



# The PLS GAZETTE

**A newsletter of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.**

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## Green Signals Ahead

**I**t seems like just yesterday it was spring at PLS and we were all getting ready for the Spring Meet. Here we are in December with Christmas just around the corner and PLS looks more like a ghost town than a railroad. I am happy to report that all of the railroad including Gauge 1 remained in excellent running order for the entire 2015 running season. The track work that took place throughout the year continues into the winter months, making our railroad one of the best to run on in the country. Although we had good weather all year long our major events; Spring Meet, Picnic and the Fall Meet were somewhat under attended. Weather for each of these events had a somewhat poor forecast and I am sure this kept out of town visitors as well as locals away from PLS. As it turned out, each of these events had better than fair weather and those that took a chance and showed up had a great time!

Looking back on the year 2015 we completed several major projects and many smaller projects related to just maintaining the railroad. We scheduled additional spring tree work as a follow-up to our 2014 tree removal. This work was to be much simpler than last year with just trimming and cabling. Actually, it was discovered during the trimming process that the trees we thought were sound turned out to be in very poor health and had to be removed. Not only did we lose more of our shade trees, we also ended up with a bill that was bigger than expected. Ouch! The good news is we improved the safety of the property and will look at planting new

trees in the future. The new dual track and switch that leads into the transfer table at Building 3 was completed. The addition of the second track now gives us two-way traffic to and from Building 3 and the steaming bays making the traffic flow considerably better. The two tracks continue on the East side of the transfer table giving access to another completed project, storage Building 9, that replaced a single track shorter storage building. Building 9 now offers us easy access to our Work Train cars and the Club's Dash 9 Diesel Locomotive. Another project that was completed late in the year was the replacement of the siding turnout switch on the north side of the railroad. The old switch was showing significant signs of wear and a few derailments also caused concern. The new Number 11 switch replaced the older Number 8 making the transition to the siding a little gentler. Another late in the year project was the removal of a tree that had died on top of the area next to the Multi-Gauge unloading area. Thanks to Bruce Saylor and John Bortz, Jr., the tree was removed safely saving PLS from another bill from the tree folks.

What's ahead for the New Year 2016? We have several member approved projects as well as a number of maintenance projects that we will undertake. One project that we just started is to repair what we fondly call "The Core Wall". The Core Wall consists of cylindrical concrete test samples that were stacked one on top of the other to make a wall on the southeast side of the property to help prevent bank erosion. The cores (about 6 inch in diameter and 15 inches long) were dry stacked along the

bank more than 20 years ago. Did I mention that back in the day the cores were given to PLS FREE of charge from a concrete supplier? Time has taken its toll on this wall as the natural pressure of water, earth movement and some of our track ballast has caused the wall to bulge in several locations, the worst directly adjacent to the west end of the trestle. Our current plan is to take the wall down one core at a time, making sure the bottom cores have a slight backwards angle and re-stack the cores eliminating any bulge or tilt in the wrong direction. Not rocket science, just dirty heavy and time consuming work that needs to be done. We do plan to use some concrete adhesive to help slow down any slipping of the cores. Hopefully the cores will stand for more than another 20 plus years. Another maintenance project is building a new dual gauge curved switch that will replace the switch that leads to Building 3 and switches to the Yard. The current switch is more than 25 years old and built using older low rail that is badly worn. The new switch will use our current high rail and a frog with a steel insert. Construction of the switch will take place over the winter and weather permitting will be installed in the spring. One of our membership approved projects is the 30 foot extension of the "Porch" roof on Building 1. The extension will effectively replace the tent we have been using for many years. As of this writing, we have a variance hearing on December 17, 2015 with the goal of having the Perkiomen Township approve this project. Provided the variance for side setback and size of

(Continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

construction of the new “Porch” sometime in early summer but the Core Wall comes first. Yet one more membership approved project is the addition of a lean-to roof addition to the east side of Building 3. The purpose of this addition is for the “out of the weather” storage of our Backhoe and Cement Mixer - start date yet to be determined. Two switch and signal project completions are also planned for 2016. One on the 7 ¼ inch gauge track transition from the yard to the mainline just north of the 7 ¼ inch Station. The purpose is to eliminate tie-ups of the main line and to improve and create safer signaling of the yard to the mainline merge. Another switch and signal project is the completion of the 4 ¾ inch gauge signaling of the mainline west of the 4 ¾ inch station to the signal at the down grade east of the 4 ¾ inch station. This will also allow the enabling of the signals that are currently camped at Approach (Yellow) from just outside the tunnel over the driveway. This will complete all the signals on the 4 ¾ inch mainline. Our project list never ends with both new construction and ongoing maintenance of the railroad. Always lots of things to work on at PLS.

Work on the railroad goes on all year long. It's not just during the spring and summer. I urge you to come out and join us on our Wednesdays and Saturdays (9:00 AM) work days to help keep the property and the railroad in great shape for all to enjoy.

See you on the Mainline,

*Frank Webb*

PLS President

## 2016 PLS Upcoming Events

Fri-Sun, Jan. 15-17	Cabin Fever Expo (CabinFeverExpo.com)
Saturday, Jan. 23	Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
Saturday, Feb. 20	Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

## Pertinent Dates for the 2016 Election

The 2016 election of all officers and three non-officer directors will take place at the Annual Business Meeting on March 19, 2016. Bob Blackson and Jim Salmons volunteered for and were appointed to the Nominating Committee. Regular Members who attended at least half of the membership meetings in 2015 are eligible to be nominated for election to a seat on the Board and to any office except President, which requires prior service of at least one term as an officer or non-officer director. Pertinent dates for the 2016 election are –

**December 1, 2015**

First day to accept nominations.

**January 12, 2016**

Last day to accept nominations.

**January 15, 2016**

Last day for the Nominating Committee to supply names of nominees for offices and directorships to President and Secretary.

**January 22, 2016**

Last day for President to supply the names of nominees for offices and directorships to Editor for publication in *The PLS Gazette*.

**February 18, 2016**

Last day for Secretary to post the names of nominees for offices and directorships in clubhouse.

**March 4, 2016**

Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail.

**March 19, 2016**

Election at Annual Business Meeting.

## Club Membership News

PLS welcomes new Associate Members: John Shields; W. Harrison Hall, Jr. and John Dinan.

## Membership Gauge

As of November 30, 2015 PLS has:

**103 Regular Members**

**226 Associate Members**

**10 Honorary Members**

## Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

<b>President</b>	Frank Webb	77 Roundwood Circle, Collegeville, PA 19426	president@palivesteamers.org
<b>Secretary</b>	Lee Nonnemacher	1474 North Wales Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422	lee_n@msn.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Robert Morris	3034 Black Swift Road, Norristown, PA 19403	rmorris1171@verizon.net
<b>Gazette Editor</b>	Lawrence Moss	815 Maplewood Drive, Harleysville, PA 19438	LarryMoss@outlook.com
<b>Board of Directors:</b>	Peter Brown, peteprivate@yahoo.com; Robert Freer, W3YLT@juno.com; Steve Leatherman, steveleatherman@gmail.com; Jim Salmons, jshay6@verizon.net; Bruce Saylor, bgsberk@comcast.net; Ron Shupard, ShuSmoke@aol.com		

Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc. • P.O. Box 26202, Collegeville, PA 19426-0202 • 610-454-0477 • www.palivesteamers.org

# PLS Calendar of Events - 2016

## January

Saturday Jan. 23 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

## February

Saturday Feb. 20 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

## March

Saturday Mar. 19 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
**Annual Elections**

## April

Saturday Apr. 16 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
**Spring Clean-up in AM**  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday Apr. 24 Run Day - Members & Guests -  
**Boiler Testing**  
(Rain Date May 1)

## May

Saturday May 21 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Friday May 27 **Spring Meet** - Members & Guests

Saturday May 28 **Spring Meet** - Members & Guests

Sunday May 29 **Spring Meet** - Members & Guests

## June

Saturday Jun. 18 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday Jun. 26 Run Day - Members & Guests  
(Rain Date July 3)

## July

Saturday Jul. 16 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Saturday Jul. 16 **Annual PLS Picnic - 2:00 PM**  
(following the Membership Meeting)  
(PLS provided food and train rides will  
be available from 2 PM until 4 PM)  
(Picnic Rain Date Sunday July 17)

Sunday Jul. 24 Run Day – Members & Guests  
(Rain Date July 31)

## August

Saturday Aug. 20 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday Aug. 28 Run Day - Members & Guests  
(No Rain Date )

## September

Friday, Sept. 2 **Fall Meet** - Members & Guests

Saturday Sept. 3 **Fall Meet** - Members & Guests

Sunday Sept. 4 **Fall Meet** - Members & Guests

Saturday Sept. 17 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday Sept. 25 Run Day - Members & Guests  
(Rain Date October 2)

## October

Saturday Oct. 15 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
**Fall Clean-up in AM**  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday Oct. 23 Run Day - Members & Guests  
(Rain Date October 30)

## November

Saturday Nov. 19 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Friday Nov. 25 Turkey Trot Run – Gauge 1 only -  
(Rides not available)

## December

Saturday Dec. 17 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

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**Note:** Rides may not be available at afternoon/evening run days following membership meetings due to possible limited participation by equipment owners. All members and their guests are welcome to attend with the understanding that rides are not guaranteed at these events.



# THE NEWTOWN SQUARE BRANCH

## Echoes of a lost era

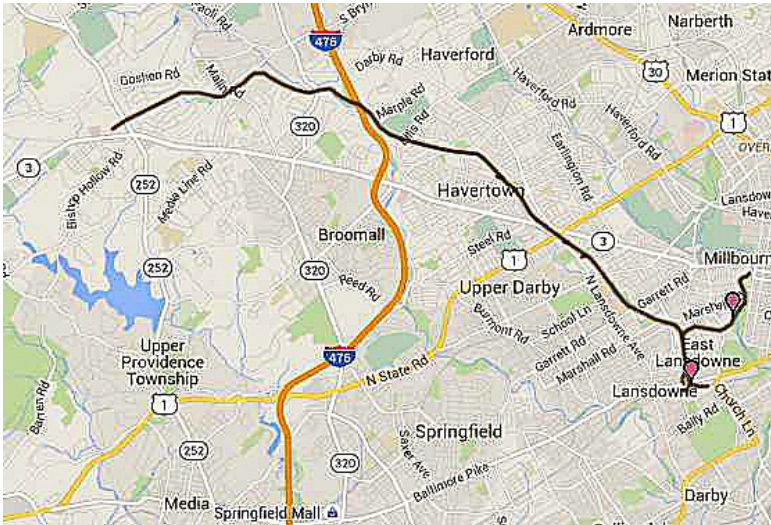
Bob Thomas

Growth of small communities throughout our nation was stimulated in the later decades of the nineteenth century by phenomenal expansion of short line connecting railroads and branches of large regional rail networks. Those secondary railroads hauled innumerable varieties of commodities and manufactured products directly to and from businesses serving ever-growing local communities. Citizens could at last benefit from improved mail and express freight service, availability of the affordable new products of a developing nation, and improved nutrition from a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables grown hundreds of miles away, but never before accessible to residents of remote small towns. Branch lines were – or initially seemed to be – so profitable they were built at a frenzied pace, in many instances with competing railroads laying near-parallel tracks, each terminating with its own separate stations and support facilities.

Over-building of branch lines finally became so prevalent that many communities could not economically support two separate rail services, or even one in some instances. The result was rate wars, takeover of distressed branches by large railroad networks, and bankruptcies. Those circumstances reached a climax in the Panic of 1893, when the New York Central, Union Pacific, and other large railroads, consolidated and absorbed many small lines and failed railroads into their systems at bargain prices under the manipulation of powerful financiers.

Tortured proposals for construction of a railroad to Newtown Square began in 1872 with formation of the Philadelphia and Chester County Railroad. That ill-fated venture was unable to even begin construction due to inability to attract buyers for its stocks and bonds. The company went into foreclosure where it remained until re-organized in 1877, but even so, it did not actually emerge as a legitimate business entity for another eight years as the Phila-

delphia Midland Rail Road Company. By 1890 that company had spent almost a half-million dollars without completing the line so, in still one more iteration, the Philadelphia and Delaware County Railroad took over, finally completing the 9.2 mile branch from Fernwood Station<sup>1</sup> to Newtown Square in 1895 – 23 years after the initial proposal!



delphia Midland Rail Road Company. By 1890 that company had spent almost a half-million dollars without completing the line so, in still one more iteration, the Philadelphia and Delaware County Railroad took over, finally completing the 9.2 mile branch from Fernwood Station<sup>1</sup> to Newtown Square in 1895 – 23 years after the initial proposal!

Passenger service began in 1894 with seven round trips during the week, and five on Sundays. Motive power initially was PRR 4-4-0s with period accents: large kerosene headlight, ornate steam dome, and a tall, capped stack. The route originally included ten stops but Llanerch and Newtown Square had the only station buildings; the rest were flag stops. It took only 30 minutes to travel from Fernwood to Newtown Square and just 46 minutes all the way from Broad Street Station. Try doing that today!

Passenger patronage on the railroad plunged after the Philadelphia and West Chester Traction Company (later, *Red Arrow Lines*) built a trolley line from Llanerch to Newtown Square next to West Chester Pike. By 1905 the P&DCRR had reduced passenger service to one train daily, and then discontinued it completely in 1908. All of that did not occur without considerable strife between the railroad and trolley company, however. The two lines crossed near West Chester Pike in Llanerch so the Pennsy (final owner of the Newtown Square Branch) got the bright idea of parking a locomotive right on the crossing to block passage of the trolleys.

Scuffles ensued until the issue became so inflamed the traction company took the PRR to court, where it won an order that prohibited further interference with the trolleys by the railroad.

Even without passenger revenue, so many businesses were established along the railroad it was able to pay for itself with

freight service alone. There were over forty turnouts on the 9.2-mile branch. A few were for passing sidings and access to storage yards; the rest accommodated the specific needs of nearly thirty lineside businesses and ten public delivery

facilities distributed along the railroad. In addition to those services, the Cardington Branch<sup>2</sup> diverged just beyond Fernwood. The variety of local businesses that depended on the Newtown Square branch is best illustrated by their company names:

- Lansdowne Ice & Coal Co.
- Abrasive Products Co.
- John McClatchey [builder/developer]
- Gulf Refining Co.
- Upper Darby Township
- Philadelphia Suburban Transportation
- Llanerch Lumber Co.
- Atlantic Refining Co.
- Pennsylvania Synthetic Gas & Chemical
- Brown & Bruno [junk yard]
- Soapstone Produce Co.
- Philadelphia Chewing Gum Corp.
- National [wood] Preservers
- Foxcroft Quarry
- Horse Corral [Newtown Square]

(continued on page 5)

As the list indicates, there was wide scope for most types of rolling stock of the day which was normally shifted in and out of sidings by a hefty PRR H9 Consolidation. Hoppers, reefers, tank cars, gondolas, flats, and plenty of box cars were all required to handle raw and finished products that line-side businesses either used or supplied. In early days of the branch there was a horse corral at Newtown Square, often served by railroad horse cars. In later years the list of rolling stock expanded to include covered and center-flow hoppers and covered gondolas as they became available. An N6b wood-sheathed cabin car often completed the consist. Trains that handled merchandise on the branch were, in every sense, “peddler freights” with the locomotive positioned on either end or even in the middle of the train.

The railroad ordinarily maintained a low public profile while going about its routine operations until May 9, 1962, when a tragic event brought it unfavorable notoriety. A gondola had been picked up near the beginning line and added to an existing small consist without a brake test. At Llanerch the gondola was dropped on the main while the rest of the train headed off for routine local shifting. The crew was horrified when the unattended gon starting rolling down the one percent grade that existed all the way to yards at Pembroke. They attempted to stop the runaway by jamming sticks and planks under the wheels but it kept rolling.

A brakeman ran alongside the car and climbed aboard, but when he got to the brake wheel, it turned freely with no effect! The best he could do was shout out at unattended grade crossings to warn everyone not to cross in front of the now speeding gondola. Speed of the car had risen to more than 60 m.p.h. as it approached busy Garret Road but crossing lights there, timed for 15 m.p.h. trains, did not begin flashing soon enough for adequate warning. A sixteen year-old girl walking along Garret Road apparently did not notice the fast-moving car, nor could she hear shouts from the brakeman because just at that time a Media/Sharon Hill trolley car was rumbling across the steel trestle above the railroad. The gondola struck and killed the

girl and continued onward until it eventually derailed at Pembroke.

The railroad had strong appeal for young boys while I was growing up in the late 'thirties. Kids watched in awe as the crew, almost without saying a word, could adroitly maneuver a hopper car out from the center of a train to the head end and then shove it up the incline of a coal dock. We could watch, but crews were not friendly and were seldom known to invite a youngster up into the cab. Even so, a boy could learn a lot about steam locomotives by paying attention to the sound of the blower and watching the stack, listening to the injector start, or observing the sights and sounds of the air compressor and the slowly-rotating handle on its lubricator. We didn't know Walschaerts from Stephenson, but we could tell which direction the engine was going in next by the position of the reach rod. It was also a great place to walk on a Saturday afternoon. Without going into details, on one of our jaunts approaching the Garret Road grade crossing, we learned it takes a *really* low resistance between rails to actuate crossing signals – a piece of galvanized cable held down from rail-to-rail simply won't do it! By the early 'fifties H9 steam locomotives were gradually supplanted by Baldwin “Box-on-Wheels” Diesel switchers so there wasn't much point in hanging around the branch after that.

Lineside freight business on branch lines began to decline as the U.S. economy changed with increasing dependence on trucks for merchandise delivery. Freight service was truncated at Eagle Road in Havertown in 1963. The line was abandoned by Conrail in 1981 and the tracks and bridges were removed within four years. Some of the right-of-way has been converted to hiking/biking trails while parts of other sections have been “informally occupied” by adjacent businesses and residences. A preservation society, originally located at the Newtown Square terminus, has been moved to a park-like setting at Drexel Lodge. Thus, like so many formerly thriving branch lines, the one to Newtown Square now exists only in publications and in memories of those for-

tunate enough to have enjoyed it while it was there.

## References

<sup>1</sup> The Fernwood Station (M.P. 5.5) in Yeadon is one of the first stations, after 49<sup>th</sup> Street, on the former PRR Octoraro Branch to Port Deposit.

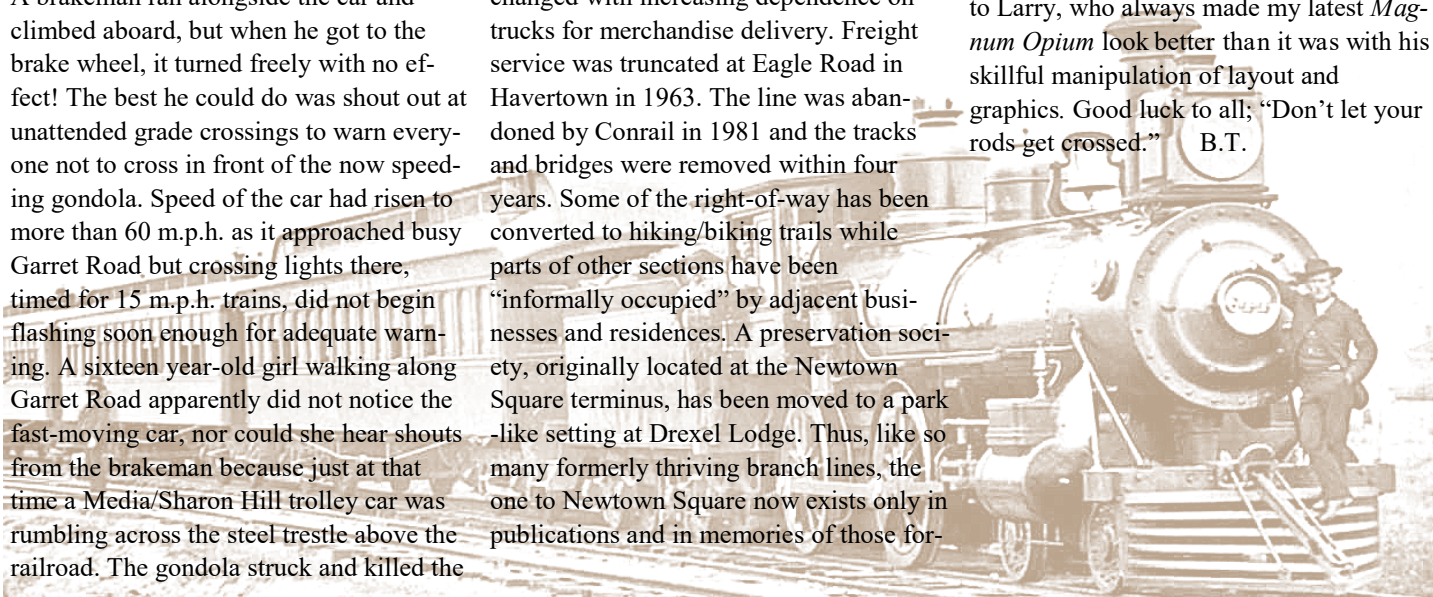
<sup>2</sup> The Cardington Branch was built in 1900 to provide freight service to Cardington Mills, a cotton mill on Cobbs Creek at the western edge of Philadelphia. The track diverged from the Newtown Square branch near its beginning at Pembroke Yards, continued close to the west bank of Cobbs Creek to Cardington, then onward under Market Street and the Market/Frankford El to an interchange with the Philadelphia and Western at 69<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Principal Reference

The bulk of information for this article was derived from *The Newtown Square Branch*, a special publication of the PRRT&HS Philadelphia Chapter, reprinted from Vol.7, Nos. 2 and 4, 1991/92.

## Author's Note

This will be my final article for *The PLS Gazette*. Although I “retired” a couple of years ago, it seemed natural to help Larry Moss with a few page-fillers after he took over as editor. Since then age has crept up on me with some unwanted infirmities that make it increasingly difficult to write new material. It's time to bow out but in doing so I want to express my deep appreciation to Larry, who always made my latest *Magnum Opium* look better than it was with his skillful manipulation of layout and graphics. Good luck to all; “Don't let your rods get crossed.” B.T.





# My Senior Project

Joseph Gotlewski



I have been a member at Pennsylvania Live Steamers since I was 4 years old. My family lives close by. We often wondered why there was a caboose in the woods along Gravel Pike. One day, my nursery school, Open Windows, took our class on a field trip to PLS. We were amazed to see what was here. I was already very interested in trains and knew immediately that I wanted to join PLS. I became an associate member and have now been coming here for 14 years. My high school, Perkiomen Valley, is located across the street from the club. Because students are required to do a senior project in order to graduate, I chose to do mine on the importance of railroads and the role of PLS in preserving that part of history and the associated technology.

As part of the project, I participated in a variety of tasks at the club, some of which were relatively new to me. Walt Mensch provided references for much of the club's history. He also had me operating power tools and mixing cement for the modifications to the walkway and fence by the Steaming Bay. I assisted in track repair and construction with Bruce Saylor, John Bortz and Bob Hillenbrand. Mike McDevitt introduced me to machine work and engine repair. He also included me as an assistant engineer for some of his off-site community events. Hank Reilly recruited me to serve as a train conductor. Jay Shuppard and his family included me in the grilling for the Spring Meet which I really enjoyed since I also have an interest in cooking. Lee Nonemacher has always been especially supportive. He has frequently provided me with guidance along the way as I acquired equipment for both the 1 inch and 1 ½ inch scales. During some of the work days, he educated me about switch design and fabrication. As the Club Secretary, he presided over my

'mock interview' which was a significant part of the project requirements. This was conducted as if I were applying for a job at PLS. A really big moment for me was when he supervised my qualification run on the club engine along with Frank Webb and Ron Henderson. Someday I hope to qualify to operate steam as well.

The submission of my project included a written summary and a presentation to a group of teachers. Because I completed my project early, I was able to pick the panel of teachers who would receive and grade my presentation. I am involved in both Orchestra and Choir so I chose those instructors along with the Band Director as my audience. For the presentation I included photos and videos taken at PLS to include a video of a complete ride on Pat Murphy's New York Central Hudson. My teachers were also surprised to learn about what was across the road from the school. Since then one of them has visited PLS as my guest on a Run Day. I have invited the others to come in the spring before I graduate. Now they also know a little about what I do away from school. I concluded my report by highlighting the important service PLS provides in preserving our railroading history, including the related technical and engineering knowledge required to operate locomotives and a railway. I am happy to report that I fulfilled all of the requirements to pass.

This experience has increased my knowledge of the club and how it operates. I hope to continue learning more over time. Eventually I would like to be able to assist newer members in a similar way. I would like to thank all those who assisted me in any way including Kathy Parris and those not mentioned by name.



Pictured above is my first locomotive. It is an electric powered Diesel road switcher. I acquired it from the family of Frank Willis in 2011. While recovering from back surgery in 2014 I repainted and detailed it in a Coca Cola scheme as this is my favorite beverage.



Near the end of my project I purchased a gas powered switcher shown above for the 1 ½ inch gauge. I am currently building a Gondola to serve as a riding car for this locomotive.

## Castings for Sale

Fair Weather Foundry in Kent, Ohio is offering trackside accessory items for sale in raw or finished form

[www.FairWeatherFoundry.com](http://www.FairWeatherFoundry.com)



## 2016 PLS Membership Renewals Now Due

PLS renewal notices have been sent and are due by the end of December in order for you membership to remain current. Please be sure to complete both sides of the renewal form and return it with your payment in the envelope provided. Membership Cards will be sent in early February to all those who renew. If you have not received your renewal notice, please

## Donation Acknowledgements

PLS wishes to thank the following members for donations received during October and November: Matt Haines, Paul Rice, John Dinan, Mayland Crosson, the Estate of Win Becker and the Time Bandits Car Club.



## 2015 Turkey Trot

Well, Pilgrim, this celebration of Turkey Trot was set forth in the year MCMXCVI to give thanks for those who established the PLS colony more than a half century ago. Those wise and venturesome individuals, who blazed trails and laid tracks, made it possible for future generations to enjoy the wonders of live steam. Many come from far and wide to speak on the legendary beginnings of the trails in building, but the foundations of the PLS Gauge One settlement were set forth in no small part by the actions of two brothers. Paul and Harry Quirk's fascination spread the gospel of steam. Over the years the Quirk's and their track traveled from local events in greater Philadelphia, including the Franklin Institute, along with a trip to Washington D.C. one hot summer. Their zeal to see gauge 1 live steam in the hearts of hobbyists pressed on as they setup their portable track at a variety of locations such as Kinzers and Lebanon, PA.

On a faithful day at Kinzers, Harry and Paul found a voice of another, George Hoopes, offering to them hope to build upon. George made inroads to the PLS settlement that allowed Paul and Harry to visit their establishment on special occasions (Labor Day and Memorial Day). During the early years of the gauge one running on the Quirk's portable layout, another great champion of steam, Walt Mensch put forth the support for a permanent home for these pioneers of gauge one live steam. The members of the PLS set-

tlement welcomed the addition of a gauge one rails allowing a brick and mortar structure to be erected. Many helped, with over two dozen members toiling away to transform the grassed over infield to incorporate the beautiful structure enjoyed by all today. The building of the gauge one steam arena was no easy task. From the digging four feet down, the moving of many obstacles along with Mother Nature's impact on the progress would have easily thwarted a less dedicated group.

Of those there at this recent annual event; Paul, Harry and Murray Wilson carried with them the memories of the effort necessary for such wonderful moments in the gauge one hobby over the years. These three pilgrims helped to build the foundation and set forth one of the earliest established gauge one communities in the hobby.

Despite the many years of wet, cold, ice, snow and other weather impediments during Turkey Trot, this year's gathering had a record 24 attendees. The weather was fantastic and many different locomotives were operated. Among the steam locomotives fired up were models from US, UK: Great Northern S2 (4-8-4), the colorful Ft. Wilderness, the regional PRR G5s, the famous Casey Jones, and the enduring Aikenback Central Mikado along with a wide variety of others. The tradition, it seems, will be carried forth by future family members and new enthusiasts. This was evident by the four generations of Quirks involved with the steam up this year. Also, the increased number of those present with a priority given to gauge one live steam despite the holiday weekend and "Black Friday!"

lement welcomed the addition of a gauge one rails allowing a brick and mortar structure to be erected. Many helped, with over two dozen members toiling away to transform

The traditions of Turkey Trot normally there would be a gathering for lunch and a movie at the main building. This year the gathering was a group photo and watching locomotives running outside in the excellent weather conditions. What a day it was: no crowded malls, no traffic jams, no hustle and bustle for lunch reservation...just the fun of running our trains with friends. Such are the moments one can have from a train journey!

Could be that we all sense that the hobby offers something unique. Might it be that all there had a thankful thought and the feeling that life is like a train ride. As such I offer each of you reading this a reflective thought on life's train ride:

I like trains

I like their rhythm

and I like the freedom

of being suspended

between two places all

anxieties of purpose

taken care of:

for the moment. I know

where I am going.

From *Stasiland*

by Anna Funder

Like the journeys of our forefathers; be it by foot, boat, train, plane or car there was a purpose through the journey that gave meaning in their lives. Therefore, we gathered on a particular Friday in November to once again...run our trains.

*Ryan Bednarik*







# The PLS GAZETTE

P.O. Box 26202

Collegeville, PA 19426-0202

## FIRST CLASS



**Great Northern S2 (4-8-4) steams down the mainline at annual Turkey Trot**

Story on page 7