

# The Anthracite EXTRA



Issue 110

Anthracite Railroads Historical Society, Inc.

September 2020

## President's Message

By John M. Gabriel

Welcome to the September issue of *the Anthracite Extra*, I hope you and your families are in good health during this extended period of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also been a summer full of challenges from Mother Nature, with tropical systems, power outages, and most recently fires throughout the West. Nonetheless, ARHS has endured these challenges and continues to grow and thrive. **The Board of Directors has been using video teleconferencing to conduct monthly business meetings and we have decided to use this format in resuming the monthly membership meetings - with the first planned for October 9, 2020. While this represents a major change for ARHS, it provides an opportunity for all members to participate in the monthly event.**

In this Extra you will also find the next installment of information on how to properly label your railroad images and create basic documentation for the care of your collection after you pass from the land of the living. While this may be an uncomfortable topic, it is important to ensure your life's work is cared for in the future. ARHS has been the benefactor of numerous members' collections over the past five years and we are acting as a responsible custodian. Our strategy is to retain all Anthracite railroad related materials, while contacting other historical societies to inquire if

they have proper means to accept and use non-Anthracite railroad items. Bob Wise is leading the deaccession work. He has made contact with numerous historical societies to arrange for reciprocal trades of materials.

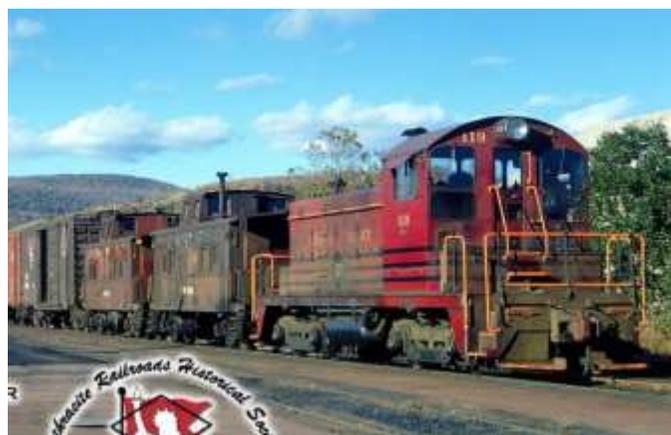


Photo by Dave Augsburg

Charles Liggett is managing our modeling projects (with help from members) to improve existing offerings and provide ideas for future projects. The Board recognizes Rapido Trains for their generous donation to ARHS in appreciation for the joint venture to produce the Bright Red LV RS-11s.

We also recognize long-time member Tom Posatko who will be retiring from the Board during 2020. ARHS appreciates his many contributions to the society over the last three decades and look forward to his continued involvement.



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In succession, Charles Liggett has volunteered to take on the role of merchandise order fulfillment.

I encourage any member with a desire to volunteer to contact us. Over the last two years, ARHS has become a rejuvenated organization with new volunteers augmenting our dedicated roster of Board members and committee chairs – and there is much more to accomplish in the years ahead with your help.

In closing, until we meet in Zoom for the October membership meeting, take care, stay safe and in good health.

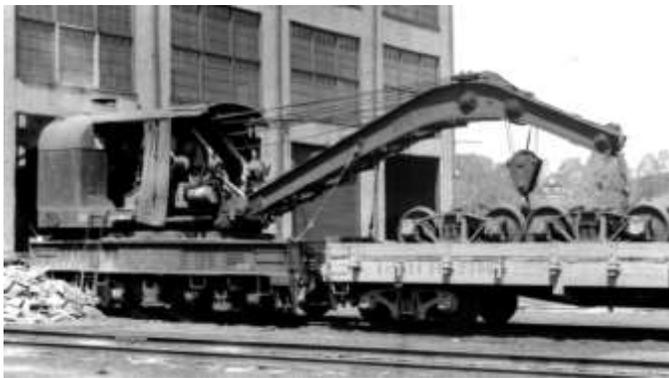


Photo from John LaRue collection

## Monthly Meetings Will Resume in October – Available to Members Via the Internet

In light of the continued precautions associated with COVID-19, the ARHS Board has decided to utilize video conferencing technology (Zoom) to resume monthly membership meetings. **We will conduct a trial run with this format on Friday, October 9, 2020.** The session will feature a brief business update and entertainment from **Tom Nemeth presenting on the Lehigh & Hudson River Railroad.**

You can participate from a computer, a smart phone, or a combination. See the “Zoom Info” below for details.

Future meetings will be on November 13 (Kermit Geary, Jr., presenting on the New Jersey Zinc Co.)

and December 11 (Rich Jahn, topic TBD.) Topic will be announced.

## What Happens to Your Railroad Collection in the Future?

By Tom Posatko and John Gabriel

We have invested considerable time and resources enjoying this great hobby, whether taking railroad pictures, building a model layout, or amassing books and memorabilia. As the years pass, it is important to address what will happen to our collections. We all have stories about railroad items that were disposed in the trash by unknowing wives, children, relatives, or left to gather dust and mold in the attic or garage. We certainly don't want this to happen to our collections, but we often postpone making a plan to “some other day” and move onto reading the next issue of our favorite railroad magazine, or head trackside to see what is coming through today.

If you already have a succession plan for your railroad belongings that is great – congratulations on your responsible care! However, if you don't have a documented plan, please read on. ARHS is sharing a few key actions to preserve and direct where your life's work will go and be appreciated for generations to come.

### Action Number 1

Write it down. This can be done via computer email, Word or Excel file, or creating a hand-written note documenting what you have and where you wish it to go upon your death. This doesn't have to be complex – we're not suggesting writing a railroad Last Will and Testament, rather a simple list of your collection items and who should inherit it upon your passing. This is the single most important thing you can do – documenting your wishes. Do not make the assumption that if you tell your spouse, children, or railfan buddy what is supposed to happen to your collection this will take care of things. It won't. Memory is a very fickle thing. Even if significant others remember exactly what you said, there is no proof you really did say it and they

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didn't just make it up for their own benefit. Conditions such as this can result in disagreements over who will get ownership for your railroad treasures. Remember, you don't have to describe every item in detail, think about logical groupings (slides, negatives, books, models, etc.) so that a reasonable person can understand your wishes.

#### Action Number 2

Date your email, computer file, paper list, and sign your name at the end. Your signature is proof you created the list. And don't forget the date. By adding the date, you avoid problems if you decide to make future updates to your list. When making changes to your list, put a new date and the old list is no longer valid.

#### Action Number 3

Send the electronic file or make multiple copies of the hand-written list, providing them to trusted individuals. Number one recipient should be your spouse, if you have one; if not, then a family member, relative, or friend that you can trust. If you plan to donate all or a portion of your railroad collection to a non-profit organization, such as ARHS, a museum, or a local historical group, give them a copy as well.

#### Action Number 4

While still able bodied, invest time to organize your collection. This will make it much easier for whoever is going to carry out your wishes to get the materials to the designated parties. The less work you leave for them the more fondly they will remember you.

Important: These recommendations are not intended to be legal advice. If you own a great deal of personal belongings in addition to your railroad collection, you should speak with a lawyer about preparing a Will. Since most people own their biggest assets (homes and bank accounts) jointly with their spouses - those assets will automatically pass on to the spouse at your death. If you have an existing will, documentation of your railroad collection and wishes on who should receive it can

often be accommodated by making a simple attachment to the existing document.

These recommendations are also not meant to be advice on inheritance taxes. If you leave a sizable collection or one with great monetary value, technically the government may be entitled to collect an inheritance tax on it. Exactly what value to put on your hobby items is not an easy question to answer. Your next of kin may need to get an appraiser or auctioneer to look at your collection before they're distributed to determine if there is enough value to require payment of inheritance tax.

In closing, if you are interested in naming ARHS as a party to your collection, please contact either Rich Jahn (Archives Committee) or John Gabriel (President) to discuss options and intentions.

## From the Archives: Get Organized! Part Two

By Bob Wise

In our last installment, we reviewed the benefits of good record keeping for your collection of railroad photographs. Slides that you took in the Seventies, Eighties and Nineties are more meaningful to you and others if you have the ability to recall details about the subject in the photograph.

About three years ago, the ARHS received a call for help from the family members of a rail enthusiast who had passed away. The house of the deceased was no longer occupied and would have to be cleaned out before being sold. The siblings did not have any directions from their brother about what should be done with his accumulation of rail photos and memorabilia, but they were, thankfully, thoughtful enough to know some individual or organization would be able to make use of his materials. Two members of the ARHS made multiple trips to the house, reclaiming bags full of yellow Kodachrome slide boxes that would have been trashed otherwise.

A few of the recovered slides have seen their way into articles for *Flags Diamonds & Statues*.

As you might have anticipated, there was **no information written on the slide mounts** about the scene on the individual slides. This leads to a lot of guessing (and extra work) on the part of an editor who must make some tough decisions about what he or she is looking at. A slide might feature a Lehigh Valley C628 freshly repainted in Cornell Red. An eye-popping photo, yes, but the details are missing. Where was it taken? It might not be obvious. When was it taken? Could a train ID have been added? And if the slide gets put aside while research is going on, another problem could arise. Just who was the photographer?

To be honest, I'm as guilty as anyone on the subject of documentation on slides. I do have the information available for all the photos I've taken since 1968. What was originally in notebooks was transferred in 1998 to an Excel spreadsheet. The slide subject, the date and a train number if applicable are easily available to me. But there is a weak link here. The information is in my spreadsheet but it's NOT on the slides. An editor working with my material who doesn't have access to my spreadsheet is going to have to play the guessing game needlessly, and the especially frustrating part is the information is available, but in a different location.

Take a look at the slides below and decide which one you would rather work with. And pardon me while I get my slides out and start placing vital information on the mounts. Yes, it's work, but it's worthwhile. Especially when I find a subject I'd forgotten I had photographed 45 years ago!



Photo by Bob Wise

## Modeling Report

By Charles Liggett

### Rapido LV RS-11

The society's inventory of HO scale bright Cornell red LV RS-11s by Rapido are selling quickly. We have sold out Nr. 7640.. The models are sound equipped with ESU LokSound decoders for DC/DCC. See our web page for current availability and to order:

<https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/product/lv-rs-11s-by-rapido-ho-scale>

.\$300.00 plus shipping.

### AHRS LV SW-8 Detail Parts

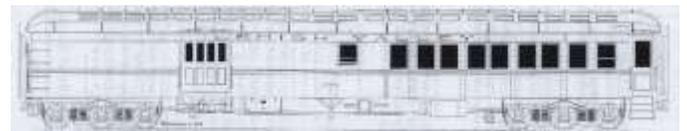
Society member Ed Robinson has updated the instructions for the dynamic brake detail parts set to turn a HO Proto 2000 SW-8 into one of the Lehigh Valley unique "pups". The new address for the kits is:

<https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/product/mdlc-ho-dbkit/>

They are \$22.00 for the package.

### ARHS CNJ Baldwin "Babyface" Diesels

The metal detail parts for the Baldwin DR-4-1500 kit are now in production with our supplier. The society expects to have this kit out in time for the holiday season this year. Look for the announcement in the next *Extra*.



Drawing by Bobb Losse, Sr.

## Other Modeling News

### Lehigh Valley Combine Car Kit in HO

Bethlehem Car Works kit #4730 is for the Valley's combine cars Nrs. 1080-1081. The kit has 3D printed sides on a Branchline car body. The kit is \$59.95. BCW's website is at:

<http://bethlehemcarworks.com/>

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## Future Project Ideas

If you have ideas for future modeling projects, in any scale, contact us through the web site at: <http://www.anthraciterailroads.org/contact-us/>

## New Publications of Interest

**Bloomsburg Branch: History & Operations** by Peter Brill is focused on the history of the Bloomsburg Branch, and its predecessor Lackawanna & Bloomsburg. It covers the construction of branches to Nanticoke, and the industrial traffic sources which were served over the decades. Topics include DL&W's evolving system to handle carload traffic; and locations along the Bloomsburg Branch west of Shickshinny, especially the huge plant of American Car & Foundry at Berwick.

<https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/product/bk-lack-bloomac>

John Pechulis Media has released **Railfanning the Reading Volume 3**. This DVD starts at 12th Street Allentown, PA, and traverses the East Penn Branch to the cross line, proceeding west to Carlisle Junction.

A tour on the Bethlehem branch from Bethlehem to Lansdale, PA, is followed by short scenes on the Catasauqua & Fogelsburg branch, an excursion and rider's view of the Perk local on the Perkiomen branch and finally a tour of the Schuylkill and Lehigh branch in Reading operation. Operation under the WK&S is briefly noted. This DVD is narrated with commentary by Mike Bednar.

<https://www.johnpmedia.com/dvds/railfanning-the-reading-volume-3>

## September 18-20 - Reading Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet VIII – Free and Online

Register now for this exciting modeling event. Presentations will feature L&NE RS-2s, Lehigh Valley coal cars, DODX heavy-duty flat cars, and

railroad wrecking cranes on CNJ, L&HR, and the other anthracite railroads. Of course, there will be an abundance of Reading Company modeling info.

See details and registration form online at:

<http://www.readingrrmm.com>

## Upcoming Train Shows

Due to COVID-19 impacts, many of the regional train shows have been cancelled this Fall.

January 30-31, 2021

Amherst Railway Society, Eastern States Exposition Fairground, 1305 Memorial Av., West Springfield, MA. (This will be our second year.)

<http://railroadhobbyshow.com/>

## Help Wanted - Train Show Volunteers (ARHS Retail Tables)

Attend a train show for free! We really need the help. Volunteers staff sales tables at train shows, inform people about the Society, and help them to purchase models, books, posters, etc. Sale proceeds support ARHS projects and help in keeping dues reasonable. No special skills are needed. Please contact Kermit Geary ([kgjr1554@earthlink.net](mailto:kgjr1554@earthlink.net)) if you are able to help with any of these shows.

## Restoration Report

At this time, the Steamtown shop is closed to volunteers. Our 567C prime mover (acquired in March) is in a gondola there, covered by a tarp.

A timeframe for any future work is unknown at this time.

## Suggestions, Feedback, and New Ideas Wanted

The Society officers and the *Extra* editor are eager for your input and assistance. Please use the contact form or send via USPS to 519, Lansdale, PA 19446.

<https://www.anthraciterailroads.org/contact-us>



Photo by J. J. Young, Jr.

## Save the Date – April 24, 2021 – ARHS Seminar

The society will hold an educational seminar in Binghamton, NY, featuring the Lehigh Valley and DL&W railroads in New York State. Speakers and topics will be announced.

## Zoom Info for October 9 Meeting

Information on how to set up Zoom meetings on your computer or smartphone, and a link to the October meeting, will be available on the ARHS website and Facebook page after September 21.

For members reading this on-line

**If you have railfan friends who are not computer-savvy, we encourage you to help them participate.** About one-third of our members do not have email (or do not share it with the Society) and may not have access to the Internet.

ARHS monthly meetings feature knowledgeable presenters on a diverse array of anthracite railroad topics. Moving our meetings to the Internet creates a great opportunity for members to participate in regardless of where they are located.

**Please help us reach out to the entire membership with this information.**