

# FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e

official publication of the  
FOX RIVER TROLLEY MUSEUM



Come ride with us!

2023-2

news from  
**UNDER  
the wire**

## RECENT FOX RIVER LINE HAPPENINGS

news from  
**UNDER  
the wire**

## Museum Hires an Executive Director

At a special Board meeting on Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a unanimous vote of the board of directors voted to approve an offer of employment as Executive Director to *Shelia M. Pardo*, of Aurora, Illinois. *Ms. Pardo* accepted the position and formally started her duties on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023. She is a seasoned leader who possesses over two decades of business, accounting, and finance experience. *Shelia* brings tremendous energy, strategic thinking, innovation, and creativity to her work and is recognized by her peers for having passion for helping others with her exceptional leadership skills. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Management as well as a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in leadership from Aurora University.

After the loss of her grandmother, *Shelia* sought to assist others in similar situations by founding "Journey On" to both reflect on her own grief, and to provide comfort to those experiencing a loss. "Journey On" has served individuals and families within the Chicagoland, Indiana, and Wisconsin for over a decade and continues to offer support today.

On the personal side she enjoys volunteering, watching sports, yoga, running, biking, and spending time with her family and friends.

**Joseph Hazinski**



**Shelia M. Pardo, Executive Director, Fox River Trolley Museum.**

*As a highly motivated and results driven executive, I am eager to contribute my skills and experience to the Fox River Trolley Museum.*

*Throughout my career, I have developed a reputation for being a problem-solver and effective communicator, with a keen eye for detail and the ability to work under pressure.*

*My passion lies with helping others, I look forward to our growth together.*

**S. M. Pardo**

## From the Editor:

By this time, you should have received your *Fox River Lines Magazine 2022-Annual*. With this current issue we are happy to get back into our four issues a year model. We were elated and fortunate to get the story of hiring an executive director in, just under the wire. This action should be a game changer in the improvement and development of the museum and the members I have spoken with are excited.

Editorial work has already started on the next two issues for 2023. There are a number of interesting projects that are pending or going on this year, so there will be no dearth of news to report.

Jeff Bennett is a special assistant to the editor, a person to help keep me moving, timely and relevant. I will continue to rely on my proofreaders as well as people who submit both articles and photographs, especially *Ralph Taylor* this issue. Thanks to all, first for doing the newsworthy activities that need to be reported and second for submitting stories that make the *Fox River Lines Magazine* the chronicle of the museum and the history it interprets.

**Joseph Hazinski - Editor**



## MISSION

To preserve and interpret Chicago's electric transport era that began in the 1890s and peaked before 1950. The electric transport era is significant because electric railways, including interurban, rapid transit, and streetcars, helped the Chicago region grow to be one of North America's great metropolitan areas. The Museum strives to show that electric railways were more than convenient, they were and are a way of life for generations of people from all walks of life.

The Museum fulfills this mission by preserving, interpreting, and operating historic railway vehicles on its demonstration electric railway, over the Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric route at South Elgin, Illinois. Furthermore, the museum preserves, displays and interprets smaller artifacts, photos, oral histories, and documents which help relate the importance of electric transport in and around the Chicago Metropolitan Area, putting them in context with their surroundings and era.

## C O N T E N T S

2023 - 2

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 ... Museum Hires an Executive Director | 8 ... Fox River's Substation       |
| 2 ... From the Editor                    | 10 ... New Items in Museum Store   |
| 3 ... Some Tree Stories                  | 11 ... Track 2 Platform Update     |
| 5 ... Wayne Shelter Update               | 12 ... IC Fairmont Motor Car F8695 |

# FOX RIVER TROLLEY ASSOCIATION, INC.

### 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Edward Konecki, Jeff Bennett, Fred D. Lonnes, Douglas Rundell, and Patrick Storm

### 2023 OFFICERS

President - Edward Konecki  
Vice President - Fred D. Lonnes  
Secretary - Patrick Storm  
Treasurer - Douglas Rundell  
Executive Director - Shelia M. Pardo

### 2023 COMMITTEES

**Management Committee** – Edward Konecki, Fred D. Lonnes and Douglas Rundell  
**Nomination & Election Committee** – Damin Keenan (chair), Laura Taylor, Art Lemke  
**Executive Director Search Committee** – Jeff Bennett, Doug Rundell (co-chairs)

### 2023 MUSEUM DEPARTMENT LEADERS

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:

**Controller** - Barbara Ann Stuenkel CPA

#### MUSEUM OPERATIONS:

**Operations Superintendent** - Patrick Storm  
**Trainmaster** - James Tarbet  
**Crew Caller** - Damin Keenan  
**Museum Store Manager** - Damin Keenan  
**Assistant Store Manager** - Laura Taylor

#### MEMBER SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

**Membership Secretary** - Laura Taylor (Edward Konecki, acting)  
**Assistant Membership Secretary** - Vacant  
**Membership Activities Coordinator** - Vacant  
**Membership Development Coordinator** - VACANT

#### MUSEUM SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

**Museum Services Manager** - Edward Konecki  
**Media Relations Coordinator** - Vacant  
**Curator** - Joseph Hazinski  
**Archivist** - Vacant  
**Web Master** - Jacob Goldberg  
**Assistant Web Master** - Edward Konecki  
**Education Coordinator** - Bernard S. Kamenear  
**Capital Development Coordinators** - Edward Konecki and Fred Lonnes  
**Publications Manager** - Edward Konecki  
**Newsletter Editor** - Joe Hazinski  
**Special Assistant** - Jeff Bennett  
**Community Relations Manager** - Vacant

#### CAR DEPARTMENT:

**Chief Car Officer** - Jeff Bennett  
**Assistant Car Officer** - David Peterson  
**Car Superintendent Emeritus** - Joseph Hazinski

#### FIXED PLANT DEPARTMENT:

**Chief Engineer** - Ralph Taylor  
**Chief Technology Officer** - Edward Konecki  
**Roadmaster** - Vacant  
**Assistant Roadmaster** - Patrick Storm  
**Chief Lineman** - Vacant  
**Building and Grounds Superintendent** - Vacant  
**Electrical Supply and Signals** - Ralph Taylor

#### MUSEUM SAFETY DEPARTMENT:

**Safety Coordinator** - Ralph Taylor

**ADDRESS ..** 365 S. LaFox St., P.O. Box 315, South Elgin, IL 60177  
**PHONE ..** (847) 697-4676 **WEBSITE ...** [www.foxrolley.org](http://www.foxrolley.org)





Doug Rundell

| **Kramer Tree Service rig being used to trim the north oak tree.**

## Some Tree Stories

Our first tree story goes back to Friday January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, when *Fred Lonnes* had Kramer Tree Service come out to Castlemuir to trim our two Illinois Burr Oak trees. Besides CA&E car 20 and AE&FR 304, these two trees are perhaps our most iconic assets as they are over 450 years old, far older than the United States of America, making it hard to fathom how much change they have seen since they grew from acorns into saplings and then into the grand trees we see today. Kramer used a rubber tracked aerial lift to reach the branches that needed trimming. Plywood sheets were used to protect the grass and disburse the weight of the lift as it passed over the tree roots which mirror the branch canopy one sees overhead. To protect these roots and thus the trees is why we limit motor vehicle traffic around the trees. Besides being a link back into time, both trees provide shade for visitors and volunteers alike.

On or about June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, one of



FRTM Security Camera

| **Rubber tracked aerial lift moving to the south oak tree on plywood pads.**

our neighbors reported a tree down south of Ward's Bridge. The tree was on the east side of the Fox River Trail path blocking it and our track as well as landing on the overhead wire briefly and knocking one of our bracket arms out of position on the line pole it was attached to. It had apparently brushed the ComEd lines on the way down but did not damage them. The next day *Jeff Bennett* and *Connor Ladley* arrived on the scene with Jeff's high-rail bucket truck to find that Kane County had already cleared the tree from

the path and our right of way. Our crew then removed the bracket arm from the old pole and mounted it on a pole that supports the 600-volt feeder some yards north of the old pole. More adjustments like this are planned for the future. In its new location the undamaged trolley wire was reattached to the bracket arm and the old line pole was cut up and removed to continue the cleanup of the area. As a result, there was no delay to any museum rail operations the next weekend.

*(Continued on page 4)*



## Some Tree Stories

(Continued from page 3)

There have been a number of trees down situations this year alone and last year there was a three-day work party with *Jeff's* bucket truck and a rented woodchipper to clear branches away from the feeder wire and remove those starting to intrude into the overhead and car zones of our right-of-way. I know that *Fred Lonnes*, *Tom Albright*, *Ben Rohling*, and others have cleared trees that were either down or leaning into the track zone this season. It is my observation that many trees along the river and our line are maturing and thus becoming weaker and are candidates to be blown down during storms. Historic photos, especially around Coleman, suggest that there were fewer trees in the 1930's as a lot of the land along the line was used for farming. Vigilance on our inspection runs spot limbs and trees that are leaning or down so that they can be removed so as not to impede our train operation. Thanks to all who have reported such issues and especially to those who responded to clear the way.

**Joseph Hazinski**



James Tarbet

| The bent bracket arm and tree down on the tracks.



Jeff Bennett

| Using the high-rail bucket truck to cut off the bracket arm from a very old line pole.



Jeff Bennett

| The bracket arm installed on the feeder line pole and everything ready to go.



# Wayne Shelter Update

The CA&E Wayne shelter has received some upgrades to make it look more presentable. First in February the windowpanes were replaced with custom made vinyl casements that replicate the rotted and unusable wooden originals. These two windowpanes, which were obtained and installed by *Andre Juerk*, and funded by *Fred Lonnes*, can be opened just like the ones that came with the shelter, an important feature for air circulation.

Next it was time to replace the lower portions of the cedar siding, some pieces which were split and others that had holes drilled into them when the shelter had to be rotated 180 degrees. A bump out was made on the east wall to compensate for the deck which the shelter rests on being slightly larger than the footprint of the shelter. *Andre* then tackled the door which he repaired rather than replaced with a replica. A new museum lock was added to the door and the door frame was repaired so to be more weatherproof and to accept the new lock bolt. A moisture barrier was laid down on the deck to seal it and framing was installed on top to support the new tongue and groove flooring to bring the interior floor up to its original height to be level with the threshold of the doorway. This floor was primed and painted. Electrical conduit was installed with boxes for electrical outlets on three of the interior walls. Wiring for these boxes, the exterior light at the door, and for the two interior light fixtures will be installed during a later phase of the restoration. *Andre* made a temporary set of steps for the exterior of the door to aid in entry. Eventually a stone platform, like the one at its original site on the CA&E, will be installed, again in a later phase.

Next a painting contractor was employed to prepare the exterior and prime all the new siding, and then painted it the iconic red and gray it wore in its last days of service on the Elgin branch of the CA&E. To date I have been unable to locate a photograph of the west wall as it appeared



Mike Gilles

**The plastic windowpane frame on the north side.**

**In April work started to replace and upgrade the cedar siding.**



Mike Gilles



Jeff Bennett

**Andre and his helpers have the exterior siding done April 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

during the last years of service. Such a picture might clarify what the light fixture above the doorway looked like and whether the outdoor bench on the south wall was wrapped around the corner to the west wall. There was a rain gutter on the west edge of the roof, but

the bench issue needs to be resolved in order for the down spout running down the south wall to be installed. So, if anyone comes up with a picture showing the west wall during the last years of operation or any picture at all, please

*(Continued on page 6)*



## Wayne Shelter Update

(Continued from page 5)

share them with *Dave Peterson* and me.

The structural renovations to WAYNE cost \$8,000 and the exterior prep and painting cost \$3,150 for a total of \$11,150 of the donated \$12,000. It should be noted that the same painting contractor charged \$2,400 for the repairs and badly needed repainting of the depot and crew locker/soda shed at Castlemuir.

Pending changes to the Track 3 lead and overhead wire to accommodate the car barn extension, the underground cable to electrify the shelter has to be held in abeyance. There are many other pieces that need to come together to develop WAYNE to its full potential as a historical display, but I am confident that the wait will be worth it.

**Joseph Hazinski**



Mike Gilles

After the moisture barrier is down the floor joists are going in.



Mike Gilles

Here Andre is installing the flooring.



Mike Gilles

It is April 27<sup>th</sup> and the painting contractors are starting their prep work.



Web Site photo

Work is underway in this April 29<sup>th</sup> view.



Joseph Hazinski

May 3<sup>rd</sup> and the shelter is waiting for the contractors to return to start the priming.





Joseph Hazinski

**Mike Gilles is making corrections to the paint on the window frame on June 4th.**



George Barreto

**Joe Hazinski is bringing up the red one more layer of siding to conform to the original CA&E paint scheme at the time of abandonment.**



Joseph Hazinski



Joseph Hazinski

**This is the corner of WAYNE where we need photos from 1956-57 to confirm details to assist in further restoration efforts.**

**A pleasant summer afternoon view of the first phase of the restoration.**



# Fox River's Substation

## *Preparing the Site - Moving and Setting Up*

The property where the museum is located was purchased from the *Castle* family estate in 1962. Previous to this, a written contract had been obtained by the *Railway Equipment Leasing & Investment Company* (RELIC) with the *Aurora Elgin & Fox River Electric Company* to rent the railroad trackage from South Elgin to Coleman for a trolley museum operation.

The museum had to have access to *Commonwealth Edison's* 34KV transmission line for service to our substation. The only property that could be used is where the museum is currently located.

I obtained approval from the *Commonwealth Edison Company* Western Division Planning and Engineering to approve the museum's electric service application. *Commonwealth Edison* would only supply 34KV electric service if the customer's electric demand was greater than 500 kilowatts. Without knowing what our demand would be I gave the Planning Department an estimate of 500 kilowatts and the application was approved.

Excavation for the substation building and switchyard was done on November 12, 1962, by *Ed Schrieber Sand & Gravel* and cost \$54.00. A building permit was obtained from Kane County on November 21, 1962, and cost \$60.00.

The concrete foundation for the rotary converter and underground ductwork was completed on April 26 and 27, 1963. *Doug Christensen's* father was a bricklayer by trade, and he helped us construct all of the wood forms needed for the foundations. *Doug* was a RELIC stockholder. The concrete floor for the *Truscon Steel Company* (of Youngstown, Ohio) metal substation building was completed on May 4, 1963. The total cost of the concrete foundations was \$282.62.

After the foundations were completed, *Wendell Dillinger*, another RELIC stockholder, took a color picture of the foundations before the substation equipment was moved on May 29, 1963.



Wendell Dillinger

**All the components have been delivered and set down on their concrete pads. Note the apple tree blossoms to the right. I was told the sour apples were good for making pies.**



Unknown photographer

**A view from the track looking south to the then narrow driveway. Some of the substation equipment can be seen to the right just above the car. Note the line of trees along the Castle farm fence.**

The museum's substation was moved from Batavia to South Elgin over the Memorial Day weekend of 1963. The concrete foundations for the rotary converter, building floor, the three 34KV transformers, and the oil circuit breaker had already been completed.

The museum hired *Belding Engineering*, a West Chicago based machinery

moving company, to do the transport of the rotary converter, contactor panels, load limiting resistors, 34KV transformers and oil circuit breakers from Batavia to South Elgin. *Belding* did this work on the Thursday before the Memorial Day weekend. The rotary converter and the other indoor equipment were covered with tarpaulins after *Belding* had set the





Possible Al Williams photo

**Taking down the Truscon brand substation building in Batavia after the equipment had been removed. Down in one day and mostly up the next.**

*Note to readers:  
The attribution of these  
photos are my best guess.  
Editor*

**Putting up the switchgear tower in the yard with the help of the CA&E Unit crane. Most likely Ralph Taylor in his linesman's gear on the southeast pole. The autos in the background are in the junk yard that is now part of the park.**



Possible Wendell Dillinger photo

equipment onto the foundations at the museum site. The date was May 29, 1963, and *Belding's* bill was \$300.00. A color picture of the equipment after the equipment had been set in place on the foundations was taken by *Wendell Dillinger*. The picture is included with this article.

The dismantlement of the *Truscon* steel building at Batavia was undertaken

by museum personnel on Saturday of the Memorial Day weekend. *Ken Ward* borrowed the flatbed truck from the plumbing company where he worked. The building was completely dismantled and moved to South Elgin that Saturday. By the end of the day on Memorial Day Monday the building was completely erected except for the roof. The roof was installed the

following weekend.

I bought a pole-jack from *Kohler's Trading Post* in Lombard, and I used it to jack out the switchyard poles at Batavia. *Belding Engineering* was again hired to move the four poles and associated timbers from Batavia to South Elgin. I even jacked the chain-link fence posts out

*(Continued on page 10)*



## Fox River's Substation

(Continued from page 9)

of the ground so we could use the entire chain-link fence at South Elgin.

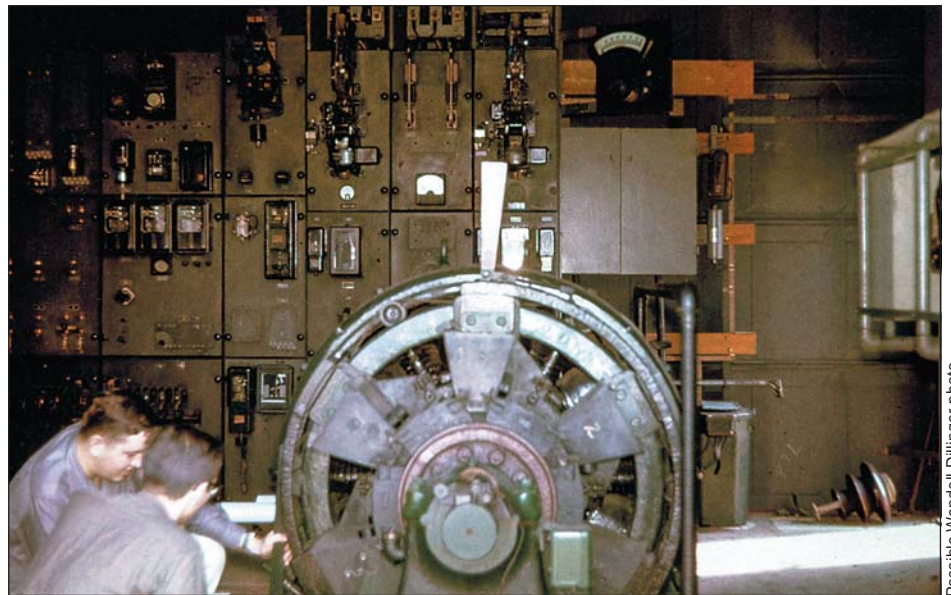
The holes for the four 34KV switchyard poles were dug by hand and we used the CA&E crawler Unit crane (made by the Unit Crane & Shovel Corp., Milwaukee, Wisconsin) to set the poles and associated timbers into place.

As a sidelight, it was *Belding Engineering* that moved the CA&E Unit crane from Wheaton to South Elgin. The crane was actually the first piece of museum equipment to arrive at the museum property in South Elgin.

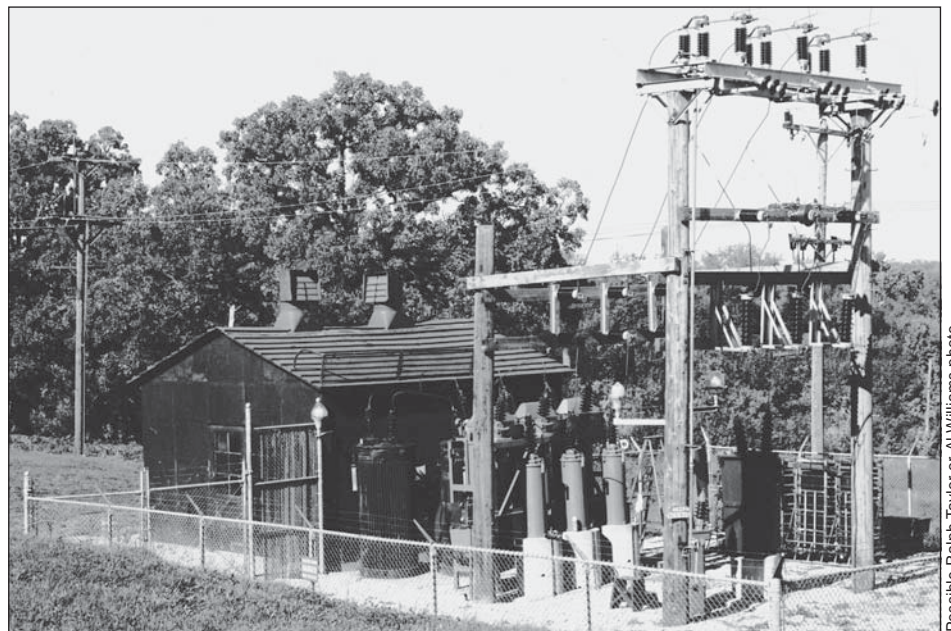
*Ed Allen*, one of the founding RELIC stockholders, had removed the 600-volt d. c. electrical panels from the substation at Batavia and had transported them to his garage in Wheaton. When *Ed* decided to take the job as Master Mechanic at the Iowa Terminal Railroad electric freight line in Clear Lake, Iowa, the museum had to move the electrical panels and all the spare parts that the museum bought from the CA&E to another rented garage in Wheaton, owned by *John Schriber*. The museum purchased a second-hand semi-trailer and had it moved to the museum property in South Elgin. The equipment from this rented garage in Wheaton was then moved to the semi-trailer.

The total purchase price of our substation from *Commonwealth Edison* was \$1,000.00 for the rotary converter, \$800.00 for the switchboards and \$600.00 for the *Truscon* steel building making a total cost of \$2,400.00 or about \$24,288 in 2023 dollars.

**Ralph Taylor – FRTM Chief Engineer and one of the RELIC founders**



It looks like Ed Allen and Ralph Taylor doing some final set up on the rotary converter inside the substation.



It is October 10<sup>th</sup>, 1965, and the substation is complete. A close examination of the photo suggests that the trolley wire has yet to be strung over the mainline.



## New Items in the Museum Store

There are three new items in the museum's store at Castlemuir. A wooden toy replica of Car 20 which runs on all toy wooden track is flanked by a Fox River Line mug and an AE&FRCo orange mug in the colors of #5. Available in the depot now! Hope we see a wooden toy replica car of CTA 4451 in 2024 so youngsters can take home a car they rode in.



## Track 2 Platform Update

For anyone who passes the museum after dusk, they will see that the lights on our Track 2 high-level platform are on as a security measure. On May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, *Fred Lonnes* and *Mike Gilles* did an upgrade by connecting the lights to the Castlemuir overhead light and power feed wires. Prior to this change the lights were on a timer and connected to be depot by temporary means. Now these LED lights will turn on under control of the optic light sensor that controls all the other exterior lights at Castlemuir. There is also an option to turn them off during Polar Express so as not to detract from the North Pole flats that are erected on the hillside next to the mainline. Thanks to the guys for their efforts and forethought. Also, when the depot and crew locker were repainted, the Track 2 high-level platform was coated with stain by the same painting contractor. The wood needed to season for six months before this could be done.

**Joseph Hazinski**



Mike Gilles

**Fred Lonnes is on the extension ladder to hook up the platform lights to the overhead AC wire system used to power all the other Castlemuir lights.**



FRTM Security Camera



FRTM Security Camera

**Fred and Mike hooking up the wiring from the line pole to the former L platform lights on our high-level platform.**

**| Here is what it looks like at night.**



## IC Fairmont Motor Car F8695

This M9 Fairmont inspection motorcar, serial #218599, was donated to the museum by *Greg and Sue Burnet* on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022. They had hoped to run the car as part of the NARCOA excursions, and had some mechanical work done to tune it up. However, given the death of a friend with whom they'd hoped to share the excursions with, they decided to gift it to the museum. It hasn't been operated for a number of years, having been stored during that time. The unit appears to be complete but needs a new battery, as well as a carburetor and gas tank cleaning. It was built in 1958 and served at Lena, Illinois, a station west of Freeport on the Iowa Division of the Illinois Central Railroad. It

has a factory windshield and roof with side and rear weather curtains which are in very good condition. With its single cylinder Fairmount designed engine and a belt drive the car has a sound and charm all its own. F8695 may have been one of the IC motorcars rescued by the late museum member *Ken Ward* when the Chicago Central & Pacific took over operation of the Iowa Division. Two boat seats have been added and perhaps additional red taillights, as well as a rearview mirror for use during motorcar meets. In any event it is a very complete and intact example of a light motorcar used by section foremen to inspect track, a task now performed by using high-rail trucks.

**Joseph Hazinski**



Joseph Hazinski



Joseph Hazinski

Our latest motorcar, a classic Fairmount single cylinder unit from the Illinois Central sits on Track 3 north. Here we can see the little hand actuated gong used as a warning device. The aluminum handles protruding from the front are used to turn the car off the track so it can be set off to clear rail traffic.

In this view of the other side, the storm curtains can be seen in their stored position. The hand crank to start the car can also be seen in its stowed position. The metal circle is a guide to keep the crank straight when starting the car.

### FOX RIVER LINES STAFF

**Editor**—Joseph Hazinski

E-mail: [jrhengine@outlook.com](mailto:jrhengine@outlook.com)

2908 S. Clement Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207-2439

(414) 788-4357

**Special Assistant**—Jeff Bennett

**Layout and Graphics**—Jack Sowchin

*Fox River Lines* is the official publication of the Fox River Trolley Association, Inc., an Illinois not-for-profit corporation. It is published for distribution to members and friends of the Fox River Trolley Museum. Reproduction of the *Fox River Lines*, either in part or its entirety, is strictly prohibited without prior permission from the editorial staff or the FRTA Board of Directors. Entire contents Copyright © 2023 Fox River Trolley Association, Inc.

**Submissions:** Submission of stories from members and others is necessary in order to publish the *Fox River Lines*. Feature length articles are welcome and considered as are photographs and illustrations. Please contact the staff before undergoing a project. Contributors submit materials with the understanding that no monetary compensation is provided.

**Address change:** Send address changes to the museum's mailing address: Box 315, South Elgin, IL 60177.