

The Liggie

Published by the Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association for the Friends of the LVRRA.

September 2008

Volume 4 - Issue 3

CHALLENGE GRANT MET

SUCCESS in capital letters! Friends and foundations have more than answered the \$25,000 challenge grant made by the Allegheny Foundation in March. Not only was the challenge matched, it was tripled by August, reaching the grand sum of \$77,000. That coupled with the \$25,000 contributed by the Allegheny Foundation will cover the expense of completing the Darlington Station restoration and will provide additional funding toward the development of the museum, library and office.

Participating organizations include: the Allegheny Foundation, the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, the McFeely-Rogers Foundation, the Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation, the Richard King Mellon Family Foundation, the Regis Synan Family Foundation in conjunction with the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, and the LVRRA Board of Directors and Friends.

The LVRRA and Friends are indebted to all contributors who have made the restoration project a reality. From the anonymous person who donated \$10 at the Summer-in-Ligonier booth to the foundations that have donated thousands of dollars, the LVRRA can never thank its contributors enough for entrusting the LVRRA with the stewardship of this project.

HISTORY PRESERVATION AWARD RECEIVED

As a relative greenhorn, the LVRRA is most humbled to be recognized as a sister organization by the group that sets the standard for historical relevance in Ligonier Valley. Not only has the Ligonier Historical Society (LHS) recognized the existence of the LVRRA and its mission, but also on August 16 presented its Annual Local History Preservation Award to the LVRRA for the restoration of the Darlington Station.



Photo by Rita Giesey

At the annual Muster Day picnic at Compass Inn, Peggy Shepler, president of the LHS, and Jim Koontz, innkeeper, present the LHS preservation award to Bill McCullough and Bob Stutzman, representatives of the LVRRA.

PHASE II WORK RESUMES

With the funding for the project secured, the LVRRA has requested JM Builders, the general contractor, to resume work on the interior restoration. Currently, the second floor is plastered and ready to be painted. When the painting is completed, the replica woodwork and the carpeting will be installed. The first floor has been plumbed and wired for electricity and the security system. Once the "behind the wall" inspection is completed and the insulation and drywall are installed, the interior will begin to take shape.

Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association
106 N. St. Clair Street
PO Box 21
Ligonier, PA 15658

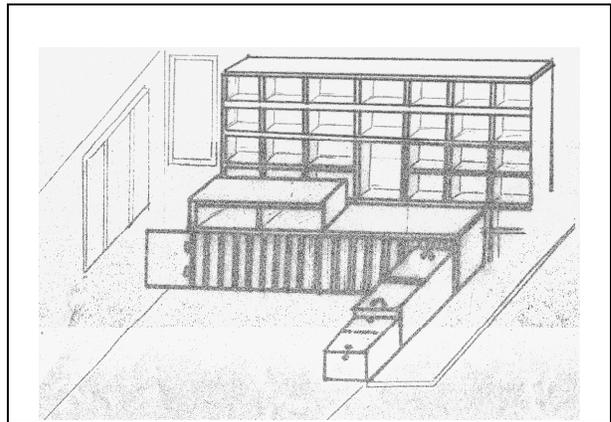
lvrra@verizon.net

724-238-7819
724-238-7859

LVRRA'S FOCUS TURNS TO FURNISHING THE STATION

As the completion of the interior restoration work nears, the LVRRA Board of Directors (BOD) is turning its attention to the furnishings.

The plan is to replicate the original combination lobby and convenience store in the front room of the building. The project involves building a counter and shelving according to descriptions provided by individuals who were in the original station when it was functional.



Sketch of proposed counter and shelving as recalled by Ed Soisson and Ella Betz Wuchina

Some of the shelving will approximate the appearance of a 1940s dry goods store; other shelves will display LVRRA merchandise. The center shelf will house the original ticket dispenser used at the Darlington Station.



Submitted by Bill Potthoff

Photograph of a grocery store that approximates what the Darlington Station may have looked like

The back room on the first floor will house LVRR displays and artifacts and will require few if any furnishings. The first-floor addition will accommodate the library and restrooms. The LVRRA has already acquired the shelving and display cases for the library.

Much of what will be needed to furnish the second-floor office and conference room has been donated by the Latrobe Foundry Machine and Supply Company.

NEW BOARD MEMBER INTRODUCED

Armour Mellon, great-great-grandson of the founder of the Ligonier Valley Rail Road, Judge Thomas A. Mellon, will replace Lisa Hays as a member of the LVRRA Board of Directors. Armour brings to the BOD an inherent desire to preserve the legacy of the Ligonier Valley Rail Road. Welcome aboard!

HAYS NAMED DIRECTOR EMERITUS

The board is proud to announce that Lisa Hays has been named Director Emeritus. As one of the charter directors, Lisa came to the board with considerable knowledge and experience involving non-profit historical agencies. She was instrumental in the development of the LVRRA and gave the organization immediate credibility because of her impeccable reputation. Thank you, Lisa, for all of your contributions.

HOME TOUR WINS OVER NEW SUPPORTERS

On June 21 the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor in conjunction with the Ligonier Chamber of Commerce and the Ligonier Historical Society sponsored the Inside Ligonier Valley Home Tour. Darlington Station was fortunate to be included in the event as an historic work-in-progress.

Over 100 people visited the station and enjoyed viewing the restored architectural features of the building and photograph exhibits as well as the Costello Caboose, which provides a hands-on experience into the world of

railroading. Tour guides proudly answered questions and provided the history of the station.



Team-members mugging for the camera, including Paul Fry, wearing his original souvenir hat sold at the Last Run of the LVRRA

The following volunteers participated in the clean-up parties and/or served as guides for the visitors: Tom Bitner, Frank Dominick, Gladys Light, Sally Walker, Staci Peipock, Paul Fry, Rose Showalter, Bill and Karen McCullough, Bob and Carolyn Stutzman, and Dan Herbert of the LHHC.

A special thanks to Jim Mickinak, who provided guests with soft drinks, and to Brandon Leonatti, who gave permission to the LVRRA staff to park on Idlewild property.

BLOWOUT SALE CONTINUES

All existing model train items are discounted 20%. Let's move out the old inventory, so we can order "new stuff."

LENDING LIBRARY IS OPEN

The LVRRA has added a lending library of 70-plus volumes to the mini-museum/office. The books are both enjoyable and informative. Some books contain interesting photographs of railroading and make for easy reading.

One book in the library is *The Western Maryland Railway Story* by Harold A. Williams (1952). This book includes the history of the Western Maryland Railroad beginning with the charter granted on May 27, 1852, through its first 100 years. Chapter four focuses on the use of the railroad during the Civil War, including transporting President Lincoln to Gettysburg to deliver the Gettysburg Address.

Another available book is the *Illustrated Book of Steam and Rail* by Colin Garratt and Max Wade-Matthews (2002). This book is filled with color photographs. The first 250 pages relate the history of locomotives. The second part of the book is entitled "Great Railway Journeys of the World."

The lending library is located in the mini-museum and open Saturday mornings between 9 a.m. and noon. Books are available to all members of the LVRRA.

CALENDAR OF LVRRA EVENTS

September 27 - Annual Gala

October 10-12 - Fort Days

February 2009 - LHMRC/PW&S

March 2009 - Model-train House Tour

LOGO ADOPTED

The LVRRA has adopted a logo that commemorates the Ligonier Valley Rail Road and its official reporting mark, LGV. The Association of American Railroad (AAR), founded in the '30s, organized the various road names and abbreviations of the nation's railroads to avoid duplicity and confusion. For example, Lehigh Valley, Lycoming Valley and Ligonier Valley (among others) initially used the LVRR abbreviation.

The AAR gave Lycoming Valley Railroad the right to use the LVRR designation. The Ligonier Valley Rail Road was designated LGV. This new logo will remind everyone of Ligonier Valley Rail Road's official reporting mark.



The logo colors, gold letters on a blue field, the same colors as were used on the original cast-iron station signs, are very similar to the colors used on the old Pennsylvania license plates.

Future LVRRA letterheads and apparel will be emblazoned with the logo. Lapel pins and iron-on patches featuring the new logo have already been distributed to Friends attending the annual dinner.

FIELD TRIPS TO CONTINUE

Field trip coordinator Staci Peipock, who has begun contemplating activities for the coming year, is asking for input. The four previous LVRR tours have been educational and are worthy of being repeated, but Staci would like to add some new ones.

Some suggestions include day trips to Strasburg, Washington, Pa., or Romney, W. Va., where one can actually ride the rails. Another suggestion is to visit Horseshoe Curve and the railroad museum in Altoona. There are many possible day-long excursions and carpooling would lessen the expense and add to the enjoyment.

Give Staci a call at 724-238-2653 and lobby for your preference. One local trip is guaranteed this coming winter. The Somerset-based Laurel Highlands Model Railroad Club has modeled the Pittsburgh, Westmoreland and Somerset Railroad (PW&S) in HO scale. It has done a superb job in detailing the railroad that connected Ligonier to Somerset in the early 1900s. This field trip will be scheduled in February or March 2009.

SUMMER IN LIGONIER CONTINUES TO BE A SUCCESS

The Ligonier Chamber of Commerce invited the LVRR to again participate in the 2008 Summer-In-Ligonier festivities. Volunteers greeted visitors and distributed complimentary copies of the June *Liggie*. The bell removed from LVRR Engine #19 once again echoed in the valley.



Tippy-toes increase leverage.

Kudos to the volunteers setting up and manning the booth: Bruce Shirey, Sally Walker, Tom Bitner, Staci Peipock, Paul Fry, and Bob and Carolyn Stutzman. This sort of exposure and community awareness is always welcome. Kudos also to Rachel Roehrig and the chamber for inviting LVRR to continue to share its history with the public.



Who's on first?

A LIGONIER DOODLEBUG TRIBUTE RE-EMERGES



Recently uncovered in the archives of the LVRRA were the words to a song entitled "The Ligonier Doodlebug." The author is identified only as W. G., Freight Agent. As of this time only the author's initials are known. Hopefully, his identity will be uncovered in the future.

The composer's co-employee, Chuck Robb, thinking the song a novelty, shared the words with Bill Smith, founder of the Penn-Ligonier Railroad Club. Fortunately, the song became part of Smith's collection that the LVRRA purchased from Smith's son-in-law, Russ Lowden, in 2004.

The musical score, if it ever existed, was not saved. However, LVRRA Friend Phil Light composed a tune reminiscent of the sounds of the '50s to accompany the words.

The LVRRA Ensemble, not to be confused with the Philadelphia Philharmonic, made its debut performance at the Annual Dinner. Phil Light on keyboard, Sally Walker on guitar, Frank Dominick on washboard and vocalists Bob and Carolyn Stutzman performed their entire repertoire, one song, "The Ligonier Doodlebug," for the entertainment of attending Friends.

The Ligonier Doodlebug

She leaves Ligonier Valley
Heading down that Idlewild line
When she passes Darlington Station
You can hear her whistle whine
You're on that Ligonier Rail Road
The best spot on the globe
On the Ligonier doodle-bug
On your way to old Latrobe.

Chorus:

She winds down thru the valley
Thru the mountains and the vale
The years she's been a running
She has done her duty well
She's one of Ligonier's landmarks
Loved by one and all
How we love that doodle-bug
Mellon's baby doll.

If you're ever in the valley
And you want to see the scenes
Get yourself a ticket
On that old valley queen.
She's the beauty of the valley;
How we all love that train.
She travels in the sunshine
In the snow and in the rain.

Repeat Chorus

MODEL-TRAIN TOUR POSTPONED

Due to the overloaded schedules of members, the house tour of model-train layouts has been postponed. Several hosts are willing to participate and prospective guests have been inquiring, but a willing and able coordinator needs to volunteer and make the event happen. Call one of the officers (numbers listed elsewhere) if you are that coordinator.

2008 GALA SCHEDULED

Last year's Gala celebrated the completion of the exterior restoration of the Darlington Station. This year the LVRRA is celebrating the successful fund drive to restore the interior.

Sandy Mellon is heading the 2008 Gala, which will feature noted Pittsburgh celebrity and chair of Pittsburgh 250, Bill Flanagan, as the guest speaker.

Both the Pittsburgh Banjo Club and Home Front will return for encore performances. Ernie Vallozzi will again prepare his sumptuous hors d'oeuvres. Jim Mickinak and Ligonier Distributing Company will supply the drinks.

Mark September 27, 2008, on your calendars. Come and help celebrate the success of the Phase II fundraising drive. Tickets are \$250 per couple and \$150 per individual. If you have not received your invitation, please contact one of the officers (numbers listed elsewhere). Gala participants will also be among the first to explore the Costello Caboose.

THE MISSION OF THE LVRRA
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

LYNN BYERS ART AVAILABLE

Thanks to Lynn Byers, the LVRRA is now taking orders for her Costello Caboose slates. Each is individually hand painted on a 110-year-old slate that was part of the original Darlington Station roof.



Contact one of the officers or call the office (724-238-7859) and leave a message to order your original artwork. At \$200 per slate, six slates have already been ordered. (Incidentally, LVRRA is also still taking orders for Lynn's Darlington Station slate.)



STAFF NEEDED FOR
FORT LIGONIER DAYS BOOTH

It is that time of year when you may receive a call to staff the LVRRA information-and-sales booth during Fort Ligonier Days. Please consider it as an opportunity to make new friends or to renew old acquaintances. If you do not receive a call and would like to help, call 724-238-2653 or leave a message at the office, 724-238-7859.

RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Thanks to all contributors for the following items that have been donated to the LVRRA since the last Liggie publication:

Patricia Ransel

Booth and Flinn Quarry photos; Booth and Flinn correspondence and blank letterheads; original *Ligonier Echo* published to commemorate the Last Run

Tom Hoover

Manual railroad car mover; LVRRA bridge tally cards/bookmarks

Janet Hudson

Display case

Ed Gross

Display case and cash register

Anonymous

West Penn Trolley photographs and 11 x 17 copies of LVRRA prints

Rachel Roehrig

Original postcard of the Ligonier Station

Tom Evans

LVRRA switch lock, uniform buttons, passenger tickets and original postcards

Dave Shafran

Miscellaneous fire extinguishers, circa 1885 and 1925, railroad spikes and battery-operated railroad lanterns

Doris Matthews

Copies of excerpts pertaining to the LVRRA from John Clifford's "I Remember" articles written for the *Ligonier Echo*

Ed Soisson

Copies of E. Kay Myers' "Remember When . . ." articles pertaining to the LVRRA and the PW&S published in 2001

George and Eileen Gerneth

Brass railroad bell complete with yoke, inherited from George's father, a fifty-year PRR employee

Frank Dominick

Original vintage panoramic postcard of Horseshoe Curve

MONETARY CONTRIBUTION

In honor of

C. R. Greene

By

Carol and Don Smith

LVRRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill McCullough - President
724-238-5859

Bill Stablein - Vice President
724-238-5570

Bill Potthoff - Secretary
724-532-5564

Bob Stutzman - Treasurer
724-537-2647

Al Pilz - Director

Ralph Scalise - Director

Pat Wallace - Director

Paul Fry - Director

Armour Mellon - Director

Janet Hudson - Emeritus

Lisa Hays - Emeritus