

FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e

official publication of the
FOX RIVER TROLLEY MUSEUM



Come ride with us!

ISSUE 10-3 ■ FALL 2010

news from
**UNDER
the wire**

RECENT FOX RIVER LINE HAPPENINGS

news from
**UNDER
the wire**



Joe Hazinski

2009 Track Team Projects Repairing Switch Point on Switch 20

During the last week of November in 2008, Swanson Contracting installed Switch 20 on Track 2 and rebuilt 180 feet of Track 1 at Castlemuir. Track 1 is part of the original museum track from the early 1960s. Switch 20 is a number 7 switch with 15-foot points purchased in 2001 from the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railroad (CRANDIC).

The track team then corrected brace placements on Switch 20. In addition, the team straightened one of Switch 20's points, which had become bent at the heel block end.

This the way our tracks should look and this is the way they do look. This is the way Ed Konecki, Road Master, keeps it. Ties have been replaced where needed over our track, track surfaced and the entire two plus miles of track sprayed. The herbicide application keeps vegetation to a minimum, providing proper drainage which in turn lengthens tie life. All of this to ensure that our guests have a safe, comfortable ride. This view is looking south from just north of the IC/CN bridge.

Editors Note:- The pictures in this issue are a story within a story about the Museum's efforts at track maintenance through herbicide application, one of the most important in maintaining our track in good safe condition.

The team was not successful at bending it straight, so the point will be replaced with another 15-foot point from the other CRANDIC switch we have in stock.

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Editor's Note:

This issue is almost exclusively devoted to the efforts of the Track Department. Over a period of many many years what used to be a right of way that looked like "a green carpet" where one would ask "where are the ties?" has been changed to look mostly like the tracks of the AE&FRE before abandonment of passenger service in March of 1935. Yes we do have ties and over the years many thousands have been "changed out" and the cinder ballast maintained. This issue is a salute to the current road master, Ed Konecki and his current able track crew and to their predecessors.

- Don MacBean



president's message

From the Front Platform

Spirit of Partnership

The members and friends of the Fox River Trolley Museum volunteer their time and funds to provide a memorable and educational experience for our visitors. Many of us work long and hard on such activities as maintaining the cars, making train crew assignments, keeping the grounds up, running the gift shop and taking care of the hundreds of other tasks needed to run the museum. Sometimes, though, despite the hard work, we encounter critical comments from our visitors. People will ask about the lack of visitor facilities or the shortness of the ride. They will also help with suggestions to improve things that start out, "You should.". Now, like many people, I often feel a bit taken a back when I run into comments like these, but instead of being frustrated, I instead change it around in my mind as an opportunity to invite a critical visitor to help the museum. How, ask for their help.

When you ask for help, you are changing the relationship we have with our visitor. You turn the conversation from one of critical concern to acting as partners. The word partner is important here. Why is it important? Partners are equal participants in an activity of common interest, in our case, explaining history. Let us look at what this means concerning the Fox River Trolley Museum.

Our museum exists to provide a service to the community. We are the caretakers of a significant part of the historical story about who we are and how we came to live the way we do. Since 1959, the Fox River Trolley Museum's members and friends have volunteered to build a museum to tell this story. We tell the story with artifacts, antique railroad cars and a ride on a 105-year-old railroad. We tell this story to thousands of people every year-our visitors. Our visitors are our partners in our activity. Without them listening to us and riding with us, there would be no story, no museum, no preserved artifacts, no railroad cars and no railroad. But, our visitors do not know that they are our partners. And, this is where we must begin to educate them.

The best place to start with educating our visitors that they are our partners is when they ride with us. Let our visitors know that they are partners in the museum. Tell our visitors that this museum is their museum and that they can help in improving it for tomorrow's visitor. Tell them that they can help. When our visitors know that they can help and that they are our partners, it will change the relationship that they have with us. Our relationship changes from passive to active, from visitor to partner. So, what is the power of this partnership relationship? When you treat visitors as partners, visitor comments, even of our critical visitors, change to suggestions for positive action. And, positive action is what will build our museum for future generations to come.

Ed Konecki

edwardkonecki@aol.com
847-209-5453

Ed would appreciate your comments and or suggestions. He can be reached by e-mail at the address above or at the phone number shown.

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ADDRESS ... 361 S. LaFox St., P.O. Box 315, South Elgin, IL 60177
PHONE ... (847) 697-4676 **WEBSITE ...** www.foxrolley.org

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Museum Financials 2009

CASH INCOME 2009

Dues	\$8,795
Donations	\$36,712
Miscellaneous Income	\$10,697
Store Sales	\$8,055
Ticket Sales	\$57,012
TOTAL CASH INCOME	\$121,271

CASH EXPENSES 2009

Administration	
{phone, bank fees, insurance,	
professional fees, taxes, rent}	\$29,414
Car Maintenance	
{lubricants, parts, repairs, restorations}	\$29,049
Electricity	\$3,982
Facilities Maintenance	
{property upkeep, waste disposal}	\$13,350
Member & Museum Services	
{memberships, advertising, publications,	
web site, archives, operations,	
community relations, development}	\$35,748
Store Stock	\$2,946
Track Maintenance	\$12,228
TOTAL CASH EXPENSES	\$126,717



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.

2009 Track Team Projects

(Continued from page 1)

On Sunday, April 5, the weather was the big worry of the day. However, the predicted storms didn't come in until the team had finished its goals: complete repair of the west switch point of new Switch 20 at Castlemuir and spike up all of the newly inserted ties at Castlemuir.

The first task was to complete the repair of the west switch point. This involved grinding off a lip of metal on the gage side of the point. While this was taking place, the substation was started up and "L" car 4451 was lubricated so the track team could use the car to power our Air Spiker. After the switch point work was complete, the point was tested by running car 4451 through it and observing that the car tracked very well through the switch. Now it was time to start spiking. First, the team spiked the new ties in Switch 54. The team went on to the mainline and moved north to spike all of the new ties inserted between switch 54 and the current tie-up location of "L" cars 40 and 43. All 33 ties were spiked just as the weather changed around 3:30 in the afternoon. So after tying up the 4451 on the mainline, the team put all the tools away and drove off just as the first rain drops fell.

Replacing 100 to 120 New Ties on Mainline

Preparing for the 2009 Season

In mid-March of 2009 the track team organized and cleaned up the Maintenance of Way (MOW) building in preparation for the 2009 season. Two weeks later the track team unloaded 250 new 6 in. x 8 in. industrial railroad ties from the truck onto the parking lot. Then, 24 ties were loaded into the Iron Monster Cart for distribution along the mainline. In the days that followed, the track team distributed 100 of the new ties along the mainline of our demonstration railroad in preparation for the first Saturday Track Fun of 2009.

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FOX RIVER LINES STAFF

Managing Editor—Don MacBean

817 College Ave. #5, Wheaton, IL 60187

(630) 665-2581 E-mail DMacBRR@aol.com

Layout and Graphics—Jack Sowchin

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

Correspondence: Comments, letters to the Editor, 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.

2009 Track Team Projects

(Continued from page 3)

Inserting Ties on the Main Line

Starting at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 4, track team volunteers pulled out and inserted 84 ties on the demonstration railroad mainline. This included three switch ties at Switch 54. While the tie replacement was taking place, other track team volunteers loaded up the remaining

123 ties in the parking lot and moved them south of the Maintenance of Way building so that they would be easily available for additional tie work during the season.

To finish the day, the track team spotted three relay ties for replacement on Castlemuir Track 1 and three new ties on Castlemuir Track 2. The Track 1 ties will finish the transition between the new track and the old track. The Track 2 ties will be inserted under a joint in front of the Track 2 platform.

Plating and Spiking the New Ties

On Saturday, April 11, beautiful Spring weather kept the track team busy. Al Barker, Ed Konecki, and Jim Minerly loaded up the tools while Bill Minerly and

Ralph Taylor prepared “L” car 4451 for operation at the work site south of Stop 53. Once at the work site, Al and Ed started plating the new ties. This involves matching the spike-hole pattern on the plates so that we can use the correct spiking pattern when nailing the rail to the tie. Following the plate gang, Ralph set spikes and then drove them home with the air hammer while Jim and his father, Bill, used claw bars to nip the tie. Nipping is where you place one or two claw bars under a tie to lift the tie up to the rail. This provides a very firm surface to drive home the spike. Ralph had to leave at noon, so Ed took over the spiking. Skipping lunch, we continued working until 2:00 p.m. We got 27 ties spiked with 24 more ties for next Saturday.



Another view of our track looking north from south of the IC/CN bridge. Note the near perfect alignment - no low joints and level alignment – no “wiggly track.”



Joe Hazinski

Weed Patch, the Museum's herbicide contractor, truck starts the day at switch 54. The Museum's facilities at Castlemuir are in the background.



Joe Hazinski

The Weed Patch truck crossing one of the many cattle under passes on our right of way. They now serve as drainage outlets, but when area was being farmed, cattle used them to get to the Fox River for water. This is just south 54.

The following Saturday was a glorious day in South Elgin. It was a great day to finish up spiking the remaining 24 ties inserted on Saturday, April 4. Ed fired up the museum's motorcar and then he and Jim got the track tools loaded on the motorcar trailer. At the same time, Bill and Ralph made "L" car 4451 ready for operation so that its air compressor could power the Museum's air spiker. Once

everyone was at the work site, Ralph started setting spikes and Bill pounded them down with the Air Spiker. Jim handled the important job of nipping the ties. While Ralph, Bill, and Jim spiked, Ed finished plating the remaining ties and also relocated a couple of ties that were not positioned in the right place. After all of the ties were plated, Ed joined the spiking party. We then finished up and

spiked the remaining 24 ties.

Since we did not have enough people to start tamping, we returned back to the Maintenance of Way building to quit for the day. While Ed and Jim got the tools put away, Bill and Ralph tied up 4451.

After putting the tools away, Ed checked the Jackson Electric Tamping Generator's oil. Since it was a little low, he added some oil. After way too many pulls of the starting cord, the generator was test started. Finally, the engine caught and roared to life. So we are ready to go for next Saturday and tamping.

Tamping in Spite of the Weather

The last Saturday in April was a good day to stay close to the Maintenance of Way building to keep out of the rain and even some hail. Al, Jim, Ed, and Patrick Storm got out the surfacing tools, the Jackson Tamping Generator, and two of the Electric Jackson Tamping shovels, which were set up at Switch 54. Then, Ed spotted jacks on the east side of Switch 54 to tip the switch to level. With the jacks in place, Patrick, Jim, and Ed proceeded to ratchet the jacks up to get the right height on the east rail. This took a lot of effort, because that switch is heavy. Finally, we got the switch level so we could finish spiking the east mainline rail on the two new 15-foot switch ties.

Once the spiking was done, Ed and Patrick started up the Jackson generator, connected up the Electric Jackson Tamping shovels, and started to tamp the east side of Switch 54. While Ed and Patrick tamped, Al and Jim fed the tampers a steady stream of ballast to load under the ties. Soon the real fun started, because 10 minutes into the tamping it started to rain and then started to hail. Everyone except Ed and Patrick retreated to the Maintenance of Way building to ride out the storm. Ed and Patrick stayed on task, though, so that the track would be passable for the Operator Recertification trips that were scheduled to start running after 11:00 a.m. Fortunately, the storm let off so we could pick up our tamping speed. Patrick could only stay until 11:00 a.m., but fortunately, Fred Lonnes had finished his morning errands and could join in on the fun. Fred took

(Continued on page 6)



Joe Hazinski

Not only is the track sprayed, but other areas which are otherwise difficult to reach. Every place along our right of way gets sprayed including embankments like this one next to the car barn on the left. The Weed patch crew is seen here ably supervised by Road Master Konecki.

2009 Track Team Projects *(Continued from page 5)*

over Patrick's Electric Tamping Shovel and we finished up the east rail just in time for moving the former CNS&M 715 onto the mainline for Operator Recertification.

After the 715 passed, it was time to start tamping the rest of Switch 54 with Fred and Ed on the Electric Shovels and Al and Jim feeding the tampers. Just after lunchtime, Art Lemke was able to join the track team and assist with feeding ballast to the people using the Jackson Tampers. Soon, we had Switch 54 tamped as well as two new ties to the north of Switch 54. Then, the entire track team finished up the project by dressing the newly tamped ballast to make sure that the ties won't move and to provide a nice, finished appearance to the public.

Installing Rail Anchors on Blackhawk Curve #1

Saturday, May 23 was a super day in South Elgin, IL and a super day to be having fun on the track team. Track team volunteers Phill Kovari, Chris Nelson, and Ed Konecki loaded up the track dressing tools (switch brooms, shovels, etc.) tools

onto our motorcar trailer and moved down to Stop 53-1/2. There, we unloaded all of our tools at the work site. Ed then took the motorcar and trailer back up to the Maintenance of Way siding to put it in the clear so that Trainmaster Dan could train student operators while we worked. Soon, we were joined by Chuck Galitz who was a big help in getting the 51 ties dressed up so we could take them downtown.

We worked our way south to the Stop 52 culvert, finishing shortly after 1:00 p.m. just as the Operating Department finished their training and gave us the railroad. Most of us then rode back with the last northbound car and got off at the Maintenance of Way building. There, we picked up the motorcar and trailer and moved them to the mainline in front of the Maintenance of Way building. We then got out the Nolan cart and tied it on to our work train. Next, we got out the Jackson Electric Tamping Generator and Electric Tamping shovels and loaded them on the Nolan cart.

We then headed back south to

Blackhawk Curve #1. On the way, we stopped south of Coleman to take a look at the construction work to the west of the track where Commonwealth Edison is in the process of transferring their overhead power lines to underground conduit. This is in preparation for building the new Stearns Road Bridge. Bridge construction started on Monday, June 15, 2009.

Soon the four of us got down to Blackhawk Curve #1 and set up for tamping. We tamped the final 160 feet of the east rail with the Jackson Electric Shovels with everyone taking turns on the shovels, moving the generator, watching the cords, and feeding ballast. Chris had to leave about 3:00 p.m., so Roadmaster Ed ran him back north to Castlemuir. Once Ed got back to Blackhawk Curve #1, Chuck, Phill, and Ed finished up the last bit of east rail. Finally, we were done. Blackhawk Curve #1 is now moved and tamped into place.

At this point, it was time to have some fun with the drive on rail anchors. Chuck donated a new rail anchor persuasion tool that we had to try out. Boy, that

little persuader snaps those anchors right on. It was getting late, so we only box anchored three ties before we had to call it a day. We loaded up all of the tools and headed back north to the Maintenance of Way building at Castlemuir. Once back at the Museum, we put all of the tools away. Phill's dad, there to pick Phill up, was a big help in getting to tools into the shed and everything stored for the night.

Applying Weed Patch Herbicide

On Saturday, June 20, our first job of the day was to clean out the track flange ways of the Museum's driveway grade crossing so that we would be ready to rail the hy-rail truck for our vegetation management contractor, Weedpatch. After a long hot morning of pick and shovel work, the track team members headed down to the Maintenance of Way building to load up our tools and take the A4 Motorcar and trailer down to De Young junction.

Weedpatch owner, John Horneij and his nephew Mark met Roadmaster Ed at the Museum to manage vegetation on the Museum's demonstration railroad. John and Mark were onsite with Roadmaster Ed from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. when the job was complete.

In the mean time, the track team returned to Blackhawk Curve #1 to continued where they left off installing rail anchors. We started up where we left off the previous Saturday-one rail length south of the De Young Junction switch. From this point we continued placing anchors on every other tie up to the switch and then into the turnout of the switch finishing up just as we got to the switch heel blocks. It was one scorcher of an afternoon, and all of the track team volunteers had to take water breaks and work at a slower pace so that the heat wouldn't get to us. So we packed up our tools and took our motor car and trailer back to Castlemuir where we stowed everything for the next weekend. We now need to finish installing the rail anchors on the railroad south end of Blackhawk Curve #1.

In spite of the brutally hot weather, the team was able to get the grade crossing cleaned out and the rail anchors installed.

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Joe Hazinski

Switches must be maintained. Seen here are switch points where the mechanism must be oiled or greased periodically so that they will operate smoothly and easily.



Joe Hazinski

A close up of a switch point showing parts in continuous need of lubrication.



Joe Hazinski

Track maintenance efforts include work on switches that need attention. At times a big gap at a rail joint needs closing up. Seen here is a "dutchman" a short section of rail installed to fill a small gap in the rail at a joint.

2009

Track Team Projects

(Continued from page 7)

Illinois Railway Museum Field Trip

Adam Robillard, the Illinois Railway Museum's Road Master, invited our Track Team volunteers to the IRM to help raise and cross level a critical switch on the leads to yard 6. This was a great learning experience for the Track Team as IRM uses a Jackson Yard Tamper to put the ballast under the track after the track is lifted with track jacks. When the Track Team volunteers arrived, they helped Adam and Steve to get out the tools and jacks and then to position the Jackson Yard Tamper at the work site.

Once all of the equipment was in place, we started picking up one side of the switch with jacks. Steve then ran the tamper on its first pass through the switch to tamp the ballast under the ties. We then picked up the other side of the switch with jacks.

Through out the day, Adam and Steve were able to give Fox River Track Team Volunteers Phill Kovari, Jim Minerly, and Chris Nelson on-the-job experience in how to use the tamper. This was great as it gave the Fox River volunteers an opportunity to learn the techniques of using heavy equipment to maintain the track surface.

We broke for lunch to eat at the IRM diner. Adam graciously treated all five of the Fox River Track Team volunteers to lunch. It was real hard to leave the air conditioning of the diner, but we needed to get back and finish the switch surfacing.

Fortified after a real nice lunch, everyone headed back to the work site where we continued with our track lifts, hand distribution of rock, and tamping. After lunch, IRM Track Team Volunteer Tom Hunter was able to come by and join us as well.

Art Lemke and Jim Minerly had to leave by mid afternoon, but the rest of the Track Team stayed for the rest of the day. Unfortunately, a mechanical problem with the Jackson Yard Tamper meant that we could not get all of the surfacing work done, but the amount of work that we got done was astounding!

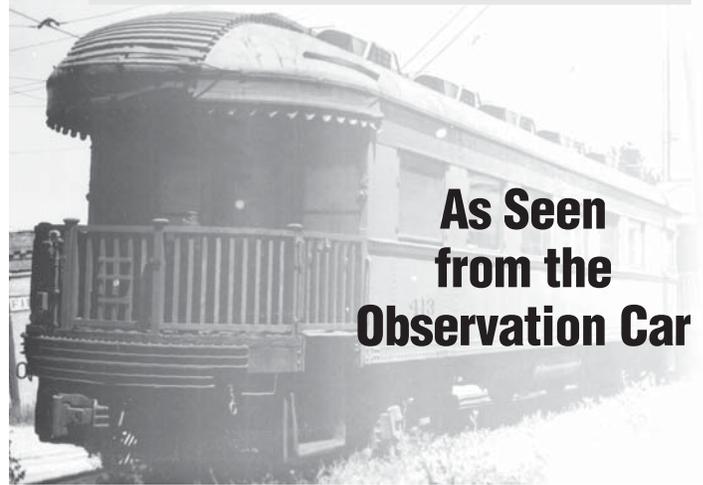
After the track tools were put away for the day, the Fox River Track Team was treated to several rides on IRM's mainline in the Museum's Southern Pacific SD-9 number 1518. Along for the ride were Chris Nelson, Phill Kovari, Phill's Mom, Kris Kovari, and Roadmaster Ed.

A big thanks to Adam, Steve, and Tom from IRM's Track Department for inviting us. A very special thanks to the IRM Diesel Department for running locomotive 1518.

2010 Projects

2010 Track Fun projects include:

- Replacing the switch stands at De Young Junction and Blackhawk Siding
- Build Set Out for Iron Monster Cart South of Maintenance of Way Building
- Repairing the wash between Stop 50 and 51



As Seen from the Observation Car

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

- Connecting Track 0 to Switch 20
- Installing 40 New Ties on Mainline at Coleman
- Installing 30 New Ties on Siding at Coleman
- Coleman Tie Cleanup
- Right of Way Cleanup

-Russ Friend, Ed Konecki