

FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e



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CA&E QUILTS!



This chalkboard hung on the old dispatcher's tower in the Wheaton yard. It chronicled the end of CA&E passenger and freight service. The information on the board was chalked in by Ed Allen, a CA&E employee at the time and an FRTM founding member. The board, updated daily, identified for switchman -- "Cars to be held for INSPECTION (Track 1 or Track 2), sent to the WASH TRACK for washing, HOLD cars and Comebacks."

Gone but Certainly NOT Forgotten

The Chicago area has never seen a service suspension similar to that on the CA&E July 3, 1957. But museum volunteers performed a re-enactment that was a bit *more* realistic than expected the weekend of June 30-July 1.

The one-time CA&E weekend celebration took months of planning. It all began back in the fall of 2006 with a suggestion that the museum mark the 50th anniversary of the end of CA&E passenger operations. Through the

winter, ideas were bounced back and forth and a plan began to take shape.



Conductor Bob Rodenkirk and event coordinator addressing visitors on the history commemorating the event.

It was decided almost immediately to try to make available a two-car CA&E train for the weekend - something the museum hadn't done, except for one or two trips on the final operating day of 2005, since 1984. *Ralph and Rob Taylor* had been working on 316's restoration since 2004, and the pace picked up over the winter and into the spring with additional help from *Bob Wayman, Jim and Jan Gonyo, Grant Harrison and Matt del Giudice*.

It was suggested that perhaps we rename our stations for the weekend. Castlemuir became Wheaton, thanks to a sign in tradition CA&E style hand-lettered by *Ralph Taylor*. Ralph had a professional sign-painter do the heavy lifting on the other sign, a CRT blue enamel-style DesPlaines Ave. sign.

Ralph also secured permission to use a genuine and unique CA&E artifact - the inspection track sign from Wheaton Shops, lettered in white paint with the words all passenger service abandoned July 3rd 12:13 p.m., 1957, and the question, The end???? A later note, painted in the lower left corner of the sign noted the end of freight service nearly two years later.

Ralph Taylor and I also provided CA&E memorabilia for display, including lanterns, a motorman's seat, company mailbags and the controller from the parlor car Carolyn. We even obtained and framed a copy of the *Chicago Sun-Times* front page of July 4, 1957, which had a front-page story and two photos, including one of museum co-founder Ed Allen, then a CA&E switchman, fielding calls at DesPlaines Ave. terminal.



With 316 in the lead and 20 seen heading (west) north to Wheaton in the Jon Duerr Forest Preserve.

Extensive publicity was done beforehand in local media, and the *Daily Herald* even printed one press release verbatim. The *Northwest Herald*, *Kane County Chronicle*, *Elgin Courier-News*, *Aurora Beacon-News* and *Sun* Newspapers all printed stories in advance. CA&E Days also was the focus of a half-hour WSPY-TV *Fox Valley Today* show aired June 25.

Unfortunately, vandals struck the museum in the days immediately before CA&E weekend. It took a concerted, six-hour clean-up effort on June 30 that began well before the museum opened to the public to eradicate the graffiti. Thanks to *Jim and Jan Gonyo*, *Luke Helm*, Lisa Hendrickson, *Jim Minerly*, *Art Lemke*, *Marty Tuohy*, *Don MacCorquodale*, *Marcia and Budd Wilkening*, *Robert Olech*, *Gene Jannece*, and *Bill, Mary and Jen Hottendorf* for pitching in. Most visitors never knew what had happened.



Unwary commuters boarding at Wheaton for the trip to Forest Park.



CA&E 316 and 20 eastbound (southbound) on track two heading to Forest Park.

The first day of the weekend ran smoothly, with 68 passengers plus crew riding aboard two re-enactment trains, at 12 noon and 1 p.m. The two-car CA&E train handled most of the rest of the day's trips, with CTA 4451 running the two pre-noon trips and North Shore 715 two late afternoon trips. Saturday evening, *Bruce Moffat* entertained and informed with a multimedia presentation based on his new publication, *Cooperation Moves the Public* (which is on sale at the Fox River gift shop), and concluding with vintage film of CA&E operations from *Ralph Taylor*. Thanks to Ralph for hurriedly getting his slide projector into place to assist Bruce.

Before taking riders down the line, we set the stage with a brief history lesson (done on the train at 1 p.m. Saturday) that included the CA&E's construction, the expressway construction that cost it its downtown entry, its desperate cash position by the spring of 1957, the July 3, 1957, court action, and the mini-riot that ensued on the DesPlaines Ave. platform that day, then told the conductor to call "CA&E train ??63??" to take them to "Forest Park."



Passengers in 20 enjoying a comfortable ride to Forest Park. The event attracted a large number of visitors including railfans including one seen capturing the moment for history.



An interior view of CA&E 316 put in service for CA&E DAYS, a re-enactment of July 3, 1957.

At the south end, *Ralph Taylor* had installed a real CA&E communications telephone at the east end of the platform, and riders were directed off the train to that general area. I played the part of CA&E trainmaster M. O. Caliahan, phoned the "Wheaton dispatcher," (who was actually *Don MacBean*, on an extension at the other end of the platform - an ex-CA&E employee doing the honors) and the orders were given to shut down operations, annul westbound CA&E express train 71, put up white flags and return to "Wheaton without passengers and without stops.

Orders were repeated, there was some cross-talk between motorman and conductor to the effect of "I don't know what they're thinking" for all to hear, and the interurban train pulled out empty.



Passengers detrainning at DesPlaines Ave. (Blackhawk Station) and waiting for their CTA train to take them to work at offices along the beautiful shores of Lake Michigan eerrr . . . the Fox River.



Member Don MacCorqudale at the controls of 316.

On both Saturday trips, everything executed flawlessly and the riders were returned after a brief delay. That also was the plan on Sunday, but the wire came down at DeYoung Junction as the "rescue train" came out of the South Coleman Switch. We really had stranded everyone!



Left: Conductor Rodenkirk opening phone box at DesPlaines Ave, to get orders from CA&E dispatcher.

Right: FRTM's replica of the CA&E Forest Park platform with "DesPlaines Ave." sign made specifically for the event by member Ralph Taylor.

We had one truly exasperated rider who left everyone else laughing, convinced he was a plant. A few people were able to summon rides via cell phone and we sent vans to collect riders, but with the beautiful, 70ish and sunny weather that day, it was no problem for most to simply walk back up the bicycle path, the way some commuters walked the CA&E right-of-way July 3, 1957. Only two people, including an 89-year-old Pullman Co. retiree, stuck with the train, which remained quite comfortable. Eventually, the rescue train met up with the CA&E train that had been stalled near Woodcliff when power was cut, and pushed them in while also towing 715.



Conductor Rodenkirk advising passengers that there are no more CA&E trains to Wheaton . . ."Service is suspended."



Conductor Rodenkirk advising passengers that there are no more CA&E trains to Wheaton and that there will be a rescue train.



CNS&M 715 and Warren and Saline River #73 leaving DeYoung Siding. This train provided equipment for the "rescue train" to help passengers stranded at Forest Park.

The CA&E train was spotted at the mainline loading platform while repair took place; *Chuck Galitz, Bob Wayman, Ralph Taylor, Jim Gonyo, and Bill Minerly* worked on the repair as *Greg Runions* and I gave tours at Wheaton for the balance of the day and talked about the CA&E's history, while *Laura Taylor and Jan Gonyo* were busy in the gift shop. Many riders who left once called several times or came back one or more times to check to see if we'd completed the repairs; it would have been an extremely busy day had we been able to operate. The publicity did its job, but it took until 7:45 p.m. Sunday to complete repairs. A decision was made quickly to honor the custom-printed tickets issued July 1 for the balance of the month.

Bob Breese-Rodenkirk



Silver Threads Amongst the Gold

How Now (FRTM) Brown Cow?

Almost all railroad history organizations that I have a membership in are talking about the problem of the aging of their membership. People always get older. But usually, in organizations, younger people join so that the average age of membership stays pretty constant. What I'm hearing and seeing too is that younger people, for the most part, are not joining railroad history organizations. So the average age of membership gets older and older. Soon, members start to pass away and the average age of the organizations membership is dead. At that point, the organization is dead.

There is proof of this besides the gray hair on my own head. There are numbers and demographics galore, but a more interesting way to see that this is really happening is to look at it from an economics viewpoint - supply and demand. Everyone knows that if more people want to buy something that has a fixed supply, the price goes up. Everyone knows that if fewer people want to buy something that has a fixed supply, the price goes down. So, if there are fewer people interested in the books and artifacts of railroad history (older enthusiast passing away and no younger enthusiasts coming into the market), then there should be a drop in book and artifact prices.

There is a drop, a significant one too, in a product that is very representative of electric railway enthusiasts. This is a book called, *The Great Third Rail*.

In 1973, after saving my allowance for 10-weeks, I bought my copy of the final, hard cover edition of this book at Kroch's and Brentanos book store in Evergreen Plaza, Evergreen Park, IL, for \$10.00. Now, after the final edition, there were a fixed number of copies of this book in the market. So, as younger, electric railroad history enthusiasts discovered this book, the book became more expensive. How expensive? You would do well to get a copy between \$75 and \$90. Often though, you paid well over \$125. This is a significant market premium, given that controlling for inflation, the \$10.00 book of 1973 would be \$45.55 in 2006.

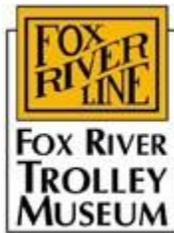
In 2007, you can buy *The Great Third Rail* for \$20 to \$30. In other words, there are either a lot more copies of this book in circulation or a lot fewer people who want this book or both!

What at first appears ominous though, is actually a blessing. There are still people who want this book, so there is still interest. But now, the price is right to do a wonderful thing. Older electric railway preservationists can buy this book (and others) and give copies to younger people to spark and stimulate their interest in the excitement and drama electric railways. And soon, these young people, wanting to know more and experience more

about electric railways, will join railway museums and railway history organizations. For example, my 1973 purchase of The Great Third Rail led me to a membership in the Fox River Trolley Museum in 1978.

Edward Konecki

Responses are invited by the editor and President Konecki.
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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.



Matt Del Guidice with a welcoming face and personality at the ticket counter of the Castlemuir Depot.

Younger Member Makes The News!

Editor's note: This uncut article appeared in the June 27, 2007 issue of the Elgin Courier News. May his tribe increase.

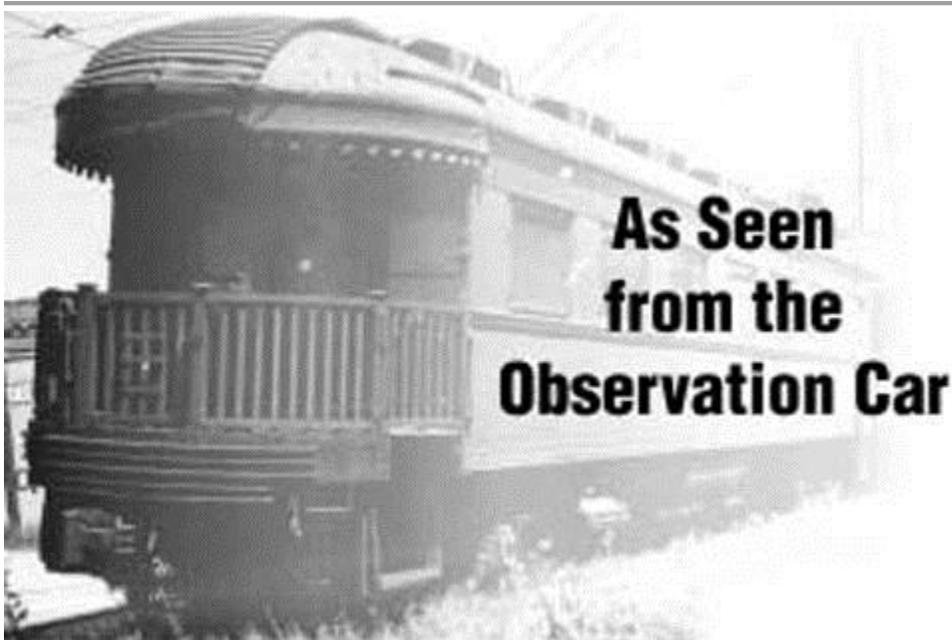
The lanky Geneva High School junior gestured to a weathered, wooden shack just off South La Fox Street and said with an aw-shucks tone, "I guess I'm repainting it." It's obvious Matt Del Guidice, 16, will enjoy painting the Fox River Trolley Museum's depot, just as he enjoys all his assigned tasks here. He has been a faithful Trolley Museum volunteer since he was 12, and is dreaming of the day, two years from now, when he can operate a train.

A typical Saturday and Sunday finds Matt at the museum early, waiting at the gates because he doesn't yet have a key. He helps turn the place on, throwing power switches, opening up train cars and bringing the depot back to life after five days of silence. He's come a long way. Matt's first day as a volunteer found him collecting tickets on the trains. He now gives the verbal tour, "the famed spiel," he said, as passengers ride the four-mile

round-trip tour on one of the historic train cars. "That's kind of a new one for me. It's coming along," he said of his job explaining the history that lies at the heart of the museum and answering visitors' questions. Asked if train enthusiasts ever stump him with a question, Matt answers, "All the time. I have to refer them up the ladder" of experts. Someone always has the answer, he said. Not much of a dates-and-times buff himself, the teenager loves working on the rails best. "I like to just do the work. Saturday we do a lot of track work." Track work, albeit on a smaller scale, has long been a favorite hobby. Growing up in South Elgin, Matt not only visited the trolley museum often, he played at home with a large O scale train set.

These days he divides his energy between the Geneva High School marching band, in which he plays clarinet; the track team, for which he competes in the high jump; and the museum, where he does whatever is asked of him — even in 90-degree weather. "You have to have a real interest, because it's unpaid," he said. His friends wonder why he'd work for no money, but they do come and visit, he said. His friends probably won't ever get to drive a 45-ton locomotive. Matt will, after turning 18 and passing the required safety tests. He will need to be observed for one portion of the testing, but he's watched conductors navigate the rails for some time now. "With six years under my belt, I think I'll have it down," he said. And with that special driving license, Matt will join a select group of individuals who give so freely of their time to a good cause. "It's preserving history," the self-proclaimed future doctor, lawyer or engineer said. "Otherwise, it will be gone."

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Think

Outside the Box

We are all aware of the expression, current in American parlance, "Think outside the box." It is used in most instances to encourage thinking beyond, above or outside prevailing thought on any given thought, process, operation, procedure, system or philosophy. Such is the object of this essay. We will attempt to use the illustration of the box below with words (ideas) inside and outside the confines of the box. Readers then can evaluate and interpret for themselves and make suggestions to the Museum's board or volunteer managers as to what needs to be changed, added or dropped in the way the Museum functions and achieves.

Don MacBean



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