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FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e



Issue 02-1, Spring 2002

Trolley Wire Goes Up on Extension



The Aldridge Electric crew with Chuck Galitz installing "trolley wire" at Blackhawk. Most of the work was done without benefit of snow which sped up the installation.

With all of the parts in and the engineering done, this winter's mild weather was the perfect break that was needed to get the trolley wire installed on the Blackhawk Forest Preserve extension. Starting in December and working through the first week in February, Aldridge Electric, Inc. was able to construct the new pole line for the feeder cable and install the cable. Then advanced to hanging the span wires and trolley wire on the line poles that they had previously installed in the Forest Preserve.



Supplying power to operate the museum's cars on the extension required the installation of a "600 v. feeder line" from Castlemuir on the north to the extension as well as "trolley wire" over the tracks. Seen here are the men and equipment installing the "feeder line" just south of the Canadian National bridge.



Placing of "span wires" from which the "trolley wire" is attached at Blackhawk.



Left: Attaching "trolley wire" to a "span wire."

Right: Planting one of the 54 poles in the Coleman Siding area.

The trolley cars, when at the current far end of the line away from the substation had always had a problem with the voltage drop, especially when more than one car was out. Already over a mile from the museum site at Castlemuir and their supply of power, another half mile of line was just going to make things more difficult. So a feeder cable was added to the west side of the right of way to supply the trolley wire at intervals so that the cars would have the power that they needed. After 50 some poles were placed along the line, over a mile of feeder cable leading into the extension was attached to them. The aluminum cable is about 1 inch in diameter to feed the almost half inch trolley wire, which though sounding quite large by itself, still is not enough to keep the trolley cars "well fed".

Attention was then given to assembling the span wires with their insulators, hangers, and trolley wire clamps between the pairs of line poles along the extension. Then as the trolley wire was run off of its reel, it was hung beside the clamps until it could be pulled up into place with the required tension. Then it was moved into its clamps which grip the top side of the somewhat figure 8 wire, leaving the bottom free for the passage of the trolley poles on the cars. Also attached along the way at intervals are lightning arresters to handle those situations when they occur.



Stringing "trolley wire" near the pond. Note the "feeder line" and the reel of shiny "trolley wire."



The Aldridge Contractor's equipment and their crew at Castlemuir working on the "feeder line."

Still to be done by museum volunteers are the placement of the trolley frogs and backbones. These frogs, unlike the majority found in the forest preserve, are the connection points of the two trolley wires at switches, which allow the trolley poles to follow the proper wire. Backbones are the overhead groups of support guy wires hung along curves to hold the trolley wire in position similar to the rail position between the line poles.

Chuck Galitz



Connecting Us with 1902

Hundred year anniversaries are always thought of as major milestones. Since 100 years is far beyond the typical three score and ten of human existence, anyone and anything that hits the century mark is truly special. Think back 100 years ago. There were no airplanes, radios, TVs, computers or paved country roads. Automobiles were rare-only found in cities. Electricity was new, and you had to be rich to have it in your house. Most people worked in agriculture. If they had non-farm jobs in town, they walked to work or rode a streetcar. In 1902, the United States had 45 states. Chicago only had 1.6 million people, while Cook County had 1.8 million, DuPage County had 28,000 and Kane County had over 78,000 people— thanks largely to those two bustling cities on the river, Aurora and Elgin. Things were a lot quieter, smaller and closer then. In the world of 1902, new things were exciting and wonderful and one of the newest things to hit Cook, DuPage and Kane county was the coming of one of the most amazing new technologies ever-the 'high-speed' electric third rail powered trains of the Aurora Elgin and Chicago Railway (AE&C).

August 1902. Testing of the new electric line begins, as construction-workers, electricians and train operators get ready to open this new marvel of transportation between Aurora and the Chicago city limits. Finally, on August 25, 1902, the first AE&C electric train left Wheaton, DuPage County, for the first trip on this modern marvel. The cars on that first train were wood with steel under frames and blazingly bright electric lights. They could run at speeds over 60 miles per hour and there was talk of 100 mph service in the next few years. Those cars on the first train were sisters to the Fox River Trolley Museum's car 20. In fact, car 20 could have been part of the first train, but records do not exist to let us ever know for sure. What a world it must of been in 1902. Imagine the excitement, the optimism and the amazement of the electric powered marvel of the AE&C's new trains.

Flash forward one hundred years. We live in a completely different world than 1902-cars, airplanes, TV, radio, the Internet and fast food. So much has changed between who we are today and who we were 100 years ago. Buildings, streets, even towns that existed then have changed beyond all

recognition today. A passenger on the first trip from Wheaton could not begin to understand the world of 2002. Worse, the Internet surfers of 2002 probably can't understand the world of 1902. So much has changed; so much has disappeared; the world of 1902 is gone forever— except car 20 is still with us. Car 20 anchors us to this past world. As an artifact, car 20 reminds us about the long lost world of our shared past. Car 20 lets us experience that past. When we ride the car, we connect with the people of Cook, DuPage and Kane County of 1902. Through this connection, we can gain understanding about the optimism and experiences of the people that lived here 100 years ago. And by sharing these experiences and seeing the continuity of our lives with people from a century ago, we can have a new appreciation for how our world came to be and our place in it.

This year marks car 20's one-hundredth birthday party. To mark the significance of surviving for a century, the Fox River Trolley Museum will host, this August, a special anniversary weekend. Being a survivor for 100 years is special. Being able to connect people with the past by giving them the experience of part of the past is amazing. Happy birthday car 20.

See you at the Museum.

Ed Konecki



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.

Cash Income and Expenses 2000 vs. 2001

INCOME

2000

2001

DUES	\$6,454	\$5,970
DONATIONS	\$19,367	\$8,438
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$979	\$1,788
STORE SALES	\$8,836	\$8,821
TICKET SALES	\$17,002	\$14,693
TOTAL INCOME	\$52,638	\$39,710
EXPENSES	2000	2001
ADMINISTRATION	\$4,081	\$11,998
CAR MAINTENANCE	\$584	\$3,100
ELECTRICITY	\$2,156	\$3,099
FACILITIES MAINTENANCE	----	\$1,277
INSURANCE	\$5,702	----
MEMBER SRVCE & PROMO	\$9,712	\$11,328
RENT	\$5,074	----
STORE STOCK	\$3,006	\$6,027
TRACK MAINTENANCE	\$2,939	\$12,419
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$33,254	\$49,248
INCOME LESS EXPENSE	\$19,384	(\$9,538)

Chuck Galitz

Editors Note: The blanks in the 2001 columns are due to a different accounting practice used in 2000.

Trolley Museum 2002 Schedule Announced

Edward Konecki, President of the Fox River Trolley Museum announced the Museum's 2002 calendar which begins **Mother's Day, May 12**. It is the biggest day in the Museum's 37th operating season, Konecki said. That day mother and grandmothers will be able to ride free with a paid child's fare.

Seven other special events, running a total of 12 days, dot the Museum's calendar:

Spring Caboose Train Rides, Sunday, June 2.

See spring blossom along the Fox River aboard the Museum's Big Red Illinois Central Caboose, pulled by a 93-year- old electric freight locomotive.

Tentative Dedication and Opening, Blackhawk Forest Preserve Extension, Saturday June 8.

Years in construction, the extension will be opened with special ceremonies

Father's Day, Sunday, June 16.

Bring dad and granddad for free rides with a paid child's fare.

Red, White and Blue Dollar Day, Thursday, July 4.

All riders pay \$1 on the nation's birthday, the 36th anniversary of the beginning of the museum's public operations.

The 23rd Annual Fox River Trolley Fest, Saturday and Sunday, August 17-18.

This event runs simultaneously with South Elgin's annual Riverfest-Express, which begins Aug. 15. The village and the Museum celebrate the long weekend along the Fox River with food, music, exhibits, crafts, antique autos, fireworks and weekend trolley rides. The Museum will be open extended hours, from 11am to 6pm., this weekend only.

Fall Caboose Train Rides, Sunday, October 6 and 13.

The big Red Caboose offers a great view as the as the colors begin to change along the scenic Fox River Line.

The Pumpkin Trolley, Saturday and Sunday, October 19-20 and 26-27.

It is the most popular of the Museum's special events. Join the hundreds who come each day, ride a trolley to the Museum's "Pumpkin Patch" to select your very own pumpkin and enjoy other activities. Pumpkins are \$1 extra.

The museum has again held the line on fares for 2002, *Konecki* said. Fares are \$2.50 for adults, \$2 for senior citizens, and \$1.50 for children 2-11. Children under 3 are always welcome for free.

Don MacBean

2002 Meetings

At its January 19, 2002 meeting the Fox River Trolley Association Board set the following dates, times and places for its meetings as well as Members Day and Annual Members Meeting.

THE TIME AND PLACE ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Contact Jim Gonyo, Secretary, at 630-296-2780 for latest information.

Saturday, March 23, 1:00pm: Council Chambers - South Elgin V. H. 10 N. Water Street

Saturday, May 18, 7:00pm: Council Chambers - South Elgin V. H. 10 N. Water Street

Saturday, July 13, 7:00pm : Council Chambers - South Elgin V. H. 10 N. Water Street

Saturday, September 7, 7:00pm: Council Chambers - South Elgin V. H. 10 N. Water Street

Other Meetings or Member events:

Saturday, April 27: Spring Members Day Museum Grounds - 1pm to 4pm, Council Chambers - South Elgin V. H. 10 N. Water Street - 7pm

Saturday, October 5: Annual Members Day - 11am to 5pm - Museum Grounds

Saturday, October 12: Annual Members Meeting - 1pm - Council Chambers - South Elgin V. H. 10 N. Water Street

20 Volunteers Attend Recognition Banquet Held at New Venue

The Golden Duck of Downers Grove was the site of this years Volunteer Recognition and Awards Banquet. A fine Bohemian meal was served, roses passed out to the ladies and four rounds of DEPOT (CAERY) . . . a *BINGO* type game . . . were played with *Stan Nettis, Barb Pettijohn, Jan Gonyo* and *Don MacCorqudale* winning. Dinner was served at 7pm and banquet goers were on their way home by 9pm. Thanks to the *Taylor*s for a fine evening.

Ed Konecki/DonMacBean



DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Car Department

While some work has taken place over the Winter, such as rebuilding Car 715's windows, assembling tools and preparing storage materials, March should see the beginning of serious work efforts at the museum site.

I plan to start the season off with a Department Meeting where our volunteer work forces will be organized with lists of tasks to be done this

season. I am hoping to have a few presentations but as of this writing they are not all lined up.

There will be an emphasis on safety, environmental responsibility, respect for tools and quality of work. Besides an expanded inspection and lubrication program for all operating cars there will be three main projects. Before the grand opening of the long awaited Blackhawk extension, North Shore car 715 will receive major attention with doors installed, cab window completed and installed, upper sash windows rebuilt, step tread fabricated and installed, roof work done, body work, surface preparation and finally painting and relettering. The simple red and green scheme will continue to be used and a quality oil based paint system used which can be both sprayed and brushed.

After the second weekend of operation work will begin in earnest on CA&E car 20. The east side window sill will be replaced, the South motorman's end window repaired, the Northwest end window replaced and train door posts and associated vestibule flooring repaired. Each of these projects will be done one at a time so as not to disable the car for operation by tearing the whole car apart. We may very well need the car on weekends because of increased traffic due to the extension, but there is always the possibility it may not be available on a given weekend. It is hoped that this work would be completed by Trolleyfest/Riverfest and will celebrate the car's 100th anniversary.

Thirdly during the Summer we will be able to put CTA car 40 into service. I would like to see this car painted but that is not essential. This would give us another passenger unit for Fall and the pumpkin trolleys. *Fred Lonnes* has headed up work on AE&FR locomotive #5 and as a result she is looking much better and will be a fine display as well as a useful tool. Unfortunately it does have wheel problems on the South truck which will require \$7,500 worth of work to correct. Fortunately it can still be used with restrictions and limitations, it is just not 100% correct.

There will be other projects as well including rainy day projects inside the car barn and shop car. The main ingredient is volunteer work effort if this year's program is to succeed. We need people who have some experience in woodworking, bondo body work, painting and sign painting. But most of all we need workers.

Joe Hazinski

Development Department

The ongoing activities of the writer continue to be concentrated on the Blackhawk Line Extension Project.

Plans for the feeder line from the substation to the extension were received the first week of September, 2001. The plans were sent out for pricing during the last half of September. Extensive discussions were ongoing with the potential contractor during the ensuing weeks. In early November a Purchase Order was issued to Aldridge Electric covering the installation of the poles for the feeder line. Subsequently a time and material

agreement was reached to cover the purchase and installation of the feeder line and hanging of the trolley wire. The work of installing the poles and feeder line started in Mid-December, 2001. It is anticipated that the work being done by Aldridge will be completed by the first week of February.

Work on the design of the passenger facilities at Blackhawk is completed, although much later than earlier anticipated. Prices for the work were received in Mid-November. The prices exceeded the funds available. Meetings were held with the low bidder to work toward a reduced work scope to accommodate the funds available. It is hoped that the purchase order will be issued by the end of January so that construction can start.

With the cost for trolley, feeder and passenger facilities exceeding those anticipated the Museum will have to complete final work on these elements. The work to be done include final alignment of trolley wire, connecting feeder taps, installing trolley frogs, completing both high & low level platforms and installing rail bonds.

With the work that is underway it is anticipated that an opening in May or June 2002 can be attained.

Fred Lonnes

What is in store at the Museum Store for 2002

Once again we will have the new 2002 Guide to Tourist Railways and Museums. We will be adding more postcards to our collection. Our Fox River Foxes went well last year and we will be having them again this season. We have different sizes of our FRTM T-Shirts and we will be carrying the cameras, which were popular with our customers when they forgot theirs at home.

Some of our new books we will be carrying this year include *Nothing Like It In The World* which is about the building of the Union Pacific Railroad and the Central Pacific Railroad. Another new book for the Gift Shop is the "Chicago Unforgettable Vintage Images." which is a collection of photographs in one volume gathered from other Chicago area books published by Arcadia. We will be carrying many new things for children, families and the interested shopper visiting the museum this season.

Laura Taylor

Operating Department Looking Forward to a Great Season!

We are approaching the 2002 season and I am looking forward to the opening of the extension into the Blackhawk forest preserve. I know that

you, Fox River Trolley Museum members, and the operating crews share my excitement. Please bring your friends when you visit the museum this summer. The crew will make sure that your visit is memorable.

All crew members that have not passed the new 2001 safety-operating test will be required to take the test in 2002. The first safety meeting and review session is planned for the morning of March 23, 2002 in South Elgin. Other future dates will be scheduled prior to opening day. A review package will be sent to each crew member before the safety meeting.

The opening of the extension will require additional crew members. Please call Jim Gonyo at 630-964-4366 if you are interested in being an agent or train operator. I will provide you with the study materials for the test and schedule operator and conductor training on the equipment.

Jim Gonyo

Building the Fox River Line

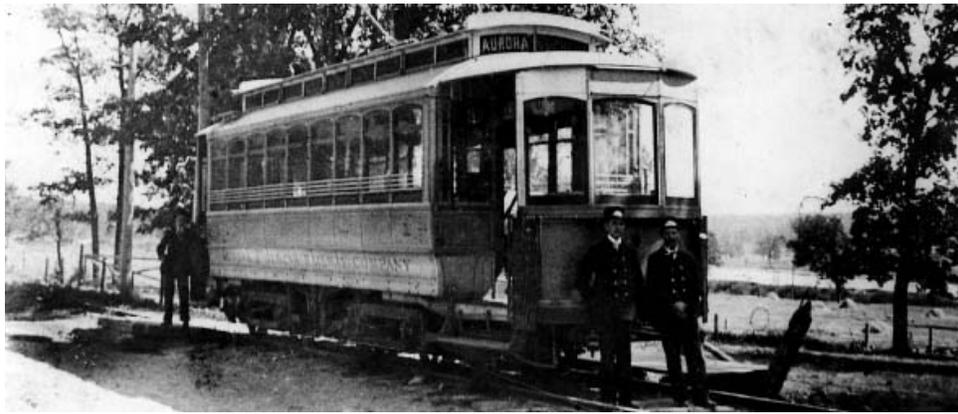
Editor's Note:

Parts 1 and 2 of these articles discussed the efforts of the Elgin City Lines to extend trolley service north and south of Elgin. Part 3 discusses the Aurora streetcar system extending trolley service north to Batavia. Part 4 will deal with the construction between Batavia and Geneva. Aurora to Yorkville will be covered in part 5. A history of the Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric Company including the street car lines replete with numerous pictures can be found in Hopkins Peffers' Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric Company, Volumes Two and Three. The books are available at the Museum's Gift Shop during the operating season.

North from Aurora to Batavia

AE&FRE (Part 3)

Aurora's first electric streetcar ran for the public on March 16, 1891. The Aurora Street Railway's financial backers were located in New York City. Robert Dodson, president of the Aurora Street Railway lived there and not Aurora. In 1895, the financial backers of both the Aurora and Elgin streetcar systems had expansion and more profits on their minds. After meetings held in April 1895, the backers of both systems agreed to build toward each other and meet on the south side of Geneva. The agreement stated that after the two routes were physically joined, the two companies would also be consolidated at the corporate level.



Aurora and Geneva Railway Co. #2 on the line which was opened for service between Aurora and Batavia on October 24, 1896.

The Aurora system began to have problems with its expansion almost from the start of its efforts. It took them a year to negotiate a franchise agreement to operate electric cars on designated streets in Batavia. A local newspaper announced on June 6, 1896 that "The Aurora Street Railway will build at once to Batavia. Articles of incorporation have been filed for the Aurora & Geneva Street Railway Company. The plan is to build to Batavia this year and perhaps further". The Monday June 8th newspaper provided additional information, "The long talked of electric line connecting Aurora and Geneva is at last an assured fact, that it will be built and in operation before the snow flies again, and that it will be virtually a part of the Aurora Street Railway system. The Elgin-Aurora company deal, so far as it affects the Aurora end of the line, seems to have fallen through. The Elgin company building from the watch city to Geneva will end its line there, and the road from Geneva to Aurora will be operated by the Aurora and Geneva company. The managers of the Aurora company have arrived at this decision some time ago, but have been working quietly on the project. The company's plan is to begin work at the earliest moment possible and to have the road in operation to Batavia in two months. The work will stop at that point until next spring unless the people along the proposed route show a desire to avail themselves of its advantages at once. If they offer sufficient inducement, the line will go through to Geneva at once".

As a part of its extension to Batavia, the Aurora Street Railway asked the City of Aurora for an extension of time on its 20 year franchise, granted in 1890, to make it 20 years from date. Local newspapers announced on July 16th that "On condition of its promise to build an extension to Batavia, the Aurora council granted the Aurora electric railway company an extension of franchise for twenty years, dated from June 1, 1896.

Batavia finally granted the Aurora & Geneva company a franchise on August 1, 1896. The railway wasted no time and began construction of the interurban railway at 7:30 am on Monday August 3rd. "A force of fifty men with picks, shovels, horse teams, plows, and scrapers are making the dirt fly today in the vicinity of Sullivan farm. The track will be laid on the side of the highway, next to the graveled track for vehicles. The trolley wires will swing from arms projecting from a single row of poles on one side. Material will be distributed from cars on the Batavia Branch of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railroad, which parallels the highway the

entire distance. Manager Belden, of the Aurora Street Railway and the Aurora & Geneva Railway, predicts that with favorable weather, he will have the Aurora and Geneva Railway interurban electric road completed to Batavia by September 20th", reported the Batavia Herald.

Earthwork construction continued at a feverish pace. President Dodson from New York was on hand to personally oversee construction of the new railway. Grading on the line from Aurora north through North Aurora was completed and railroad ties on this segment were being laid down by August 14th. The installation of rails began at the Aurora end on Wednesday August 19th.

The Elgin newspaper reported on September 18th that, "The track for the Aurora & Batavia electric railway is now laid to North Aurora, and the poles and wires are up to nearly the same point".



Another view of A&G #2 at an abutment near Sullivan Road about half way between Aurora and North Aurora. Note the substantial construction of the abutment.

Electric cars began operating between Aurora and North Aurora on Sunday October 4th. Three electric cars operated on the line that day and carried between 1,600 and 1,700 people.. The initial fare was five cents. A transfer between the interurban line to Batavia and Aurora streetcars required an additional fare. The fare from Aurora to Batavia was set at ten cents. The optimistic railway managers even announced an Aurora to Geneva fare to be fifteen cents when its rails would enter that city.

Aurora streetcars were initially used on the new line since most of the new cars for the interurban service were not ready. The Aurora Post reported on October 7th, "A great many of our citizens took the trip from the transfer station in Aurora to North Aurora yesterday. Of course they all tried to board the new car, but this was utterly impossible, so two more old cars were brought from the barn and used. All afternoon a continual

stream of people visited the up river burg. At one time 105 passengers were aboard the large new car. Nearly 1,750 passengers were aboard the large new car that day. The trip up the river is pleasant, the road bed level, good time is made and the scenery is beautiful. This line promises to be a paying one".

On Thursday October 15th, the newspapers reported, "The track of the Geneva extension of the Aurora street railway is laid into Batavia, with the exception of the bridge at Mill Creek, which will be ready for the cars by Saturday. The Mill Creak bridge is a substantial steel structure capable of sustaining heavy freight trains. The electric street railway is being built through Batavia this week. Therefore, the road bed in the street is all torn up".



Looking south from just north of Mooseheart along what today is Illinois Route 31 as seen in 1896. "Old Dobbin" seen just to the right of the interurban car was displaced by the interurban and it displaced by the automobile 39 years later.

"The remaining construction at Mill Creek and in Batavia was finished at the same feverish pace at which construction began. The Batavia Herald reported in a large story in its October 29th edition:- "The electric railway between Batavia and Aurora was formally opened last Saturday October 24, 1896, and cars now run regularly every hour. The alderman, and other citizens of Batavia were invited to ride to Aurora at 11 o'clock. Members of the press and other distinguished citizens of Aurora were invited to ride to Batavia and return, leaving Aurora at 11:30."

"It spoils an hour to make the trip, and while it might be made in less time, yet a half hour each way will probably be allowed, which will give the cars an opportunity to pick up passengers along the line. The ride between Aurora and Batavia is one of the prettiest in the State. The road runs along the beautiful Fox River, which can be seen most of the way-its smooth waters reflecting back the beauties of the landscape, the foliage, the sky, clouds and sunshine, lending an additional beauty to the scene. That there will be considerable travel between the two cities there is no doubt. A foot

bridge over the river now and then, especially at the Smelting Works, would bring more travel to the new road and accommodate the residence of the east side as well."

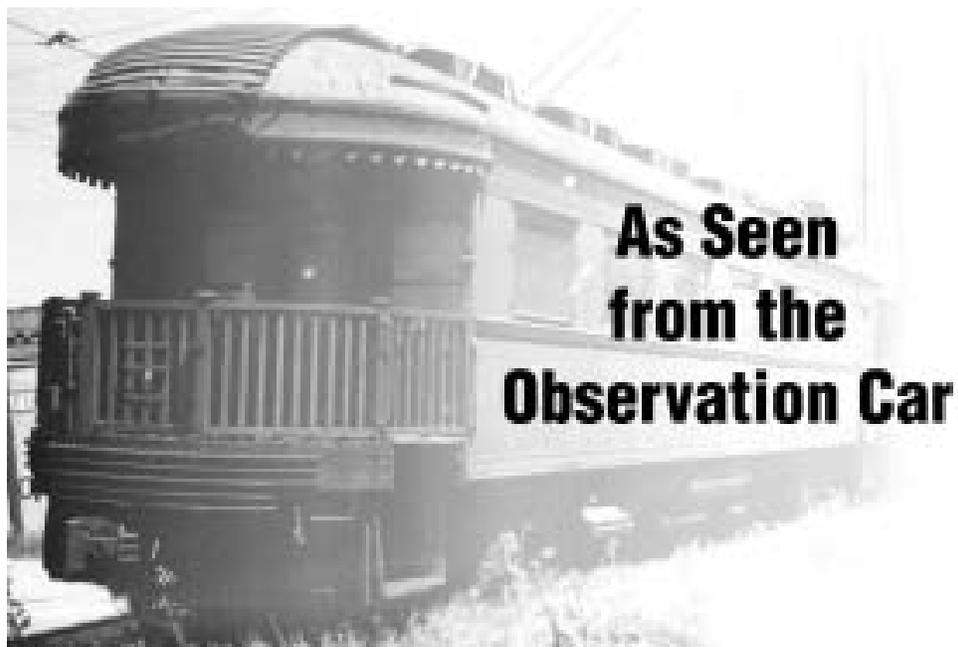
"At North Aurora is a turn-out, with a side track two or three hundred feet long. The steel bridge over Mill Creek looks substantial and appears to be well built. In Batavia, the car stops at the Revere Hotel, but it is expected it will be extended to Geneva in a few weeks. This makes the fourth iron track which bonds both cities, Aurora and Batavia, and the frequent cars will give Batavia people all the advantages of the county."

"The farms lying between the two towns are destined to be cut into smaller lots and become homes of those doing business in the city, who wish a quite retreat. The road is now declared open, ready for business, pleasure parties, trolley parties and the like. Let all take a ride, The fare to Aurora is ten cents."

"If patronage of the new Batavia road keeps up to the high water mark it did Sunday, the railway will be the best paying six miles of track in the country. Car number 1 took in 940 fares in the first round trips Sunday afternoon, while several thousand passengers rode during the day. Fares are collected twice each trip, one on each side of North Aurora".

The initial railway construction built from Aurora to the north side of Batavia. The Batavia Herald reported after the trolleys were running to Batavia that with a horse-drawn bus connection between Batavia and Geneva, the trip from Aurora to Elgin can be made for forty cents in two hours time using the electric railways at both ends of the trip.

Andy Roth



The Museum is in process. Being a professional museum is our goal. What do we have to do to achieve this goal? Here are some keys to our development as members and leaders.

- Realize that we stand for the importance of a museum in our community.
- Read, understand, post, publish and buy into it.
- Incorporate the Mission Statement as the vision of our business plan.
- Institute sound management planning.
- Develop policies and procedures for management, volunteers, boards, and chairpersons.
- Implement an ongoing planning process.
- Educate ourselves. Attend seminars. Read journals/newsletters. Talk to colleagues.
- Research the economic impact of the Museum. How much money do we bring into the community?
- Know our Museum. Whom do we serve? Beyond economic and educational impact, what other impact do we have in the community? What would happen in our community if the Museum did not exist?
- Promote yourself and the Museum at every opportunity. Develop a public relations plan.
- Know our business community, and understand their politics and their needs.
- Study and know the business impact of the Museum.
- Avoid complacency.
- Maintain a balance.
- Seek excellence in our selves and in everyone around us.

Don MacBean, Editor

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Correspondence: Comments, suggestions, and corrections relating to Fox River Lines should be directed to Managing Editor Don MacBean at the address listed above. The editorial staff appreciates your feedback.



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