

The Liggie

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TREASURE TROVE OF PHOTOGRAPHS SURFACES

Recently, a collection of negatives of pictures taken during one of LVRR's rail-fan trips in 1952 has surfaced. After World War II, as the coal and coke business waned and railroad passenger traffic subsided, so did the profitability of the LVRR. When it became evident to Bill Smith, founder and president of the Penn Ligonier Railroad Club, that the line would soon be shutting down, he organized excursions so that rail fans could ride the Ligonier line and photograph the equipment of the LVRR and scenes along the way.

Smith and his club members organized five of these trips, one per year starting in 1948 with the last one scheduled on June 22, 1952. Smith worked with LVRR management to build consists of Ligonier rolling stock, including its one passenger coach, caboose, and three doodlebugs.

Several of these excursions attracted more than 400 rail fans. As a result, the LVRR had to supplement its rolling stock with gondolas borrowed from the Pennsylvania Railroad to provide standing room for additional passengers.

The recently acquired negatives, which document the June 1952 excursion, will be added to the museum archives. The 21 pictures printed from the negatives

will enhance the existing collection of memorabilia relating to that trip, including an invitation advertising the event, the train order for that run, and a welcoming letter and a schedule of the day's events given to passengers as they boarded the train.



This photograph of Engine #594, framed by the Longbridge pilasters, was printed from one of the newly acquired negatives.

Additional photographs printed from this collection of negatives are located on the last page.

THE MISSION OF THE LVRR 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

ANNUAL DINNER AT PIKE RUN A SUCCESS

The music provided by the Pittsburgh Banjo Club and the pleasant atmosphere of the Pike Run Country Club created a festive setting for the LVRRA's sixth annual dinner meeting on May 27. Eighty-eight Friends of the Ligonier Valley Rail Road enjoyed an evening of camaraderie, while celebrating the legacy of the Ligonier Valley Rail Road.



The spirited music of the Pittsburgh Banjo Club creates a festive tone at the Pike Run Country Club.

Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres were served in the Grill Room and followed by a buffet dinner. As guests finished their desserts, board member Pat Wallace welcomed everyone and began the program by acknowledging the accomplishments of the LVRRA during the last year. Foremost among the accomplishments noted were the 1000 visitors to the museum during its first year, the cataloguing of 1800 items into the archives, and the \$5000 raised by the model-train tour. Also mentioned were the erection of the highway signage and the additions of the mail bag crane, the REA wagon and hand truck at the museum.



The smile on the face of Mary Weidlein reflects her pleasure of attending the dinner with her son Ted and daughter-in-law Mary, who live in Washington DC.

Tom Donchez and Bill McCullough awarded numerous raffle prizes that Donchez had solicited from local merchants and McCullough had selected from the museum archives and gift shop. Each prize awarded to the lucky 11 winners included a service or goods from a local merchant, a collectible from the LVRRA archives and a gift from the LVRRA gift shop.

Bob Stutzman concluded the program by presenting the latest edition of a virtual ride on the Ligonier Valley Rail Road, a PowerPoint slide show that features historic photographs as well as current ones of the museum and LVRRA events.

A special thanks to the following raffle donors:

<i>Abigail's Coffeehouse</i>	<i>Currant Tymes</i>
<i>Fairmont Minerals</i>	<i>Finishing Touch</i>
<i>Fresh on Main</i>	<i>Ligonier Country Club</i>
<i>Ligonier Tavern</i>	<i>Post & Rail Men's Shop</i>
<i>Road Toad</i>	<i>Roy Culbert</i>
<i>Second Chapter Books</i>	<i>Sewickley Spa</i>
<i>Ligonier Country Club Golf Shop</i>	

MUSEUM TRAFFIC IS BUILDING

On a recent Saturday, 20 adults and three students, including a family from New York City, visited the museum. Efforts to increase traffic at the museum, including tourist-rack flyers, highway signage, and newspaper coverage of events, have all contributed to an increase of patronage. Several people have also indicated that hearing from others about the restored station and the extensive museum collection prompted their visit to the museum. Obviously, word-of-mouth is still one of the best forms of advertising.

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ROCK GARDEN OFFERS A WELCOMING TOUCH TO THE MUSEUM

Last year Gladys and Phil Light envisioned a perennial rock garden alongside the entrance road into the Darlington Station. After many hours of planning, volunteers have planted a number of attractive perennials, giving the hillside a completely different look. The unkempt bank has been transformed into a colorful array of flowers that enhances the visitor's initial impression of the museum.



This perennial rock-garden provides a welcoming touch alongside the original roadbed of the LVRR at the Darlington Station.

It is no surprise that the project has been such a success since both Gladys and Phil Light are master gardeners. Other Friends have served as volunteers to work on the project and additional ones are needed to help with maintenance. Fortunately, so far, the project has cost no money since all the perennials planted at the museum have been donated by the master gardeners responsible for the Penn State demonstration garden at the Ligonier Country Market.

E-VERSION OF THE *LIGGIE*

If you prefer to access the newsletter in electronic format rather than to receive a hard copy, please notify the office at 724-238-7819 or send an e-mail to lorra@verizon.net.

LVRR MUSEUM CONTINUES TO ADD TO ITS RAILROAD COLLECTION

A replica railroad-crossing signal has been added to the outdoor display area of the LVRR Museum. Friend John Bialek created the signal by using original components that he had collected over the years as well as a cast-iron crossbuck replica. Once the signal is wired, it will greet arriving guests with flashing lights and clanging bell.



John Bialek and Bill McCullough stand beside the crossing signal recently installed at the Darlington Station.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill McCullough — President
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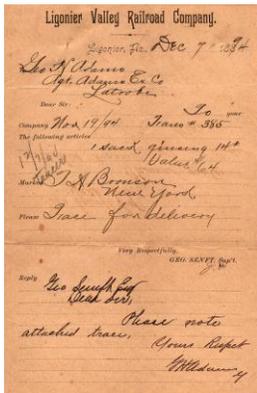
Bill Stablein — Emeritus

RAILROADS MAKE THE FIRST EXPRESS DELIVERY SERVICE POSSIBLE

Today United Parcel Service (UPS), FedEx and the United States Postal Service (USPS) compete with each other for the nationwide delivery of parcels. In the early 1900s, however, various express companies, such as Wells Fargo and Adams Express, worked together to deliver parcels by way of the national network of passenger trains.

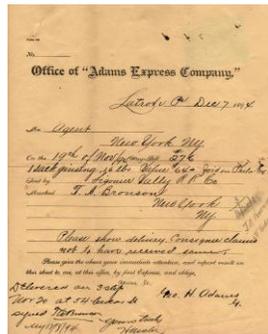
This system of delivery was much more efficient and timely than that previously offered by freight trains, which did not operate on a fixed time schedule. Still, there was no such thing as a direct shipment.

For example, a parcel shipped in 1894 from Ligonier to New York City was



transferred from one train to another until it reached its destination. A "Trace for Delivery" document dated December 7, 1894, in the LVRR museum archives lists a 14 pound sack of ginseng valued at

\$64.00. A Ligonier Valley Railroad Company form shows that the sack of ginseng was consigned to the Adams Express Company in Latrobe for delivery to an address in New York. The corresponding paperwork from Adams Express lists Philadelphia Express as the forwarding conveyor of the package to New York.



Not only was the actual delivery complicated. Because various companies had to work together to deliver parcels, the breakdown and distribution of the corresponding payment to the companies involved must have been a bookkeeper's nightmare.

A major change in express delivery occurred in 1913 when the U.S. government established the Parcel Post with the intent of helping farmers obtain goods previously only available to people living in cities. Soon thereafter, the Parcel Post was a major competitor of the express companies, even causing some to go out of business after the government ordered them to lower their rates.

Another change occurred during World War I. When the United States Railway Administration (USRA) took over the nation's railroads, the federal government determined that a single entity could better handle the delivery of parcels. Under the USRA, the existing four major and three minor express companies were consolidated into the American Railway Express, Inc.: "Offices that were redundant were closed, employees were shifted about and the entire range of activities of the organization was streamlined and made more efficient than previously."* The American Railway Express operated until 1929.

After deciding to relinquish its control of the express industry, the federal government sold the business to the Railway Express Agency (REA), a corporation owned by 69 railroads. The REA divided its 1000 shares of stock in proportion to the current levels of express generated by each railroad.

Cumbersome as it sounds, the REA prospered through the 1950s as its red-diamond logo became commonplace.

Some unique services set the REA apart from its competitors and contributed to its success. One was its willingness to ship almost anything, including live animals, such as pets, chickens and horses. The REA also was the first delivery service to offer refrigerated railroad cars.



An original 1941 REA shipping tag

The REA eventually owned and leased as many railroad cars as some of the largest railroads and operated one of the country's largest fleet of trucks, which it used for local deliveries. However, once the number of passenger trains declined and air express service became a competitor, it became financially necessary for the REA to gain permission from its railroad owners to also use planes and ships to remain in business.

With the introduction of the interstate road system in the 1950s, the REA began its decline. The better roads resulted in the rise of the trucking industry, which soon began its own parcel delivery businesses. Additionally, fewer passengers depended on the railroads for transportation once automobiles became affordable and commonplace. As the number of passenger trains

declined, so did the opportunity for the REA to deliver in a timely fashion.

The USPS also contributed to the eventual bankruptcy of the REA since USPS was subsidized by the government and, therefore, not profit driven. Probably REA's existence until 1975 is notable given all the factors that negatively affected its operation during its last 20 to 25 years. The downward spiral continued to deepen until 1975 when the REA eventually was liquidated.

References:

Garrett, Klint, with Toby Smith. Ten Turtles to Tucumcari. A Personal History of the Railway Express Agency. University of New Mexico Press, 2003.

*Roseman, V. S. Railway Express. An Overview. Ed. Randall B. Lee. Denver: Rocky Mountain Publishing, Inc., 1992.

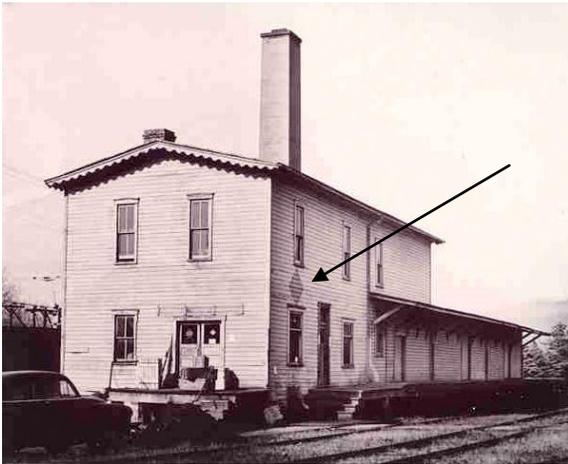
NEW MEMBERS SINCE JUNE 1, 2011

Andrew Gleason
Jack Harris
Bruce Hartman
Clark Kemmerer
Wesley Kidd
Joseph Mastrorocco
Pam McCaffrey
Robert McKie
Bill Myers
Robert Schwarz
Fred and Susan Utech

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Editor — Bob Stutzman
Associate Editor — Carolyn H. Dillon

REA IMPACTS LIGONIER VALLEY OVER SEVERAL YEARS

Although research of the LVRR archives to date has yet to uncover specific mention of the REA operation in Ligonier, REA charts list depots in both Latrobe and in Ligonier. Also, photographs on file in the museum picture REA wagons sitting on the Latrobe platform and the REA logo clearly displayed on the front of the Ligonier Freight Station.



The REA logo is clearly visible in this photograph of the Ligonier freight station.

Further evidence of the REA's service to Ligonier via the LVRR can be found in the September 26, 1952, issue of the *Ligonier Echo*. One article expresses the discontent of Ligonier residents, especially businessmen, that REA's service was terminated when the LVRR went out of business. Another article, dated October 17, 1952, implies that once the complaints reached the REA, it agreed to continue service, transporting shipments between Latrobe and Ligonier by trucks.

CALENDAR OF LVRRRA EVENTS

- April 28, 2012 — Model Train Tour
- May 25 or 26, 2012 — Annual Dinner
- June 30, 2012 — Field Trip
- July 5, 2012 — Marks the 100th anniversary of the Wilpen train wreck



Bill Potthoff and John Bialek position the restored REA wagon on the Darlington Station platform.

LVRRRA PARTICIPATES IN THE 2011 COMMUNITY DAY

On June 12 over 120 people took advantage of the third annual Community Day in Ligonier, a day on which residents are invited to visit historic and arts facilities throughout the Valley free of charge. Those organizations participating in the event include the Ligonier Valley Rail Road Museum, the Ligonier Valley Historical Society, the Antiochian Heritage Museum, Fort Ligonier, the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art and the Valley Players of Ligonier.

On this year's Community Day, the LVRR Museum staff hosted more than 120 guests during the six-hour period. The staff entertained the visitors by giving mini-tours and answering questions. Many attending were impressed by the beautiful restoration of the station and by the variety and quality of artifacts and memorabilia in the museum, as well as the interactive display map and the bobber caboose.

The idea of a community day originated with the historic and arts facilities located within the Ligonier School District to familiarize local residents with the tourism opportunities within their community. In turn, these facilities hope to increase both local and out-of-town visitors.

RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS

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

John Bialek – Photograph of coke ovens with a machine used to pull coke from the ovens in the foreground

William Burns – Photograph of 1908 train wreck in Derry

Dan Christian – Offset print block used in printing a photograph of a LVRR doodlebug and a *Ligonier Echo* dated August 29, 1952, highlighting the upcoming Last Run festivities

Patricia Farrell – Framed copy of an 1859 PRR schedule

Robert Jack, Jr. – Railroad tools, including a spike puller

Ligonier Camp and Conference Center – DVD copy of a 1946 film featuring campers arriving and departing the camp via the LVRR doodlebug

Karen O'Connor – A book entitled *The Story of the Cedar Valley Road*

Susann Park – Post card depicting a railroad crew

Ray and Fran Robb – Seven books, VHS tape and phonograph records, all relevant to railroading in western Pennsylvania, wooden banana crate from Battaglia Produce, four railroad lanterns, PRR switch lock and key, and a railroad key inherited from Rosario Ciocco, Robb's grandfather and former LVRR employee

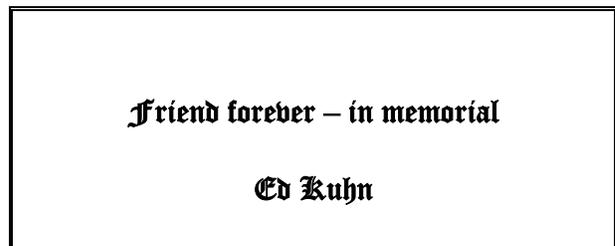
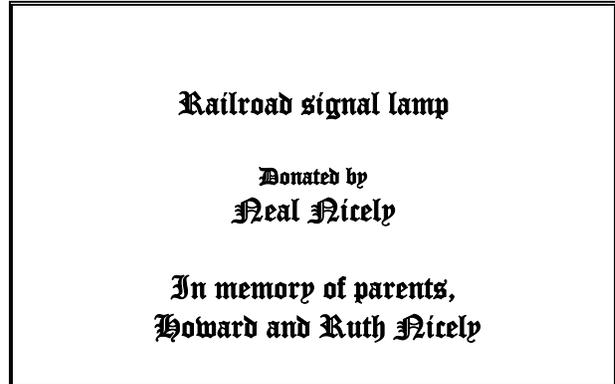
Pat Casey Serena – Original photographs of Serena's grandfather Lawrence Casey at the McSpadden Quarry

Bob and Carolyn Stutzman – Digital copy and reprint of an August 29, 1952, edition of the *Ligonier Echo* donated by Dan Christian

John Vucina – Railroad jack

Laurie Wehle – Original PRR paperwork dated 1876 and 1878

Anonymous – Railroading books and DVD featuring Pennsylvania train stations.



REMOVAL OF LVRR TRACKS ALONG LINCOLN AVENUE IS COMPLETE

The removal of the original LVRR tracks along Lincoln Avenue in Latrobe has been completed. Amrail, a Norfolk Southern subcontractor, has removed the rails and ties, paved the grade crossings and planted grass where the roadbed was graded in 1877, some 134 years ago. Only one other section of LVRR tracks remains. LVRR rails continue to cross Latrobe Specialty Steel property and Ligonier Street and extend to the site of the former Vulcan Mold plant, which is near Latrobe Specialty Steel's new melt shop. The future of this section of track is unknown.

PHOTOGRAPHS HIGHLIGHT THE JUNE 1952 RAIL-FAN TRIP



A stop near the quarry tipple which stands today beside westbound Route 30 allows passengers time to explore.



Photograph taken from the bridge highlights the beauty of the scenery in the Loyahanna Gorge as the steam-driven train approaches Longbridge.



Passengers at an unknown location climb about the tender and caboose during the sightseeing stop.



A stop at the Two-mile Run grade crossing gives passengers a chance to stretch their legs and view the Ice Pond.



Consist stops at the Ligonier yard on its way to Wilpen.



Young rail fan is dwarfed by the size of engine #594.