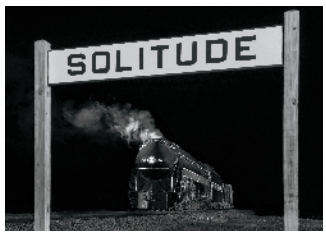

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Presenting the winners of *Trains*' annual photo contest, co-sponsored by the National Railway Historical Society. This year's theme is "Icons of railroading"

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"Troubleshooting a diesel locomotive," "I'm telling your Dad!" and "How to make up a day on Amtrak's *Pioneer*"

Lynn Sass, Adrian Telizyn, and Bruce Butler

ON THE COVER:

Leaving the last of four tunnels westbound on B&O's Magnolia Cutoff, this CSX freight led by a now-classic SD40-2 is nearing Paw Paw, W.Va. Stan Trzoniec

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From the Editor

Carl Swanson
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On paper, as author Jeffrey Harwell notes in his "CPKC's Shreveport dilemma" article, that starts on page 14, the merger of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern just makes sense.

The new CPKC is the only true North American railway, linking Canada, the United States, and Mexico in a single a 20,000-mile system.

Although the merger unlocks fascinating possibilities, a few challenges need to be overcome, and one of the biggest is the Kansas City Southern yard at Shreveport, La.

Serving five rail lines radiating from the city, the yard is essential and frequently congested. Untangling Shreveport is certain to be a major emphasis for the newly formed railroad.

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Left to right: Librarian George H. Drury, Editorial Assistant Nancy Bartol, Managing Editor Rosemary Entringer, Associate Editor J. David Ingles, and Editor David P. Morgan. Here, they're celebrating 35 years. How time flies — the 1,000th issue is close at hand. *Trains* collection

Meet the Staff

CHANGE IS INEVITABLE. Many great people have walked through the halls of Kalmbach. They have sat down at a desk with a name plate adorning the wall by their office. They have worked all night long to get you breaking news. They have been late to family gatherings and dinners more times than they can recall. Deadlines lurking around every corner is essentially the name of the game. But would you recognize these "word warriors" if you saw them in public? Some truly amazing editors have laid their hands on this magazine. *Trains* is not just a job about physical trains, it's about the people who live in a world built upon a great railroad industry. People use trains to make a living and support their families, to discover and experience vast new surroundings, to help in times of hardship and war, etc. Trains are involved in many facets of our lives. Their historical significance is immense — it's hard to know where to start and where to stop.

As times change, as circulation numbers change, and as the internet grows, we adapt and grow with it. There is a new force to be reckoned with. At Trains.com, under the *Trains* brand, if you scroll over to the *Trains* Magazine tab, then down to "Meet the Staff," you can read about (and see) the current faces behind the magazine. Each one has a unique story to tell. — *Nastassia Putz, production editor*

Plus

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Not a member yet? Check out our 30-day FREE trial unlocking unlimited access to premium video content on Trains.com. — *KJ*

Ask us

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Cruise Guide

UP, CPKC battle over trackage rights in Texas

Merger with CP creates new interest in little-used KCS rights for grain trains

▲ **A Kansas City Southern grain train led by SD70ACe No. 4019 passes a grain dealer in Beasley, Texas, on Aug. 11, 2019. KCS and Union Pacific are fighting over trackage rights for grain trains in Texas.** Tom Kline

UNION PACIFIC AND Canadian Pacific Kansas City — new rivals in the north-south corridor linking the Upper Midwest with the Gulf Coast — are locked in a dispute over grain-train trackage rights.

As part of UP's 1988 acquisition of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad, Kansas City Southern gained trackage rights over UP from Beaumont, Texas, to the ports of Houston and Galveston so grain customers would not lose shipping options.

CPKC wants to use the so-called South End trackage rights to send unit grain trains from the Upper Midwest to export via the Gulf Coast ports. But UP says those rights are limited to interchange grain traffic that originates from a handful of "North End" locations in Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa.

KCS, whose northern terminus was Kansas City, Mo., only sporadically used the rights over the past 35 years. After obtaining the concession to operate in Mexico in 1996, KCS concentrated on cross-border grain movements it could originate and that maximized the railway's length of haul.

But now the CP-KCS merger has prompted shipper interest in using CPKC's single-line service from the Upper Midwest to reach export markets via Houston and Galveston. So CPKC in August asked federal regulators to enforce the rights it says the Interstate Commerce Commission made part of its approval of the UP-MKT merger.

UP asked the Surface Transportation Board to toss out the complaint, then later filed suit in federal court. UP wants the court to declare that the railroad has no obligation to handle the CPKC trains because the CP-KCS merger eliminated interchange in Kansas City — and therefore CPKC's ability to use the trackage rights to reach Houston and Galveston.

The North End rights first arose in 1982 when UP acquired Missouri Pacific. An ICC condition of that deal, UP says, was "to grant MKT trackage rights for 'the preservation of an additional rail option for grain moving to Kansas City from Lincoln, Topeka, Atchison, and Omaha/Council Bluffs' — the North End rights."

The ICC did not intend for the trackage rights to be a windfall for other railroads, UP contends. UP also argued that since KCS took UP to court in a 1997 dispute over the trackage rights, it's clear that even CPKC should realize the STB lacks jurisdiction.

CPKC called UP's assertions "revisionist history."

"The 1997 complaint demonstrates that UP's position in this proceeding reflects a troubling pattern: when KCSR engages in a transaction that offers shippers better competitive options and thereby threatens UP's market position, UP responds by seeking to take away KCSR's rights. It did so in 1997 after KCSR acquired an interest in the Mexican Concession, and it is trying to do so again now after KCSR became part of the larger CPKC network." — *Bill Stephens*

Environmental issues lead court to scuttle Uinta Basin approval

Exemption for railway project returned to STB over downstream impacts

A FEDERAL COURT RULING in August struck down the Surface Transportation Board's approval of the Uinta Basin Railway project, calling the decision allowing construction of the 88-mile rail line in eastern Utah "arbitrary and capricious." The court also vacated the Environmental Impact Statement and a related document and sent the matter back to the STB.

In its December 2021 decision granting the exemption allowing construction, the board said the project "is likely to produce unavoidable environmental impacts" but that "the transportation merits … outweigh the environmental impacts." Board Chairman Martin J. Oberman dissented from that 4-1 decision, saying the environmental impacts outweighed the transportation benefits, and that the decision "badly understates" the significance of those impacts.

That viewpoint proved to be similar to that of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in the suit brought by Eagle County, Colo., and several environmental groups. They had sued the STB and the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition, the group seeking to build the railroad to move crude oil from the Uinta Basin. Judge Robert L. Wilkins, writing for the panel that also included Judges Patricia Millett and Cornelia Pillard, said the environmental report from the STB's Office of Environmental Analysis "failed to demonstrate that the Board took the requisite 'hard look' at all the environmental impacts of the Railway."

Opponents of the project hailed the ruling.

Eagle County Attorney Bryan Treu told the *Colorado Sun* news site that the board "cut corners in their environmental analysis of this project, particularly as it relates to Colorado, and now they have to start over." Deeda Seed of the Center for Biological Diversity, another plaintiff in the case, said in a press release that the decision

> THE REPORT "FAILED TO DEMONSTRATE THE BOARD TOOK THE REQUISITE 'HARD LOOK' AT ALL OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE RAILWAY"
> — U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

was "an enormous victory for our shared climate, the Colorado River, and the communities that rely on it for clean water, abundant fish, and recreation."

The Seven County coalition, meanwhile, said in a statement

The "Spirit of the Union Pacific" locomotive leads a westbound train along the Colorado River at Burns, Colo., in October 2020. Failure to consider impacts in Colorado played a part in a court decision overturning STB approval of the Uinta Basin Railway. Matt Krause

that it "remains committed" to development and operation of the railway, and that while it believed the existing environmental report was "appropriate and thorough … we are ready, willing, and capable of working with the U.S. Surface Transportation Board to ensure additional reviews and the project's next steps proceed without further delay. We look forward to bringing this railway to the Basin in a safe and cost-effective way to enable economic stability, sustainable communities and an enriched quality of life to Utahns and beyond."

The STB does not comment on litigation, spokesman Michael Booth told *Trains*.

The court's decision was critical of the failure to consider impacts beyond the project's immediate area, saying it agreed with the plaintiffs' contention that the final environmental report "ignored certain upstream and downstream impacts." Specifically, the court faulted the board's failure to consider the larger environmental impacts of the oil drilling in the Uinta Basin, and from the later refining of that oil.

The board argued in part that such impacts "are not reasonably foreseeable," and in part that it was not required to consider environmental impacts of refining because it "cannot regulate or mitigate" such impacts. But the court's decision rejected those arguments.

On the first point, Wilkins wrote, "The Board provides no reason why it could not quantify the environmental impacts of the wells it reasonably expects in this already identified region. Further, the Board's cursory assertion that it could confine the upstream impacts of oil development on vegetation and wildlife to areas where oil development and railroad construc-

tion would overlap lacks any reasoned explanation and is unsupported in the record."

On the second, he wrote, the board "cannot avoid its responsibility under [the National Environmental Policy Act] to identify and describe the environmental effects of increased oil drilling and refining on the grounds that it lacks authority to prevent, control, or mitigate those developments. … given that the Board has the authority to deny an exemption to a railway project on the ground that railway's anticipated environmental and other costs outweigh its expected benefits, the Board's argument that it need not consider effects it cannot prevent is simply inapplicable."

The court also found the environmental report failed to provide the required "hard look" because it did not consider the increased risk of a rail accident or wildfire downline because of increased rail traffic, or the impact on water resources resulting from such events.

That concern over downstream impacts, particularly the risks of an accident involving a train transporting oil from the Uinta Basin project along UP's main line through the Colorado Rockies, was a primary point of contention for Eagle County.

The lack of scope played a similar role in the court vacating the Biological Opinion on potential impacts on endangered species and critical habitats was a part of the environmental report.

In that regard, Wilkins wrote, "The Board's reasoning for narrowly defining the action area not to include waterways downline near the Union Pacific Line is unreasoned and fails to demonstrate a 'rational connection between the facts found and the choices made." — *David Lassen*

August was a busy month for heritage rail paint schemes. Above left, Metro-North's Conrail-wrapped P32AC-DM No. 201 arrives at Croton-Harmon on its first run, Aug. 14, 2023. Top right, Norfolk Southern's Virginian SD70ACe No. 1069 is displayed at Altoona, Pa., after becoming the first of the railroad's 20 heritage diesels to have its paint scheme refreshed; the rest will follow over the next few years. Lower left, CSX introduced its Louisville & Nashville heritage diesel at Waycross, Ga., a few weeks after providing the first look at its C&O passenger-scheme diesel inside the Waycross shops. Top left, MTA/Marc A. Hermann; top right, Norfolk Southern; lower left and right, CSX Transportation.

Eastern railroads add to heritage-paint bonanza

CSX, Norfolk Southern, Metro-North all make news with classic designs

THESE ARE GOOD TIMES for classic locomotive paint schemes in the eastern U.S., as illustrated by a series of unveilings during a five-day period in August.

During that time span, CSX Transportation released a locomotive honoring the Chesapeake & Ohio passenger diesel scheme, the fifth unit in its heritage-diesel series; New York's Metro-North Railroad unveiled a unit wrapped in a Conrail design, the second unit marking its 40th anniversary; and Norfolk Southern outshopped a refreshed Virginian locomotive and said it would restore its entire heritage fleet.

CSX introduced another heritage unit, honoring Louisville & Nashville, later in the month.

The C&O unit was the first of the group to be unveiled. Like earlier locomotives honoring Baltimore & Ohio, Seaboard System, Chessie System, and Conrail, the ES44AH was repainted at the railroad's Waycross, Ga., shop, and announced on the railroad's social media platforms.

It features the script "Chesapeake & Ohio" of the railroad's passenger diesels, as well as the "C&O for Progress" logo. Its number, 1869, reflects the year of C&O's founding. Similarly, the number 1850 of the L&N unit reflects the charter date for that railroad by the commonwealth of Kentucky.

Metro-North P32AC-DM No. 201 was wrapped at the commuter railroad's North White Plains shops in a blue-and-yellow design worn by Conrail FL9 units between 1976 and 1982. Conrail had granted Metro-North permission to apply its name, logo, and colors in March. It debuted in Hudson Line service on Aug. 14.

Metro-North has said as many as five units could be part of its heritage program.

The Virginian unit, SD70ACe No. 1069, was repainted at NS' Juniata Shops in Altoona, Pa. The railroad said the project took 10 carmen more than 550 hours and required more than 72 gallons of primer, paint, and clear coat. It kicked off a program to apply fresh paint to all 20 NS heritage diesels, the first of which were introduced in 2012 to mark the railroad's 30th anniversary. — *Bill Stephens and David Lassen*

Workers examine Long Island Rail Road Train No. 722 after it derailed at 54 mph in Queens, N.Y., on Aug. 3, 2023. Thirteen people were injured. An investigation determined the switch was incorrectly lined, but a wiring fault led dispatchers to believe otherwise. MTA/Marc A. Hermann

Misaligned switch leads to Long Island Rail Road derailment

Train traveling 54 mph derails at Hall Interlocking

A MISALIGNED SWITCH — shown to dispatchers as being correctly aligned for a straight-ahead move because of a wiring fault — caused the derailment of a Long Island Rail Road train at Hall Interlocking in Queens, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority determined in the early stages of its investigation of the Aug. 3 incident.

Thirteen people were injured, two seriously, in the derailment of eight-car train No. 722, a 10:43 a.m. departure from Grand Central Madison bound for Hempstead, N.Y. Fifty-five people were on board when the train of M7 electric multiple-unit equipment derailed just east of the Jamaica station at 11:12 a.m.

The MTA said the LIRR had conducted a required monthly inspection of the switch prior to the derailment, and believes the switch did not properly realign following that inspection. It said this was not detected "because of a previously unknown vulnerability in the switch's wiring configuration, which resulted in the train dispatcher's display showing that the route was properly aligned when it was, in fact, not."

Catherine Rinaldi, interim president of the LIRR and president of the Metro-North Railroad, said the incident "exposed a unique and previously unknown localized vulnerability that has been rectified. This incident has prompted us to enhance our switch inspection processes to improve the safety of the railroad going forward."

The switch was rebuilt to address the wiring issue, and the LIRR subsequently assessed all 1,045 of its switches to determine the issue was unique to that specific location, the MTA said. The railroad also has developed and implemented additional procedures for the inspections such as the one preceding the accident. — *David Lassen*

Fixes

IN THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE:

— On page 45, in the "Travel" article on the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine, the name of the new structure under construction to help protect more of the museum collection is incorrect. It is the Burton B. Shaw South Boston Car House.

NEWS BRIEFS

Derailment causes major damage to Swiss rail tunnel, world's longest

Switzerland's **GOTTHARD BASE TUNNEL**, at 35.5 miles the world's longest rail tunnel, will likely be limited to traffic through just one of its two tubes until early 2024 after the Aug. 10 derailment of a freight train that caused significant damage to the west tube. Swiss national rail operator **SBB** said the accident destroyed a gate at a crossover point that is necessary to separate the two tubes in case of a fire. It also damaged some 5 miles of track and more than 20,000 concrete ties, as well as some of the tunnel floor. The remaining tube will handle almost 100 freight trains a day until repairs are complete; passenger trains are being rerouted over the panoramic Gotthard Pass route, adding about an hour to travel times.

Bay Area commuter operator **CALTRAIN** has ordered a **STADLER** battery-electric trainset for test operations, a first-of-its-kind trial for the technology in the U.S. The four-car trainset will run on overhead power between San Francisco and San Jose, then rely on batteries for the 30 miles beyond the end of catenary to Gilroy, Calif., with occasional demonstration trips to Salinas, Calif., another 30 miles away. Funds for the trainset and related infrastructure will come from an $80 million award from the **CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY.**

The **CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION** ordered 60 new passenger cars from **ALSTOM** for use in Hartford Line service as well as on **METRO-NORTH**'s New Haven Line branches. The 85-foot stainless steel cars will be based on Alstom's X'Trapolis European EMU design. Delivery of the first cars under the $315 million contract is expected in 2026.

Shortline company **GENESEE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION** added to its fleet of six-motor Alco and MLW locomotives by purchasing four MLW M636s from **WESTERN NEW YORK & PENNSYLVANIA**, which had stored the units since acquiring GE AC60CWs. The ex-**QUEBEC CARTIER** units will become backups, and in one case, a parts source, for GVT's fleet of two M630s, one M636, and one C636.

New Fred W. Frailey novel is a page-turner

Set in the 1970s, 'Seldom Willing' tells the tale of the fictional South West Kansas Railroad

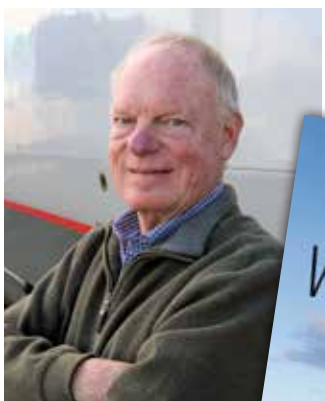
Bill Stephens
bybillstephens@gmail.com
Analysis: Trains.com

Have you read any good railroad novels lately? Me neither. Or at least I hadn't until May, when Fred W. Frailey emailed me a nearly final draft of his first novel.

Frailey needs no introduction. For more than four decades *Trains* readers enjoyed his masterful reporting and writing on the railroad industry. Now in retirement, Fred has traded fact for fiction in *Seldom Willing*, a novel that draws on his lifetime of observing railroads.

Seldom Willing, available on Amazon, is set in the 1970s and tells the tale of the fictional South West Kansas Railroad.

From villainous executives and corporate intrigue to operational hijinks and the dedicated people who keep trains moving 24/7/365, *Seldom Willing* captures the essence of a fascinating industry. Toss in a whodunit caper and the quirky characters that are part of the fabric of railroading, and you've got a page-turner.



David Lustig photo

Frailey is no stranger to writing books: He has authored or co-authored a half-dozen nonfiction works about railroads. Fred has been a stickler for facts since beginning his journalism career at age 16 at the newspaper his family owned in Sulphur Springs, Texas. "I never wanted to do fiction. Ever," he says.

Then inspiration struck on a January 2013 trip through Kansas. Frailey was following Union Pacific's Kansas Division along Interstate 70 and took note of the small, prosperous towns beside the tracks, each with its own skyscraper grain elevator. "And I thought, my God, the wealth that's created in this state that everyone thinks is boring. It's not boring," he recalls. "I started thinking, is there a story to be told here? And if there is, what is it?"

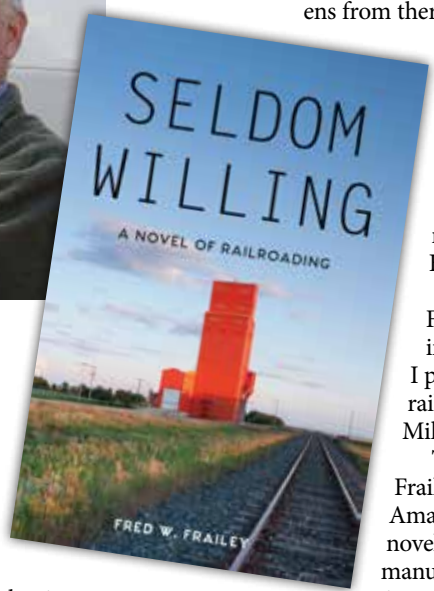
The idea popped into his head around Hays, Kan. By the time he reached Topeka three hours later, his imagination had run wild, and he had the makings of a novel. At a motel that night, Fred jotted down a rudimentary plot and a cast of characters. When he arrived home in Virginia, he opened a spreadsheet and created a list of station names and mileposts — half real places, half imaginary — that would dot the South West Kansas Railroad's mythical map.

"Then I proceeded to forget about this whole thing for eight years," Frailey says. But writers write, and not long after hanging up his *Trains* pen in 2020 at the age of 77, Fred's thoughts returned to the long-forgotten novel.

Writing *Seldom Willing* took two years. "I've never had more fun," Frailey says. "Once you get your head into writing it just takes you away. You're picked up and swept into the heavens. And this was 58,000 words of being swept up into the heavens."

Readers will get swept up in the book. *Seldom Willing* begins with a bang — quite literally — and then delves into the fragile state of the Central Pacific Railroad and its Kansas Division. The Kansas Division was built in the 1870s as the South West Kansas Railroad, which earned the moniker "Seldom Willing" before going bust and becoming part of the CP.

Frailey's Central Pacific is headed by a CEO named Buzz "Chainsaw" Whitaker, who decides to abandon the redundant Kansas Division, only to have a smart and well-connected local grain magnate scoop up the Kansas City-Denver route. The upstart railroad is renamed South West Kansas. And the plot thickens from there.



"I was bound and determined this would not be a thinly veiled story about Union Pacific," Frailey says. "UP is not a failure. The fictional CP is a failure in the making. The CP runs south of the real UP, although both railroads — real and imaginary — go through Hugo, Colo."

The events in the book do lean on Frailey's decades of experience covering railroads. "I borrowed everything I possibly could," he says. Several real railroaders — Rob Krebs, Jim Hagen, Mike Haverty — even make cameos.

The easiest decision about the book, Frailey says, was self-publishing on Amazon. Last year Fred read a first-time novelist's book, which noted that the manuscript was rejected more than 200 times before a publisher finally picked it up. "I thought, OK, now you're 79. You don't have time to be rejected," Frailey says.

Frailey, bitten by the fiction bug, is hard at work on his second novel: A mystery that revolves around a dozen passengers aboard Santa Fe's westbound *Super Chief* during its heyday. "The fact is, there's not much railroad fiction," Frailey says. "I think there are a lot of stories to be told." 1

For more *Trains* advertising information, please call Michael Wieloch at 262-798-6625.

BRIDGE UNITS to the PUMPKIN PATCH

Ex-Key System articulated units host a family friendly experience

Story and photos by Bill Buchanan

Each October, two former Key System Bridge Units operated by the Western Railway Museum become more than artifacts of 20th century transit. They regain their original role by moving crowds of people, quickly.

The riders now are mostly kids and families visiting a trackside pumpkin patch, not commuters headed to jobs in San Francisco. You can hear an echo of rush hour, though.

"That's the time of year we really move people, instead of just offer a scenic train ride, and those cars hold 130 people each, plus standees," says Bob Towar, volunteer, treasurer, and spokesman for the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association. "They run every 30 minutes. And they're full. We have some days that approach 1,000 visitors."

The two-car, articulated, three-truck units were built in 1937 by Bethlehem Shipyard in Wilmington, Del., for Key System service across the San Francisco Bay Bridge. The units had cab signals and automatic train stop equipment, and they were designed to help riders get on and off the cars quickly.

The museum's home is rural Rio Vista Junction, Calif., where state Highway 12 crosses over the former Sacramento Northern Railway main line about 60 miles northeast of San Francisco. The association acquired 22 miles of the former SN from the Union Pacific in 1993. Most of it is idle, but the museum offers rides year-round on approximately 6 miles of re-electrified track south from the museum.

The trip to the Pumpkin Patch Festival at Gum Grove, accessible only by rail, is about 5 miles each way.

This year's pumpkin trains operate on the last three weekends in October. They will run every 30 to 45 minutes between the museum and the patch, with trains leaving the museum between 10:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Former Key System Unit No. 182 crosses Little Honker Bay Road en route to Gum Grove. This location is known as Garfield.

October on ex-Sacramento Northern Railway: Bridge Unit No. 182 at Gum Grove station boards passengers who had arrived at the grove earlier and are ready to go back to the museum.

Looking through the interior of Unit No. 182 shortly after passengers have detrained at the museum. Almost every seat was full on this ride to the pumpkin patch.

The museum will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the event.

"It's our largest fundraising event of the year," Towar says. "We partner with local Rotary Club chapters, and the event brings significant revenue to both organizations."

Key System streetcars and trains served the Bay Area, reaching San Francisco by ferry from Oakland before moving to tracks on the lower deck of the Bay Bridge from 1939 until 1958. Buses replaced the trains and streetcars, and lanes for cars and trucks replaced the tracks on the bridge.

The association owns Bridge Units 182, 186, and 187. The pumpkin patch trains use 182 and 187; No. 186 is stored and would need significant work to return to service, Towar said. The museum also has three Key System streetcars, "one of which (No. 271) is in the process of complete restoration in our shop," Towar says. Another streetcar, No. 352, "is a workhorse and runs often."

The museum assigns other cars to the pumpkin trains as needed and runs the Bridge Units at other times of the year, Towar says, especially on busy days.

OLD SCHOOL AIR CONDITIONING

The cars' windows don't open, so the museum tries not to use the units during hot weather. But on warm days in October, "we do what Key System operators used to do," he says. "Open the door at each end of the car and get a breeze going through as the car runs.

"I love running the Bridge Units," Towar says. "I don't need much of a reason to pull one out when I am operating for the day."

If these features weren't enough to qualify the Bridge Units for the pumpkin runs, they have one more attraction: The cars are partly orange. T


SHR
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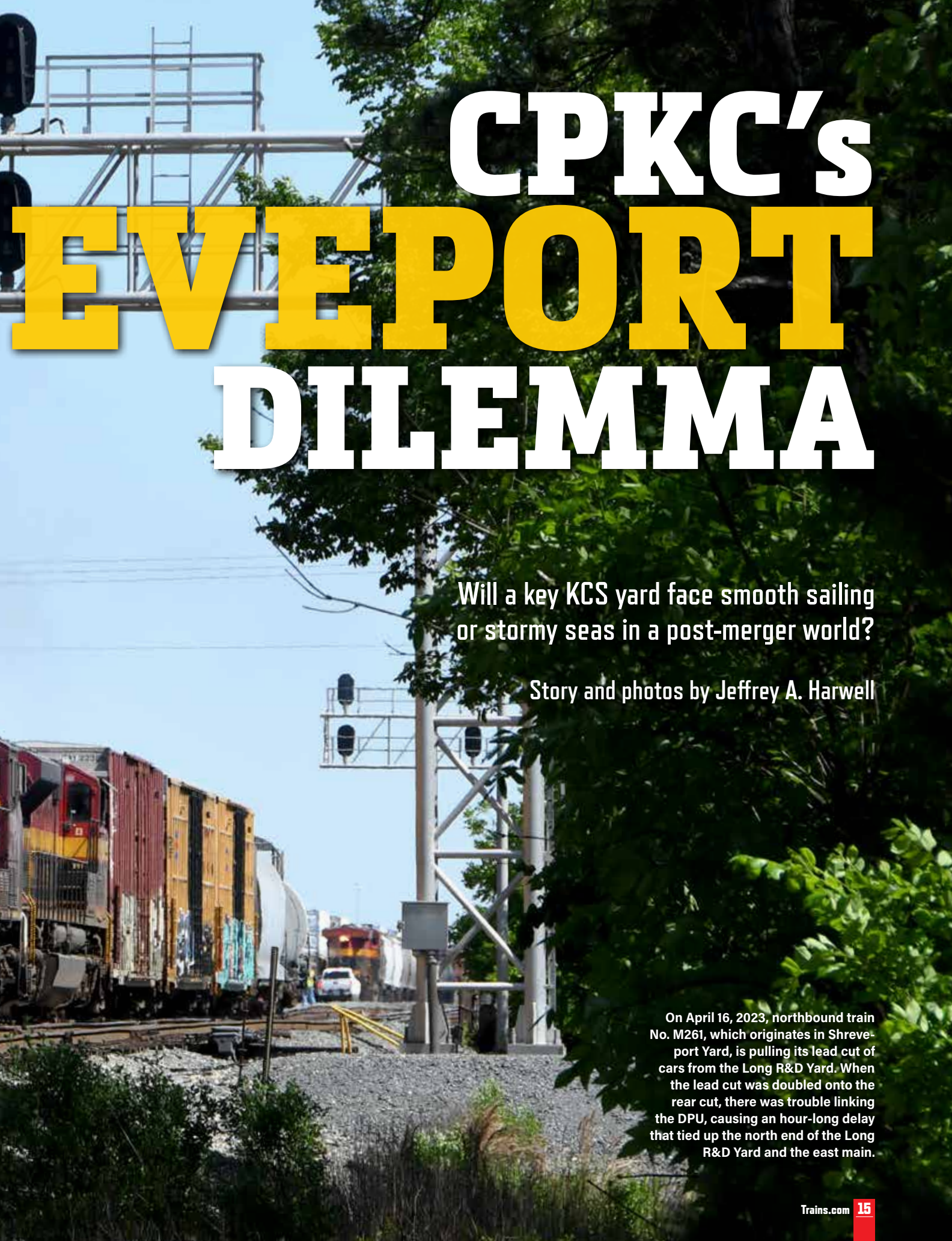
CPKC's EVEPORT DILEMMA

Will a key KCS yard face smooth sailing or stormy seas in a post-merger world?

Story and photos by Jeffrey A. Harwell



On April 16, 2023, northbound train No. M261, which originates in Shreveport Yard, is pulling its lead cut of cars from the Long R&D Yard. When the lead cut was doubled onto the rear cut, there was trouble linking the DPU, causing an hour-long delay that tied up the north end of the Long R&D Yard and the east main.

On paper, the merger of the Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern looks good. It is truly an end-to-end merger of the smallest Class I railroads, which will enhance rail industry competition.

Public response to the merger has not been totally unexpected. The not-in-my-backyard folks voiced their concerns. Other Class I railroads tried and failed to squeeze out concessions during the approval process.

In fall 2022, the Surface Transportation Board issued its redacted version of the merger documents. These contain many of the things you'd expect. Marketing experts talking about the endless growth opportunities for the first Class I railroad to connect Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Numerous testimonials give blessings to the merger.

KCS' dependence on trackage rights through south Texas has received publicity as a potential impediment for the new railroad. There are, however, other potential roadblocks.

If you're familiar with railroading in the south, you can't help but thumb through the 4,342-page merger document and notice that there's one line item missing. That would be infrastructure improvements to KCS' major yard in Shreveport, La., the railroad's Achilles' heel. While the document outlines a slew of new and extended sidings, it goes on to say, "the yard has sufficient capacity to accommodate this expanded role." Could Shreveport Yard be added to the list of potential hot spots?

A GRAND PLAN

The original Shreveport Yard opened in 1957. Its location was ideal. Five routes radiated from Shreveport, making it the heart of the Kansas City Southern. Back then it was known as Deramus Yard, for William Deramus, the road's longest serving president (1941-1961), but the name changed to Shreveport Yard in the 2000s.

If you talk to any KCS railroader, past or present, you'll learn there has always been a nasty stigma associated with moving trains into and out of Shreveport Yard. Pick any derogatory term and you'll hear it used to describe the facility. You'd think in such a situation the railroad would consider changes. It did.

In early 2005, KCS hired a consultant to investigate designing a more user-friendly yard. The consultant came up with a grand plan that involved a mini-hump classification yard capable of sorting 3,000 cars per day. More importantly, this plan redesigned the choke-point track configurations at the yard's north and south ends. Things were looking good.

The design proposal for the new and improved Shreveport Yard came at a time when Precision Scheduled Railroading was becoming popular. The interests of railroad executives and investors were being piqued by the man who wrote the book on PSR — E. Hunter Harrison. PSR methodology isn't compatible with most hump yards. It didn't help that the recession of 2009 was in full effect when decisions on the yard's future were made.

The consultant's plan for Shreveport Yard soon fell victim to these winds of change. The mini-hump was quietly axed. The railroad did undertake several improvements, which included adding Centralized Traffic Control for the main lines through the yard, reconfiguring trackage closer to town, and installing power switches within the yard. Seven new receiving and departure tracks were added on the east side of the yard, but for the most part, the track configuration at both ends remained basically unchanged. Was it a mistake not to move forward with many or all of the changes the consultant proposed?

REALITY

The diagram "The proposal — CPKC Shreveport Yard," on page 18, shows the consultant's improved yard plan. This concept took what was already there and designed a layout to neutralize existing restrictions, as best it could.

Even after much of the plan was shelved, the railroad was left with a 30-track classification yard plus 16 receiving and departure tracks. That sounds impressive enough. But looking at the details of Shreveport Yard, limitations and conflicts restrict what it can do.

The "Conflicts & limitations — CPKC Shreveport Yard" diagram, also on page 18, represents what the yard looks like today. Given its location at the center of five rail lines, you could argue this is a case where a hump yard could be justified on a precision-scheduled railroad.

Handling 1,000 cars per day is generally regarded as the point when a hump opera-

Looking north from the Shreveport diesel shop in 2023 one would think a set of power could quickly get to its train by following this lead to the yard's north end. In reality, either north-end switching must stop for the move or the power has to negotiate the yard's congested south end.

Prior to KCS de México and the Meridian Speedway, this is what Shreveport Yard looked like in July 1989. A cut of cars is being pulled from the classification yard (right rear) to be shoved into the Long R&D Yard (left). During recent times, the yard has rarely looked like this.

tion becomes beneficial. Shreveport Yard was handling an average of 1,600 cars daily in the mid-2000s, when project decisions were being made.

Flat-switching operations can have an advantage over hump classification when dealing with large blocks of cars. PSR railroads spend a great deal of time developing elaborate blocking plans, allowing for longer distances between switches. In such situations, a flat switching yard is usually the better solution — if the yard can handle it.

The Shreveport Yard argument isn't about hump yard versus flat yard — it's about track configuration.

To understand how important the track configuration was and continues to be, consider two of the consultant's goals from 20 years ago: "To separate all yard operations from mainline track operations," and "Separate receiving/departure tracks from the classification yard." Neither goal was realized.

Study the current configuration and you'll see two major bottlenecks. Tracks at both ends of the yard are suddenly restricted to only three in order to navigate highway overpasses. When the yard is busy, delays caused by these constrictions are significant.

MAIN LINES AND CORRIDORS

Looking at the bigger picture, the two busiest routes operating through Shreveport Yard are the north-south corridor (Kansas City to Beaumont/Laredo, Texas) and the east-west Meridian Speedway (Meridian, Miss., to Dallas). For the 8.8 miles between Texas Avenue and Texas Junction, these two corridors share the same track. Shreveport Yard is located roughly in the middle.

Given the importance of this track segment, one would think the route would be a double-track main line, and it is, almost. The 1.2-mile segment between South Shreveport and Control Point 554 is a single track. With room for only three tracks over the highway bridge at South Shreveport, two of the three tracks are devoted to yard functions and/or a tail track. Herein lies one of the problems the new railroad will face as its traffic levels increase — having a single-track main at a critical yard point.

The main-track reduction is important because of the larger number of through trains that will need to bypass the yard under CPKC's plans. A fair number of non-priority bulk trains already bypass the yard on the north-south corridor, with more anticipated.

Following the merger, CPKC immediately added priority intermodal trains I182/I183 to the north-south corridor. At the time, operations personnel called I182/I183 the hottest trains on the railroad. It is imperative the main line be open anytime one of the trains is in the area.

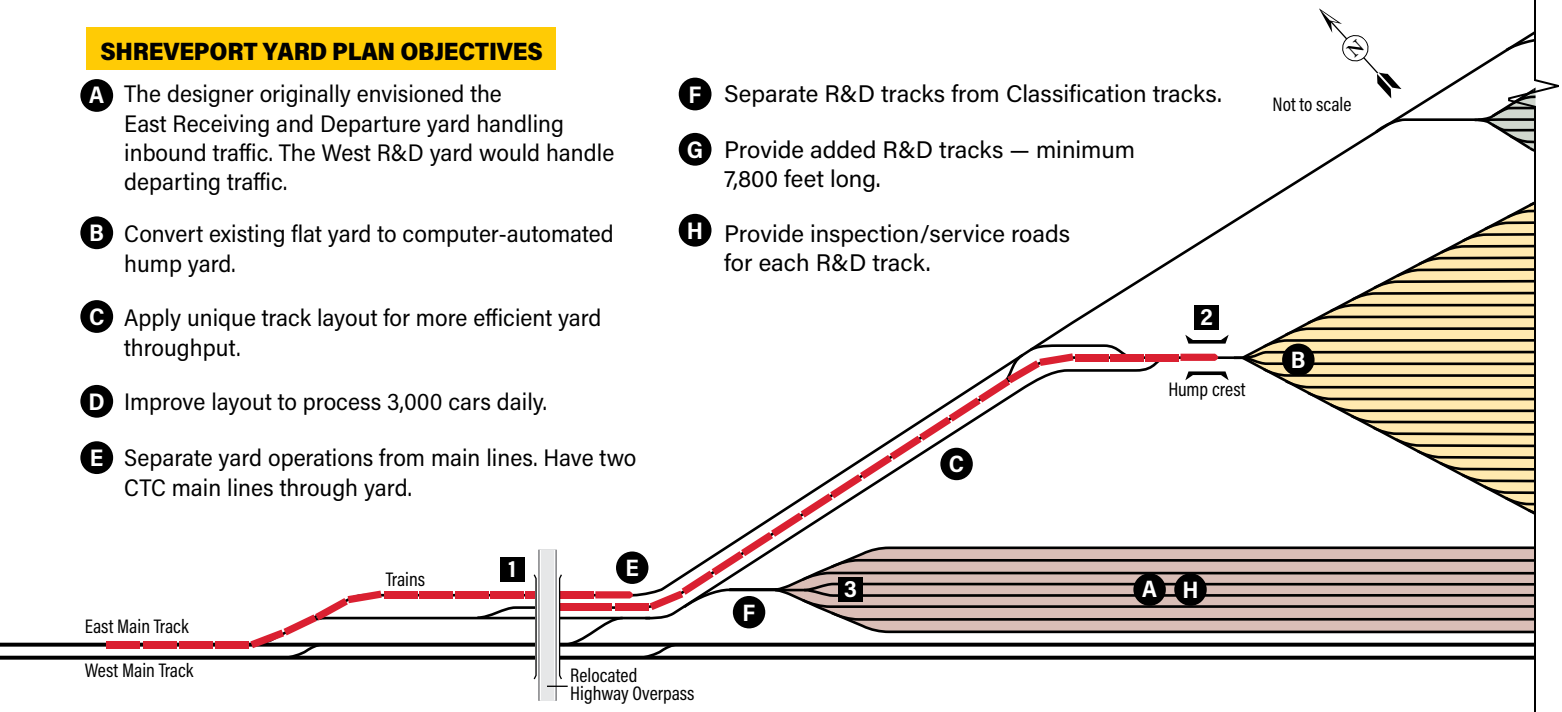
After adding this train pair, CPKC announced during its April 26, 2023, earnings call that it was introducing an even hotter train pair — I180/I181 — on May 11. This second pair hauls Schneider and Knight-Swift containers between Chicago

At two points, the Shreveport Yard funnels down to only three tracks due to highway overpasses — Martin Luther King Drive to the north and, here, Lakeshore Drive to the south. Both locations become significant bottlenecks during busy times and bear watching for further congestion as post-merger traffic increases according to the CPKC plans.

THE PROPOSAL
What the yard could be

SHREVEPORT YARD PLAN OBJECTIVES

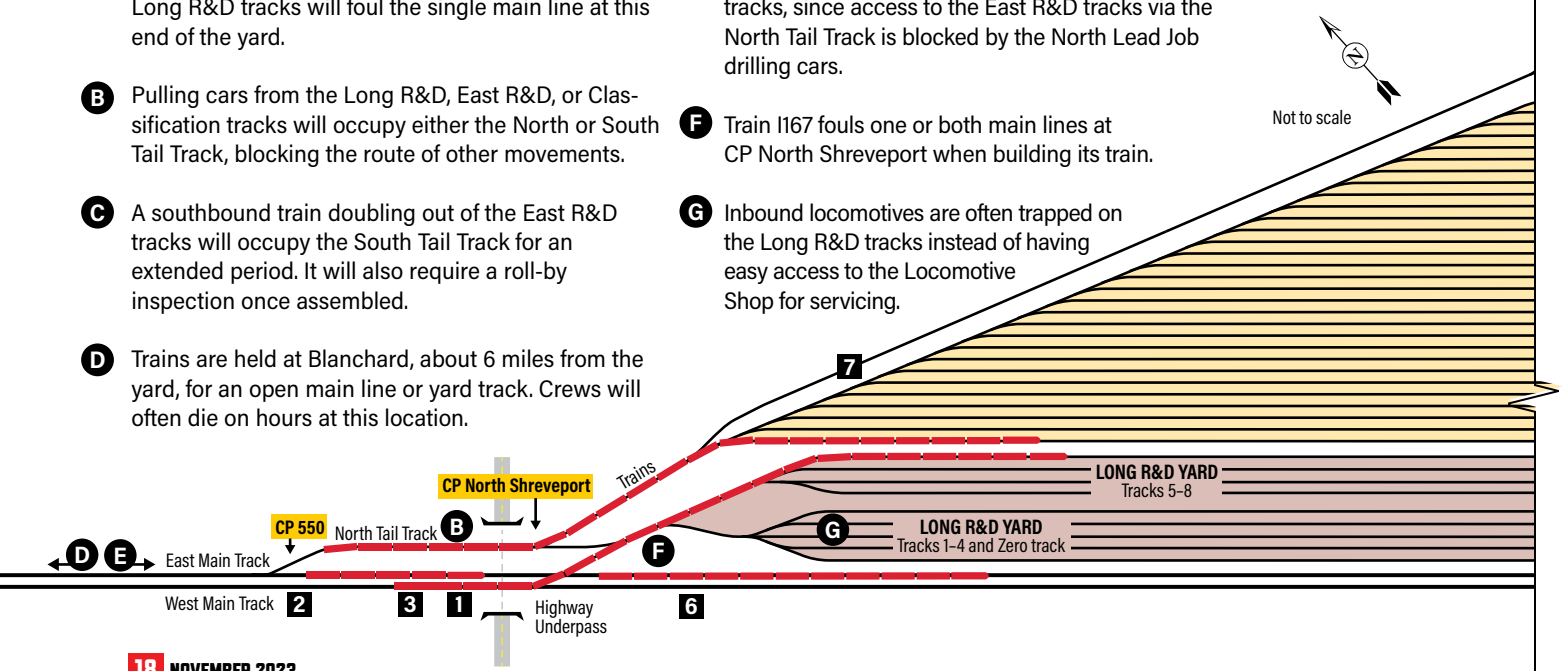
- **A** The designer originally envisioned the East Receiving and Departure yard handling inbound traffic. The West R&D yard would handle departing traffic.
- **B** Convert existing flat yard to computer-automated hump yard.
- **C** Apply unique track layout for more efficient yard throughput.
- **D** Improve layout to process 3,000 cars daily.
- **E** Separate yard operations from main lines. Have two CTC main lines through yard.
- **F** Separate R&D tracks from Classification tracks.
- **G** Provide added R&D tracks — minimum 7,800 feet long.
- **H** Provide inspection/service roads for each R&D track.



CONFLICTS & LIMITATIONS
The current yard layout

SHREVEPORT YARD CONFLICTS

- **A** Any train swapping blocks at the south end of the Long R&D tracks will foul the single main line at this end of the yard.
- **B** Pulling cars from the Long R&D, East R&D, or Classification tracks will occupy either the North or South Tail Track, blocking the route of other movements.
- **C** A southbound train doubling out of the East R&D tracks will occupy the South Tail Track for an extended period. It will also require a roll-by inspection once assembled.
- **D** Trains are held at Blanchard, about 6 miles from the yard, for an open main line or yard track. Crews will often die on hours at this location.
- **E** Southbound trains can only enter the Long R&D tracks, since access to the East R&D tracks via the North Tail Track is blocked by the North Lead Job drilling cars.
- **F** Train I167 fouls one or both main lines at CP North Shreveport when building its train.
- **G** Inbound locomotives are often trapped on the Long R&D tracks instead of having easy access to the Locomotive Shop for servicing.

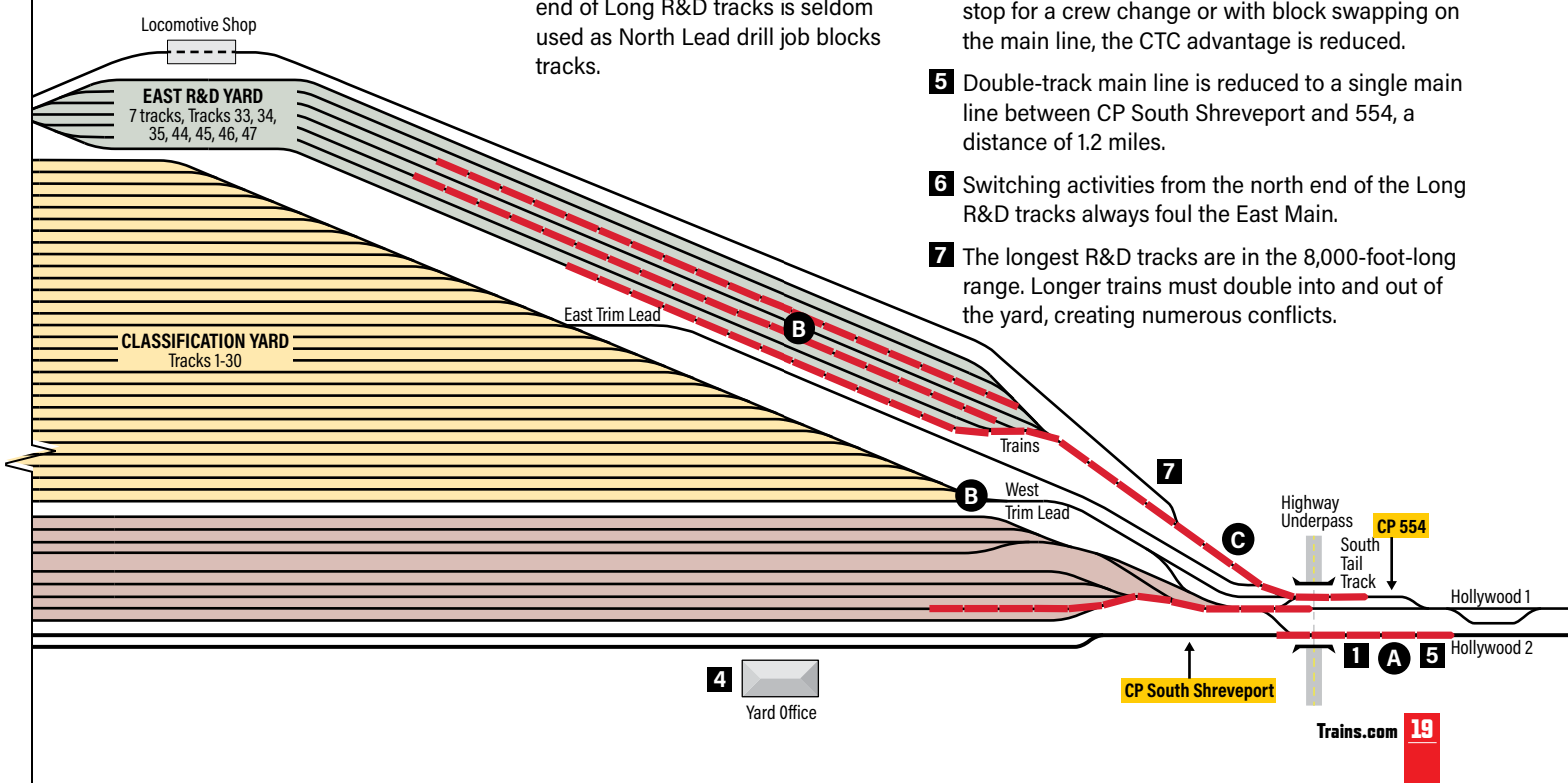


PROPOSED YARD TRAFFIC FLOW

1. Inbound (southbound) trains can enter either R&D tracks with minimal interference from hump job.
2. Hump job operates independent of all other yard activity.
3. Block swapping at either end of the Long R&D tracks would foul only one of two main lines as opposed to fouling the lone main line.
4. Trains can double over at either end of the East R&D tracks (receiving) without interfering with the hump or trim jobs.
5. One track for each trim job permits efficient simultaneous operation.
6. Inbound (northbound) trains can enter East R&D tracks while both trim jobs are pulling cars from the hump bowl.

YARD LIMITATIONS

1. Yard reduced to three tracks by highway overpasses at both ends.
2. Power switch and signal provided for North Tail Track access to east end of Long R&D tracks is seldom used as North Lead drill job blocks tracks.
3. Block swapping by northbound trains around CP North Shreveport will foul at least one main line, preventing arrivals from or departures to the north.
4. CTC was installed on main lines through Shreveport to increase train speeds. With trains having to stop for a crew change or with block swapping on the main line, the CTC advantage is reduced.
5. Double-track main line is reduced to a single main line between CP South Shreveport and 554, a distance of 1.2 miles.
6. Switching activities from the north end of the Long R&D tracks always foul the East Main.
7. The longest R&D tracks are in the 8,000-foot-long range. Longer trains must double into and out of the yard, creating numerous conflicts.



Northbound CPKC train M261 makes its usual afternoon appearance emerging from the north end of Shreveport Yard to begin its journey to Kansas City on April 15, 2023. The North Lead Job is drilling cars into the classification yard on the next track over. The crew is having to hand-throw the switches within the North Shreveport control point, slowing progress.

and Mexico City on an expedited schedule.

It's not just the north-south corridor dealing with priority trains. The east-west Meridian Speedway has always had enough traffic for a daily intermodal train each way — I168/I169. Adding a second daily intermodal train pair has been considered, but traffic only warranted such a train on certain days, not the entire week.

Given the yard's constraints, the last thing it needs is to introduce block swapping with 10,000-foot trains. But that's what the railroad did in mid-February with the new daily Meridian-Dallas schedules of trains I166/167. Granted, these trains are not 10,000 feet long every day, but that's the goal. These trains handle the overflow intermodal traffic in the corridor, then fill out with manifest traffic. The concept is to have one super train in place of several smaller ones.

The key aspect of I166/I167 is that each train is taken apart and rebuilt as it passes through Shreveport Yard. When this happens, the process ties up either end of the yard for an extended period. If both trains are working the yard at the same time, you'll hear the dispatcher tell other trains, "I've got both pig trains working in the yard, so I don't have anywhere to go with you." While intermodal trains I168/I169 still get the royal treatment when they pass through, I166/I167 have become unwanted stepchildren.

Keep in mind that as more priority trains are added in the north-south corridor, they will quickly outnumber priority trains on the Meridian Speedway. Norfolk Southern has a significant investment in the Speedway, and schedules are closely coordinated with NS. You can bet NS will keep a close eye on the punctuality of these trains.

When KCS decided against the mini-hump and new yard track design, it instead tackled this 2012 reconfiguration of the main line used by Meridian Speedway and Alexandria Sub trains southwest of downtown Shreveport.

DWELLING AND BLOCKING

One statistic railroaders look at to see how well a yard is performing is terminal dwell time — how long a car remains in a yard before it is forwarded. In a 2008 KCS press release, terminal dwell at Shreveport Yard was touted at 24 hours. By 2012, with most yard modifications complete, dwell time rose to 29 hours. In 2013, that number went up to 31 hours.

Fast forward to 2022, when terminal dwell stood at 32.6 hours. Looking at the 2023 figures, through mid-February dwell time was 29.2 hours. But from mid-February to the end of June, dwell time rose to 40.5 hours. The mid-February time frame is relevant because that's when KCS schedules were modified, and many trains began using CP/CPKC symbols. This is also when train I166/I167 and their associated block swapping activities were added. Additionally, congestion issues surfaced in Mexico during this time.

By late summer, dwell time numbers were approaching more normal levels while cars online remained relatively high.

While this is good for the railroad in the near term, train counts are still low compared to what they will be several years into the merger.

In comparison, CSX was averaging a dwell time of 21 hours for its 10 major terminals for the week ending March 31.

Blocking is another concern. The merger document indicates Shreveport will do more blocking. In the three-year period after the merger, Shreveport will handle 81 additional cars per day, according to the MultiRail simulation program used to develop the merger document.

More importantly, Shreveport will start building four new blocks shortly after the merger, then add two more by Year 3. The document also states the yard will build 10 additional blocks in the "post-transition" phase, but doesn't clearly define the term. The added block destinations are: Bensenville, Ill.; Kansas City/BNSF Interchange, St. Paul, Minn.; Nahunt, Ga;, East St. Louis, Ill.; Vicksburg, Miss.; Port Arthur, Texas; and Sanchez, Monterrey, and San Luis Potosi in Mexico.

The added blocks are being built in addition to the yard's current workload. Using merger document data, this translates to 41 blocks being built by Shreveport during the "post-transition" phase. The Shreveport Yard still has only 30 classification tracks.

MANAGING FEARS

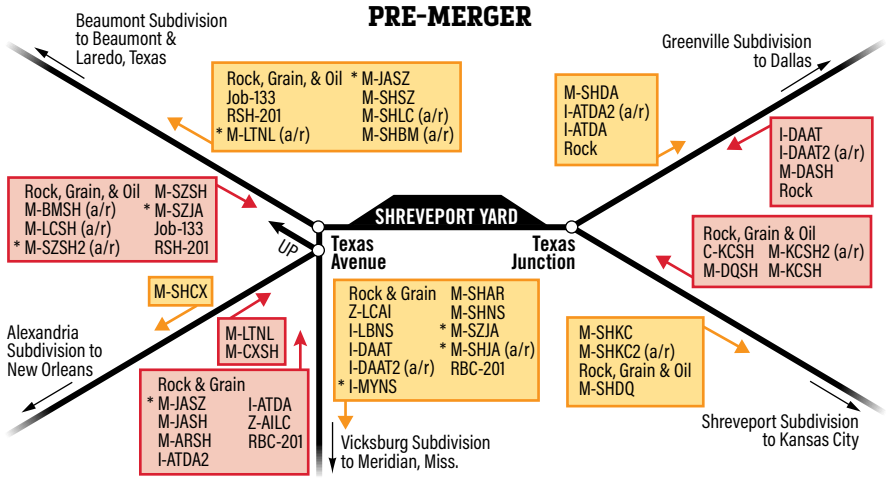
With numbers like this, one can't help but wonder how Shreveport Yard will manage to do everything it is asked. What would help alleviate the concerns?

To start, look at how the computer simulation accounts for the yard's limitations. The yard can classify a certain number of cars a day, but does this figure account for all limitations?

As an example, in Year 3 post-merger there will be six priority 100-series trains scheduled to swap blocks at Shreveport. How does the simulation model account for the disruption caused by such trains performing block swapping activities at either end of the facility?

One way to ease these concerns would be to look at how the classification tracks are set up for blocking before the merger and what they'll look like in the phases after the merger. How and where are the excess blocks going to be built? Where will the blocks be placed on the Long R&D tracks until a train is ready to pick them up, and how can this be done without interfering with other inbound and outbound trains?

Trains contacted both CPKC and Oliver Wyman, the MultiRail simulation software developer, regarding the accuracy of the simulator model for trains moving into, out



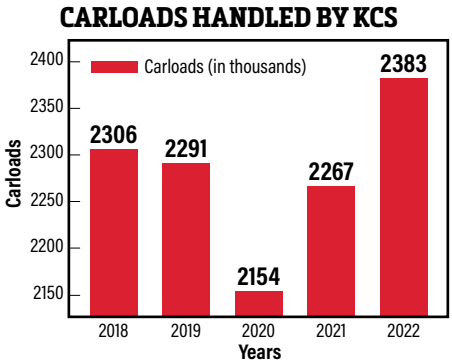
Trains may not operate every day.
Trains can/do operate with extra sections.
** 2M-260 would be the second section of M-260.
*** 3M-281 would be the third section of M-281.

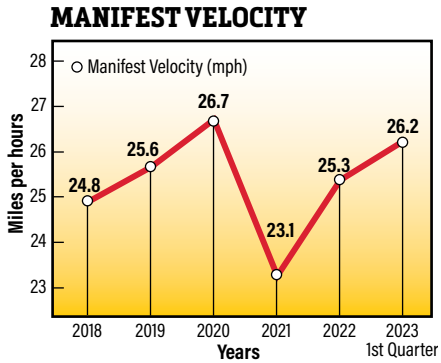
* Avoids Shreveport Yard
C Coal
I Intermodal
M Manifest
a/r As required

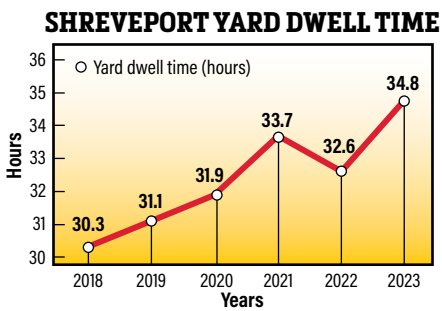
Towns in United States

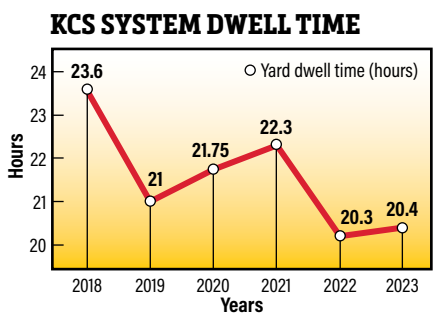
AR	Artesia, Miss.	KC	Kansas City, Mo.
AT/AI	Atlanta	LB	Long Beach, Calif.
BM	Beaumont, Texas	LC	Lake Charles, La.
CX	CSX-New Orleans	LT	Latanier, La.
DA	Dallas	NS	Norfolk Southern-Meridian, Miss.
DQ	De Queen, Ark.		
JA	Jackson, Miss.	SH	Shreveport, La.

Towns in Mexico
MA/MY/NL/SZ Mexico









At 1:10 p.m., April 15, 2023, CPKC train M262 (left) pulls to stop a mile north of Shreveport Yard. Here it will wait until Meridian, Miss.-to-Dallas train I169 (right) completes its block-swapping moves, which stand in the way of yard access. At 2:42 p.m., I169, having been built out to more than 10,000 feet, rolls out. A replacement crew will now board M262 and run it into the yard.

SO CLOSE, AND YET SO FAR

DURING APRIL 2023, a crew of southbound CPKC train M262 traveled the 212 miles from Heavener, Okla., to the outskirts of Shreveport Yard. Had the train rolled another mile, it would have been tucked away inside the yard. Instead, its journey came to a halt on the east main at the infamous North Shreveport Control Point.

The crew can see the yard from the locomotive cab. They just can't get in because no tracks are open in the Long R&D Yard. After a while, a crew van arrives, which is their passage to the yard office. Their workday is complete. A yard crew will board the train later in the day and run it the final mile.

When the yard crew boards the train, they'll learn they aren't going anywhere fast. Meridian to Dallas train I169 is coming out of the Zero Track to start putting its outbound train together. For this move, I169 will tie up the North Shreveport Control Point for 2 hours, 21 minutes — that's both main tracks and the north end of the Long R&D Yard. The majority of I169's time is spent swapping blocks, but today there also are issues with linking up the Distributed Power Unit. The extra time needed to put today's train together stems from its size — more than 10,000 feet long — split fairly equally between manifest and intermodal.

Meanwhile, two southbound trains stack up north of the yard at Blanchard — a Leesville rock train and Martin Lake coal load. Both trains just need to get through the yard to continue south. With I169 building its train, there's no track available for them to sneak by.

When I169 departs, M262 enters the yard on a newly opened track in the Long R&D Yard. Likewise, the other two southbound trains can now move through on the main line vacated by I169. Unfortunately, the southbounds now face three northbound trains that will all be vying to make it into the terminal on limited service hours. This is just another Saturday in the complicated life of Shreveport Yard.

Today's I169 is the PSR poster child. Previously, KCS would run two trains between Shreveport and Dallas on busy days — IATDA2 (intermodal) and MSHDA (manifest). This traffic in now combined in one train. Today's version reaches the 10,000-foot length PSR advocates.

Eastbound counterpart I168 does the same thing in the opposite direction. It replaces the almost-daily MDASH and the as-needed IDAAT2 between Dallas and Shreveport. At Shreveport, the lengthy block swapping takes place at the south end of yard in order to create a monster train bound for Meridian. The merger documents indicate that train I168 replaces as-needed IDAAT2, daily MSHNS, and as-needed MSHJA east of Shreveport.

While mega-train I169 made a fine sight in all its 10,000-foot glory, how do you accurately gauge the disruption dealt upon Shreveport Yard? With even more trains on the slate for block swapping, we should find out soon enough. — *Jeffrey A. Harwell*

of, and through Shreveport Yard. The railroad responded with at a statement that read in part, "We will decline to make additional comment beyond the materials filed with the STB as part of the application regulatory review." The software company did not respond.

PSR TO THE RESCUE

In early 2019, KCS hired Sameh Fahmy as executive vice president in charge of implementing PSR. Fahmy worked alongside E. Hunter Harrison at both Canadian National and CSX. On the surface, he appeared to be the ideal candidate to lead KCS into PSR.

In a few earnings calls after Fahmy's hire, PSR was indicated to be progressing and saving the railroad money. However, late in 2021, KCS announced that Fahmy was leaving at year's end. No reason was given. Even after Fahmy left, all indications were that PSR implementation was still moving forward.

Research into the merger documents for items related to Shreveport Yard turned up something unusual. The document outlines reasons why the new merged company will improve service. It notes that one of the KCS deficiencies prior to the merger was that it operated a hub-and-spoke network.

Under this system, a number of trains were not operating on a daily or balanced schedule. There were also "as-required" trains running when traffic warranted. Such conditions, as the merger document indicates, resulted in additional dwell time, assets and crews stranded, leading to deadheading, and limited utilization and resource optimization — all items PSR sets out to eliminate.

There are two statements in the merger document that seem to imply KCS had already implemented the foundation of PSR: "KCS's ongoing adaptation of PSR principles helped make KCS's base operational design more compatible with the PSR-based design that CP honed over many years," and "It is important to realize that the principles of PSR, which have been embraced by both CP and KCS independently,

A loaded rock train waits in downtown Blanchard, La., 6 miles north of Shreveport Yard, on April 16, 2023. Blanchard is a holding point for trains needing access to or bypassing the yard. Notice the white air hose on the ground between the tracks. It supplies air to trains that need to clear the main line and cut for the two crossings in town. It's usually not a good sign if you need a portable air hose outside a major rail yard.

are built on the premise of constant re-evaluation and optimization." These statements contradict previous statements detailing how KCS wasn't operating with PSR at merger time.

Had KCS been using PSR, it would have made the transition easier to accomplish. Instead, the new management team is faced with implementing cultural change in KCS territory as it braces to handle the anticipated additional traffic. The previously mentioned I166/I167 are the first PSR-type trains CPKC has introduced in the Shreveport area, as the new railroad tries to move away from the KCS hub-and-spoke system.

WAIT AND SEE

If you're familiar with how Shreveport Yard functioned over the years, the one thing you didn't want to read in the merger document was, "Shreveport will play a more prominent role in the post-transaction train design." That, however, is what the document says.

The main factor helping Shreveport Yard in the last 15 years was that traffic never rebounded to the mid-2000s level.

Merger documents indicate the yard currently handles between 800 and 900 cars daily. Three years into the merger, 1,000 cars are anticipated, which is considerably lower than 1,600 daily when Shreveport Yard was stretched to the limit in the mid-2000s. Stretching the limit did garner consideration for adding a hump yard. Anyone still around from those days does not want to go back. The difference now will be the addition of block swapping.

Whether a hump yard is installed or not, without reconfiguring the track layout at both ends of the yard, limitations and conflicts still abound, and the effect of new traffic levels remains to be seen.

Keith Creel, CPKC president and CEO, seemed to say the right thing in the company's first-quarter 2023 earnings conference call: "I'm not going to allow this network to get oversold." Holding true to that comment will be a key component in the railroad's future. As history illustrates, it is tempting to do things you should not following a merger.

Had the consultant's plan been implemented when it was developed 20 years ago, this discussion may be moot. Making major renovations to a yard is going to be a disruption no matter when it is done, but what better time to do so than when traffic levels are low, like during a recession?

As often is the case, the PSR principle of doing more with less prevailed. For an extended time, it seemed like the railroad made the right call. Now with new traffic on the horizon, will it continue to be the right choice?

If CPKC executes its Shreveport Yard plan flawlessly, the railroad deserves a tip of the hat and congratulations for a job well done. However, if it does not … T

The North Lead Job pulls a cut of cars out of the Long R&D Yard to move them into the classification yard based on destination block. Coming into the yard on the west main line is a southbound grain train out of Blanchard.

B&O'S MAGN

After more than a century, an engineering marvel still serves CSX Transportation

Story and photos by Stan Trzoniec

CSX SD40-3 rebuild No. 4287 leads a westbound train of auto racks out of the 1,592-foot Graham Tunnel and across the Kessler Bridge on its way toward Cumberland, Md., in October 2017. Each of the four tunnels on the Magnolia Cutoff was named for one of the engineers involved in the project to straighten the Baltimore & Ohio main line.

For students of railroad history, Baltimore & Ohio's Magnolia Cutoff in West Virginia remains an engineering masterpiece and was more so when built.

With the railroad's freight traffic increasing by 25% between 1910 and 1913, and maintenance-of-way becoming a problem, the B&O was looking to shorten or straighten its route along a segment of the West Virginia-Maryland state line.

Between Orleans and Okonoko, W.Va., the railroad needed to eliminate the winding path along the Potomac River through Hampshire and Morgan counties. This planned cutoff which, according to many, was to be one of the period's last major improvements, would be about 12 miles long with gentler grades. A double-track main line would have the side benefit of increasing passenger traffic.

The plan required construction of several features — a long cut at Doe Gully, four tunnels, and two bridges spanning a peninsula. It would require pouring enough concrete for a large wall in order to move the existing main line (the Low Line) to a higher elevation (the High Line) for more efficiency.

Three units, led by ES40DC No. 5351, have an eastbound manifest freight maintaining track speed just past milepost 139 and approaching the private grade crossing at Orleans Road. The contemporary signal bridge was installed in July 2016.

OLIA CUTOFF

The estimated construction cost was $500,000 per mile; the railroad would recoup that in reduced operating expenses. The new line would benefit freight traffic while the older main line would support passenger service on a more scenic route.

The plan was quickly set in motion. There were clear traffic problems on the route's east end, as the westbound track from Orleans Road to Okonoko included two single-track tunnels and a steep grade at Hansrote. This required helper engines to be stationed at Hansrote.

Project engineers presented four construction plans, ranging in cost from $2.235 million to almost $16 million, to the Baltimore & Ohio board of directors. The proposal that offered the most for the buck was a new two-track line for eastbound traffic, while continuing to use the established line for westbound movements. This would create a four-track line between Orleans Road (protected by AD Tower) and Little Cacapon. The plan was approved March 13, 1913, with a project cost of $6 million; work started that month.

The project included boring of four double-track tunnels. Built between 1913 and 1914, they were Randolph Tunnel, 1,014 feet in length; Stuart, the longest at 3,355 feet; Graham, 1,592 feet; and Carothers, 995 feet. All were 24 feet, 6 inches wide by 31 feet high at the portal; all were named after one of the project's Baltimore & Ohio engineers. The plan also included the erection of bridges on either side of Graham Tunnel.

Work was completed in only 21 months and was finished three weeks ahead of schedule, unusual considering the challenges of the area and the long list of men, machines, and materials involved. The railroad employed seven contractors with close to 2,500 men. The heavy equipment list included 57 locomotives, 22 shovels, six concrete plants, 550 dump cars, 126 drills, and power plants at Doe Gully and Magnolia. In addition, two sawmills, a blacksmith, and a forging shop at Magnolia provided additional construction support. Camps for workers were set up with particular emphasis on sanitation, clean drinking water, and electric lights, all of which went a long way to maintain worker morale.

Work on the Magnolia Cutoff began in March 1913, and as the date on the west portal of the nearly completed Randolph Tunnel indicates, progressed rapidly. Tunnels were lined with brick to protect them from damaging steam locomotive exhaust.

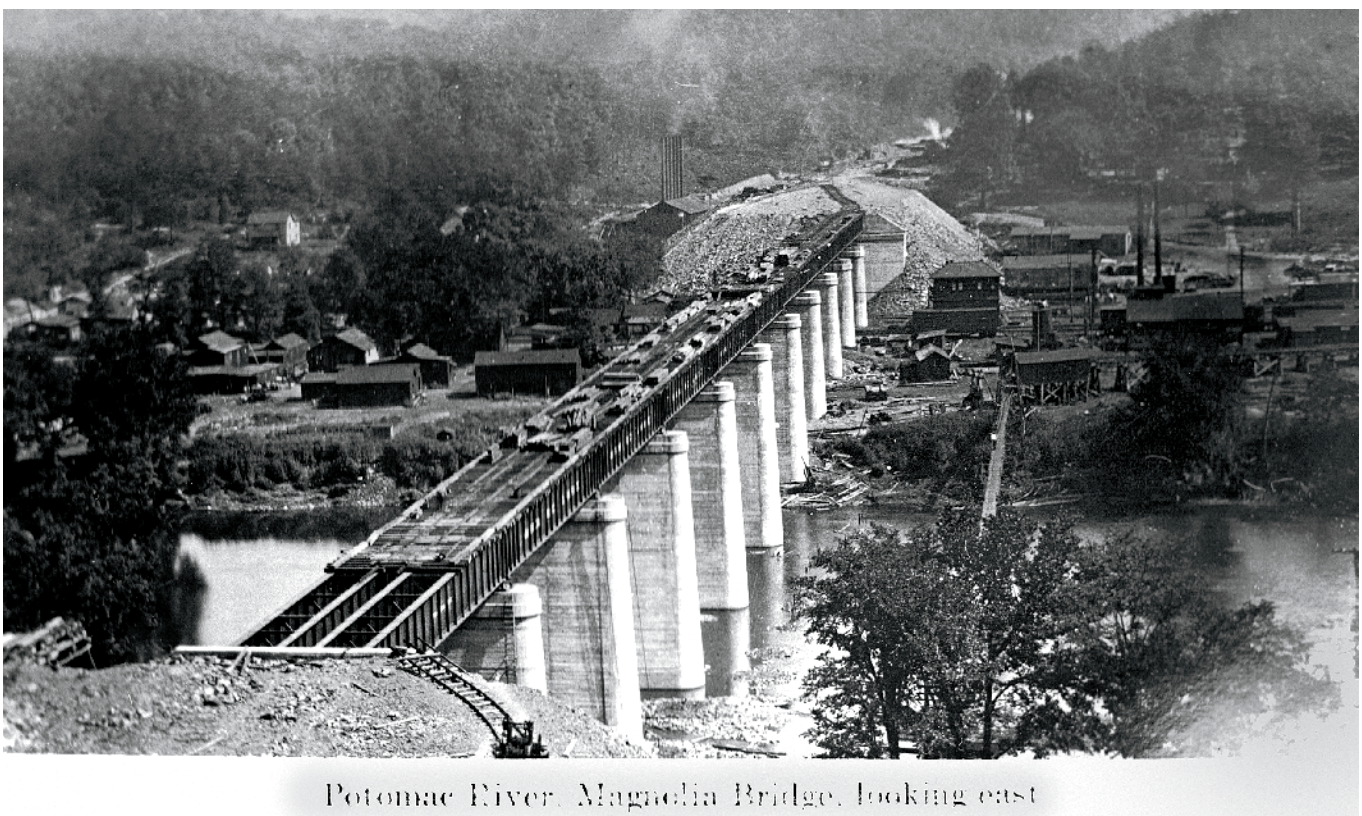
Baltimore & Ohio engineers found that exhaust gases from the steam locomotives were detrimental to the tunnels' longevity. To counter this, the engineers added vitrified shale bricks over the existing concrete lining for added stability. Stuart Tunnel — even when shortened by 160 feet — suffered a collapse as the earth proved unstable during drilling. It was the only bore to use steel with timber cribbing.

Traveling west from Hansrote, the town of Magnolia comes after the Stuart Tunnel. This location had a depot and "water station," and at one time also had a post office and general store. However, most of the community was washed away in a devastating flood in 1936.

The town had its share of names, including Magnolia Vale, Magnolia Dale and even, in railroad lingo, Water Station No. 12. To the dismay of project engineers, a bridge was needed here to cross the winding Potomac River.

Magnolia was one of two large staging points during cutoff construction. The railroad built a large power plant developing 4,500kw, along with two DC generators designed to output around 200kw that helped power a sawmill capable of turning out thousands of ties.

At the Magnolia Bridge, construction crews were faced with a gap to be filled with six 100-foot, three 80-foot, and two 75-foot spans prior to entering the Graham



The Magnolia Bridge included two 75-foot, three 80-foot, and six 100-foot deck girder spans. The site also included a construction camp, two 200-kw generators and two 6,100-kw boilers, and a huge sawmill. Two photos, B&O Historical Society

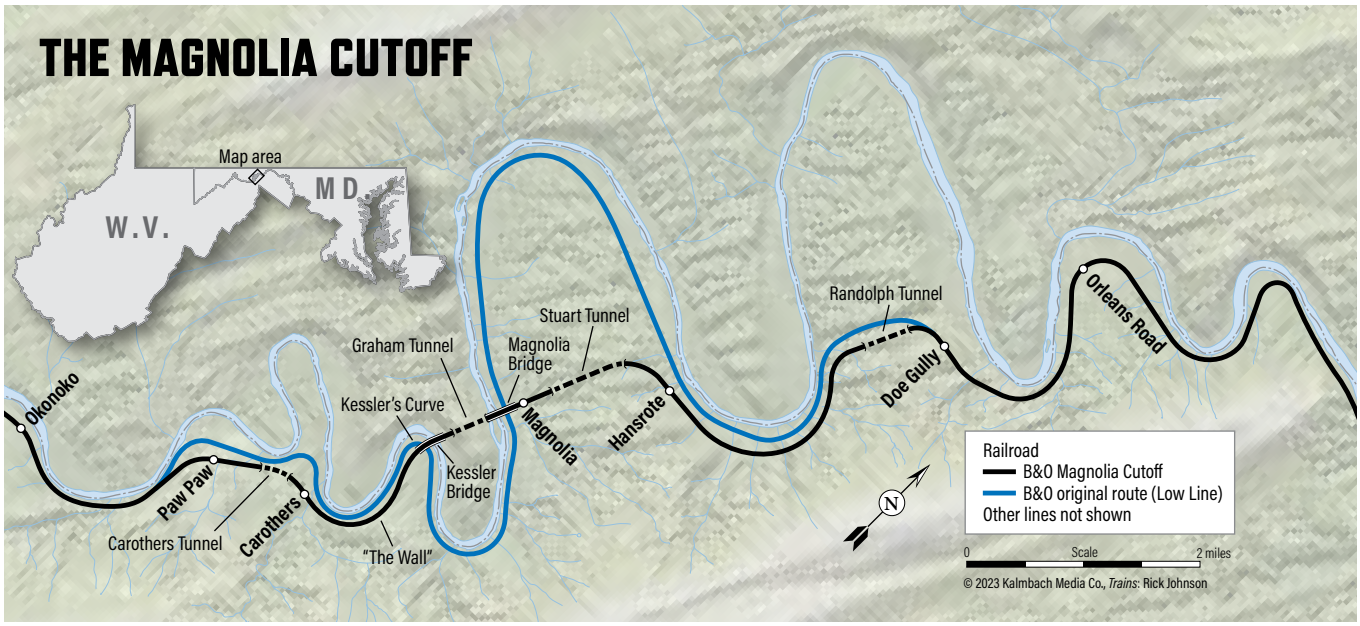
Tunnel. The work also had to contend with scheduled trains operating on the Low Line beneath the bridge while protecting the construction crews. Even today, the structure is imposing.

Once through the 1,592-foot bore, workers were faced again with another Potomac crossing. This time it was the Kessler Bridge. At 1,052 feet in length, it required 13 steel spans to cross the river. Towering more than 50 feet above the Low Line, the span still offers much in photographic opportunities. Records show the bridges used a combined 3,000 tons of steel and more than 26,000 cubic yards of cement.

THE CONCRETE WALL

Coming out of the west end of Graham Tunnel, the line bends around Kessler's Curve where it encounters the legendary Concrete Wall east of Carothers. Out of all the traveling I do documenting American railroads, this wall built by the Baltimore & Ohio is one of the most impressive structures I have seen. Following the Low Line — now only a path wide enough for a single car — the first sign of this massive edifice is when one comes to the steps on the wall's east end. Everything about this project, an enormous undertaking in 1913, is impressive. It towers about 31 feet high with a base of 15 feet.

This wall accommodates the two tracks



An eastbound exits the Graham Tunnel and crosses the Magnolia Bridge near noon on a July day in 2016. Leading the way is GP38-3 No. 2009, originally Conrail No. 8215, upgraded during a rebuild program that took place between 2014 and 2016.

More than 1,800 feet long and standing 30-plus feet high, the Cutoff's Concrete Wall remains an imposing structure even as it shows signs of more than 100 years exposure to the elements. The steps to track level seem to have broken down the most.

ES40DC No. 5231, a 2005 GE product, leads three locomotives hauling a train along the top of the wall with a touch of fall color in evidence during October 2016. Engineers developed a moving gantry to deliver concrete for the wall from a plant about a half-mile away.

that made the Magnolia Cutoff fluid in both directions. Nothing here was easy. First, workers had to chip away at a natural ridge clinging to the side of the Potomac River, removing nearly 80,000 cubic yards of rock. The wall measures 1,800 feet around a curve and was offset at the east end, allowing for the placement of steps to access the High Line. Moving up the decaying steps only drives home the enormity of this wall, built not only to hold back the ridge but also to hold up powerful locomotives.

At the top of the steps, you can almost hear the sound of thundering coal drags pulled by heavy articulated steam or traditional diesel locomotives going by. It's that kind of place.

Given when it was built, the wall has fared well. Difficult footings had to be designed and installed; a concrete plant was constructed about a half mile to the west, with delivery in small railcars. From here, and to keep traffic moving, the group engineered what they called a "traveler," a moving cement gantry that dropped concrete into the forms. Men and machinery made progress along active, running tracks at the rate of two 50-foot sections per week.

Walking along the base of the wall on the Low Line, I was in awe of what I saw. While the concrete on the wall is starting to show signs of age, with cracks, water damage, and overgrown vegetation, this barrier is still holding strong. Trains running across the top of the wall made a quiet, muffled, yet peaceful sound — a tribute to those who built it with the right materials and engineering abilities.

CSX Transportation has upgraded the clearance in the four tunnels to allow double-stack trains to pass through. This cost about $2.6 million in 2013. The $6 million for the original project in 1913 — about $183 million in 2023 dollars — was indeed money well spent.

The 993-foot Carothers Tunnel, near the town of Paw Paw, W.Va., is the westernmost of the four bores required for the cutoff. This tunnel needed some 8,000 cubic yards of concrete lining. The notches have created clearance for double-stack traffic.

The former station at Paw Paw, W.Va., is still hanging on as a maintenance-of-way building, with most of its original architecture intact. Just a few feet from State Route 9, the building's platform is gone and its roofline has been altered, but some of the old roadbed remains.

BLASTING OUT OF CAROTHERS TUNNEL

Still following two tracks, we head toward Carothers Tunnel, the 993-foot dig that leads us towards the town of Paw Paw, W.Va., incorporated on April 8, 1891. For those doting on old buildings, the town's station still stands along the old Low Line Road, on Depot Street.

The route then winds through a cut in Little Niagara on the way to Okonoko. Here, at NO Tower, was the western junction of the Magnolia Cutoff and the original Low Line. The tower did receive color position signals in 1957, but met its demise in March 1958. Control of this part of the line went to the new facility at Patterson Creek, W.Va., and its ultra-modern FN Tower.

The benefits of the Magnolia Cutoff as one of the Baltimore & Ohio's largest capital improvements were significant. It shortened the travel distance between Orleans Road and Paw Paw by almost 6 miles, and cut or eliminated 887 degrees of curvature, and providing a line with virtually no grades. This was particularly important at Hansrote, where it eliminated the helper engines.

The Cutoff quickly paid for itself with savings in operating costs that sometimes amounted to $500,000 per year. While the Cutoff proved itself repeatedly as a financial benefit, sadly, the Baltimore & Ohio hit tough times in the early 1960s. After that, the Chesapeake & Ohio took control of the B&O, and soon after removed the Low Line from service. Today, the High Line, as it was built a half century ago, carries all CSX traffic through the area.

To this day, Chief Railroad Engineer F.L. Stuart would certainly be proud of his accomplishments on the Magnolia Cutoff. T

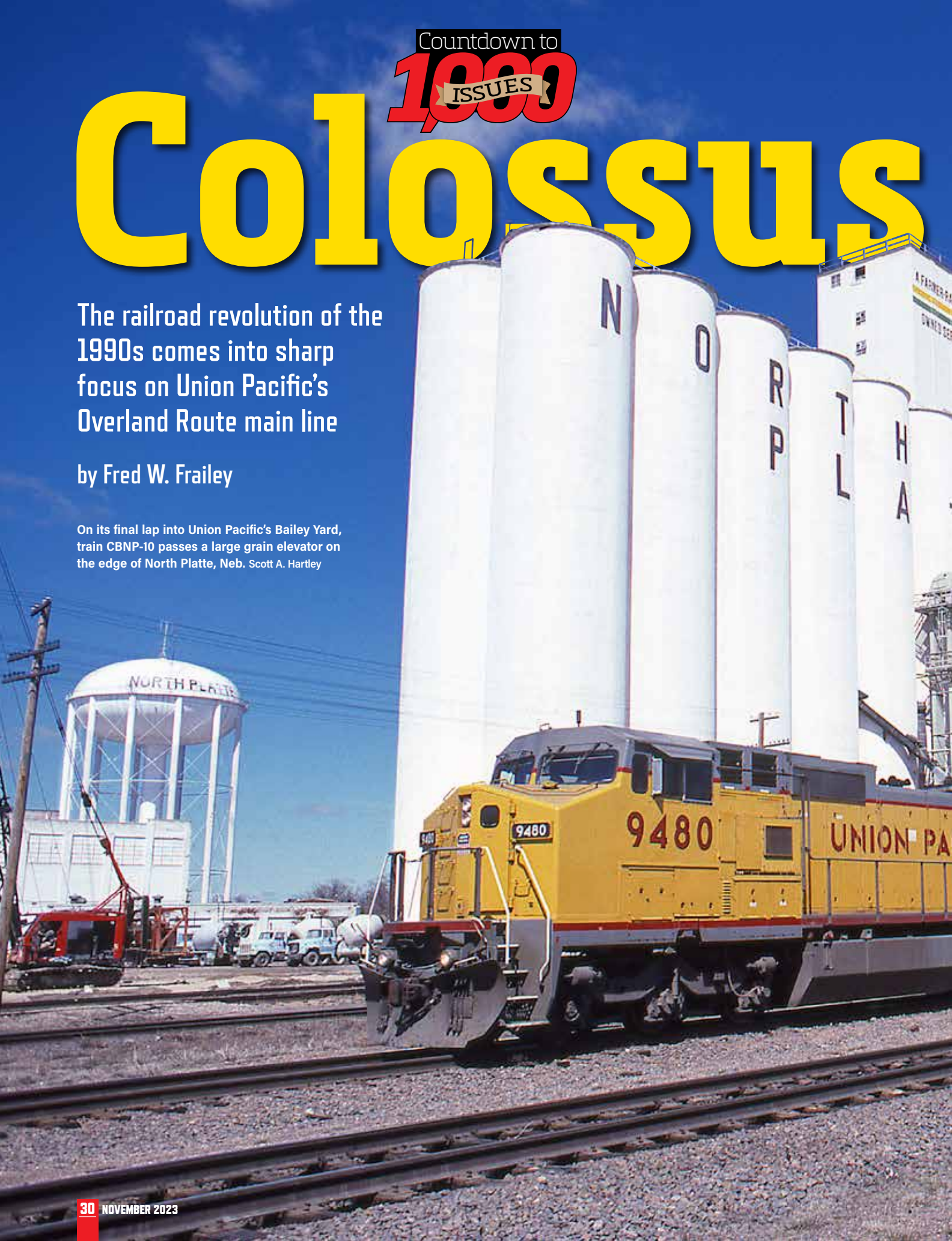
Stan Trzoniec is a writer, photographer, and book publisher known to Kalmbach Media and elsewhere on the subjects of the outdoors, photography, and railroads.

Countdown to 1,000 ISSUES

Colossus

The railroad revolution of the 1990s comes into sharp focus on Union Pacific's Overland Route main line

by Fred W. Frailey



On its final lap into Union Pacific's Bailey Yard, train CBNP-10 passes a large grain elevator on the edge of North Platte, Neb. Scott A. Hartley

# of roads

THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF TRAINS — SUPER RAILROAD! Union Pacific and the rail revolution of the 1990s — took an in-depth look at how the industry turned itself around in the last decade of the 20th century. Anchoring the landmark November 1995 issue was Fred W. Frailey's 12-page story, "Colossus of roads." Fred used UP's Council Bluffs, Iowa-North Platte, Neb., merchandise train CPNP-10 and its trip across UP's busy Overland Route to illustrate how freight railroads reinvented themselves in the 15 years since the Staggers Act of 1980 had partially de-regulated the industry. "Colossus of roads" is classic Frailey storytelling: Take a heaping dose of operational detail, toss in the broad sweep of history, add a sprinkling of insights from top rail executives, and tie it all together with crisp writing and a keen analysis that makes sense of it all. *Trains* editors and contributors unanimously voted the story as their top choice from issues 600 through 699 (Oct. 1990 to Jan. 1999).

— *Bill Stephens,* Trains *correspondent*

Riding the tide of Powder River coal: C&NW and BN trains congregate at Converse Junction, Wyo. Mike Danneman

THE FIRST DAY of the 127th year of transcontinental railroading in the United States — Wednesday, May 10, 1995 — begins early for conductor Phil Tamisiea. A phone call at 4 a.m. jolts him awake. "Mr. Tamisiea?" says a businesslike voice from Union Pacific's Harriman Dispatching Center in Omaha. "You're called for 5:30. CBNP-10. Okay?"

Tamisiea mutters his assent, hangs up, and slips out of bed so as not to bother his wife, Judy. He showers, gets dressed "as if I'll encounter every kind of weather, because I probably will," grabs from the refrigerator a Dagwood sandwich he'd concocted the night before, and puts it in his carryall bag. Well before 5 o'clock, Tamisiea has departed the tiny Nebraska community of Fort Calhoun for the 20-minute drive along dark, rain-spattered roads to Council Bluffs, a waiting freight train symboled CBNP-10, and the always unpredictable journey of 286.5 miles west along the busiest stretch of freight railroad in the world.

Council Bluffs … Milepost 0. In the summer of 1859, a year before his election as president, Abraham Lincoln visited this small Iowa town across the Missouri River from Omaha. "Dodge," he asked the great civil engineer, surveyor, and explorer, "what's the best route for a Pacific Railroad to the west?" Replied Grenville Dodge without a moment's hesitation: "From this town out the Platte Valley." So it came to pass during Lincoln's presidency.

If you're going to tell the story of today's railroads as they approach the millennium, what better place to begin than the starting point of the great Pacific Railroad in the 1860s and for a century thereafter the gateway to the Overland Route? To Council Bluffs from the east, the likes of Burlington, Chicago Great Western, Illinois Central, Milwaukee Road, North Western, Omaha Road, Rock Island, and Wabash brought their freight cars destined for Union Pacific's great steel boulevard.

One by one UP's connections sold their lines, left town, or merged with one another. The biggest connection of all, Chicago & North Western, moved its gateway 40 miles northwest, to Fremont, Neb. And now Chicago rather than Council Bluffs is the eastern terminus of the Overland Route, for on June 23, 1995, C&NW officially was acquired by UP. Council Bluffs' glory years as a railroad town are indeed past.

But that's our point. Too many people are fixating on missing icons of the glory days and not upon the meaning of those lost symbols. They have concluded that without all the railroad names and railroad towns of their youth, without passenger trains with Railway Post Offices, without country depots with telegraph keys, without interlocking towers, without cabooses, without 40-foot boxcars emblazoned "Everywhere West" and "Cotton Belt Route," without the branch lines, without firemen and brakemen, and without spur tracks beside every factory, that the business of railroading was in an inevitable decline.

Try this: Ask your neighbors about railroads. Odds are, you'll get back a baffling babble of misinformation. Most folks think railroads have had it. The fact is, not in your lifetime have railroads had it better. Not in this century has opportunity beckoned so. Unlike people, businesses aren't condemned to birth, maturity, decline, and death. They can be reborn.

Left to right: Author Fred W. Frailey, Editor Kevin P. Keefe, photographer David Lustig, and UP's John Bromley. J. David Ingles, Brian M. Schmidt collection

In the past 15 years, railroads have indeed experienced a rebirth. They have ceased to lose market share to trucks, reversing a trend that is almost as old as this century. An entrepreneurial streak that would have puzzled railroaders a generation ago has taken hold, with amazing results. Stated most bluntly: Today, railroads employ only half as many people as in 1980 and operate one-third fewer route miles using 34% fewer locomotives and 30% fewer freight cars. Plus their revenue per ton-mile (i.e., one ton carried one mile) fell 2%. Even so, railroads deliver 31% more ton-miles to customers than in 1980 while earning 1½ times more money and paying the remaining workers twice as much. That's a productivity record few industries can match. It also shows how much fat needed sweating off.

These days, engineers, conductors, and dispatchers are being hired instead of retired. Railroads are adding rather than shrinking capacity, particularly in terminals but also along major corridors. Physically, railroads look great, because they have to — major routes see traffic and tonnage volumes unthinkable a few years ago. And for a change, the money is there to keep up the property.

Hallelujah! This is what brings you to Council Bluffs, to a railroad that either pioneered or quickly grasped virtually all the advancements that in the past 15 or so years have turned a dying industry into what may yet be termed a growth business. It's what puts you aboard the CBNP-10 (Council Bluffs-North Platte, originating May 10) of Conductor Tamisiea and Engineer Dennis O'Connor a garden-variety "boxcar train" whose 95 cars nonetheless demonstrate that the revolution sweeping this industry is affect-

M.P. 18.1

08:37 Curving through Omaha's suburbs

The dash to North Platte is in full gear as CBNP-10 approaches the U.S. Route 6 overpass east ot Elkhorn. Scott A. Hartley

CBNP MAY 10, 1995

ing even the most mundane services. It takes you across UP's Council Bluffs Subdivision, where freights run so fast and so often that the company is doing the unimaginable: building 100 miles of third main track down the Platte River valley.

THE BROAD, FLAT VALLEY OF THE PLATTE is ideal for high-speed, high-capacity railroading. Tracks extend in long tangents on a tabletop surface that's biased ever so slightly upward as you head west. It's also ideal corn and wheat land, lined by scores of grain elevators and traversed each day by G-symboled grain trains, as well as locals that switch the elevator tracks. But Nebraska was not always hospitable to either railroaders or farmers. In the Union Pacific Historical Museum in Omaha is a photograph of Civil Engineer Samuel Benedict Reed, standing in the summer of 1865 astride his untracked right-of-way and gazing dolefully into the flat, treeless infinity of the Platte valley. Another engineer wrote then of the Platte: "This is a terrible Country, the stillness, wildness and desolation of which is awful." The progress of the railroad across Nebraska would be fought mile by bloody mile against Indians, until a virtual army accompanied the crews of red-bearded construction bosses, Jack and Dan Casement.

And when all was said and done — when the transcontinental railroad was completed on May 10, 1869, above the Great Salt Lake at Promontory, Utah — Union Pacific's traffic density each way per day was a mere one passenger train and two freights. The freights, according to Maury Klein in his epic *Union Pacific: Birth of a Railroad 1862-1893* (Doubleday, 1987), typically handled but 22 cars and took four days to go from Council Bluffs to Promontory, and five or six getting back.

You're mindful of the heritage of the Council Bluffs Sub as CBNP-10 crosses the Elkhorn River at Waterloo, 25 track miles northwest of Council Bluffs, then enters the flood plain of the Platte at appropriately named Valley, Neb. The time is 8:49 a.m. Your train didn't begin moving on yard lead 58 in Council Bluffs until 0657 hours, when the last of its 62 loads and 26 empties was attached, the end-of-train device was hoisted atop the knuckle of rear car MP 267378 (a boxcar full of plastic bound for Caldwell, Idaho), the brakes were tested, and everyone got aboard.

CBNP-10 today is made up of cars collected from such Council Bluffs connections as regionals Iowa Interstate and Chicago, Central & Pacific, plus UP's Omaha-area locals. And a mere 12 miles out your train made a regular stop in western Omaha at an industrial yard named Woody to pick up boxcars full of Kellogg's breakfast cereal. (The work order said five cars awaited you, but when Tamisiea contacted Woody's yard engine by radio before signaling O'Connor to back down the lead track, he learned that two more cars were ready.)

So after a 47-minute pause to add the cars and retest the brakes, you were moving again. "Next stop, North Platte," came the cheerful voice of dispatcher Tim Halpenny over the radio from the bunker at the Harriman Dispatching Center. But no one inside lead C41-8W 9480 believed him. Most days the Council Bluffs Sub is an ocean of trains swimming through a mine field of possible delays.

"Flashing!" shouts Tamisiea across the cab as a blinking yellow signal comes into view. Minefield No. 1 lies close by: Fremont, M.P. 39, where C&NW's single-track line from Iowa joins the UP and where the two roads interchange virtually all but unit trains. Just how busy is this piece of the railroad? The Council Bluffs Subdivision, stretching from Iowa to western Nebraska at North Platte, is the linchpin, the center of the UP barbell, the place where virtually all east-west traffic must pass, the territory visited each day by roughly one of every 10 UP road-freight crews.

Look at the traffic piece by piece, starting with scheduled freights such as CBNP-10. Four trains go in and out of Council Bluffs per day. Twelve more intermodal, automobile, and boxcar trains are interchanged each way per day with North Western at Fremont — that's an average, with more trains on weekends and fewer midweek. So far, you're up to 16 trains in each direction, or 32 in all, not counting locals blanketing the entire subdivision. At Gibbon, 111 miles shy of North Platte, the Marysville Sub from Kansas City joins your line, and contributes (on average) 11 scheduled intermodal or boxcar freights each way. That's 54 a day, or a few more than Santa Fe pushes across its New Mexico-Arizona main line — considerably more than Southern Pacific sends across the Sunset Route or Burlington Northern across the Dakotas and Montana.

Now add the heavyweights: unit trains. Joining the Overland Route at O'Fallons, just west of North Platte, come roughly 24 eastbound trains of loaded coal each day from the Powder River Basin of Wyoming, and as many empty westbounds diverging. There's a coal train or two from mines off UP's main line near Medicine Bow and Hanna, Wyo., too. And don't forget unit grain trains, some destined for one or more of the towns along the Council Bluffs Sub, others

CBNP-10 meets an eastbound freight led by GE C30-7 No. 2515 en route to North Plate. J. David Ingles, Brian M. Schmidt collection

just passing through. On a busy day there could be a dozen grain trains scooting across the subdivision or in and out of the elevator tracks. About half of the unit coal and grain trains go to or come from the Marysville Sub at Gibbon. On this line, 120-train days west of Gibbon and 60-train days east of there are the norm. So are traffic jams.

But this is your lucky day. At 8:59:20 dispatcher Halpenny taps a command on his computer keyboard in Omaha, and 26 seconds later the home signal at Fremont flashes to green for CNBP-10 on Track 1 (north). At 9:07, as CBNP-10 eases through town, Fremont's tracks are empty but for a yard engine and empty coal train CSHCK-10 (Sheboygan-Coal Creek Mine) that uncharacteristically arrived via the C&NW line and will follow you westward 19 minutes later. You've made it through the first minefield, unbloodied.

NOBODY REALIZED IT JUST THEN, but sometime last year a profound turning point occurred in transportation: Railroads finally succeeded in stopping their loss of freight market share to trucks, and regained a bit. This is particularly momentous when you realize that cycles in transportation are long, hard to alter, and slow to end. In the 19th century, rails utterly supplanted horse transportation and sent the water carriers into a decline that would last until the advent of diesel-powered boats. In the 20th century, it was over-the-road trucks' turn to push aside railroads. Now the cycle of truck ascendancy may be ending — and if so, what will replace it? A lot rides on the answer. As Prudential Securities Rail Analyst Brian Routledge notes, each percentage point of regained market share is worth roughly $2.5 billion a year in new revenue (more than a 10% increase).

To appreciate the position railroads are in today, consider for a moment where they stood at the dawn of the 1980s. In the West, nature was reclaiming much of the abandoned right-of-way of the Milwaukee Road, which had retrenched to its core in the Midwest to avoid outright liquidation. Rock Island in 1979 had done the unthinkable, completely ceasing to operate. In the East, 4-year-old Conrail had spent almost all of its $3.3 billion government dowry, and asked for $900 million more — this after losing a total of $560 million on operations the previous two years. "In the late '70s it seemed inevitable in Washington that the industry would have to be nationalized," says James McClellan, who had worked at the U.S. Railway Association, the independent government agency that established Conrail. The system seemed broken, maybe beyond fixing.

In truth, the system *was* beyond fixing. It consisted of a tottering tower of regulation that began with the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887, extended through the Sherman Act of 1890, the Elkins Act of 1903, the Hepburn Act of 1906, the Mann-Elkins Act of 1910, the Transportation Act of 1920, the Hoch-Smith Resolution of 1925, the Emergency Transportation Act of 1933, the Motor Carrier Act of 1935, and the Transportation Act of 1940, as embellished by nine decades of Interstate Commerce Commission jurisprudence. In Washington, regulation of railroads by 1980 had become an industry unto itself, presided over by legions of transportation attorneys.

Many railroaders liked it that way. The jobs of unionized workers enjoyed statutory protection, sometimes expanded by generous managements to lifetime promises of employment. And many rail executives, having come up in an industry that discouraged initiative, were quite content. After all, the ICC was not just regulator but referee of a cartel of railroads and truck companies that ensured nobody would undercut the pricing structures of their respective industries. Put another way, while the public focused on the ICC's power to set maximum freight rates, the carriers benefited most from the commission's right to prohibit price-cutting. In effect, the cartel rewarded inefficiency.

But it was a damned poor cartel. Truckload motor carriers were largely outside the reach of the regulation, and from about 1940 they began luring freight traffic from railroads in significant amounts — a trend that accelerated in the 1960s as the Interstate highway system matured. The transportation pie kept getting bigger, so it was hard to see the erosion of rail traffic because actual tonnages were not falling. Still, "the rail industry was dying, one piece at a time," explains Santa Fe Chairman Robert D. Krebs.

Piecemeal legislation in the 1970s to deregulate railroads had almost no impact on the downward spiral. Then came the cataclysmic event: the Staggers Rail Act of 1980. It did not just ease the regulatory bond; it virtually undid it, freeing railroads to be run as businesses rather than as public utilities. Just about everything that subsequently occurred owed itself to this one piece of legislation, passed by a liberal Congress and signed by a Democratic president over the shortsighted opposition of several big railroads, including Norfolk & Western and Southern Railway.

Deregulation had many midwives. Within the rail industry, the most tireless campaigner — a man seldom remembered for his contribution — was Edward Jordan. Never heard of him? Small wonder, because he strode across the stage but briefly. Jordan was Conrail's first chairman, during 1976-1981, and it was on his watch that those multi-billions in subsidies were exhausted. Beginning in 1978, Jordan visited every member of Congress who would listen to him, and his message was always the same: Fix the system or you'll subsidize Conrail forever.

"Congress," says Jordan today, "did not want to face the prospect of continuing to finance Conrail's rehabilitation." Or, as Robert Gallamore, then the No. 2 person at the FRA, puts it: "We could not 'fix' Conrail's hemorrhaging without the changes contained in the Staggers Act, and we probably couldn't have gained political consensus to pass the regulatory reform bill without the pressure that Conrail's losses put on taxpayers."

It wasn't immediately apparent that big changes would occur. "We were going to either take this opportunity to really turn ourselves around and selectively be in businesses we could

09:58 Rolling through Richland

UP CBNP-10 races through Richland, Neb., 76 miles west of Council Bluffs, past a trackside grain elevator. Scott A. Hartley

make money in," says Conrail Chairman James Hagen, "or we were going to sit there and go out of business." The public-utility mindset of railroaders had to be buried first. Krebs puts it this way; "We entered our stage of denial. I see it all the time in life: A sea-change occurs, and everybody says it will go away by next year if we just do things a little better. In our case, we realized after four or five years that we'd better quickly take advantage of the legislation, or go broke."

Attitudes did change, sooner at roads like Conrail, later at places like SP and the pre-Krebs Santa Fe. Then began the rate-cutting and the cost-cutting. No longer did the ICC keep a floor under rates, to help inefficient railroads. Plus, interstate trucking was deregulated in 1980.

RAILROADS BEGAN COMPETING BY PRICE, first against each other and then against common foes: truckers, barge lines, and proposed coal-slurry pipelines. By making themselves more economical, railroads hastened the development of significant new sources of business. Events unfolded in close to this order:

• New traffic sources. BN didn't need the Staggers Act to begin hauling coal out of Wyoming's Powder River Basin in the late 1970s. But without Staggers, the growth of this business might have been stunted. First, BN invoked its rate-making freedom by raising rates it felt were too low to permit it to maintain tracks that handled this heavy traffic. (The ICC used its residual regulatory power to trim back those increases.) Then C&NW used the all-but-absolute freedom to cut rates to quote what was an ultra-low price for taking coal from Wyoming to White Bluff, Ark., thus making uneconomical a proposed coal slurry pipeline.

Powder River Basin coal was the catalyst and revenue source for rebuilding the rail infrastructure across the entire middle third of the nation. To deliver this coal in 125-ton cars you need good track. Wherever the coal appeared, so did better rights-of-way, more powerful locomotives, and modern signal systems. And with those assets in place, the benefits of better, faster service flowed to traffic on those lines. Coal became the salvation of KCS, and the savior of the pre-UP Missouri-Kansas-Texas. In fact, it's hard to name a railroad in the Midwest and Southwest that wasn't affected, positively, by Powder River Basin coal.

Also midwived by rate deregulation: The dedicated double-stack train. SP developed the hardware, in conjunction with carbuilder ACF Industries, during 1978-1982. American President Lines' Don Orris (now SP Lines president) put together a marketing network, quickly copied by other steamship lines, to sell the backhaul space. So from the West Coast, a double-stack train would bring Pacific Rim imports east and return either with export goods or regular freight handled at market prices. The economics of double-stack trains are stunning. On Santa Fe, for example, a mere 20 people can take a train of 25 five-platform articulated cars that hold 250 containers from Los Angeles to Chicago. A truck company doing this in the same time span would require 500 drivers working in tandem and goodness knows how much diesel fuel.

• New names. During the Great Railway Bazaar of the mid-1980s, railroads right and left sold, leased, or all but gave away thousands of miles of line, some of it rather heavily trafficked, that they deemed uneconomic, particularly under full-crew rules then in force. Thus came into being the new regional railroads, among them Arkansas & Missouri (from BN, 1986); Buffalo & Pittsburgh (CSX, 1986); Chicago, Central & Pacific (IC, 1985); Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern (C&NW, 1986); Kiamichi (BN, 1987); MidSouth (IC, 1986); Montana Rail Link (BN, 1987); Wheeling & Lake Erie (NS, 1990), and Wisconsin Central (Soo, 1987). The better among these regional lines quickly provided better service at lower cost, and turned losing routes into winners.

• New mergers. You could cut costs quickly and improve service by merging with other core systems. Enter the mega-railroads: Chessie System and Seaboard System to form CSX (1980); Denver & Rio Grande Western into Southern Pacific (1987); Missouri Pacific and Western Pacific (1982), MKT (1987), and C&NW (1995) into Union Pacific; Norfolk & Western and Southern to form Norfolk Southern (1982); Soo Line into Canadian Pacific (1990), and now, Santa Fe and Burlington Northern to create BNSF.

• Job buyouts. Paring crew sizes looked undoable. It took 30 years of strife to get rid of firemen in principle, in 1969, and by the mid-1980s attrition had still not done them in. How many years would it take to rid through freights of even one brakeman?

Then someone at CSX had a good idea: Tell the unions, in effect, "We give up — your members *do* own their jobs. Now we want to buy them. How much?" CSX paid the second brakemen $50,000 each to quit, and immediately "retired" the jobs along with the people. This fast, peaceful, relatively inexpensive solution spread like a roundhouse rumor. By the time Santa Fe could negotiate a buyout for brakemen's jobs on the western

The sun has set on Wednesday, May 10, 1995, but Union Pacific's traffic still surges at North Platte. Mike Danneman

half of its system, it leapfrogged the process and bought out *both* the brakeman positions on most through freights. "The buyouts turned out to be one of the best investments we ever made," says Union Pacific Railroad Chairman Dick Davidson. "We paid one time, and from there on it went right to the bottom line."

• Service commitments. By the early 1990s it seemed apparent that railroads had taken on the truckers in a cost-cutting — read "rate-cutting" — war, and won. The trucking companies largely ran out of costs to cut, whereas railroads, with decades of slothful habits to undo, were far from finished. Krebs, for one, let it be known in 1988-89 that he intended to streamline Santa Fe until it started becoming dysfunctional, and relent only then.

Next: Making inroads on the service-quality advantage always held by trucks. Actually, cost-cutting improved service more than it hurt. When you close a yard, eliminate a crew-change point, combine business from two routes onto one, or take the caboose off a train, you are saving money but also eliminating reasons for delays. When you put all your train dispatchers in one building, you find you need fewer dispatchers, while achieving better control over a far-flung enterprise.

But the best way to provide good service is to structure it correctly, and here Conrail had the first breakthrough: combine the marketing and operating functions. Hagen divided his railroad into four product groups: intermodal, automotive, unit train, and "core service" (everything else). Each group crafts its own schedules, sells its services against those schedules, and contracts with the transportation department to provide locomotives and crews. Says Hagen: "The theory was that if you run Conrail's intermodal business, you should be able to control how many trains you run and when, what your 'lift' costs are at terminals, and even the hours the terminals are open. Then you can be held responsible for the profitability of that traffic." Today, nearly all of Conrail's trailer and container business is grouped onto schedules whose symbols begin with "TV." It hauls new autos on solid trains beginning with "ML," for multi-level.

Most railroads copied Conrail and reorganized by commodity group, to the point that Conrail, CSX, Santa Fe, and UP now run what amounts to a coordinated national network of dedicated multi-level trains. The common point for this huge fleet of tall trains is Indiana Harbor Belt, which caught the entrepreneurial bug and last year persuaded its Eastern and Western connections around Chicago to route multi-level cars via its Gibson Yard. Gibson, in Hammond, Ind., was an underutilized flat-switched facility perfect for this job, because auto companies had complained that hump yards were causing too much damage to autos. Now IHB takes automobile trains from the Eastern roads, classifies them into automobile trains for the Western roads, and delivers the goods, undamaged. Santa Fe and UP each receive three trains a day from IHB in this manner. Maybe it's no coincidence that railroads now deliver 70% of new cars and trucks, up from 42% in 1980.

Another tactic: Tailor the service provided to the price paid. Santa Fe provides an extreme example, offering six levels of intermodal service, each priced differently. You want guaranteed delivery? That would be a "Q"-symboled freight. Super-demanding United Parcel Service has its own set of trains — those still carry numbers (like 199 and 891) rather than two pairs of letters designating origin and destination. And so it goes. There are even two levels of boxcar service on Santa Fe.

• Consorting with enemies. You really knew the pendulum was starting to go the other way when J.B. Hunt cast its lot with railroads, starting in late 1989. Other non-union truckers quickly got in line. Last year the unionized segment of trucking withstood a Teamsters strike to win the right to put up to 28% of its business aboard trains. Maybe the truckers have little choice. Prudential's Brian Routledge figures intermodal service on the rails is now 15% cheaper than going by road. He believes the whole long-distance truckload business is "under attack" from the rails, and that an alliance with railroads is one of the few options open to truckers.

THAT GETS YOU TO THE PRESENT, but what of the future? Railroads have certainly proven willing to spend copious amounts to increase capacity. In the West, where train density has grown the most, UP, Santa Fe, and SP are all embarked on huge double-tracking (in UP's case, triple-tracking) projects. In the East, NS picked up a second main track on the cheap between Gary and Fort Wayne, Ind., by buying Conrail's ex-Pennsylvania Railroad main line, portions of which were about to be abandoned. And every railroad is investing in places few railfans see close-up: their intermodal terminals.

If we're about to embark on a new Age of Railroads, capacity additions can't occur fast enough. Out West, at least, freight-train frequency increased markedly during a period in which rails lost market share to trucks. So imagine the effect that getting a bigger slice of an expanding market for freight traffic could have. More marriages are a certainty. SP (or part of it) is a natural fit inside UP. Another logical fit is KCS within BN-Santa Fe. NS has openly and covertly pursued Conrail for a decade, and isn't about to stop.

Mergers eliminate whole sets of bureaucrats as if a neutron bomb had detonated. Mergers wipe out difficulties the two merged roads had working together. Case in point: Norfolk Southern is largely a north-south road in the East, and Conrail an east-west carrier. They conflict over NS' desire to develop business to and from the Northeast via Hagerstown, Md. Northern New Jersey to

Hagerstown is 200 miles on Conrail — hardly worth the trouble when it can use its locomotives for long hauls to Chicago or St. Louis. NS recently offered to buy the Hagerstown-Harrisburg (Pa.) line, but Conrail wasn't interested; that would put a potential rival within striking distance of New York City. Says Conrail's Hagen: "We look at a trailer coming via Hagerstown and say, 'We get X dollars for that and Y dollars for taking a trailer from Chicago. Which one do we want?' Well, the answer is easy. But with the right division of revenue we can both be satisfied."

The merger of mergers will be the one that jumps across Chicago and joins the Atlantic with the Pacific. The people who could make a coast-to-coast railroad reality — the CEO's of the Big Six carriers — are in disagreement about whether it will happen and whether it should happen:

• Union Pacific's Davidson: "If there is such a merger it won't be for economic reasons because the savings are just not there. What would drive such a merger are demands by shippers for seamless service."

• Conrail's Hagen (before UP made public its intent for SP): "The current break on the Missouri River, with three carriers on each side, is probably a good balance."

• Santa Fe's Krebs: "My own private view is that market forces will demand one because of the increasing need to take costs out. Plus, we haven't even scratched the surface of the level of service we need to provide."

Warming to a favorite topic, Krebs continues: "In Kansas City a car goes into the Norfolk Southern yard and they take it out of the train and haul it across the Missouri River to us at Argentine Yard. Then we take that car and put it over the hump, meaning another 24 hours before it comes out the other end. In other words, we have taken exactly the amount of time to get this car through Kansas City as we will to haul it the next 2,000 miles to California. You can eliminate entire terminal operations when you have one railroad."

What he's talking about isn't speed, but service quality. If there's anything that railroad CEOs agree on, it's that no matter how much better their service is by the historic standards of railroads, it falls short of what well-run truck companies can provide. Service is the hurdle that, if it can't be surmounted, could bring the railroad renaissance crashing down.

Santa Fe's intermodal reliability rose from 65% a few years ago to a recent 96%, but Krebs isn't satisfied. "Our challenge is to raise the bar on standards of service," he says. "If we can provide a better product while keeping costs down, we can realize the potential that is out there in front of us. But it's a big question mark. I don't think that, as an industry, we are even close to a standard of service that would justify my saying that railroads are a growth industry." The service handicap borne by railroads is easy to understand. The trucking company depends upon one or two drivers to pick up a load, drive it over a highway, and deliver it by an appointed time. The railroad collects and then delivers scores or even hundreds of trailers or cars at once, and dozens of people share responsibility for making it work.

M.P. 261.1

CBNP MAY 10, 1995

14:58 Just passing by Brady. **CBNP-10 passes a prefabricated high-speed turnout at Brady, Neb., 261 miles west of Council Bluffs, Iowa.** Scott A. Hartley

Reliability requires discipline that not all railroads possess. Intermodal traffic is most sensitive on that score, and during the first part of 1995 truckers took special retribution on three railroads for their sins. Southern Pacific and BN in 1994 each had checkered records getting goods delivered on time, and both saw 11% falloffs in trailers handled the first five months of 1995, compared with a year earlier. Conrail was down 13%, and the suspicion is that truckers, with the economy catching its breath, are getting back at Conrail for unilaterally suspending intermodal service between a host of low-density markets in 1994. Conrail CEO David LeVan suggests a different reason: Union truckers have tilted their use of rail to Western carriers, where they can get longer hauls, thus freeing up driver availability in the East.

Union Pacific's on-time performance is at about 90%, which Chairman Davidson describes as "not nearly good enough." UP each month analyzes performance against the commitments to customers, "and if we aren't measuring up, we fix them." Conrail's intermodal trains are meeting 95% of their customer commitments, notes LeVan.

If you're the wagering kind, bet on the rails. Those that imposed strict disciplines upon their operations are achieving success. The rest will follow suit or change management. Remember, the pendulum has changed direction, and truckers have big problems of their own. You may read that truck companies are attracted to railroads because of a national driver shortage. Well, no. There's no shortage of drivers — only a shortage of drivers at wages the truckers can afford to pay without being driven out of business by railroads.

That's a big change, wouldn't you agree? It's certainly something to contemplate as your CBNP-10 swings through the curve at Fremont and heads west into the teeth of the Super Railroad. T

Sponsored by NRHS

In addition to other prizes, all winners will receive a one-year NRHS membership.

Icons of Railroading

Trains 2023 Photo Contest Winners

Runners-up

These photographers each has won a three-year subscription to *Trains* Magazine or equivalent *Trains* products.

◂George Hiotis

Engineer Tommy Donovan takes New Jersey Transit's ex-Pennsylvania Railroad GG1 No. 4877 for its final northbound revenue run on Oct. 27, 1983, approaching Elizabeth, N.J., at 70 mph. The GG1, perhaps the world's most recognizable electric, is an icon of American railroading, owing to its sleek lines and remarkable durability.

- **Nikon FM**
- **Nikkor 15mm f3.5 lens**
- **Exposure not recorded**

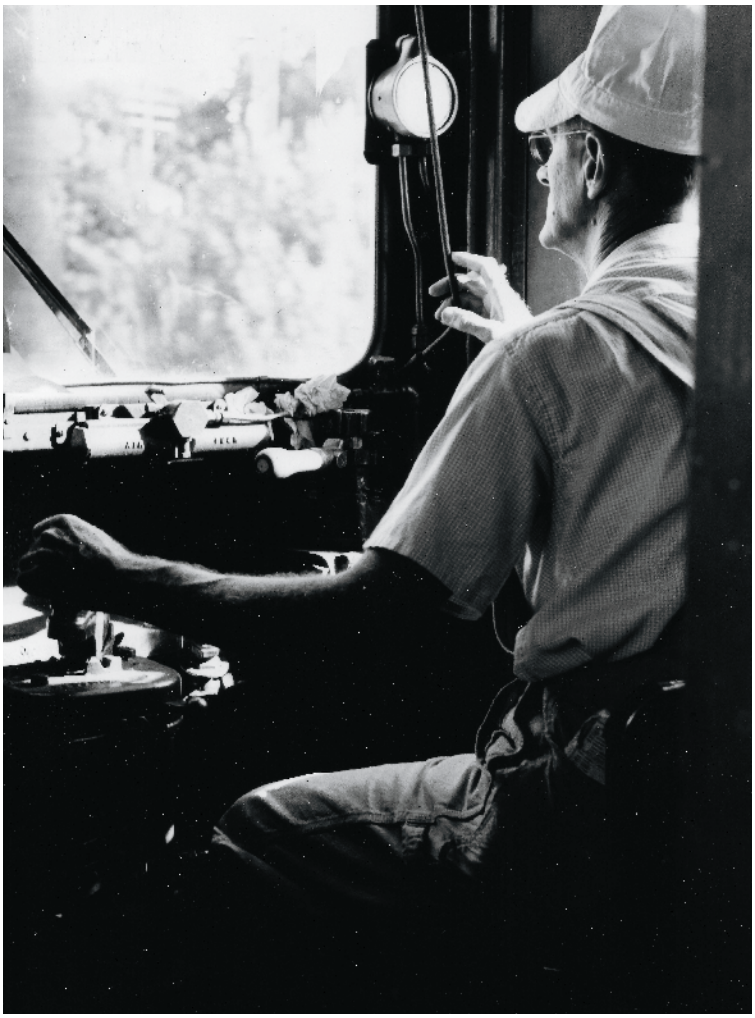
THIS YEAR, 95 PHOTOGRAPHERS ENDEAVORED TO SEARCH OUT THE ICONS OF RAILROADING. Their 237 entries represented a wide variety of images that could be considered long-lasting symbols of steel wheels riding on steel rails — icons. Entries spanned PCC cars, signals, heritage steam operations, famous locations, heritage paint schemes (Santa Fe, Pennsylvania, and New Haven, to name a few), and numerous other interpretations. This gallery represents the best of the best. The judges identified with images that had strong ties to iconic locations or people. Following are not just recognizable views of railroading, but symbols drawing you to a place and telling a story that not only includes the photographic moment, but transcends time, carrying its meaning over centuries of railroading.

Begin now to contemplate the 2024 photo contest theme: Power, which can be found in equipment, nature, or people.
— *Jeffrey Smith and Bob Lettenberger*

▴Dennis A. Livesey

In the golden age of trains, the station was second only to the train itself as the most important icon of railroading. It was at the station that average people would start and end their interaction with the railroad. That building, whether modest or grand, had an overwhelming effect on the people flowing through it. Memories of great trips, modest trips, loved ones leaving who would never return, loved ones who gloriously returned; these are extremely powerful emotions, emotions not soon forgotten. Untold millions have shared such emotions in New York's Grand Central Terminal; I say no further evidence of icon status is needed.

- **Canon EOS 40D**
- **17mm**
- **1.3 sec., f/8, ISO 100**



William Scott

With white cap, overalls, and gaze fixed on the track ahead, Motorman Wally Clifford is working the controls of a 100-series car on the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad, an interurban-era icon. The single-car train is on Galena Hill, eastbound toward South Bend, Ind., in summer 1963. The controller is wide open, the speed at 80-plus mph, and the horn cord taut for the next grade crossing.

This photo was taken on a return trip from a visit to the Chicago South Shore & South Bend shops at Michigan City, Ind. I had made the acquaintance of Wally Clifford some years earlier when visiting the South Shore yard in South Bend. It was just happenstance that he was at the controls of the train when this photo was taken, and our acquaintance allowed me access to the car's front platform.

- Mamiya C22 twin-lens reflex
- Mamiya 80mm
- Tri-X 120 (medium-format) film
- Exposure not recorded

Jeremiah Siembida

On Oct. 3, 2021, at first light, the iconic lines of three BNSF Railway Geeps waddle down the long-dormant Grenora Subdivision at Lunds Valley, N.D., to pick up stored, empty grain hoppers. Built by the Great Northern in 1911 from the main line at Stanley, N.D., 51 miles to Wildrose and in 1916 another 36 miles to Grenora, the line features light jointed rail and spindly bridges. It was part of James J. Hill's massive branch-building campaign to serve small farming communities across the Peace Garden State. Restricted to four-axle power, 10-mph speeds and retrenched some 60 miles to Powers Lake in 2002, the branch is like a time machine. The early second generation of EMD locomotives and a paint scheme vaguely reminiscent of Great Northern Railway's diesels are at home on the branch line, serving in a land forgotten by time, another representation of icons in railroading.

- Canon 7D Mk 2
- Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L
- 1/500 sec., f/5.6, 220mm, ISO 100

Mark Turkovich

Reading & Northern No. 2102 opens its cylinder cocks in preparation for leaving the railroad's steam shop in Port Clinton, Pa. There is no question steam locomotives are a symbol of railroading history. Among the first steam excursions after the steam era ended in the United States were the Reading's Iron Horse Rambles. The famous Reading T-1s pulled these excursions from 1959 until 1964. These iconic trips marked the beginning of a new era for steam — the excursion era — with locomotives Nos. 2100, 2101, 2102, and 2124 paving the way for future mainline excursions over the next 60 years. Until 1991, No. 2102 operated on various railroads in the Midwest and Eastern U.S. In 2022, after more than 30 years of silence, Reading No. 2102, an icon in railroading, returned to operation, providing new generations a taste of what steam railroading and steam excursions were like decades ago.

- Canon EOS R
- RF 24-105 f/4 L
- 1/30 sec., f/4, ISO 640

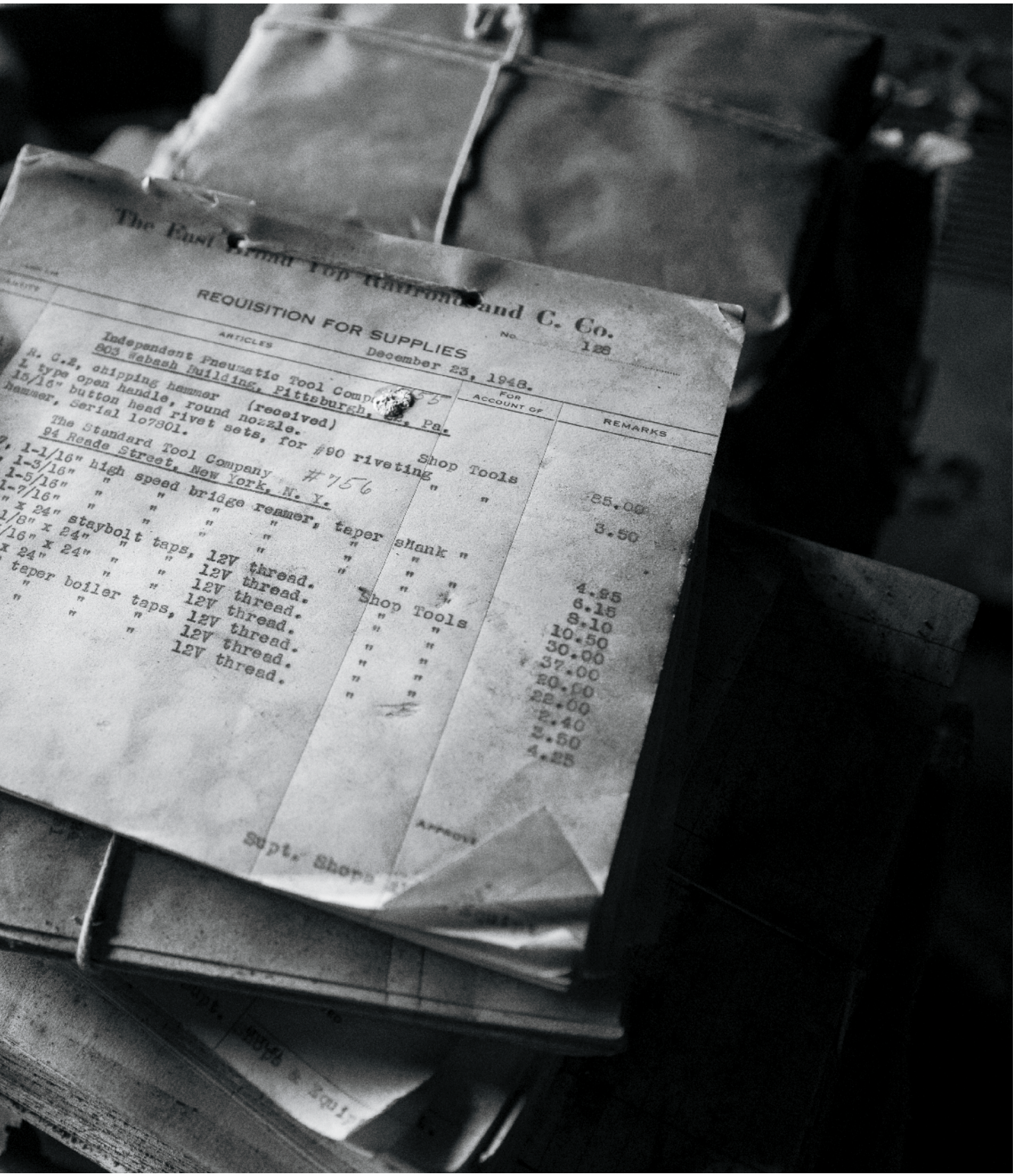
Second place

Eric Knepp

Won $250 for his photo from the East Broad Top Railroad.

On Dec. 23, 1948, the East Broad Top Railroad & Coal Co. superintendent of shops and equipment completed a Requisition for Supplies form listing a selection of tools needed from two manufacturers to help support equipment maintenance, including the fleet of steam locomotives and steel freight cars. Fast forward to May 26, 2021, and that same Requisition for Supplies form, bathed in midday sunlight from nearby windows, was found among bundles of neatly wrapped and bound shop records retained on the second floor in one of the railroad's store houses. Forms such as this, demonstrating everyday record keeping, contribute to the richness of the East Broad Top Railroad's vast archival holdings and help to solidify the collection as an icon in railroading.

- **Canon EOS 6D Mark II**
- **EF 24-105mm f/4L IS II @ 24mm**
- **1/60 sec., f/4, ISO 1250**


REQUISITION FOR SUPPLIES
December 23, 1948.
No. 128
ARTICLES
FOR ACCOUNT OF
REMARKS
Independent Pneumatic Tool Comp
903 Wabash Building, Pittsburgh,
(received)
A. C.E, chipping hammer
L type open handle, round nozzle.
15/16" button head rivet sets, for #90 riveting Shop Tools
hammer, Serial 107301.
The Standard Tool Company #756
94 Reade Street, New York, N. Y.
1-1/16" high speed bridge reamer, teper shank
1-3/16"
1-5/16"
1-7/16"
x 24" staybolt taps, 12V thread.
1/8" x 24" 12V thread.
/16" x 24" 12V thread.
x 24" 12V thread.
teper boiler taps, 12V thread.
12V thread.
Shop Tools
85.00
3.50
4.95
6.15
8.10
10.50
30.00
37.00
20.00
22.00
2.40
3.50
4.25
Supt. Shops

First place

Christopher Pollock

Won $500 for his photo recreating an O. Winston Link image with Norfolk & Western No. 611.

This image is inspired by a trio of icons: An original 1957 image, O. Winston Link — who captured the dying days of steam locomotives — and a locomotive that represents one the few operating remnants of the Norfolk & Western. Taken during N&W No. 611's 2019 visit to the Strasburg Rail Road, we knew early on we wanted to recreate several of O. Winston Link's photographs. The one we felt we could do the most with was his 1957 photograph *Solitude siding and Train No. 2, near Arcadia, Virginia*. No. 611 replaced the K-class locomotive in the original photo, and the Strasburg Rail Road provided a setting similar to the rural area of Arcadia, Va. We created a real sign using guesstimations from Link's photos as to the dimensions of the sign and lettering. We ended up with a 7-foot tall, 6-foot-wide sign using 5½ inch letters. The main issue was making it sturdy and realistic but portable and easy to assemble in the field. Construction included 4-inch posts mounted in five-gallon buckets filled with stones. A 1-inch-by-12-inch board became the sign. My daughter created stencils for the letters. She and my wife hand-painted the border and letters. Despite looking like a simple photograph, the shot required plenty of planning, which put into perspective how much time and effort Link invested into his exercises of painting a scene with light. We will never truly be able to duplicate such photographs exactly, but will continue to let iconic people, places, and technology influence us.

- **Nikon D800**
- **Nikon 24-70 F2.8**
- **1/125 sec., f/8, ISO 3200**


LITUDE
611
611
NORFOLK AND WESTERN

Grand Prize

Brandon Fiume

Won $1,000 for his photo of Horseshoe Curve.

The Allegheny Mountains near Altoona, Pa., presented a formidable challenge, as the rugged and unforgiving geography made construction of the Pennsylvania Railroad nearly impossible. The ingenious design of J. Edgar Thompson and hundreds of immigrants, working tirelessly with pickaxes, shovels, and wheelbarrows, culminated in the creation of Horseshoe Curve, which swiftly became an icon of railroading. Completed in 1854, Horseshoe Curve was the pinnacle of civil engineering for the Pennsy, allowing trains to traverse the mountains at a steady grade of 1.34% without the need for switchbacks. The railroad quickly became a major east-west transportation artery. Its significance was such that during World War II, Nazi Germany sent spies to the U.S. with the mission of destroying the Curve. The Pennsylvania held immense pride in this engineering marvel and instructed its crews to announce to passengers when they were rounding the curve, emphasizing its iconic status and remarkable achievement. Here, a westbound Norfolk Southern intermodal train rounds Horseshoe Curve against the backdrop of a stunning autumn sunset on Oct. 15, 2022.

- **XDJ Air 2S (lens built in)**
- **1/500 sec., f/2.8, ISO 100**

Troubleshooting a diesel locomotive

Knowing where to look is the first step

Troubleshooting a diesel locomotive started with a quick visit to a gas station and ended with a lesson in railroading. This pair of Chicago & North Western EMD SD40-2s is switching in O'Neill, Neb., on Nov. 21, 1991. Carl Swanson

By Lynn Sass

IN 1981, I WAS A LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER for the Chicago & North Western Railway based out of Council Bluffs, Iowa, and operating an interdivisional train to Sioux City, Iowa. I had made this run many times, but one trip taught me a lesson about troubleshooting a diesel locomotive — and about railroading.

Most of the trains on this subdivision were coal trains serving Iowa Power & Light, grain trains, and a daily mixed freight from St. Paul, Minn., to Council Bluffs, where most of its cargo would be interchanged with the Union Pacific.

The track from Council Bluffs to Sioux City is a flat river grade, with the line running parallel to the big, muddy Missouri River, which is only about a mile away. Only two SD40-2s were required for a coal train to make speed on this subdivision.

On this trip we were cruising along at our designated 40 mph when the alarm bells started ringing, my trailing SD40-2 died, and all I had left was one junk SD40-2 doing the work of two. We quickly lost speed and were soon down to 15 mph, pulling the guts out of our only working unit as it tried to lug 10,000-plus tons of coal to our destination.

Knowing the way these engines worked or, in this instance, didn't work, I was pretty sure the governor had shut the locomotive down. I informed our train dispatcher of our predicament, and he told me "Good luck," adding there were no other trains around to borrow an engine from.

Taking matters into my own hands, I stopped the train at little Whiting, Iowa, walked over to the Sinclair gas station, and purchased a quart of lightweight oil. I went back to the dead locomotive and, sure enough, the low governor oil warning light was on. I added oil to the governor, primed the locomotive, and hit the switch. She growled a little bit but finally turned over and started. I goosed it a little bit with the layshaft (a manual throttle linking the fuel injector arms) and the engine kept running.

We were in business! We were soon back up to speed and got our coal train to the power plant under our hours of service.

At the completion of our tour of duty that day, I stapled the receipt for the $1.81 quart of oil to a note requesting C&NW reimburse me for getting the locomotive running and their train delivered to the customer. Much to my dismay, I received a slip with my paycheck a week later that informed me I would not receive my $1.81 as I was a union employee, and such payment was not supported by our labor agreements.

As a young engineer, this incident suggested I reconsider going the extra mile to help the company in the future. (And, I still have that slip!)

I'm telling your Dad!

In the case, Dad and the rules were right

by Adrian Telizyn

EVERY RAILROAD MERGER has more than its fair share of takeover problems. Most are normally invisible to the general public, but often are painfully apparent to those who have to live with the aftermath of corporate integration and indigestion.

In this particular case, a small regional railway's United Transportation Union agreement allows for a trainman who has been displaced from his permanent job to take 48 hours on what is known as a "place board." This gives a trainman the opportunity to have a two-day "weekend" in case his resulting exercise of seniority would require him to work straight through without any time off.

The big Class I railroad involved in this takeover has its own separate mainline labor agreement with different terms. The new managers assigned to the former regional's territory usually do not bother to learn the ins and outs of the existing labor contracts — often to their detriment.

Since the takeover, a large number of employees have left this regional road through early retirement, resulting in a severe manpower shortage.

One day, a new trainman named Bill was displaced from his freight job at the stroke of midnight. He advised the crew caller at the Network Operations Center that he was taking 48 hours to place and hung up the phone.

At 4 a.m. Bill's phone rang, "You are called to go to work.

"No I'm not," replied Bill. "I am on the place board." With that, he hung up the phone and went back to sleep.

The trainmen's spare board showed not a single available employee. The assistant superintendent, Dave, was promptly awakened by the crew supervisor and advised of the situation. Either Dave had to scare up some trainmen, or else an unfortunate trainmaster was going to work as a conductor that day.

Led by BC Rail GE C44-9WL No. 4644, Canadian National train No. 102 has just departed the crew change point of Jasper, Alberta, and works eastbound into English on the morning of Aug. 5, 2016. CN signed a lease with the British Columbia government in 2003 for C$1 billion to operate BC Rail. Mike Danneman

Dave promptly phoned Bill. "You are going to work, young man!" Bill hung up.

Dave, now at his wits' end, phoned Bill's dad, an engineer in the same terminal. "You need to sort out your son's horrible behavior. I need him to go to work this morning." Bob advised that his son was within his contractual rights and also hung up.

Bob, of course, waited until a civilized hour before phoning Lisa, the UTU general chairman for the regional railroad, to advise her regarding what had transpired overnight.

Lisa promptly phoned Dave, but only got his voice mail. "Dave," she scolded into her phone, "can I get your dad's phone number so that I can talk to him about your behavior at work? I have been in touch with Bill and Bob about what happened the night before. It's inappropriate to talk to Bill's daddy about a union issue." With that, she hung up. Thinking that the matter was closed, she went to work later that morning.

The assistant superintendent was waiting for her in the terminal building. He was absolutely wild! Not only did he make the mistake of listening to his voice mail over a speaker phone in front of his peers, who were all listening, but another personal matter also came into play.

Dave began to shout at her, while they were standing in the hallway connected to the train crew booking-in area. Dave bellowed that he objected to her unfair, horrible behavior, and that his dad had recently died!

"Good," deadpanned Lisa. "My mom is dead too. Perhaps she and your dad could talk about whose kid has better manners!" T

How to make up a day on Amtrak's *Pioneer*

A local shortcut saves 23 hours and the vacation plans

by Bruce Butler

IT WAS IN JUNE 1985. I had attended a conference at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kan., and was traveling home to Spokane, Wash., riding Amtrak.

I boarded the westbound *California Zephyr* in Lincoln, Neb., late in the evening. As I recall, the train split three ways in Salt Lake City — the *Desert Wind* to Los Angeles, the *California Zephyr* to Oakland, Calif., and the *Pioneer* journeyed to Portland, Ore.

The next morning at breakfast in the diner, I began conversing with another passenger who had also boarded at Lincoln. I sensed something was bothering him. It turned out that he and his wife were beginning a long vacation, including a stay in Glacier National Park. They had made all their reservations through a travel agent.

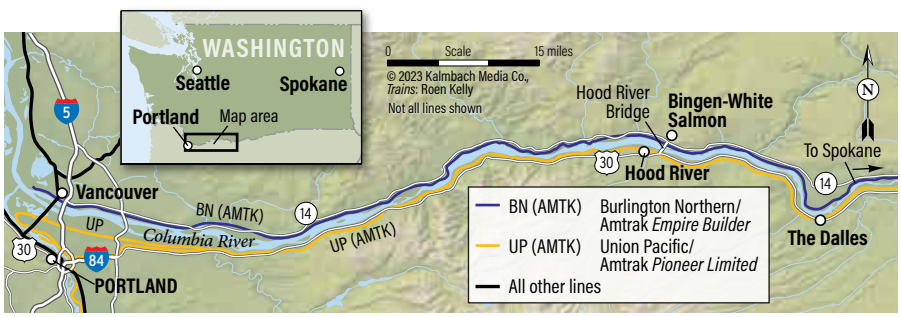
Unfortunately, the travel agent did not catch the fact that Amtrak's eastbound *Empire Builder* departed Portland about an hour before the westbound *Pioneer* arrived. The 23-hour layover in Portland would result in all of their hotel and other reservations being a day ahead of their arrival! They didn't discover this until they were already on the train. He was thinking of flying out of Portland to catch up with their reservations.

I grinned, asking him if he would like to make up the lost day. He looked at me like I was crazy. I showed him a road map I had and traced how the *Pioneer* went west on the south side of the Columbia River and the Portland section of the *Empire Builder* went east on the north side. I asked if he had any reason to go to Portland. He replied: "No." I then told him about the unofficial Hood River, Ore.,–Bingen, Wash., connection via a taxi over the toll bridge. He was amazed. He borrowed my map to tell his wife of the plan.

He was back within 10 minutes saying, "If you don't mind, we will share that cab ride with you." No problem. We were joined by another young man who was doing the same thing. My new friend was so delighted with this arrangement that he paid the cab fare. We even had time for a pizza before the *Empire Builder* rolled into Bingen. Then, we were properly headed east.

I imagine that he had an interesting conversation with that travel agent when he got back home!

Don't go to Portland! Get off the *Pioneer* at Hood River, Ore., as seen here, instead. Our author wanted to catch the eastbound *Empire Builder*, which departed Portland, Ore., an hour before his *Pioneer* arrived. By taking a taxi across the Columbia River to Bingen, Wash., one could catch the *Empire Builder* and save a 23-hour layover in Portland. Wayne Depperman



113-year-old Union Pacific depot in need of funding for restoration

Green River, Wyo., depot could become a multi-use community center

▲ **Union Pacific's westbound *City of Los Angeles* pulls past the Green River, Wyo., station in July 1952. Today, the station, opened in 1910, is in need of significant restoration work, but securing funds is a roadblock. Once restored, the depot could become a multi-use community center.** Richard Steinheimer

IN OCTOBER 1910, the Union Pacific opened its new depot in Green River, Wyo. The three-story, red-brick station became the center of transportation for southwest Wyoming. Now 113 years later, the city of Green River is faced with a decision: what to do with the historic structure.

For decades, trains along the Overland Route paused at Green River. The timetables for the likes of the *City of Los Angeles*, *San Francisco*, and *Portland* all included a stop at Green River. In April 1909, the citizens of Green River petitioned the Union Pacific to construct a depot befitting their growing city.

"We have a commodious Court House, a handsome Carnegie Library, a newly constructed Union Pacific Club House and the promise of a federal post office building," the petition reads. "If the Union Pacific will at an early date construct a suitable railroad station it will be a substantial proof that they are interested in the improvement of Green River."

The result was the building that still stands today. Union Pacific passenger trains stopped using the facility when Amtrak took over. In 1983, Amtrak opted for a more scenic route through the Colorado Rockies, leaving the depot without passenger traffic. Since that time, the structure has slowly deteriorated. The city of Green River, which owns the 20,325-square-foot building and leases the land it sits on from the railroad, is now looking at its future and hopes that demolition won't be part of the plan.

Local newspapers report the community wishes to see the building saved and converted to any number of alternative uses, potentially including a museum, event venue, retail shops or a craft brewery, to name some of the possibilities discussed.

In the path of any such plans is rehabilitating the structure. Ryan Rust, city public affairs and grants manager, estimates that the cost of bringing the currently-vacant depot to a habitable state could range from $15 to $20 million. The building needs new windows and doors, masonry repairs, roofing, and water, sewer, and electrical upgrades. In 2014, a $200,000 grant from the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Brownfield Project addressed lead paint and asbestos remediation in the depot. However, last year the Department of Environmental Quality indicated close to $2 million is now needed to structurally stabilize the building and guard against further deterioration.

Rust also says that the roof is becoming an issue. The weight of the clay tiles, combined with water seepage, is putting stress on the roof structure. There may also be hazardous materials in the roof, requiring remediation. Roof repairs could take an additional $2 to $3 million.

During a July community meeting, more than 100 people toured the depot. The overwhelming response favored preservation. Presently, consultants are finalizing studies that will give the city a road map forward. The question will then become funding availability and where depot preservation ranks among other civic infrastructure projects. — *Bob Lettenberger*

185-year-old Rocket moving to Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania

British-built 1838 locomotive removed from Franklin Institute

Weighing only 8½ tons, the 25-hp Philadelphia & Reading Railroad *Rocket,* built in 1838, is among the oldest preserved North American steam locomotives. *Rocket* has been transferred to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania from Philadelphia's Franklin Institute. Patrick C. Morrison

THE ROCKET, one of the oldest surviving North American steam locomotives and the oldest Reading Co. engine, is getting a new home: the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg.

Imported from England in 1838 for the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad, the 8½-ton, 25-hp *Rocket* was recently moved from Philadelphia's Franklin Institute, its home for the last 90 years.

"Certainly [*Rocket* is] something that's been on our wish list for decades," says Patrick C. Morrison, director of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. "It will be the oldest … locomotive we own."

Transferring *Rocket* to the museum came as part of The Franklin Institute's renovation of its gallery space. *Rocket* was displayed in the *Train Factory* exhibit, which also included Baldwin Locomotive Works experimental engine No. 60000. That exhibit is now closed, making way for a new exhibit. *Treasures of the Franklin Institute,* scheduled to open in fall 2024, will present objects from the archives not normally on display.

In early August, *Rocket* was extracted from the Franklin Institute and trucked to what Morrison described as an "undisclosed offsite location to be reassembled." The locomotive is a diminutive machine by any modern standard, measuring only 17 feet long, but in order for it to clear the window through which it was extricated, workers removed its stack, steam dome, fenders, and footplate.

It's expected to enter the museum's Hart Locomotive and Rolling Stock Hall sometime this fall. After final reassembly by the museum's shop staff, it will be displayed for the public, perhaps on the section of original rail with stabilizing chairs on which it sat in Philadelphia.

The *Rocket* is one of eight similar locomotives purchased by the Philadelphia & Reading Railway between 1838 and 1841. All eight were built by London-based Braithwaite, Milner & Co. and received names like *Rocket — Firefly, Spitfire, Comet, Dragon, Helca, Planet,* and *Gem. Rocket* is the only one of the group in existence today.

"In many respects, in the early 19th century, England was a few years ahead of the United States in developing railroad technology, and in embracing the concept of railroading in general," Morrison says. "The *Rocket* typifies this early American embrace of English railroad technology and precedent."

Rocket, a wood-burner, has been exhibited a number of times before its residence at the Franklin Institute. In 1893, it appeared at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Next was the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (St. Louis World's Fair) in 1904. An appearance was made at the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Fair of the Iron Horse during 1927.

Before the locomotive was displayed at the Columbian Exposition it underwent a restoration. In this process new wheels were installed; however, for an unexplained reason, the side rods, which connected the wheels, were not reinstalled. The locomotive has been without its side rods since.

Retired in 1879, *Rocket* traveled 310,164 miles on the P&R.— *Dan Cupper and Bob Lettenberger*

Ghosts in the machines

These artifacts represent the bones of the railroad

▲ **Consolidation type No. 1187 is the oldest known surviving Pennsylvania Railroad locomotive, built at the railroad's Altoona shops in 1888. This fascinating example of a once-common steam locomotive is said to be haunted by the crews that worked on it.** Brian Solomon

THE RAILROAD MUSEUM OF PENNSYLVANIA'S world class interpretation of railroading offers one of the most significant and cohesive collections, with superb restoration, and exemplary presentation for public enjoyment and education. Administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and located in Strasburg, it's across the street from the living museum that is the Strasburg Rail Road — the two institutions complement one another.

Over 40 years, I've paid the museum dozens of visits, and now I live nearby. I never tire of studying some of the greatest examples of past railroading on static display. There are one-of-a-kind relics that are the last examples of significant, once-numerous locomotives, ancient railcars, and obscure vestiges of railway technology. These relics are faithfully crafted into magnificent display pieces by the museum's restoration shop.

As I'm in the finishing stages of my latest book on steam locomotives, and on a recent visit studying Virginia & Truckee's Mogul No. 20 *Tahoe* — an 1875 Baldwin on display at Strasburg — a voice spoke, "You know it's haunted …"

Many of these artifacts represent the bones of the railroad. Cosmetically restored, they are without the invisible animating forces key to the great railroad institution of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Before the age of the automobile, railroads had successfully harnessed steam, air, and electricity, without which these displays are motionless antique assemblies of wood, iron, and steel. To fill this void, the museum has numerous supplemental displays that include interactive exhibits and operating scale railroads. These displays are used to engage visitors while helping to tangibly translate railroading and its technology.

The former Pennsylvania Railroad air-brake instruction car — restored and fully functional — is a work of art that deciphers the intricacies of the Westinghouse automatic air-brake system. For many people this system of pumps, pipes, valves, and couplings remains a mystery. However, the core of this 19th century invention is still used to control train movements today.

The railroad in all its infinite detail fascinates me, and I'm always seeking to make it compelling for my readers. I've often heard the lament, "If only a locomotive could talk, imagine the stories it could tell." Undoubtedly, those stories might be more captivating than the mere nuts and bolts of the machines. We revel in the machine displays, but wasn't it the people that made the railroad a thriving, functioning transportation system? Isn't the locomotive really an avatar of the engineer who, through skilled control of the throttle and valves, governs its power and direction?

Pay a visit to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and you may see more than just a collection of restored locomotives and rolling stock. Brian Solomon

Inside there is more to this museum than meets the eye. I've heard about apparitions in period dress on the locomotives, of shadows and mysterious people that appear in photos, and distant indistinct voices whispering mysteries in the passenger cars. I've not experienced anything unexplained during my visits, but I've had more than my share of odd encounters while working in the 1874-built former Boston & Maine station in North Conway, N.H.

In 2018, Beverly LaGorga, a psychic and medium, and Ed Kelemen, a paranormal investigator, teamed up to document apparitions within the Pennsylvania museum. Their book *The Haunted Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania* is sold in the museum's gift shop. They were drawn to several of the museum's antique locomotives and railcars. Among these were Pennsylvania Railroad class H3 2-8-0 No. 1187, which is central to the ground floor display, and the *Tahoe* that sits prominently near the eastern windows. The authors opine that spirits have no energy of their own but must draw upon external energy sources. Railroads offer incredible sources of energy. "Just imagine the emotions of the thousands of people who have traveled on the trains within the museum all mixed together in one spot."

It has been said that "the museum is in the forever business," preserving lifetimes of machinery and experience for future generations. By observing elements of past railroads, we perceive the way life was when railroading was the pinnacle of technology, harnessing invisible forces to carry goods and people, thus propelling a young nation into greatness. But remember that the wonderful exhibits were not always as they are today. Following years of hard service came decades of neglect. It took someone inspired to retrieve what many people dismissed as "junk" — to seek out its histories and mysteries and restore its historic appearance.

Visit the museum and seek out the invisible … Oh, and the ghost inhabiting *Tahoe* is called 'Ralph.' Go to www.rrmuseumpa.org for information. — *Brian Solomon*

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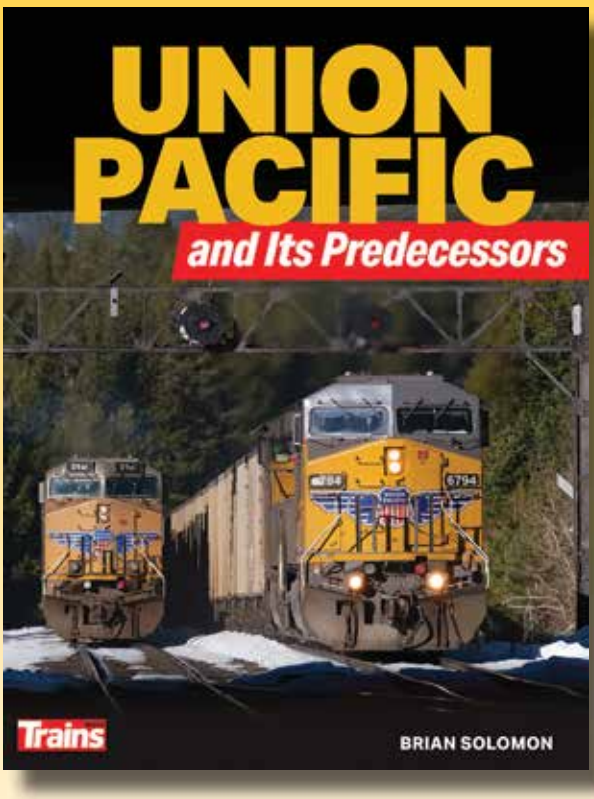

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NOVEMBER 25 & 26, 2023: Rocky Mountain Train Show. The Ranch Complex, 5280 Arena Circle, Loveland, CO 80538. Saturday, 10am-5pm, Sunday 9am-3pm. 200+ sales tables, 50+ vendors, operating layouts, model trains, all scales. Admission $10.00, under 12 free. Free parking. 303-364-0274 www.RockyMountainTrainShow.com Information@RockyMountainTrainShow.com

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