



# MRHS MAINLINE

The Official Newsletter of the  
Muskegon Railroad Historical Society  
Volume 21, Issue 12: December 2006

## THE PERE MARQUETTE: SAGINAW'S FIRST RAILROAD PART I:

By Herbert L. McCullagh

For the Saginaw Historical Society

Article Submitted by Andy Busard

In the early 1850's, the Federal government authorized the grants of federal lands to certain railroads, and in Michigan, three lines, were authorized to be constructed in the southern two-thirds of the State. They were the Grand Rapids and Indiana, (later to be part of the Pennsylvania Railroad empire) the Jackson, Lansing and Saginaw, (later to be part of Michigan Central, then New York Central) and the Flint and Pere Marquette. The F. & P.M. was organized in 1857 to build a railroad from Flint, northwest through Saginaw and on across the state toward Lake Michigan. Work did not start, however, until 1859, when a bridge was placed across the Saginaw River under the auspices of one Samuel Farwell, and his son-in-law, Dr. Henry C. Potter, late of Utica, New York, as contractors. For now obscure reasons, the company failed, and the two individuals mentioned took control of the company, along with a major creditor, Capt. E. B. Ward, of Wyandotte Steel (they had supplied the rails).

While the re-organization was in process, (which resulted in E. B. Ward as President, Samuel Farwell as Vice-President and Dr. Potter as Secretary/Treasurer), Dr. Potter, along with others became interested in mining the many salt deposits in the Saginaw Area. Sanford Keeler, an engineer, was contracted for the mechanical work. He was later to become heavily involved in the F. & P.M., first as master mechanic

and, later, General Superintendent. He would become a close friend of Dr. Potter. The salt venture was a success, providing a needed cash flow.

Construction was finally begun southward on August 11th, 1859, from the F. & P. M. bridge on the Saginaw River. Under the Federal Land-Grant Agreements, a certain amount of Federal land was turned over to the railroad upon the completion of each 20 mile segment of track, the first amount being received by the railroad on September 5th, 1860. Samuel Farwell was instrumental in the construction. His credentials included the building of locks on the Erie Canal, the Delaware & Hudson Canal, and the Erie and Great Western of Canada railroads.

There was a heavy demand for a railroad between Flint and Saginaw, but the land west of Saginaw was basically barren, save for vast stands of pine trees, not, then, very much in demand. The only town of consequence was Midland. There was very little temptation to construct a line west therefore, even though the railroad was eligible to be granted the land. It was difficult to raise the money for the Lake Michigan line.

The F. & P. M. was completed as far as Mt. Morris on January 20th, 1862, and pushed on to Hint the following December. About this time, certain Flint interests had succeeded in building a line from Holly to Flint, finishing it in 1864. The F. & P. M. saw a way to Detroit, via that railroad and the Detroit and Milwaukee, (now the Grand Trunk Western) which connected at Holly. In 1868 the Flint and Holly Railroad was purchased. Saginaw's outlet to the South was secure, by access to Detroit, via the Detroit and Milwaukee.

### December Meeting

#### Elections- Remember to Come and Vote

#### 2007 Board Final Ballot

##### President

Steve Bowyer

##### Vice President

Thomas Anderson

Kent McFaden

##### Treasurer

Andy Busard

##### Secretary

Thomas Van Bruggen

#### At Large Directors (vote for 3)

Jason Bach

Jim Beal

Jim Funnell

Jamey Morrison

Chuck Tompkins

#### Tentative Program: The International Rail Travels of Andy Busard... A Slide Show

Presented by Andy Busard

Tuesday, December 5, 2006

7:00 PM

Don't Miss It!

The push now began, due mainly by pressure from the Federal government, on construction west of Saginaw. In 1867, the line was completed to Midland, also the branch to Bay City. The line pushed onward to Averill in 1868, and Clare in 1870, and finally to Ludington in 1874. A little later, the branch to Manistee was completed. To Be Continued



### MUSKEGON RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

561 W. Western Ave. - PO BOX 765

Muskegon MI, 49443

### 2007 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL APPLICATION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ Modeling Interests Historical Interests  
 N  HO  O  S  PRESERVATION  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  Z  LARGE SCALES  PROTO  
 CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  STATIC DISPLAY  OPERATIONS  
 MODULAR  COMPANIES  
 PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  OTHER  ROUTES  
 OTHER

INDIVIDUAL (\$20 YEARLY)

FAMILY - SPOUSE AND CHILDREN UNDER 18 (\$30 YEARLY)

SPOUSES NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ CHILD \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ CHILD \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

THE MRHS ENCOURAGES THE PRESERVATION OF PROTOTYPE RAILROAD EQUIPMENT & STRUCTURES FOR THEIR HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, PROVIDES A PLACE FOR MEMBERS TO CONSTRUCT A RAILROAD MUSEUM AND MODEL RAILROAD LAYOUTS, AND PARTICIPATES IN COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS WHEREBY THE INTEREST OF RAILROADING IS PROMOTED TO THE PUBLIC.





**Prez Sez**

**By President Thomas Anderson  
2005 Highlights**

I wish to thank all of the MRHS members for allowing me to serve as the President these last three years. It has been fun, stressful, exciting, humbling, time consuming, etc., but best of all it allowed me to learn and share everyone's interest in TRAINS.

I have been reading the past newsletters and minutes of both regular meetings and board meetings to reflect just what this club has accomplished during this time. WOW! Many have contributed great articles and they were a joy to read again.

Number one, I feel we have more stability within our club. The future looks great as we become a better known part of our community. Thanks to the City of Muskegon for improving our entrance. But let's look at what has happened to this club.

We had an audit completed on our financial records going back a number of years by a couple of dedicated members, resulting in a pretty clean report and numerous suggestions for improvement. It has taken over two years, but we now have new bylaws and policies. Hopefully they are clear and concise enough to eliminate future discord.

We have had successful income generating events, such as train shows, Points for Profit, Parties in the Park, Mall coupon sales, donations at open houses, and sales of unwanted inventory. We have also had some great donations that we were able to sell after choosing what we wanted to keep for our use on layouts. The sale proceeds have enough to allow the club to purchase a video projection system with a donated audio system by a couple of members. It has greatly enhanced the presentations of numerous entertaining and educational monthly programs.

We have been hosts to meetings for the National Model Railroad Association, the Grand Trunk Western Historical Society Annual meeting, and have also been visited by the Muskegon Lions club and The Y'S club after your president conducted programs for them. And we can't forget the numerous scout and school groups that have frequently visited also.

Portable cross bucks have been made by a member and are used to direct visitors over from the train shows. The Hackley Park train display has been partially repaired and some of it can again be used at the depot across the street. The baggage cart has been taken out of storage and is on display at the depot.

For awareness we have developed postcards and info cards for visitors at our club and train shows. This will be the second year we will have a calendar available for members and guests to purchase. We are now also presenting guest speakers with a "Golden Spike" and a "certificate of appreciation" as a token of our appreciation.

Our web site, [www.mrhs-online.org](http://www.mrhs-online.org) is on

**THE MRHS MAINLINE**

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Edited by  
Thomas Van Bruggen, MRHS Secretary  
561 W. Western Ave  
P.O. Box 765  
Muskegon, MI 49443-0765  
(231) 726-3657

the internet thanks to Tom Van Bruggen. You can view the new bylaws, policies, meeting minutes, and other interesting knowledge of our club there.

More members are paying dues on time, the HO scale has been converted to DCC, and the N scale has also been operational using DCC and DC at the same time. The library and resource material has continued to grow with donations and is always upgrading. We are getting close to securing a long term agreement with the Muskegon Heritage Association, owners of the building, so we can continue with our investments and growth, including redoing the HO and N scale layouts. We will also be installing a security system soon to deter theft and vandalism when we're in meetings or just playing with trains.

We have also been working with the Coopersville and Marne Railway in helping with track work. That led to our August outings being a charter ride on the CMRY with bindle lunches at dirt cheap pricing. Our future plans are to make restoration of the Whitcomb a top priority for MRHS and see it running on their line.

Remember, this club is YOU!  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO YOU AND YOURS,  
MAY ALL YOUR SWITCHES BE FOR YOU,

Your Outgoing President, **Tom Anderson**

**Calendar of Events**

- Saturday, December 2, 2006 12 to 4 PM  
MRHS Open House
- Sunday, December 3, 2006 12 to 4 PM  
MRHS Open House
- Sunday, December 3, 2006  
West Michigan Railroad Club Train Show  
Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Tuesday, December 5, 2006 7:00 PM  
MRHS General Membership Meeting  
Elections for your 2007 Board!
- Saturday, December 9, 2006 12 to 4 PM  
MRHS Open House
- Sunday, December 10, 2006 12 to 4 PM  
MRHS Open House
- Saturday, December 16, 2006 12 to 4 PM  
MRHS Open House
- Sunday, December 17, 2006 12 to 4 PM  
MRHS Open House
- Tuesday, December 19, 2006 7:00 PM  
MRHS Board of Directors Meeting  
New Board Members Take Office!
- Monday, December 25, 2006  
MERRY CHRISTMAS!  
CELEBRATE CHRIST'S BIRTH!
- Monday, January 1, 2006  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
- Tuesday, January 2, 2006 7:00 PM  
MRHS General Membership Meeting
- Saturday, January 6, 2006  
Riverbend Model Railroad Train Show  
Wyoming, Michigan

**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 for 2007

**Individual Membership:  
\$20/Year  
Family Membership:  
\$30/Year**

**Member News and  
Donations to the Club**

**Holiday Open Houses**

The holidays are here, and as part of the holidays, the MRHS opens its doors to the public for the Christmas Season. Come down for an afternoon, run a train, and enjoy the time. The open house hours are from 12 to 4 pm for the weekends of:

- December 2 and 3
- December 9 and 10
- December 16 and 17

**DUES...DUES...DUES**

Now is the time to get your 2007 dues paid. Fill in the form on page 1 so you don't lose the privilege of using the library, running the layouts, and receiving discounts at hobby shops.

**New Books and Donations**

Patrick Herman donated a Bachmann 70 Ton Switch Engine with Lentz DCC Decoder... Thanks Patrick

Paul Trap donated a Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ) Locomotive Roster with Photos and the Railroad History Quarterly, which includes an article about the Michigan Central... Thanks Paul

Kent McFaden donated a LS&MS Rate Sheet and a soft cover book on the Pere Marquette... Thanks Kent

**New Display at Depot**

The wooden train model donated by Noel Black and built by his Grandfather is now on display at the Depot! Thanks to all that helped during the installation.

**HO Layout for Sale**

Kent McFaden is selling a 4 foot by 8 foot HO Layout. The layout is complete and includes buildings, 1 engine, 1 rotary snowplow, and 8 railroad cars. Pictures of the layout can be seen at the club. Asking \$250.00. Call Kent at 726-2606

**Web Site Update...**

**By Secretary Thomas Van Bruggen**

If you have not visited the MRHS web site, [www.mrhs-online.org](http://www.mrhs-online.org), lately there have been quite a few changes, but more are on their way over the holidays. I have added all of the policies and bylaws, and two full years of newsletters, board minutes and general meeting minutes are also available. I am working on creation of photo galleries for the site, but I NEED YOUR PICTURES! Please submit your pictures in digital format to me on CD or email them to [webmaster@mrhs-online.org](mailto:webmaster@mrhs-online.org). I hope to have the pictures and many new things added to the site by the first of the year!

**2006 MRHS Officers**

President: Tom Anderson	H: 744-9782
	W: 773-6411
V. Pres: Steve Bowyer	788-3876
Treasurer: Andy Busard	755-6298
Secretary: Thomas Van Bruggen	767-8177
Director: Jim Beal	722-2599
Director: Jamie Morrison	616-780-4914
Director: Jim Funnell	744-1979

