



MRHS MAINLINE

The Official Newsletter of the
Muskegon Railroad Historical Society
Volume 20, Issue 9: September 2005



***Halfway to Heaven on the
Coopersville & Marne Railroad
A Reflection on the MRHS Charter
Train Ride of August 2, 2005
By Robert J. Jackson***

The *Muskegon Railroad Historical Society* made history of its own during our August meeting when we rode the rails on the Coopersville & Marne Railroad. Like children at Makeway Station on Sodor Island¹, we stood on the platform, happily waiting for the train to arrive. It was even finer than being in Carolina in the morning. The thrumming of the diesel could be heard as it throttled up the rumble in its reciprocating heart. The brakeman--err--brakelady bounded down from the front of the engine and flagged for safety as the dark hulk of the engine crept over the street crossing, a mother hen towing her diner and coach chicks behind her. A bright red caboose adorned the end of the train. Our guide and guardian angel, Tom Anderson, regaled us with tales and legends of the Coopersville & Marne Railroad, then we boarded. My wife and I had two chicks of our own, our grandsons, Scott and Andrew, to scoot up the steps and into our seats.

A conductor's 'All aboard!' With a screech of steel wheels, we began our adventure and were on our way. With the time-honored shaking and the rattle, the rumble and the roar, we glided away from the station. This was more than just a ride on a historical railway, it was a magic carpet journey into a past we longed to relive again. Grins and smiles were the uniform of the day. We were all one big, happy family sharing an hour of delight, and a hobo bindle meal good enough for the Ritz. The experience was one that the Orient Express would envy.

When we reached our destination, two fortunate passengers

were invited to ride in the locomotive as it switched to a side track and did its run-around to the other end of the train. With a clunk and a gentle lurch, it coupled to the rear of the caboose and we were on our way again. This was my first time to be inside a caboose, and I marveled at the bright, white paint and clean, uncluttered interior. Happy faces peered out of every window, waving as we passed motorists paused on the highway beside the tracks. With a long sigh of contentment we glided to a stop at the Coopersville station. For one shining day in our lives we had enjoyed a trip every bit as fun as the children had on the Polar Express—except there was no chocolate. Well...maybe next time.

A thank-you note to the railroad would be appropriate, and I'm sure it would be appreciated by the hard-working folks making the Coopersville & Marne Railroad a reality. You can be one of them, too. Talk to Tom Anderson about volunteering to keep those wheels turning.

***Words of Thanks:
Letters of Gratitude from
Visiting Organizations.***

The following letter excerpt is quoted from a letter written to the MRHS by Al Johnson of the Muskegon Host Lions Club

"Thank you for the very fine program about railroading presented Tuesday noon, July 12 at the Muskegon Host Lions Club.

Also your invitation to see the fantastic display of model trains and surrounding terrain that your organization has assembled was most interesting.

Thank you again for taking the time to present this program so we could learn about and better appreciate railroading."

The following letter excerpt is quoted from a letter written to the MRHS by James Horan, Youth Services Librarian of the Hackley Public Library

"Thank you so much for letting us see the trains last night. Please let your members know how much we enjoyed our visit to MRHS. We really

September Meeting Program

War Machines from the Locomotion Series

Presented by Len Allman

Vice President and At Large
Board of Director Election
during the meeting!

Nominees:

Vice President:

Jason Bach
Charles (Chuck) Tompkins

At Large Director:

James (Jim) Beal
Leo Deuster

**Tuesday, September 6, 2005
Don't Miss It!**

appreciate so many members showing up to run all the layouts and visit with the kids and grownups.

Our visit was part of a 'Choo Choo Storytime' sponsored by the Library. After hearing stories about trains at the Library, kids were thrilled to see 'real' trains and watch them run. I counted 32 children and estimate there were 15 adults. I was pleased to have so many at a Library event.

It is a great community service you provide by making your layouts available to the public. It's one of Muskegon's treasures, for sure, and made a lot of people happy last night."

Events like these and the interest that they generate are why we are involved in an organization like the MRHS. Members taking time from their busy schedules to show others their love of railroading and model railroading. Members like Don and Nancy Pratt who continually lead merit badge events for the Boy Scouts, Jim Beal who is the first to show up and help on any task at the club, and numerous others that graciously serve the club and community. A special thanks to all who continually help where they can. The MRHS would not exist if not for members like these. Please do your part and help when and where you can, it will make the MRHS even better!



Prez Sez
By President Thomas Anderson

In place of our regular meeting and annual picnic in August, this year we did something very special! We joined forces with the volunteers at the Coopersville and Marne railroad for a great charter ride that included a "hobo bundle" meal. For those who could not make the ride I'll touch on some of the fun. We had 61 members, family members, and guests enjoy the ride. And special things happened for us as we climbed aboard the 2 restored passenger cars. We had the premier air-conditioned dining car for our pleasure to eat our meals in shifts, and the caboose was available for all to use. The caboose is a special treat that is not available to the general public. Many riders were allowed to climb into the cupola, a great treat for railroad fans. We were also allowed to climb onto the engine prior to the ride for picture taking and adding to the memories to all the kids that rode. It was a true railfan excursion complete with a photo run by! Robert Jackson was one of two lucky riders selected to ride in the engine during the engine move. He related some of his thoughts earlier in the newsletter.

Now we ask that prior members that rode and even those that never have been members pay their dues. Events like these are only possible because members support the MRHS and the MRHS works hard to reward their members with events like this.

Several guests were in attendance at the board meeting this month, and we appreciate their input. The committee reports are: "O" gauge is still there, and we may have found a new member from the train ride that is willing to help with the wiring, "HO" gauge is fine, walls have been painted, and some problems exist with conventional running, to the "N" gauge is run'N'ing 'N'ormal, 'No 'N'asty problems.

The library is still being organized and donations of magazines and books continue to come in. A C&O caboose chair has been donated by Tom Tyler. The fall show continues to grow and possible dates for the spring are being reviewed.

Don't forget we will be voting at our September meeting to fill the vacant positions of vice president and board member at large. The deadline for running was this past board meeting and we have a choice for the positions. Their names are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

There is a possibility of a hand made wooden train set being donated that will be placed on display, and we are checking on the cost of a video projection system as more of our programs will be on DVD's or computer in the future. That will be part of next year's budget!

Remember, we are all members because of our interest in trains!

Prez Tom

Bylaws and Policies Committee Update

The bylaws and policies committee is reviewing two (2) drafts of a new set of bylaws. Over the past year, there have been several comments shared with board members that led to the establishment of this committee. As the committee continues to review and propose changes, you will have opportunity to voice your concerns. And if you have concerns for the direction and guidance of the MRHS, feel free to stop by and comment at the next committee meeting, which follows the board meeting on September 20, 2005

DUES...DUES...DUES

Discounts, Library Access, Layout Access to name a few...

Get your dues in so you don't lose these privileges of membership.

If you have a check mark by your name on the envelope, your dues **have not been** paid

Individual Membership:

\$20/Year

Family Membership:

\$30/Year

Fall 2005 Train Show and Open House
September 25, 2005

Andy Busard and Jim Funnell have been working hard to pull together the Fall Train Show. A separate insert with the newsletter gave you all the show times and events, but the club needs help. We need members to help unload the dealers in the morning, run the layouts, welcome guests to the club, and load the dealers in the afternoon. These shows are a major part of our financial foundation each year, and many of the club benefits would not exist without these shows and the members that make the show run smooth. Please give back to the club a small amount of your time and energy and help make the Fall Show a great success. Contact Andy and Jim for details.

Member News and Donations to the Club

The club has received several wonderful donations. Tom Tyler donated a C&O Caboose Chair and Brad Anderson donated a 2 foot by 4 foot HO layout in progress that shows the stages of scenery development. Many thanks to both for their generous donations.

A special thanks goes to Doc Radel for restoring our donation station. It is on display and will be returning as our official donation box soon! Thanks Doc!

Calendar of Events

- Tuesday, September 6, 2005
 MRHS General Member Meeting
 Election of Vice President and Director
- Tuesday, September 20, 2005
 MRHS Board of Directors Meeting
- Sunday, September 25, 2005
 MRHS Fall Train Show!
 Plan now to help out!
- Tuesday, October 4, 2005
 MRHS General Membership Meeting
- Tuesday, October 18, 2005
 MRHS Board of Directors Meeting

Every Tuesday and Saturday the Club is Open! Stop by and Enjoy!

MRHS Officers

- President: Tom Anderson H: 744-9782
 W: 773-6411
- V. Pres: Vacant
- Treasurer: Andy Busard 755-6298
- Secretary: Thomas Van Bruggen 767-8177
- Director: Vacant
- Director: Kent McFaden 726-2606
- Director: Jim Funnell 744-1979

Train Rides

Coopersville & Marne

Pumpkin Train
October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Santa Train
November 19, 26
December 3, 10, 17, 24

Steam Railroad Institute

Pumpkin Train
October 8 and 9

Santa Train
November 19

North Pole Express
November 25-27
December 3-4, 10-11, 17-18

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