

DANVILLE FLYER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, INC. NRHS

The *DANVILLE FLYER* is published monthly by the **DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER** of the **NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY** for its members and other interested persons.

The **DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, NRHS**, is a not-for-profit corporation organized to preserve the history of railroading in Eastern Illinois and Western Indiana and operates a museum located in the former Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad depot on East Benton Street in Rossville, Illinois. The museum is open weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day and features many railroad displays plus a large operating HO model railroad.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of railroading. Dues per year are \$17.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$20.00 for NRHS membership. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June, July, August and December) at the Pizza Inn Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX, in Danville, Il. with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

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You are looking west along the former Peoria and Eastern track from Daisy Lane, located on the east side of Danville. CSX is in the process of building a connection from the mainline, to the left of the photo, to the former Conrail line for service to the new coal unloading facility that is under construction. Crews have constructed the roadbed, the turnout is in place ready to be cut in and signals are being installed. Photo 11-30 by Doug Nipper

Coming Events

January 15, 2005

Danville, IL - Chapter Meeting at Pizza Inn, 1:00 PM CDT, meeting at 2:00 PM,

December 18, 2005

Midlothian, IL - South Suburban Model Train Show

January 7 & 8, 2005

Indianapolis, IN - Train Show at the Indiana State Fairgrounds - 10-4 EST, \$7

February 19, 2006

Danville, IL - Monthly Chapter meeting at Pizza Inn.

March 12, 2006

Danville, IL - Monthly Chapter meeting - **note date change**

March 18 & 19, 2006

Urbana, IL - 30th Annual Train Show and Swap Meet, Lincoln Square Mall

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, January 15 at the Pizza Inn. As usual, we meet around 1:00 PM, order from the menu and start the meeting around 1:45 PM. At the December dinner the Chapter signed an agreement with the Vermilion County Museum Society to move records stored at Rossville to the secure facilities at the museum in Danville. In order to protect and preserve the records of the C&EI, and other area railroad, chapter members agreed that the VCM would be the logical place to preserve the records. Sue and Don Richter of VCM have opened their facility to preserve the railroad history we have acquired and have agreed to begin a preservation process. Discussion at this meeting will include setting some dates for record gathering at the museum in preparation of transport to the Vermilion County Museum. We have until December of 2007 to move chosen records but we

need to get as much moved this spring as possible.

Note the model operations set for the rest of this year as well as into 2006. Note the date change on some of the sessions, these were moved to avoid conflict with other activities. Your editor has been working to get this issue out in time for AI's December session so be sure to visit and run the trains at "warp speed". Also note that the March meeting has been moved up one weekend to miss the Urbana Train Show. This show will be the 3rd weekend of March for about the next 5-6 years. We are also moving the April meeting up one weekend to April 9 due to Easter being on the 3rd Sunday.

On December 27 & 28 Bob G. and Rick S. will be working at Rossville on the train layout. They plan to start around 9:00 AM and work until around 2 PM each day, with time out for lunch of course. Additional scenery work is planned for various areas and working two continuous days will allow them to "keep the mess" out before starting cleanup. If you have the days off and would like to join them they would appreciate the help. Some major work needed is checking all cars for coupler height and gauge on the wheels. In addition we would like to start repainting the facia board and this is something that could be done in areas where they are not working.

Remember, if we have over 6 inches of snow we may not be having a meeting or operating session at the museum. Check with some members before heading out in a storm.

The program planned for the January meeting will be one of the chapter library videos.



Operating Sessions

Rossville Museum, CI&E, 1:00 to 3:00 PM

Saturday, January 14, 2006 (Date changed due to conflict)

Saturday, February 4, 2006

Saturday, March 4, 2006

Danville and Western Railroad, 1819 Coventry Dr, Champaign 1:00 to 4:00 PM

Saturday, January 28, 2006 (Date changed due to conflict)

Saturday, February 18, 2006

Saturday, March 25, 2006

Saturday, April 15, 2006

The Club Experience

By Doug Nipper

I've always wanted to put down on paper some observations I've had over the last 25 or so years being a member of various clubs and organizations. All of these are railroad-related groups, of course, and most are concerned with historical preservation. A good majority of them have museums that are open to the public. Only one is an operating museum.

The membership experience in each group has been quite unique. When I joined the Danville Junction Chapter in 1976 at age 14, it was the first club I had ever belonged to. Naturally, I thought all groups would operate in that fashion! But even our

Tracks Ahead

Once again the favorite show of train hobbyists will be on Public Television. Milwaukee Public Television and Kalmbach Publishing are producing another 14 installments of Track Ahead. The new shows will air in January so check your listing for WILL-TV to see when the station will carry them. Some of the shows will carry stories about the Alco PA, the Pioneer Zephyr at the Chicago museum along with various train layouts.

group has changed over the years. For example, from 1976 to about 1982:

- - Meetings were conducted using Robert's Rules of Order
- - Meetings were held on weeknights
- - An annual trip was always made to a rail hotspot

Since I started the list above with meetings, let me expand on that topic first. Our club is the only one I've ever belonged to that has regular monthly meetings for members. Other groups might have monthly or bi-monthly meetings for the Board of Directors and officers. The focused historical societies might have one or two "meets" for members each year. Some groups only have one annual meeting that all members are encouraged to attend.

I think this makes an obvious point about our group: We are more socially oriented than most. By having membership meetings every month, and particularly since we moved it to the weekend and have it at a local restaurant, it encourages all local members to attend. And perhaps this is only possible for groups that do have a large local membership contingent. Those societies that have a membership base spread out over a large area are limited in what they can do. Some focused groups move their meets from one city to another each year, trying to get a varied group that is perhaps based on the geographic lay-

out of the railroad in the society's name.

How does a group get members? Some actively recruit, and almost all at least have a membership application available at their museum facility, or perhaps online as part of their website. But the more relevant question becomes how does a group *retain* members? Those that offer very little in the way of incentives and rewards to participate will see a lot of "churn" as members come and go. You expect some percentage to be armchair-only fans, and that's fine, but the core group has to be large enough to handle the tasks that *must* be done.

This leads to the leadership topic. It is a simple fact that most clubs are run as oligarchies. That is, small groups of people, perhaps even just one person, call the shots regardless of who was elected to an official office. Often this small group consists of the people who originally founded the organization or perhaps the older, "wiser" members if the club has been around a while. If the group is newer, frequently the one person who spearheaded the creation of the club is looked to for all important decisions. The alphas may take charge regardless of age. Egos are sometimes in play, and ultimately the most generous person to the club's coffers might determine what projects have priority.

While most of this organizational structure is logical and natural, the ones who don't evolve and become more inclusive of a larger group of potential leaders will ultimately suffer. The excuse "because we've always done it that way" only holds up for so long. Fresh ideas need to come from all sources, especially outside the "inner circle".

Another thing that can retain members is good information. Even if they're hundreds or thousands of miles distant, a good series of publications throughout the year that keep them informed on the happenings in their club will go a long way in making sure the next dues renewal is paid. So I make this statement quite seriously: *Your club publications can make all the difference in the success of the organization.* We are so fortunate that Rick has the drive to put out the newsletter

every month. Advances in desktop publishing software and printing technologies have made the process much easier than it was even a couple of decades ago. Even so, I can tell you from first-hand experience that getting a newsletter out on a regular schedule can be a real pain.

An organization may do one or two more formal, slicker publication each year. But to keep members current, the newsletter is your workhorse. Depending on how the group is focused, it may contain information solely about the club, museum or whatever. But with a monthly publication like the *Danville Flyer*, you may also include news clips from outside sources. In fact, the *Flyer* is mostly news from Internet sites, e-mail lists and other online sources. The balance Rick achieves with it is quite remarkable, and even people in other areas of the country can appreciate the wide range of articles.

Alternately, the more focused groups will often produce publications that only feature their museum or railroad. This is fine and normal, but creates a challenge for whoever produces your newsletter. With a limited pool of authors to generate articles, the publication has a chance of getting delayed or plain not done depending on the tenacity of the editor to coax members into writing once in a while. If the editor can get into a regular rhythm, and some members will contribute regularly, you can rest assured a good publication will result.

I did a newsletter for another group for seven years, a total of 25 issues. It was an interesting experience, and I learned a lot about desktop publishing and printing in that time. Thankfully, it survives under another editor, and fortunately with slightly more frequency, so its importance was apparent. It underscores my point that a club must communicate with its membership base to keep them interested in supporting the group's endeavours.

Q&A Session with David L. Gunn

For the 25 million passengers who use Amtrak each year, these are uncertain times.

This month, David L. Gunn was fired as president and chief executive officer of the national passenger railroad system after 3 1/2 years of what is broadly viewed as effective leadership.

The dismissal came as the Amtrak board appointed by President Bush took steps toward breaking off the more profitable Northeast Corridor, putting it into its own division and sharing its control and costs with the states.

Amtrak supporters - including many in Congress - warn the breakup likely would set the stage for a shutdown of the national passenger rail system. In Maryland, Amtrak owns and maintains key pieces of track used by thousands of MARC rail commuters every day.

Amtrak Chairman David M. Laney said the railroad's board believed Gunn was not moving ahead energetically with reforms. Gunn, 68, had run commuter rail operations in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington and Toronto.

Q. Do you know who made the actual decision that David Gunn had to go? Was there intervention from outside the board?

A. I really don't know. Personally, I think there was. You have two board members who are really not interested in the company. The chairman said on several occasions that 'I can't protect you much longer.' That tends to mean there's a person. There's no independence on this board. They're taking orders from somebody. I tried to find out but could never get to ground zero of who's pushing this.

Q. You apparently were fired at least in part because you did not agree with the board's decision to set up a separate subsidiary to own Amtrak's Northeast Corridor infrastructure. What were your objections to that plan?

A. It separates the operations from the maintenance side of the business. That's

Operating Sessions

*Danville and Northern
Railroad, 1411 N.
Gilbert St, 1:00 to
whenever*

Saturday, December 17, 2005

Come visit and operate on AlMcCoy's great tinplate layout.

what they did in Britain, and it's been a bloody nightmare.

Q. Do you think the administration is interested in continuing Amtrak service in some form?

A. They have proposed zeroing the budget, bankruptcy and liquidation, and they were deadly serious about that. There was the [notion] that bankruptcy would be a cleansing rite. [In the airlines] the company continues to exist. In a railroad, you have a negative cash flow and the company will cease to exist.

Q. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta has been publicly critical of Amtrak. How would you characterize your interaction with him?

A. I met with the secretary in June. I asked him, if I do all these reforms, do I get anything. And the answer was dead silence.

Q. What was the state of Amtrak as of the time you were fired?

A. We came out of the year with cash in the bank, and we had growing ridership. We did way better than budget.

Q. One of the criticisms of Amtrak is that its payroll is bloated as a result of expensive union contracts. How would you assess the corporation's labor relations?

A. The union guys said, 'We really hate you but don't leave. [They knew that] I wanted to end up with a functioning railroad. The work force generally knows something's got to change. The problem

is, the unskilled people are overpaid and the skilled people are underpaid. Electricians should get paid a hell of a lot more than people selling sandwiches on trains. It's a hundred-year-old division of labor. For steam engines, it worked pretty good. What you need to do is rewrite the job descriptions so they fit the modern equipment. The issue is not so much what the employees get paid or the work conditions but keeping this bureaucracy alive at the unions.

Q. Is there any merit to the idea of eliminating long-distance routes that require a heavy subsidy while keeping service going in the Northeast Corridor?

A. The politics of the thing [are that] if you take off the long-distance trains, you don't have any [congressional] support for the Northeast Corridor.

Q. Is there something Congress can do to prevent the Bush administration from carrying out its plans for Amtrak?

A. I would hope that if they start down a road that is dismantling the corporation, that is breaking it up, that is doing radical surgery, that [Congress] would act. What would be an incredible tragedy would be to lose the organization's skill, the structure. If you destroy that, then you will play hell getting it back.

Q. On some level, didn't you expect to be fired by the board in view of your philosophical differences?

A. I figured they would eventually get tired of me, and they did. I didn't know I was going to be fired that morning.

Q. Why didn't you resign earlier?

A. I said, 'I'm not going to do it.' The benefit [of being fired] is that it exposes the issue of what they're trying to do.

Q. Some critics of the administration have contended that what Amtrak characterized as your "release" is illegal because the Amtrak board may have been short of a quorum, and [these critics] have called for your reinstatement. Do you have an opinion on this?

A. I wouldn't want to work for a crowd that doesn't want me. I don't know whether the board is legal or illegal from the global

point of view. That debate is not one I want to get involved in. That use of the word “release” - that really infuriates me. It’s the classic “put the spin on something.”

Q. Have you been fired before?

A. Yes, my first job. I was right then, too.

Q. How do you respond to the allegation that you weren’t moving quickly enough on reforms?

A. We were moving on reform. All the stuff [Laney] talked about is in the mill. It was a situation where, if I’d been able to walk on water, they would have accused me of not being able to swim.

Q. What do you see as the Department of Transportation’s role in Amtrak going forward?

A. They’ve grasped the nettle. It’s theirs now. We can all stand back and watch what a great job they do. They haven’t had a viable plan for Amtrak since I’ve been here. It’s nothing but spin. The thing that’s changed now is that if they screw it up now, they own it.

Q. You’ve been praised for improving operations at Washington’s Metro, the New York subway system and now Amtrak. So what’s the next professional challenge ahead for David Gunn?

A. I don’t know. I’m 68 years old. I like to work, but I just don’t know at this point. But I’m running out of places. I’m going home to Cape Breton [Nova Scotia], and I’ll probably spend the winter there. I’ll wait for the phone to ring. I didn’t ask for this assignment. They called me.

By Michael Dresser, Baltimore Sun reporter, November 20, 2005



A Soldier’s Travel Before Amtrak

Travel by train was fun in the late fifties early sixties while I was attending college. I became a railfan after joining the Purdue Model Railroad Club when some of the members introduced me to the enjoyment of passenger train excursions. My first trip was to the Monon Shops and a train ride to Monon during a Midwest Regeon NMRA meet at Purdue in 1956. After that I sought opportunities to ride passenger trains; scheduled or excursions.

The peacetime draft was in effect during this period and I was on a deferment for the last two years of college. After graduating in June 1961 I continued working full time for a Lafayette, IN manufacturer of safes and insulated vaults. In the fall I moved back to my home in rural Warren County and commuted to Lafayette. Just before Thanksgiving I got a call from the lady at the local draft board that I was next in line to be drafted. She also told me that the Army Recruiter was there if I wanted to talk to him. None of my family was home so I went to Williamsport and enlisted after the recruiter assured me I would get the schooling I wanted. I traveled to Indianapolis, took my physical, and boarded a chartered bus for Fort Leonard Wood, MO November 16, 1961. Taking Basic Training in the middle of the Ozarks in winter wasn’t fun, but I learned that we would get a weeks furlough for Christmas. I also had discovered that there was a regular bus from the post to Newburg where I could board a Frisco train to St. Louis make connections with the Wabash to Attica, IN to get to my home in Warren County. Unfortunately my buddies from Indiana wanted to charter a bus to Indianapolis and needed bodies to make it cheaper so I agreed after a friend from Crawfordsville promised a ride from Terre Haute where the bus stopped enroute.

After I finished Basic Training I got orders to return to Fort Leonard Wood to attend Clerk Typst School for another eight weeks in the Ozarks. I was not allowed to have an automobile on post, but there were a number of rental parking lots just outside the post so I drove my new Corvair back to Missouri. Each week-end I got a pass so I spent some time photographing trains at Newburg, a division point with a yard and two story office-depot, and at Rolla the next town east. While in training the Army told us we would have to take a chartered bus to our next training post so I had to get my car home the previous week-end. I would finally get to ride a train. The westbound Wabash Cannonball No. 1 was not scheduled to stop at Attica without a days notice (Not in the timetable. I had learned this from the Agent before I joined the Army) so I had my dad call Mr. Drew to stop the train for my return. A soldier could get a reduced fare in those days and Mr. Drew complained that I was not in uniform when I boarded the train for St. Louis. The trip on the Frisco to Newburg was very scenic; although, I ran out of daylight. I boarded a bus to the post, and the next week was transferred to Fort Benjamin Harrison at Indianapolis; back where it started and even closer to home. My four weeks there was uneventful as a railfan, but four of us soldiers went to the 500 race track for the tine trials. We got there too late so were allowed to walk through Gasoline Alley just because we were in uniform.

For my perminant duty post I received orders to report to Fort Ord, CA with ten days and milage expenses to get there. A buddy also had orders to report there so I met up with him and his wife at Springfield, MO, and I followed him on the *historic route 66* all the way to Barstow, CA. After we reached Amarallo, TX the Santa Fe tracks were seldom out of sight, and the parade of trains was the highlight of the trip. I didn’t get many pictures though. My buddy and his wife were in a hurry to get to Fort Ord so that they could find housing, but a couple things I remember was snow at Flagstaff; even though it was the end of May, and taking a picture of a 2900 AT&SF 4-8-4 on display at Kingman, AZ. Arriving in California we stayed overnight at Barstow next to the mainline but I do not remember passing a yard or the Historic Santa Fe Depot. I would later enjoy its grandeur from the San Francisco Chief and Amtrak’s Southwest Chief.

Arriving in Salinas, CA, a few miles east of Fort Ord, I observed the SP’s Coast Daylight

stopped after colliding with a car. The train was in those beautiful “Daylight” colors from the Alco PA Locomotives to the rounded end of the observation car. I found Salinas to be an interesting city to railfan as the yard and engine terminal were next to the SP Depot. Fairbanks-Morse switchers were used to switch the local industry as well as a very large produce district. Watsonville Junction, north of Fort Ord, and a division point, was even better than Salinas - gathering “reefers” from the Salinas Valley “Salid Bowl” of lettuce, artichokes and other perishables. This yard was primarily switched by Alco S-6 locomotives, and also dispatched way freights on the Santa Cruz Branch and Monterey Branch which served Fort Ord. Near the roundhouse a retired steam locomotive was on display. The only drawback was that the Coast Line was all Southern Pacific.

I was assigned to the Reception Station at Fort Ord just inside the 10th. Street Gate. The SP Monterey Branch didn’t have much freight business, but the Espee’s Del Monte between San Francisco and Monterey was the oldest name train on the system stopping daily at a commute shack just outside the gate. The SP had an agent in a barracks in the Reception Station area so when Christmas 1962 was near I applied for a furlough and purchased tickets through Chicago to Lafayette. The Del Monte was usually a two car train, a coach and a first-class car that was not really a parlor car pulled by a commute GP-9

By Wade Frasch, the West Coast Wabash connection

Danville Coal Connection

As you will note on the cover photo, the connection off the mainline near Daisy Lane is progressing that will get CSX directly to the former Conrail line. This connection is for the coal loop being constructed in the southeast quadrant of the Conrail(CSX) and Milwaukee (KBSR) crossing. That project is nearing completion with grading and track mostly in place. Word is that the first coal trains are due



The train is No. 126 the Del Monte at Fort Ord eastbound (south) August 1964. The scheduled time at Ord was 6:37, and the train has a stop at the Naval Postgraduate School before its final stop at Monterey. I was standing on the pedestrian overpass over the SP Branch and California Highway 1 to the NCO (soldier’s) Club on the beach. SP always put the train number in the number boards. I sent the photos for you if you decide to print the article. The going away shot isn’t so good, but I wanted you to have it too. Photo by Wade Frasch

before the first of the year, however, recent weather may delay that arrival. The company plans to start dumping some coal prior to hauling to the former Illinois Power Vermilion Station north of Oakwood.

CSX has the switches laid out and track construction underway. Once completed the plan is to abandon the Conrail line from around Griffin Street west across the CSX mainline, several street crossings, and the crossing of Norfolk Southern at Danville Junction. The company expects to receive about 1 train per week at this new facility and trucks will haul the coal to the power plant.

Membership

Once again the NRHS is behind and membership renewals will be with next issue

Trains Hauling Gases Must Slow Down

rains carrying poisonous gases should be required to go slowly through populated areas, say safety officials who investigated a crash that killed nine people when it released chlorine gas on Graniteville, S.C.

Early on the morning of Jan. 6, a Norfolk Southern train veered off the main track onto a spur, rear-ending a parked train whose crew hadn’t returned the hand-operated switch to its original position, the National Transportation Safety Board concluded. The switch would have kept the moving train on the main rail.

“It was unfortunate, careless behavior that left that switch misaligned,” NTSB Acting Chairman Mark Rosenker said.

The derailment punctured a tank car carrying 90 tons of chlorine, and the toxic cloud that escaped killed the train engi-

neer and eight others. Another 250 people were injured and 5,400 were evacuated. It was the worst train wreck involving hazardous materials in 30 years, but not the only fatal one.

On Jan. 18, 2002, a 112-car Canadian Pacific Railway train derailed in Minot, N.D., spewing 146,700 gallons of anhydrous ammonia into the air, killing one person and seriously injuring 11. A June 28 train crash near Macdona, Texas, released chlorine that killed the train's conductor and two women in a nearby house.

The tank car that ruptured in the South Carolina accident was one of the strongest currently in use, and the train was moving at only 42 mph when it crashed.

New standards for sturdier tank cars are in the works, but won't be implemented soon. Congress in July ordered the Federal Railroad Administration to study the vulnerability of railroad tank cars and to set new toughness standards for them. Those standards are required to take effect in 2008, and new tank cars won't go into service for years.

The NTSB recommended that railroads in the meantime should run trains in ways less likely to result in crashes. One of those ways is to slow down in populated areas. Just how slow is up to railroad regulators, said Rosenker.

"There is not one answer that says everyone drops down to 26 mph," Rosenker said, adding that the track, the train and the number of people nearby need to be taken into consideration. The board said another way to reduce the chances of rupture or derailment of a tank car carrying poisonous gases is to position it toward the rear of the train.

The tank car that was punctured and torn in the South Carolina crash was the ninth car of 42 on the train.

Federal Railroad Administration spokesman Steve Kulm said the agency will respond to the NTSB about its recommendations, which it takes seriously.

Since the Graniteville crash, the FRA started work on a regulation governing misaligned switches, Kulm said. The agency also issued an emergency order in

October to improve manual switching procedures, and funded a test of a system that electrically monitors switch positions.

John Murphy, director of the Teamsters Rail Conference, said railroads shouldn't wait for the Federal Railroad Administration to act. "Rail companies must act now to implement changes recommended by the NTSB," Murphy said.

The NTSB made it clear that it views the railroad industry as safe. "What we have is a relatively safe industry that we are trying to make safer," Rosenker said.

The board's other recommendations to the Federal Railroad Administration were:

To require that automatic devices, such as flashing lights, be installed at switches along main railroad tracks that don't have signals. The engineer in the Graniteville crash couldn't brake in time once he saw that the switch was aligned improperly. About 40 percent of railroad tracks in the United States are not signaled.

To require that railroads in non-signalized territory give train crews advance notice of switch positions and to run the trains at speeds slow enough that they can be stopped before they reach a switch that's in the wrong position.

To determine the best way to provide emergency breathing apparatus for crews on trains carrying chemicals that are poisonous if inhaled, and then require railroads to provide those for crews.

Editor: This should make all of the communities on a rail line very happy, the cry for several years has been don't block the crossing and move faster, thus railroads have been looking for ways to increase speed to block crossings less time. Now the government will have trains slow down and thus take longer to go through a community.

Take Vincennes, IN for example, the speed through town is 25 mph and CSX has been looking for ways to close crossings and increase speed. The community would like to see faster movement and less blockage but don't want crossings closed. Thus with the above possible rules it looks like nothing will change in Vincennes.

In non-signalized territory if trains are required to run at speeds that allow them to stop before they reach a misaligned switch, as noted above, that means operating at restricted speed all of the time with stopping ability in half of the distance of the obstruction. Thus most trains would run at 10-mph all the time.

What about the loaded fuel trucks running at 65 mph to 70 mph in Illinois when the limit is 55 mph?

General Notes

Please note the book listed on the last page of this issue. If you like the history of railroading in the Midwest this book is for you. The entire book is a first person recollection of how it was around a station from around 1880 to 1919. You can read a lot of history books about rail travel but these two writers tell it like it was, the way they remembered rail travel. Order yours now and save some dollars, get one for a gift for the holiday.

As we reach the end of another year it is a time to reflect on our lives and how railroading and model railroading have changed. Some of us remember steam, traction, passenger trains and 40-foot freight cars. On the modeling scene we remember the "rubber-band drive" on model engines, brass rail and car kits that looked like the box they came in. The young generation only knows diesels, autoracks, containers and unit trains with Amtrak being the only passenger train they know. Model railroads today are amazing, with the detail of the real thing and digital command that lets you run a train anywhere and even into each other.

As you will note in Doug's article clubs have changed over the year, including ours. We still have the core group, we are getting older and our interests have moved to different fields within the hobby. At the last meeting we discussed field trips again and Allen Cooke has come forward to setup a rail trip this spring. We will let you know more in future issues. The museum is still going strong and we finally are getting the historical material moved to a safe place. The model layout is getting used all year and more detail work will follow.

