



SPARKS AND CINDERS

Our purpose as members of Wisconsin Chapter—National Railway Historical Society is to gather, preserve and disseminate information, both historic and current, pertaining to railroading in Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest.

Since 1950

Visit the Chapter Webpage www.nrhswis.org



That's a Big Boy. Yes UP #4014 Big Boy 4-8-8-4 steamed once again. Here the #4014 is beginning its trip back to Cheyenne with UP #844 and a string of passenger cars. The #4014 was a big part of the 150th Anniversary of the Golden Spike being driven at Promontory Point in Utah.
Photo by Keith Schmidt

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Wisconsin Chapter Meeting Schedule



Friday June 7, 2019 - Soo Line, South Shore and More - Lou Gerard

Friday September 6, 2019 Favorite Slide/Photo Night

Soo Line, South Shore and More by Lou Gerard

Over the years, dozens of accomplished railroad photographers have presented Wisconsin Chapter programs. For our June meeting, we're going to expand our horizons a bit and welcome transportation photographer Lou Gerard. He says "the problem is, I like everything!" - including railroads (and rapid transit), lake boats, and commercial and military aviation. Lou's favorite railroads were Soo Line and Chicago South Shore & South Bend, and they'll figure prominently in his program, along with other railroads, local and not-so-local. "Traction is a very large interest of mine, from streetcars to GGIs," so expect to see plenty of electric railroading, too.

In addition to trains, Lou's been photographing Great Lakes freighters for over 45 years, "especially ships like St. Marys Challenger, which I was fortunate to have made 9 trips on."

All this adds up to a lively and interesting presentation, our last before the summer break. Join us!

Monthly meetings are held in the lower level of the North Shore Congregational Church at 7330 N Santa Monica Dr. in Fox Point. The church is handicap accessible. Refreshments are available for a donation. For more up to date information on meetings and speakers, and also any weather cancellations, check the chapter's webpage at www.nrhwis.org. Doors open by 7:00 pm, so arrive early to socialize. The meeting will start at 7:30pm sharp with introductions and railroad-related news and announcements. Please bring a friend!

If you have a program idea please contact Program Chair Dave Nelson at engine1385@aol.com

Sparks & Cinders is published by and for the members of the Wisconsin Chapter, Inc., National Railway Historical Society monthly except for July and August. The Chapter meets at the North Shore Congregational Church, 7330 N Santa Monica Blvd, Fox Point, Wisconsin, on the first Friday of each month, except May, July and August, at 7:30 p.m. The Wisconsin Chapter is a not-for-profit corporation, affiliated with the National Railway Historical Society and the Wisconsin Historical Society, organized to preserve the history of railroading in Wisconsin and the surrounding area. Additional information is available on the chapter's website, www.nrhwis.org.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of railroading who is also a member of the NRHS. Paying \$20 annually to the Chapter will entitle you receive Sparks & Cinders. Paying the National dues of \$50 to the NRHS will entitle you to membership and subscriptions to the NRHS Bulletin and NRHS News. Full NRHS membership is required to participate in chapter business discussions and to vote in annual chapter elections. All address changes should be sent to Tom Hoffmann, treasurer@nrhwis.org (or via USPS at 1102 Aspen Dr, Waukesha, WI 53188).

Wisconsin Chapter officers are: Mike Yuhas, President (president@nrhwis.org); Keith Schmidt, Vice-President; Tom Marcussen, Secretary; Tom Hoffmann, Treasurer. Directors: Dan Grudzielanek, Ralph McClure, Andrew Roach, Cathy Wegner and Neal Wegner.

Contributions to Sparks & Cinders should be sent to Editor Keith Schmidt at editor@nrhwis.org (or USPS at 3286 S Springfield Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53207) by the 15th of the month to be considered for the following month's publication.

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Sneak Peek at Lou Gerard's Presentation



From the President

The chapter had two significant activities in May: our annual banquet and the tour of Talgo.

On May 5, about 39 chapter members and friends descended on Meyer's restaurant in Greenfield for the annual banquet. Let me again go on the record to sing the praises of Meyer's - the staff was helpful and attentive, and the food was delicious, as always. Several of our members took the opportunity to grab a refreshment in the adjacent bar and watch Maximum Security* win the Kentucky Derby before moving in to our private room. Norman Carlson, the chairman of the board of Metra, Chicago's commuter railroad agency, gave a lively, informative talk about the railroad's operations, challenges, and strategy.

Then two weeks later, Talgo again opened its Milwaukee facility for a tour. There had been several open houses and tours when Talgo was building four Series 8 trainsets, for Oregon and Wisconsin**; ours was the first tour since the facility re-opened. Talgo is now using the former Tower Automotive plant on Milwaukee's north side to rebuild railcars. On our visit, facility manager Gary Young told us about the scope of the work on LA Metro's A650 heavy-rail rebuild program, and the upcoming work on Southern California Metrolink's Bombardier bilevel commuter coaches. To say that Talgo was a gracious host is an understatement. All employees who were working on Saturday morning went out of their way to discuss the work being done and answer questions. Their pride is evident. We thank Talgo for their hospitality!

Our June meeting features Lou Gerard, a Chicago native who has been shooting railroad subjects for decades. His favorite subjects are the Chicago South Shore and South Bend, Soo Line, and lake boats, so expect to see plenty of outstanding images of these and more. It'll be an impressive presentation to wrap up our season.

Then, after a couple months' hiatus, we'll be back in September for our annual "favorite slide night". This year, to encourage greater participation, let's limit our selections to five minutes per member. We'll have a slide projector and the chapter's bright new digital projector so bring what you can! I'm eager to see what our members have been up to, railroad-wise.

Until then, enjoy a wonderful summer and be safe out there!

* which of course was disqualified shortly thereafter.

** the Wisconsin trainsets have never seen service, due to a change in Wisconsin's priorities, and have been in secure storage at Amtrak's Beech Grove facility for about five years.



Old Friend

Story and Photos by Mike Yuhus

Following our tour of the Talgo facility, I offhandedly mentioned to Todd, one of our tour leaders, that I had a small degree of familiarity with the Los Angeles A650 cars, as I'd ridden them and participated in a comprehensive tour of LA Metro's maintenance shops in 2013. In fact, I pulled up my website on my phone and showed him a couple photos. One of the pics was of car 556 on a Purple Line train at Union Station. This particular photo got Todd's attention - "we've got the 556 here!" I asked Todd if he'd take me back out to the floor for a one-on-one photo session with the 556, and he eagerly agreed.



The Extra Board - Upcoming Events

NRHS National Convention

www.nrhs.com

2019 Convention was May 8-11 in Salt Lake City

TMER&THS (Traction and Bus Club)

www.tmer.org

Waterstone Bank

No Meetings until September 2019

WISE Division NMRA

www.wisedivision.org

No Meetings until September 2019

C&NW Historical Society

www.cnwhs.org

National Convention

May 30th - June 2nd 2019

Milwaukee, WI

Soo Line Historical and Technical Society

www.sooline.org

National Convention September 14 2019

Wisconsin Dells, WI

Chapter Annual Banquet May 4, 2019

The Wisconsin Chapter NRHS Annual banquet was held on Saturday May 4, 2019. 37 Members and guests were in attendance at Meyer's Family Restaurant for the event. The evening started with a social hour. At 6pm dinner was served which featured salad, fried chicken, beef tips over noodles, mashed potatoes and ended with an ice cream sundae. Food and service were excellent.

President Mike Yuhas then started the evening with a surprise presentation of the President's Award. The award was presented to Tom Hoffmann for his many years serving as treasurer and holding other positions in the Chapter. Congratulations to Tom.

Mike then introduced the speaker for the evening: Norman Carlson Chairman of the Board of Directors for Chicago's METRA. Norm gave an excellent presentation on the challenges of running a commuter railroad using host railroads (UP and BNSF) and running its own trains on the former Milwaukee lines and Metra Electric lines. Norm also talked about improvements that METRA is attempting to make and community programs that they are involved in like Operation North Pole and suicide prevention. He noted running METRA is similar to running a small city. Norm's presentation was well received by all in attendance.

The evening ended with a usual handing out of door prizes. All in attendance received a door prize. Also one person per table was chosen to take home the table centerpiece which was a geranium plant.

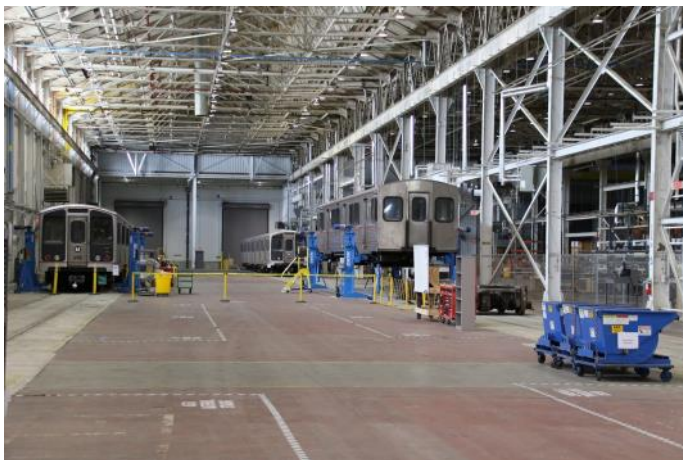
Thank you to Don and Debbie Goerke for their work with the banquet. Also thank you to the staff at Meyer for a job well done.



Tour of Talgo Milwaukee

By Keith Schmidt

On a dreary Saturday May 18th Talgo in Milwaukee graciously hosted 22 members of the Wisconsin Chapter NRHS for a tour of the plant. Currently Talgo is working on maintenance on subway cars from Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. These cars are actually two car sets. Talgo has also recently received a contract to work on Bombardier commuter cars from Metrolink in Los Angeles. Gary Young was our gracious host along with several Talgo employees. Currently there are about 22 employees but that number will likely triple as work ramps up. Below are some photos from the tour by Keith Schmidt.



150th Anniversary of the Golden Spike in the Transcontinental Railroad

On May 10, 1869 a simple telegraph message said it all "DONE". On May 10, 2019 thousands of people were asked to send the same message via social media "#DONE". The celebration of the Golden Spike was something to behold. Ogden UT hosted the first event of the weekend. UP #4014 recently restored Big Boy 4-8-8-4 steam locomotive and UP #844 4-8-4 steam locomotive met nose to nose in Ogden to recreate the scene at Promontory UT 150 years earlier. On Saturday May 10, 2019 over 20,000 people were at Promontory UT National Park for the re-enactment of the Golden Spike ceremony. I had the great honor of being in Ogden for the weekend. There were also 3 railroad related conventions going at the same time. The NRHS had its national convention in Salt Lake City, The UP Historical Society and Locomotive and Railway Preservation Society conventions in Ogden. Below are some photos from various locations and sights from the event and the #4014 doubleheader train. Keith Schmidt



From the Archives

June 1954 - 65 Years Ago

Our "Railway Historical Special" excursion on May 23 was a whopping success — nine coaches and a baggage car pulled by No. 171. We had 537 passengers by official count and a better behaved crowd of this size couldn't be found, according to one of our conductors. (This trip celebrated the centennial of the first Milwaukee-Madison train, May 23, 1854.)...Milwaukee Road 4-6-4s, 4-6-2s, and 2-8-2s were noticed under steam at Rondout, Illinois, recently from the Super Dome of Hawthatha 100. 100, by the way, hauled over 1000 passengers into Milwaukee on May 31.

June 1959 - 60 Years Ago

Barb and Jim Scribbins Out West: Tuesday, April 14. Bouncing Along on the Bug. Our vacation actually began on Monday when we rode Milwaukee 16 to Chicago, then GMO 3, the Abraham Lincoln, to Bloomington, but this was a repeat through uninteresting territory. GMO 9 is one of the few motor trains still operating — moreover, it is the only train we know of, in addition to the Wabash Banner Blue, which regularly carries an open platform observation car, in this case an RPO-coach trailer. At no time were there more than 8-10 passengers. Pulling the nostalgic little train was motor 2506, built by Electro-motive in 1929, since converted to D-E. In starting it sounded like an RDC and had fast pick-up. The train stopped everywhere and it was interesting to note that whenever a switch had to be thrown, the "driver" would pull the train over the switch so the conductor could step off at the switch stand, then would back up so the switch could be moved and would make another stop to pick up the elderly gentleman. Conductor for the short end, Bloomington to Roodhouse, Illinois, was Billy Fenton; from there to Kansas City was Bill O'Hearn. Both of these were pictured in MR's "doodlebug" story (April, 1959, w/photos and plans of the car and trailer); both are 50-year veterans and are well-accustomed to railfans.

June 1964 - 55 Years Ago

Coming excursions include two of interest to area fans. The Milwaukee Road is running a Dells trip, adults \$5.00, children 5-12 half-fare, lv. Milwaukee 9:30 a.m. CDST, ar. Dells 11:30 a.m.; lv. Dells 5:30 p.m., ar. Milwaukee 7:25 p.m. Our members would probably want to visit Sandley's outfit or the Minirama, though the Upper Dells trip may be taken for \$2.60, the Lower for \$1.60, children 5-12 half price. Then on June 21 a Green Bay trip is on. Lv. Milwaukee 10:10 a.m., ar. Green Bay 11:45 a.m.; lv. Green Bay 4:45 p.m., ar. Milwaukee 7:15 p.m., this for \$6.30, children 5-12 at half-fare. Oh yes, LS&I No. 24 will be under steam for that day.

June 1969 - 50 Years Ago

At 6:15 a.m. on July 1, the Circus Parade Limited will pull out of Baraboo with 23 cars and over 60 circus wagons. The train will be diesel-powered as the C&NW feels that 4-6-2 No. 5629, which powered the train last year, is not powerful enough to pull the train with the addition of two cars this year....The Soo Line's entire Chicago-Twin Cities main line is being operated under 40 mph slow orders after a series of derailments since the early part of the year climaxed by three derailments recently near Allenton.

June 1974 - 45 Years Ago

A Chicago plan will spell the end of the famed "L" by 1985; all operations will be replaced by subways. (So much for those plans — ed.)....From a Milwaukee Road press release: "The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company has set June 16, 1974, as the date on which it will terminate all electrified operations and go to fully dieselized service on its Rocky Mountain Division in Montana, Idaho, and Washington, Worthington L. Smith, president of the railroad, announced."

June 1979 - 40 Years Ago

Amtrak No. 7, the Empire Builder, derailed at New Lisbon on April 29 at 5:15 p.m. Engines 248 and 251, a heater car, and nine of the eleven passenger cars derailed but remained upright. One passenger and the engineer received minor injuries. An interesting footnote is that the same train broke in two, between the locomotives, in Wauwatosa and the diesel shop worked on them for at least an hour before the train continued on its journey.

May 1984 - 35 Years Ago

Butler Railroad Days are scheduled for June 23 and 24 with ex-C&NW No. 1385 powering excursions to West Allis and Wisconsin....The 50th Anniversary of the longest, fastest, non-stop rail journey in history — the May 26, 1934, trip of the Zephyr from Denver to the Chicago World's Fair — was commemorated with a medal by the Midwest Railway Historical Society....The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad will go out of existence on June 1. Its successor, the Chicago Pacific Corp., will liquidate the property.

May 1989 - 30 Years Ago

UP, concerned about the future of the C&NW if the hostile takeover bid by Japonica Partners is consummated, has acquired an option to purchase the Iowa Interstate during the next three years....The Strong Funds Great Circus Train will operate on the C&NW from Baraboo to Milwaukee via Madison, Janesville, Arlington Heights, Illinois, Kenosha, and Racine. The trip will operate on July 11 and 12.

June 1994 - 25 Years Ago

Ex-Milwaukee Road No. 261 powered excursions between Burlington and North Fond du Lac on May 14 and 15. Round trips between Green Bay and Neenah are scheduled for June 11 and 12.

June 1999 - 20 Years Ago

Chapter members were looking forward to a rare mileage excursion on the Wisconsin & Southern from North Milwaukee to Oshkosh via Slinger and Horicon and return. The consist will include streamlined coaches and a dome observation car. The train will be powered by the WSOR's E-units. The 1999 edition of the Great Circus Train will operate from Baraboo via Madison, Milton, Janesville, and Waukesha, via WSOR; Waukesha, Oshkosh, Appleton and Green Bay via WC, return to Slinger via WC, Slinger to Milwaukee via WSOR. The trip will leave Baraboo on July 2 and arrive in Milwaukee on July 5th

June 2004 - 15 Years Ago

WSOR President and CEO Bill Gardner was the speaker at the annual Chapter banquet on May 1....Chapter members enjoyed a charter trip on the East Troy Electric Railroad on April 24. The trip covered the entire line between East Troy and Mukwonago plus the Trent Tube spur....CP 2816, the Empress, will visit Milwaukee in June on its inaugural trip in the U.S

June 2009 - 10 Years Ago

Four Metra Trips were being held during summer. These take advantage of the \$5.00 weekend pass. The Board of Directors of the Chapter and the Board of the Butler Library were going to have a meeting to discuss the recent transfer of the Chapter's collection to the Butler Library. Also to be discussed were jointly sponsored "Butler Railroad Nights". The Chapter's Summer Membership picnic is going to be held Saturday July 18th at the Milwaukee Light Engineering Society Park in Jackson, WI. Train rides will be available for all in attendance.

June 2014 - 5 Years Ago

NKP #765 2-8-4 steam locomotive was in Chicago, IL on May 10th for an excursion trip. On June 15th a Union Pacific hopper train derailed at Clement Ave crossing on the southside of Milwaukee. All the cars stayed upright. Hulcher and Maggio were called in to help in clearing the derailment and getting the track back into service. On May 28th the Talgo Wisconsin trainsets departed Milwaukee for storage in Beech Grove. The sets were never put into service in Wisconsin. A pair of Amtrak P42 would power the two combined trainsets. Due to some issues with couplers the departure was delayed and happened after dark.

Sparks & Cinders
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FIRST CLASS

The Final Frame



The "Loneliest Engine in the World" - A Diesel Switcher sits at Promontory Point UT
in case one of the steam engines has a problem. By Keith Schmidt