



KEEPING TRACK

The official newsletter of the Iowa Railroad Historical Society

Here comes Thomas!

We've yet to begin our regular operating season, but September will be here before we know it. And as we all know, September brings Thomas The Tank Engine(tm). If you would like to help with this year's event, please contact us here at the depot: 1-800-626-0319, weekdays from 8:30 AM until 4:30 PM, or e-mail us at: info@bsvrr.com. Thank you!

We'd like you to meet: Lowell Diersen



Photo by Fenner Stevenson

On any given day, you're likely to find him lending a hand with projects in the shop. That is, if he's not cutting the grass on our various properties, helping switch freight on the east end, or.... well, my point is that you never know WHERE you're going to find Lowell. After more than 40 years with the line, Lowell retired as a dispatcher from the Chicago and North Western Railroad in 2000. Their loss was certainly our gain. Lowell is one of those individuals who is always willing to help out wherever help is needed. Thank you, Lowell, for all of the time and hard work that you contribute to the railroad!

Saved from extinction

Article contributed by Bryan Anderson

In earlier times, before modern integrated circuits, computers, and modern technology there was a need to protect automobiles at grade crossings from oncoming trains. In rural areas, the simple crossbuck was used much as it is today. In cities and towns, the railroads relied upon a crossing guard to either stop traffic with a stop sign or to manually lower crossing gates.

The Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad has recently restored an example of a Chicago and North Western crossing guard shed. This particular building was a ground level shed. It was used by a crossing guard who flagged the crossing upon the approach of a train. This shed has been verified by photographs to have come from Ogden, Iowa. The shed was situated on the northeast portion of 4th Street between the two main tracks and the two side tracks.

Doug Nebbe of the Bike Barn in Ogden has provided some useful information on a gentleman who worked at this post. He was also kind enough to provide some photos.

Work to restore the building began in the fall of 2005, and is now nearly complete. Because of its age and its long exposure to the elements it required a great deal of work. A great many hours by a dedicated group of volunteers brought this about. The restoration work was conducted by Bryan Anderson, Eldon Campbell, and John Veale. Jim Duff, Mel Hanson, and John Vilmain also provided assistance along with Travis Stevenson and the shop staff.

The building will be an exhibit illustrating the history of how the railroads used to do things. It is decorated with the items needed to do the job as it existed when in service. This simple building is one of only two surviving examples of C&NW crossing sheds. It is the only known example of this type and dimension. At one time they were as common as the crossing gates you see in every town along the line. *Additional photos on page 2*



The finished product. Look for "before" pictures of the shed on page 2 of this newsletter. *Photo by Loren Karr*

MOVING? Send address corrections to: info@bsvrr.com, or Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad, PO BOX 603, Boone, Iowa 50036

Quick takes

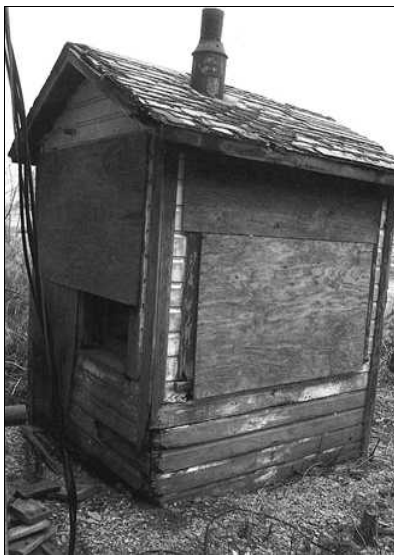
JS8419...On April 19th, JS8419 passed it's hydrostatic test. With this major step out of the way, the steam department spent the next several weeks preparing 8419 for it's 2007 operating schedule. Members of the steam department are now constructing a concrete pad for their coal storage area. **METRA CARS...**Word out of Chicago is that the Metra cars originally scheduled to be released to us last summer may finally be on their way. Arrangements have been made with Union Pacific to transport the cars to Boone. More information as it becomes available. **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS...**In early May, Winkler and Sons painting contractors, Ames, painted and stained the depot exterior. **BY THE NUMBERS...**2007 ridership (as of May 9): 1,546, +11.30% over the same time last year. **TIE INSERTER...**Iowa Railroad Historical Society foundation committee member George Maybee obtained a tie inserter, which was delivered by Union Pacific on May 3, 2007. More information in our next newsletter. **FIELD TRIP!...**On April 24, more than 180 children from area daycare centers rode a special train celebrating "The Week of the Young Child" in Boone County. It appears that May will be a busy month, with several trips scheduled for area schools. **JIM GARDNER** has been named as the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad's trainmaster. He may be reached at: trainmaster@bsvrr.com



Union Pacific crews delivered a 1989 Fairmont tie inserter to our doorstep on May 3, 2007. Photo by Loren Karr

Saved from extinction

Continued from page 1



It's hard to believe that this is the same building pictured on the front page! Thanks to the dedication of Bryan Anderson and the gang, the crossing guard shed has made a miraculous recovery. Photos contributed by Bryan Anderson.



New ticketing system

The Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad is moving forward with plans to update its ticketing system. Representatives from Dynamic Ticket Solutions, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, were on-site April 25th to train office employees on the new system, and to gather information about our operations to see how they can make the system more flexible for us. The new system will make it possible for tickets for all Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad trains to be purchased online. It is hoped that the new system will be up and running by June 1, 2007.

Back to school

More than 60 people attended this year's rules and safety class which was held at the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad shop building on April 28. This yearly course helps new volunteers learn the rules, regulations, and operating procedures of the railroad, and serves as a refresher course for those persons currently in train service. A DVD of this year's training course will be made available for those people who were unable to attend the class.

News from the gift shop

We are pleased to announce that Jim Barkwill has joined our staff, and will be working full-time as our gift shop manager. Jim is not a new face around the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad. For several years, Jim has been an active volunteer, and member of the Iowa Railroad Historical Society. Welcome aboard, Jim!

News from the car shop

The Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad shop crew had a very productive "off-season" in 2006 and 2007.

Extensive work was completed on several of the railroad's former Lackawanna cars, along with Rock Island coach 2584. Work performed included: the installation of new window sills, clear-coating, cleaning and repainting interiors, the application of rubberized roofing, repainting of trucks and steps, and the application of new decals. In addition, car 3238 received a new coat of Southern Green paint to match the rest of the coach car fleet.

Three more cars from the coach car fleet have been outfitted with AB brake systems, bringing the total number of cars with this system to four. In January, John Rimmasch of Wasatch Railroad Contractors traveled to Boone to perform the installation. Original estimates for the work to be completed were placed at right around \$10,000 per car. However, the new systems were installed at a total of just over \$10,000 for all four cars. The railroad should see significant savings with the new system. The old brake system required servicing every 2 years. This involved uninstalling system components, and shipping them out of state to have the work performed, costing the railroad an average of right around \$1200 per car. The AB brakes should be much easier to maintain, requiring such servicing only once every 15 years.

In the month of March, the "City of San Francisco" and "City of Los Angeles" dining cars were shopped for maintenance, including the replacement of several windows on both cars, and brake system work on the "City of San Francisco" car.

According to Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad Chief Mechanical Officer Travis Stevenson, restoration work on Chicago South Shore and South Bend coaches 38 and 39 has been delayed. It is the hope of the mechanical department that work on these cars, along with Alco RS-1 #205, will take place as funding becomes available.



Jim Gardner prepares C&NW bay window caboose 11136 for the 2007 season. Photo by Travis Stevenson

Roadblock

Late April rains triggered a handful of mudslides along the route of the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad. The most significant was this slide located near "Bumble Bee Curve". The slides have been cleared, and trains are running normally. Photos by Travis Stevenson



Calendar of events

Saturday, May 26: Our regular season begins

Friday, June 1: Friday evening dinner trains begin operating
For reservations, call 1-800-626-0319.

Tuesday, June 19: Iowa Railroad Historical Society board meeting
Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad depot, 5:00 p.m.

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And finally...

I just want to take a moment to say how very excited I am to have the opportunity to write this newsletter, and I look forward to trying some new and different things with it. I hope to publish these newsletters more frequently throughout the year, allowing us to touch base with you, our members and volunteers, and let you know what is happening around your railroad. If you have any questions, comments, concerns, ideas, etc., regarding the newsletter, please contact me. After all, this is your newsletter, and I want to make it something that you look forward to receiving, and enjoy reading.

Thanks much,

Loren Karr
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