

The Liggie

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PHASE TWO IS BACK ON TRACK AFTER A TEMPORARY DERAILMENT

Thanks to an additional grant awarded in mid-January, work began on the restoration of the interior of the Darlington Station (Phase 2). JM Builders has had a crew working on site ever since.



As with any restoration project, unanticipated glitches occur. In this case, the original 110-year-old floor joists, which are 18 feet long, were supported only by the walls. They sagged in the middle, causing a considerable amount of "bounce" in the floors.

When consulted, Greg Farabaugh, a structural engineer, recommended that the main floor in the original building be reinforced either by

rebuilding the basement walls to include treated sill plates to support additional floor joists or by bolsterring the first floor with posts and beams in the basement.

For economical reasons, the LVRRA board chose the second option in spite of having to change the proposed plan for the utilization of the basement. Because of access to the already existing studs supporting the second floor, it more easily could be reinforced by adding "sister" joists.

The general contractor, JM Builders, after having spent two weeks reinforcing both floors, resumed work on Phase 2 the week of February 25. With the ductwork, wiring, plumbing and insulation completed, all that remains to finish the second floor is the plastering, trim work, painting and carpeting. As additional funds become available, work will continue on the main floor.

Including the extra cost involved with reinforcing the floors, the LVRRA needs \$48,000 to complete Phase Two, the restoration of the building's interior. Donations may be mailed to the LVRRA, PO Box 21, Ligonier, PA 15658.

THE CABOOSE ROLLS IN!

How did a caboose tucked away in Summerhill, Pennsylvania, find its way to Darlington? More astonishing is the fact that the caboose is an actual "sister" to the bobber caboose once owned by the LVRRA. The LVRRA's acquisition of the caboose began as an aside comment that Dick Flock, an advisor of SCORE, made in a meeting with officers of the LVRRA: "You guys know about that caboose in Summerhill, don't you?"



John Costello, a railroad buff and the owner of that caboose, acquired the ex-PRR caboose in 1963 to use as a playhouse for his four children. Through the years, the Costello children and their friends enjoyed climbing over every inch of it. Even after the children grew up and moved away, Costello continued to maintain his relic of a bygone railroading era. Last year, however, when Costello and his wife opted to move to assisted living, one of their concerns was what to do with their children's playhouse.

Since the Costellos' property abutted the Norfolk Southern mainline, the caboose could have been a deal-maker to sell their property. They hoped that someone might want to convert their home into a railroad bed and breakfast. If so, the caboose would be an enhancement. On

the other hand, a potential buyer might see it as an eyesore and a deal-breaker. Unsure about what they wanted to do with the caboose, the Costellos agreed to Flock's suggestion to invite officers of the LVRRA to see the caboose to determine if they had any interest in it. After seeing the caboose and recognizing its similarity to Ligonier's LGV57, the LVRRA expressed a high degree of interest in acquiring the caboose, but expressed regret that there was no money in the budget to buy it. After several months had passed and the Costello property was still unsold, the Costellos donated the caboose to the LVRRA.

The LVRRA's acceptance of the caboose generated a number of issues. From zoning setback variances, to building a section of track, to physically moving the caboose and meeting deadlines to vacate the Costello property, each issue was addressed and resolved. Remaining tasks include re-locating an overhead power line, building a ramp to facilitate entry into the caboose and restoring the interior, etc. As time and funds become available, this newest acquisition will need a large dose of tender loving care to insure its preservation. However, for the time being, LVRRA's priority is the restoration of the station.

*Additional photos of the caboose and its transit to its new home are on the back page of the newsletter.

In addition to the Costello family, others that should be recognized for their support of the caboose project include: Ligonier Construction, Atlas Railroad Construction Co., Laurel Mountain Tree Removal, Art Kromel Surveying, JM Builders, Allegheny Power, Idlewild Park and Ligonier Township officials.

ANNUAL DINNER

The third annual dinner of the LVRRA is scheduled for August 28 at the Pike Run Country Club, which will easily accommodate our large number of members and guests. This century-old gathering place in Jones Mills lies 3.5 miles east of Donegal on PA Route 31. We are hoping to have the Pittsburgh Banjo Club perform during cocktails. Mark the date and plan to attend an enjoyable evening celebrating LVRRA's accomplishments and acquisitions over the past year. Invitations will be posted early July.

2008 GALA

Saturday September 27, 2008, will mark the second annual Gala at the Darlington Station. Tales of last year's event have generated numerous inquiries as to "Why wasn't I invited?" (If you did not receive an invitation last year and wish to attend, please call the office at 724-238-7859 for information.) Reserve the date for this fundraising event and enjoy an evening of music, hors d'oeuvres, drinks and LVRR centered fellowship. It will be exciting to see LVRRA's latest acquisitions and the progress that has been made during the past year in restoring the Darlington Station.

MODEL-TRAIN HOUSE TOUR

A fundraising model-train house tour is in the planning stage for November. Three Friends have already agreed to host visitors and share their extensive layouts. Additional information will be announced in the next newsletter. We are looking for at least three additional hosts, if anyone is interested. The LVRRA is very excited about this upcoming event.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Like the Marines, the LVRRA is looking for a few good people. In this case, however, no weapons are required. Once the station opens later this year, docents will greet visitors and lead them on tours through the station, explaining exhibits, sharing the history of the LVRR and relating anecdotes.

Anyone interesting in volunteering to serve as a guide should contact Staci Peipock at 724-238-2653 or leave a message on the office answering machine at 724-238-7859. Time will be needed to identify, train and schedule willing volunteers before the museum opens. Four Friends have already volunteered, but more are needed. Days of the week, hours and schedules are still a distant consideration.

If you are interested in serving as a docent, the best way to "learn the ropes" is to attend the Saturday morning confabs at the mini-museum/gift shop or as some spouses refer to it, the club house.

It seems that something new is always happening, somebody new is dropping in, or some new donation is arriving. Generally speaking, anyone who enjoys the "olden days" will probably enjoy these Saturday morning "clubhouse" meetings. Drop in some Saturday morning soon and visit with us at 106 N. St. Clair Street in Ligonier.

Interesting websites

www.pennpilot.edu

www.trains.com

VOLUNTEERS PART 2

"Never volunteer," except . . .

How would you like to help assemble HO boxcar models? We need to set up an assembly line to build 100 or more models to sell at the museum. Are you qualified? Even if you have two left thumbs, Bill McCullough believes you are trainable.

We also need people to sort, catalogue and scan the mountain of memorabilia, photographs and artifacts at the museum. To date, the identities of donors have been recorded, and we want to make sure that that link is maintained in perpetuity. Please call 724-238-5859 or 724-537-2647 to volunteer your talents.



GIZMO IDENTIFIED

In the September 2007 *Liggy*, we asked if anyone could identify the tool pictured above. Dennis Custer, former Ligonier resident and current Friend of the LVRR, writes, "A friend who is a railroad surveyor and all around railroad buff believes it to be a reel for winding up a line . . . like a chalk line. The spike is to anchor it in the ground while you walk off with the line. The wing on the reel can be further pushed until it digs into the ground and holds the reel from turning. The spike also serves as a handle while the other hand cranks the line back on the reel when you're done." There you have it, folks.

THE MISSION OF THE LVRRRA Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association Organized in 2004:

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

SHARING THE HISTORY

The LVRRRA is planning to revisit the Booth and Flinn Quarry, located on the south wall of the Loyalhanna Gorge near Longbridge. This quarry was abandoned more than 100 years ago. The streets of Pittsburgh were paved with the Belgian blocks quarried at this site. When the owners found a better grade of limestone on the north wall in the early 20th century, they abandoned the quarry on the south wall. (The current quarry operation on the north wall still supplies asphalt to local contractors.) Even though the original south-wall quarry is slowly being reclaimed by Mother Nature, evidence of the operation and its reliance on the railroad is readily apparent. Thanks to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, this property will forever remain a green space.

Most of this tour will be on foot and represents a moderate challenge due to the incline up to the site. However, the slope of the floor in the quarry is very gentle. Plan to wear waterproof boots and something warm. Join us at the Darlington Station at 1 p.m. on April 26, 2008, to carpool to the quarry, which is about one mile away. Please call the office at 724-238-7859 or 724-238-2653 and leave a message to register.

RAILROAD VALUATION CHARTS

Track charts or valuation charts are drawings of a railroad that record the tracks and features along a right-of-way, including elevations, locations of buildings, and adjoining property owners. Through notated revisions, just like those on an engineered drawing, the charts also record the dates of deletions and additions.

David Hunter, Sr., at one time planned to model the LVRRA. Because of his dream, he secured the original valuation charts when the railroad shut down in 1952. His plan was to incorporate LVRRA features into his model train layout as notated on the charts. Although that dream never materialized, he did safeguard the drawings for several decades. Additionally, when son David inherited them in the '90s, he, too, maintained the "keepsakes" until recently, when he donated these valuable resources to the LVRRA. The LVRRA is honored that Hunter has entrusted these charts to its museum.

These original charts were drawn in 1917 on linen cloths measuring approximately three feet by five feet. The LVRRA right-of-way was divided into 10 sections from Latrobe to Fort Palmer. Each section warranted its own sheet. Even though this collection only includes seven of the original 10, the LVRRA feels quite fortunate to have that much of the original collection.

Through the assistance of a Friend, these seven charts have been scanned, digitized and copied. A printout is available for review at the office on Saturday mornings. The legible detail is remarkable. There are circulated copies

of the missing three charts, but much of the detail cannot be read. (Does anyone know where the other three originals are?)

The seven original charts are safely layered between sheets of Mylar and loosely rolled to preserve them. Ideally, they should be stored flat in a map drawer; however, the LVRRA does not have a five-foot-wide drawer. At a later time, hopefully, the accumulated mold and mildew stains can be removed. Right now, the task at hand is to extract and share the relevant detail and to continue to preserve the originals.

NEW FRIENDS OF THE LVRRA

Earl Barkley
Donald Conte
Don and Nan Ferry
Frances Gamble
Jane Patricia Holman
Charles Houpt
John & Stephanie Kuzmkowski
Jim Murdock
Ed and Marlyn Soisson
John West
Jeffry Williamson

Welcome Aboard!

CALENDAR OF LVRRA EVENTS

April 26 - Quarry Tour
August 28 - Annual Dinner
September 27 - Annual Gala
November - Model-Train House Tour

RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Thanks to all contributors for the following items that have been donated to the LVRRA:

Bruce Shirey

Photographs chronicling the 2007 annual dinner and the Mill Creek Branch tour

Toni Polosky

A railroad ticket punch

Kerry Byers

Locomotive Cyclopedia -- 1941 edition

Anonymous

Enlarged photograph of Engine #807 in Latrobe and original Last Run snapshots

Charles Facemyer

Industrial light fixture

Dorothy and Tom Clark

Original LVRRA letter terminating John Holman's employment effective with the Last Run of the LVRRA (Mr. Holman was Dorothy's grandfather.); her father's (John Holman, Jr.) collection of ten PRR railroad lanterns; her father's model train collection with the names of LVRRA related industries stenciled on rolling stock; and the balance of her father's model train collection

Romayne "Dotsy" Breniser

PRR pocket watch inherited from her mother who worked for the railroad

Doris Jenkins

Pair of original LVRRA Special Excursion tickets

Pat Ferry

July 1946 edition of The Official Guide of the Railways

David G. Hunter, Jr.

Original linen track charts of the LVRRA right-of-way dated June 30, 1917, with revisions noted through August 1952

Bill Sindorf, Jr.

Scan of a 1906 group of people posing at the Darlington Station

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION

In memory of G. William Wilson
By Judi Wilson

HONORARY CONTRIBUTION

In honor of the C. C. Macdonald family
By Richard and Ann Macdonald

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INDUSTRY ALONG THE LVRR

Recently, Dorothy and Tom Clark donated her father's toy train collection to the LVRRA. One portion of that collection included many pieces of rolling stock stenciled with the names of bygone industries that utilized the Ligonier Valley Rail Road. Clark's father, John Holman, Jr., son of retired LVRR employee, John Sr., designed these cars for a window display for Homer McMaster's Ligonier Newstand in the '70s.

The names stenciled on the cars could serve as a Table of Contents to a history book entitled *Industries Serviced by the LVRR*. The names included are:

Ramsey Coal Co.	Diamond No. 1
Marietta	Shenango
Fort Palmer	Seeger
Tosh	St. Clair
Vogel	Peters Paper Mill
Ligonier Brewery	Vulcan Mold
Lesco	Byers Allen
Kingston Brick	Nicely & Sons
Harvey Black	Cons. Ice
Bouquet Whiskey	Booth & Flynn
L. Byers & Son	Crescent Pipe Line

At the present time, a portion of this historical consist is on display. However, in the near future, after some housekeeping, Holman's entire LVRR collection will be exhibited. Please stop in at the museum and check it out any Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon.

LVRRA MERCHANDISE

LVRRA merchandise, including commemorative apparel, model trains, photographs, books, etc., is available Saturday mornings at the office on St. Clair Street in Ligonier. Or if you prefer, visit our website at www.lvrro.org or call 724-537-2647.

Each newsletter will highlight one or two items for sale:

Wilpen DVD

Enjoy a virtual trip back in time to Wilpen, Pennsylvania, in the 1940s. As narrated by the original cameraman, Pete Picadio, the DVD documents sights in this once-thriving coal town. By using what at that time was an experimental roll of color film, Picadio recorded the scenes in realistic color. The DVDs are available at the office Saturday mornings, by phone 724-238-7859 or through the website listed above.

Slate Artwork

Our Friend Lynn Byers has been painting scenes of the restored Darlington Station on slates from the original roof. She has caught up on the backlog of orders and even has a couple slates at the office for sale. Stop at the office on St. Clair Street in Ligonier Saturday mornings to see her original artwork.



Costello caboose clubhouse



A three-way convergence of transportation as the caboose rolls by on the Lincoln Highway past the Compass Inn, built during the stagecoach era



High upon a hill . . .



Atop the original LVRR ROW



Building track



How many conductors does it take to run a railroad? Bill Potthoff, Bill McCullough and Bob Stutzman try to decide while Frank Kovatch of Ligonier Construction does the actual work.



Descending Laurel Mountain