DARLINGTON STATION UPDATE

Through the generosity of Idlewild and Soak Zone, the Richard King Mellon Foundation, and the Allegheny Foundation, the Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association will be able to save and restore the Darlington Station. The LVRRA plans to restore the building to its 1930’s grandeur and utilize it as a railroad museum and library focused on the Ligonier Valley Rail Road and related industry.

Idlewild Park and Soak Zone, a subsidiary of Kennywood Entertainment, has been most gracious in their offer to sub-divide and grant the property to the LVRRA. The lead monetary grant was awarded by the Richard King Mellon Foundation and will enable the LVRRA to restore the exterior of the building and to improve the property. The Allegheny Foundation grant provides project support including engineering and architectural expenditures. Future grants will be sought to re-create the original waiting room and to develop the balance of the interior.

DARLINGTON STATION - PART 2

The restoration process has begun. Scaffolding is currently in place to re-point the chimney. When that project is completed, the work will begin to replace the slate roof.

DARLINGTON STATION - PART 3

As we plan the renovation of the building, we face a dilemma. We do not know what color to paint the building. All of our photos of the station are in black and white. Nor have we located any mention of color in our research. As a result, we need your help. Do you know the color of the station in the 1930’s, 1940’s or the 1950’s? We are counting on someone with good memory to come forward and tell us what color to use on the siding and the trim. What about the tin on the roofs of the porch and platform. If you have knowledge of the paint scheme, please call Bill at 724-238-5859 or Bob at 724-537-2647.

DARLINGTON STATION COMMENT

This is exciting news! We actually own a piece of property. Moreover, there is funding in place to preserve the building and to improve the property. Phase one of the restoration addresses the exterior of the building and property improvements, such as parking and installing a perimeter fence. Phase two will address the interior. This has been a four-year journey. It has been with your support that we have had the courage and confidence to move forward and preserve this grand vestige of the LVRR. THANK YOU!
PW&S TOUR

Even though it was rainy, windy and cold, twelve brave souls retraced the PW&S roadbed October 28th. We formed our caravan of four vehicles at the ex-Ligonier Station on West Main Street. Following the roadbed as close as possible, we arrived at the site of the Byers-Allen sawmill east of town. One can still see evidence of the logging pool used by the sawmill. It was here that the PW&S first crossed the Loyalhanna. The railroad crossed the creek two more times before its ascent to the Laurel Mountain summit. Sections of the original roadbed are still plainly visible. Today's road joins the PW&S grade near the developed spring in Linn Run State Park.

It was there that we actually rode railroad equipment on the old PW&S roadbed. Linn Run officials led by John Vucina, a.k.a. Ranger One, laid a section of track on the former roadbed to serve as an interpretive display. Despite its short length, Bill McCullough hauled along his replica full-size pump car. With a little bit of finagling and maneuvering, Friends of the LVRR actually rode the rails on the PW&S roadbed. This was the first time since 1916 that there was any railroad action in Linn Run State Park. Another highlight of the tour was John’s railroad exhibit at the Linn Run Park Office.

Other stops included the water station, Zufall and the junction where the PW&S joined the never-completed South Penn Railroad. Hopefully, the next time we conduct this tour, the weather will be more cooperative.

2006 FORT LIGONIER DAYS

The float committee did a great job designing and building our first float, “Yesteryear’s Railroad Memories.” John Vucina, Staci Peipock and Bill McCullough pooled their resources to build it. We are also indebted to Ken Weaver and Bob Hoover. Ken got the trailer in running order and towed the float. Bob recently donated the hand bell used by LVRR Conductor, Denny Piper. The bell announced our presence all along the parade route.

Our “Last Run” display at Zimmerman’s won the third-place ribbon in the community window contest.

MINI-MUSEUM

Come and Visit!
Located at 106 N. St. Clair Street, Ligonier, your mini-museum/office/store is open every Saturday morning, 9 AM to noon.
MODEL RAILROADING

Do you have a hard-to-buy-for person on your Christmas list? Is he or she a Ligonier Valley aficionado? Would that person like a souvenir sporting the Ligonier Valley name? Would you like to support the Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association? You can achieve all of these objectives by buying a commemorative “O” gage model train car from the LVRRA. You can see them in Ligonier at our office, at the Chamber of Commerce and Zimmerman’s and at PostNet in the Latrobe 30 Shopping Center. They are also available on line at www.lvrra.org. If you like, you can order by phone by calling 724-537-2647. We have a caboose, tank car, box car and a set of hoppers currently available. In the near future, we will also have a replica doodlebug, 1152, available for sale.

PS – You can also see our model cars in the Ligonier Valley Library display window.

RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS

The following items have been donated to the LVRRA. Thank you, each of you, for believing in our mission.

Beverly and Sam Vaughan - Penna. R.R.Co. ticket, date-stamped May 25, 1898, Loyalhanna to Derry
Pat Ferry - Set of calipers used by ex-LVRR employee Hamilton at the Ligonier engine house
Adams Memorial Library - West Penn Railways, published by the PA Railway Museum Association
William B. Knapp - PRR Adlake lantern
Latrobe Historical Society - Dinkies, Dams and Sawdust and Stemwinders in the Laurel Highlands, written by Benjamin F. G. Kline Jr.
Bill Burns - Collection of PRR employee passes, train schedules, switch lock keys, trackman's badge, and lodge ribbons inherited from his grandfather and great-grandfather.
Bob Hoover - The comptometer from Walter Dapper's LVRR office (Walter was Bob's grandfather)
Bob Hoover - The typewriter from Bob Hoover Sr.’s LVRR office.
Bob Hoover - Hand bell used by LVRR Conductor Denny Piper
Tim Dapper - LVRR brass engine bell (rescued by his grandfather, Walter Dapper)
Mark Sliwa - Twelve-inch trestle spike found on the PS&W roadbed
Betty Lowden - Railroad lanterns including a PA Systems inspection lamp and a spittoon.
Bruce Shirey - P&LE station mileage log Book
Howard, Ruth and Neal Nicely - Pennsylvania map of railroad lines and distances
Dave Haines - Steam Trains DVD

OUR MISSION

Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association
Organized in 2004 to:

To Preserve the legacy of the LVRR
To Conserve vestiges of the LVRR
To Collect memorabilia of the LVRR
To Educate the public about the history of railroading in Ligonier Valley.
COME ALONG WITH US AND RIDE THE LIGONIER VALLEY RAIL ROAD

Are you or your organization interested in a virtual tour of the LVRR? It is a narrated power-point presentation featuring forty slides of scenes along the railroad. Our most recent presentation at the Adams Memorial Library was well received by the capacity audience. Call one of the officers with any questions.

RESTATED PRICING POLICY

The Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association could not exist without the generous support of the Friends. This support has come in the form of memberships, financial gifts, donations of time, the sharing of knowledge and a high level of enthusiasm for the goals of the LVRR. The LVRR wishes to thank you for the support that has been given and express its gratitude.

We continue to search for ways to enhance the value of your membership in the Friends. Going forward, all Friends of the LVRR, regardless of membership level, will be eligible for a 10% discount on our store items. (Current models and the Doodlebug are excepted.) Future models will be eligible for the discount.

FRIENDS OF THE LVRR

Thank you for your ongoing support. We are approaching 170 members. A list of members is included in this newsletter. If your name should be there or is listed incorrectly, please contact one of the officers.

LVRRRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill McCullough - President
724-238-5859
Jim Aldridge - Vice President
724-688-7405
Bill Potthoff - Secretary
724-532-5564
Bob Stutzman - Treasurer
724-537-2647
Al Pilz - Director
Bill Stablein - Director
Lisa Hays - Director
Ralph Scalise - Director

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

The Smith/Lowden collection is now completely in the possession of the LVRR. It was April 2005 when the Richard King Mellon Foundation awarded a grant to buy this extensive railroad collection including significant Ligonier Valley items. The last item removed was a 400 pound cast-iron division marker which marked the division of responsibility between the PRR and LVRR rights-of-way.

WELCOME ABOARD!

New Friends of the LVRR

John Bialek
Bob Boynton
Mike Burggraf
Richard Camp
Roy Culbert
Peter and Lynda Garrod
Joseph and Mary Ellen Patterson
Fred Potthoff
Merle Ray
Richard Scaife
Mark Sliwa
Joan and Bob Zeiders
The History of the “807” Bell
By
Staci L. Peipock

When the Ligonier Valley Rail Road closed down in 1952, some of the employees decided to “rescue” a few souvenirs. This said, my great-grandfather, Walter L. Dapper was the assistant-manager and controller for the LVRR at that time. One particular bell that caught his attention was soon relocated to the garage behind his house on Church Street. Unfortunately, he did not take the original cradle or yoke that held the bell. When my great-grandfather passed on in 1963, his son Walter T. Dapper lived in Scottsdale, Arizona, and came home for the funeral. He decided to take the bell back home with him.

So begins the cross-country journey of the “807” bell. My great-uncle Walter had told the family that he wanted to display the bell in his yard, so he had another yoke put on the bell. Thru the years, Uncle Walter had moved to Prescott, Arizona and then to Carlsbad, New Mexico, always keeping the “807” bell close at hand.

When Uncle Walter died in 1990, his son Timothy L. Dapper knew that there was a lot of historical value to this bell. So he packed it up and took it home with him to Danville, California. Since then, Tim had crated up the bell and shipped it to his office in Sparks, Nevada.

Almost a year ago, I first called cousin, Tim about returning the bell to its original home in Ligonier Valley. After many phone calls, we were able to locate a trucking company that would ship the 158-pound bell back home. It finally arrived in September. However, the bell did not have its cradle, and we wanted to display it in Zimmerman’s window for Fort Days. Fortunately, Bill McCullough knew a fabricator who could make a reasonable reproduction of the cradle. Although it was close, Bill and I were able to pick up the bell in time for Fort Days festivities. I am proud to say that our “Last Run Window” won this year’s third place prize.

I am looking forward to the time when we will be able to display this well-traveled bell at our museum in the Darlington Station.

Editor’s note - Perhaps this bell has traveled more miles since it retired from railroad service than it logged during its Ligonier Valley days.

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<td>Prescott to Carlsbad, NM</td>
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HAND CAR/PUMP CAR
By
Bill McCullough

The railroad hand-pump section car is a simple track maintenance vehicle built on four flanged railroad wheels and propelled by hand. Rod, gears, and cranks are utilized to enable the car to travel along the rails. These unique vehicles were developed mid-nineteenth century.

A typical car could carry four to six track maintenance workers, who were called a section gang. Their duties included replacing worn or rotted cross ties, tamping stone ballast between the ties, and aligning rail to maintain the proper gauge and elevation. Other tasks included the inspection of the track, rail replacement, vegetation control and track-side equipment maintenance.

My “Ligonier” Hand-Pump Car
By
Bill McCullough

In the spring and summer of 1996, I built a replica of a hand-pump car using drawings made from an original Sheffield model pump car. The wheels and the wheel bearing blocks are from an original pump car.

The wood is all white oak from Tennessee, kiln dried and cut to specifications. The axles were made by a local machine shop and the bearings are exact replacements of the originals. Gears and all mechanical parts were made in local machine shops per original specifications.

The hardest part of this adventure was the actual assembly. I had to use my wife’s side of the garage for the assembly. My side was already full of many railroad related items plus a small sports car. Luckily, it was spring and summer when her car had to sit out. I only heard mild complaining.

In August of 1996, the "Ligonier," as I named my pump car, took its maiden voyage on the railroad tracks in Youngwood, Pennsylvania. Some of the bolts were not tight enough and about a half mile down the tracks, adjustments and bolt tightening had to be done to complete the trip. Since then, it has been on the rails in Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia and Delaware. Its most recent trip was on Pittsburgh, Westmoreland and Somerset rails on Laurel Mountain.