

PGRS TRACKIN'



The Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

April 2024

EDITOR'S GREETING

Spring has sprung and Train Fest is near. If you remember, two Train Fest challenges were issued to our members. One, bring something to share in our Drag-N-Brag session and two, consider serving as a PGRS Club Officer or Board Member. As always, a special thank you to this month's contributors.



CLUB NEWS

Announcing the 2024 PGRS Spring Train Fest

This announcement is to inform our membership of another Spring Train Fest. Last year's was very successful and we need to continue our new tradition. The Board of Directors has set **Saturday, April 13, 2024** as the date to hold it this year. The event will be held at the same location as last year, the Lutheridge Camp and Conference Center. **The address is: 2511 Hendersonville Rd. Arden, NC 28704.**

Trainfest hours will be from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM.

These are great facilities with plenty of space for tables and seating.

Society Officers

Bill Huntzman – President
WHuntzman@gmail.com
Bill Massey – Vice President
coachbillmassey@aol.com
Don Watson – Secretary / Treasurer
docwatson@morrisbb.net

BOARD MEMBERS:

Jon Bole
Jarabhill@windstream.net
Fran Monahan
MargeMonahan2@gmail.com
Jim Redmond
Jim.Redmond@Alumni.Duke.edu
Randy Theis
RandyTheis@aol.com
Wayne Hamilton
railman1959@aol.com

WEB SITE ADMINISTRATORS

Larry Williams (Acting)
LDWeng55@gmail.com
Dan Bails (Assistant)
DanBails339@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Wayne Hamilton
railman1959@aol.com

SOCIETY WEB PAGE

WWW.PIEDMONTGARDENRAILWAY.ORG



CLUB NEWS Continued

As it was last year, the **Train Fest** will be a day where members can get together and exchange ideas and learn something about garden railroading. Members are encouraged to bring train related items for show-and-tell, or for sale or swap, as ample tables will be provided.

In addition to the swap and sale activities, the following clinics are planned:

Running a 1:1 scale railroad along with the history of the equipment he has acquired will be presented by Rocky Hollfield, owner of the **Craggy Mountain Line**, which is located in Woodfin, NC;

How to properly maintain a large scale railroad;

3D printing and its potential for large scale modeling. An actual 3D printer will be there to illustrate how it works and what are the possibilities.

Doughnuts and coffee will be provided in the morning and a light lunch will be available for the attendees so they do not have to leave the facility.

As in the past, your annual dues (\$20) will be collected prior to or at the meeting. Please mail any dues in advance to:

Don Watson
125 Mistletoe Trail
Hendersonville, NC 28791

NOTE: Please let Don Watson (docwatson@morrisbb.net) know NO LATER THEN SUNDAY, APRIL 7 if you plan to attend so he can plan for the food and refreshments.

Please set aside this date. I'm sure it will be a fun day.

There are several trains shows coming up. Mark your calendars for these:

April 12: Bulls Gap TN train show

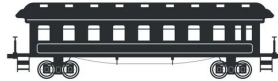
June 20 - 22: NMRA SER Convention - Decatur, AL

As always, consider sharing this newsletter with friends who might be interested in our club and if they wish to become members ask them to contact our PGRS Secretary/Treasurer for a membership form or download a form from our website.

[Join Us – Piedmont Garden Railway Society](#)

CLUB NEWS Continued

The Club's mission is to promote and to further the enjoyment of large scale model railroading among its members, their families and their guests as well as the public at large.



RAILROAD TRIVIA QUESTION

In 1917, the U.S. Army Signal Corps, Aviation Sector took control of the timber industry in the Northwest and created the Spruce Division and associated Squadrons. What did these Squadrons do? The answer is found later in this newsletter.

RAIL-FANNING PROTOTYPES TO INSPIRE A GARDEN RAILWAY PROJECT

There are some times when I read about history, that I am astounded by how important trains once were. Rail was *the* way that products and people were transported. And during World War II, trains were an integral part of the war effort. The New York Central operated personnel trains, mail trains, equipment freight, and even hospital trains. An average of two million troops per month were transported over the NY Central system during World War 2. I always love looking at old advertisements. I have a collection of Southern Railway ads, but I can across these from the NYC. Each advertisement depicts a different scene or use for the wartime trains: from riding the 20th Century Limited, to troop trains, to the fully equipped surgery suite on an army hospital train.

It is interesting to note that part of the reason why we have the Interstate System today can be attributed to the war. President Eisenhower pushed for the Interstate System, especially after experiencing the German autobahn while he served in World War II. He had also been associated with the Transcontinental

RAILFANNING— Continued

Motor Convoy which drove from Washington DC to San Francisco, and took sixty-two days. That sort of puts it in perspective, how roads in between cities were back then. Today, if you drove non-stop and managed to avoid traffic, you could drive that in two days. Sixty-two days, no wonder why people took the train!

What life is like on a troop train... speeding over the Water Level Route

This is "Main 100" . . . identified on New York Central orders only by its code number. Speeding toward a secret destination, it's one of the vast fleet of trains that now move 2,000,000 troops a month over the rails of America. Picture the thousands of Pullmans and coaches this task requires. You'll see then why car space for civilian travel is limited . . . why Americans are urged to make only essential trips. "Main 100" must have the right of way!



FIELD KITCHEN. Mess Sergeant sets up kitchen in baggage car to serve 3 or 4 troop cars. That's what many baggage cars are doing. So please *travel light!*

MESS CALL. Men eat at their seats. On some trains they file up to kitchen to be served; on others, food is brought to them. Meals are tops . . . one reason *your* home and *our* diners are rationed.

FIRST AID. Army Surgeon installs his "field hospital" in a wash-room. His prompt care for minor ills keeps our fighters fit.

G.H.Q. ON WHEELS. From his drawing room "headquarters," Train Commander orders all details of this traveling Army camp . . . of which he alone knows the destination.

RAILROAD LIAISON. New York Central "Train Escort" goes along to aid Train Commander with transportation, extra supplies, mail, special stops and other matters.

PREPARING FOR TAPS. At time set by Train Commander (later than in camp) Porter makes up berths . . . as carefully as he would for the most generous Pullman passenger.

ARMY ICE BOX

FIELD STOVE

PLENTY OF FOOD

TRAIN CONDUCTOR

V MAIL. Men write many letters, hoping for answers. To guard secrecy, none may be mailed except through the Train Escort at points designated by the Train Commander.

39 MEN TO A CAR. Two men sleep in lower berth, one in upper. Even so, troop moves now use half the Pullmans, a third of the coaches . . . one reason *you* may find space hard to get.

SEEING AMERICA. Troops spend much time at windows. Averaging six moves during training, they see the Hudson River and Great Lakes this trip . . . perhaps California next.

New York Central



BUY
MORE WAR
BONDS

ONE OF AMERICA'S RAILROADS—ALL UNITED FOR VICTORY

RAILFANNING— Continued

TRAVELING SURGERY

This operating room is mainly for dressings. But it is fully equipped. In an emergency, New York Central Representative would have train side-tracked, and an operation could be performed here.

THEY WEAR THE CADUCEUS

Enlisted men of the Medical Corps aid doctors and nurses. Their emblem, the staff and serpents of the Caduceus, is among the Army's proudest... with a tradition of brave and selfless service.

SHE RATES A SALUTE

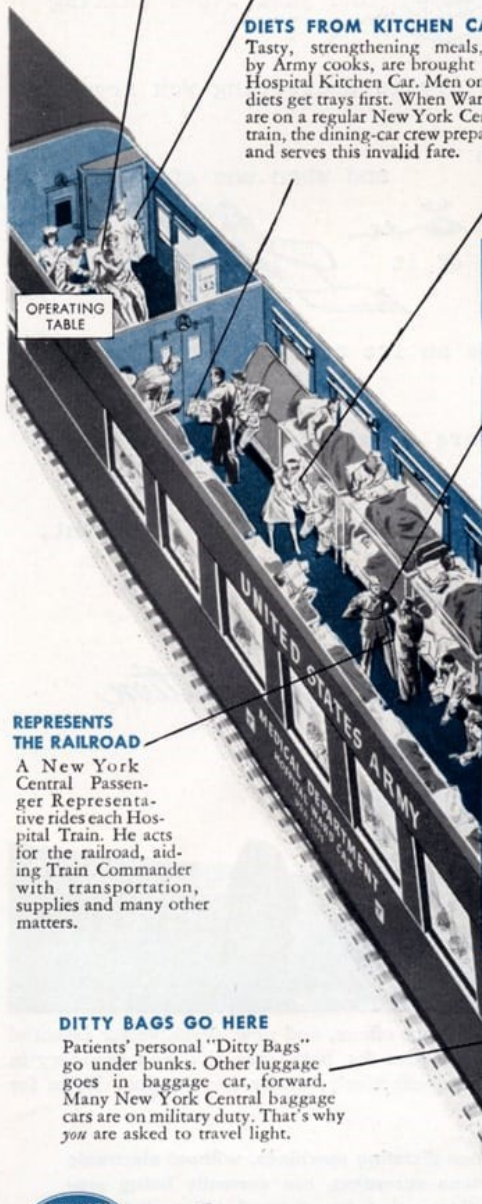
The Army Nurse rates a salute . . . not only because she's a Lieutenant . . . but for her superb, often heroic service. The Army urgently needs 2,000 more trained nurse volunteers each month this year.

DIETS FROM KITCHEN CAR

Tasty, strengthening meals, prepared by Army cooks, are brought from the Hospital Kitchen Car. Men on special diets get trays first. When Ward Cars are on a regular New York Central train, the dining-car crew prepares and serves this invalid fare.

AN M. D. IS THE C. O.

Train Commander is a physician of the Army Medical Department, usually a Captain or Major. His orders control every person and every detail of life aboard this traveling hospital.



OPERATING TABLE

REPRESENTS THE RAILROAD

A New York Central Passenger Representative rides each Hospital Train. He acts for the railroad, aiding Train Commander with transportation, supplies and many other matters.

DITTY BAGS GO HERE

Patients' personal "Ditty Bags" go under bunks. Other luggage goes in baggage car, forward. Many New York Central baggage cars are on military duty. That's why you are asked to travel light.

Trains in White

How Army Hospital Trains speed wounded fighters homeward over the Water Level Route

MILE AFTER MILE, these travelers drink in each new picture framed in the windows of their Ward Dressing Car. It may be the scenic Hudson River, the rich fields of the Mohawk Valley, or the blazing furnaces of some war production center. But always, it's *home* . . . "the good old U.S.A."

This is the last lap of their long, long journey . . . a journey that may have begun on a stretcher, under fire, but is ending now amid the care and comfort of a modern "hospital on wheels."

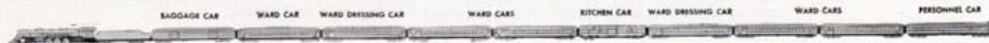
In this supreme service, New York Central is proud to share. Special schedules fit Medical Department needs. Speeds are planned for maximum comfort, and engineers exert all their skill in smooth train operation. For aboard these "trains in white" ride America's most honored passengers.

YOUR WAR BONDS HELP BUILD ARMY HOSPITAL CARS

NURSE'S DESK



New York Central



RAILFANNING— Continued

Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Herodotus



Traveling on a POSTAGE STAMP

How 3 billion pieces of wartime mail a year speed over the Water Level Route

No 20th Century Limited passenger ever sets foot here. This car is reserved for wartime travelers of a different kind... tiny V-mail... business letters... registered envelopes packed with war contracts and blueprints... all part of the three billion pieces of mail that speed each year over New York Central.

Hour after hour, as the Century bores through the night, expert postal clerks sort this "preferential mail." Tomorrow, on arrival, it will be ready for immediate forwarding or delivery.

Winter or summer, through any weather, "post offices on wheels"

provide lowest cost transportation for 96% of the nation's vast mail tonnage. A vital war service of American railroads today. A service that will be still more efficient aboard the finer, faster trains of tomorrow.

LAST BAG ABOARD! Just before the Century pulls out, several bags of last-minute mail are collected from the mail room in the station. Many business firms regularly send messengers to the station with important mail for overnight delivery between New York and Chicago, as well as intermediate points.

MILE-A-MINUTE SORTING

Pouches with mail from all parts of the United States and many foreign countries are dumped on this table for sorting. Here, highly trained clerks work through the night as their car speeds east or west over New York Central's Water Level Route.



TRAVELING MAIL BOX
This letter chute permits passengers to put letters directly aboard the post-office car at stops along the way.

MAGNIFYING V-MAIL

Clerks often read photographically-reduced V-mail addresses under a lens. These tiny envelopes get speed preference, and regularly ride the Century. Soldier mail moves in vast volume, but even more would be welcomed by service men and women far from home.

"PICKER-UPPER"

On most through trains, this Catcher Arm is swung out to snatch mail bags from mail cranes at way stations... providing fast mail service for even small towns.

BUY MORE WAR BONDS

New York Central
ONE OF AMERICA'S RAILROADS — ALL UNITED FOR VICTORY



RAILFANNING— Continued

EXTRA BEDS TO MAKE IN WARTIME

In peacetime, multiple-berth rooms were often taken by single occupants. Now, many business associates patriotically arrange to share such accommodations to save war-vital train space.

SAFETY FIRST, LAST, ALWAYS!

Brakes are thoroughly tested twice at the yard, and again at the station before the train starts its run. No shortage of manpower interferes with that strict safety rule.

WOMEN AT WORK

With 25,600 New York Central men in uniform, thousands of women help keep wartime traffic moving. Car service is among the many railroad jobs needing more women *now*.

THEY MAKE A CLEAN SWEEP

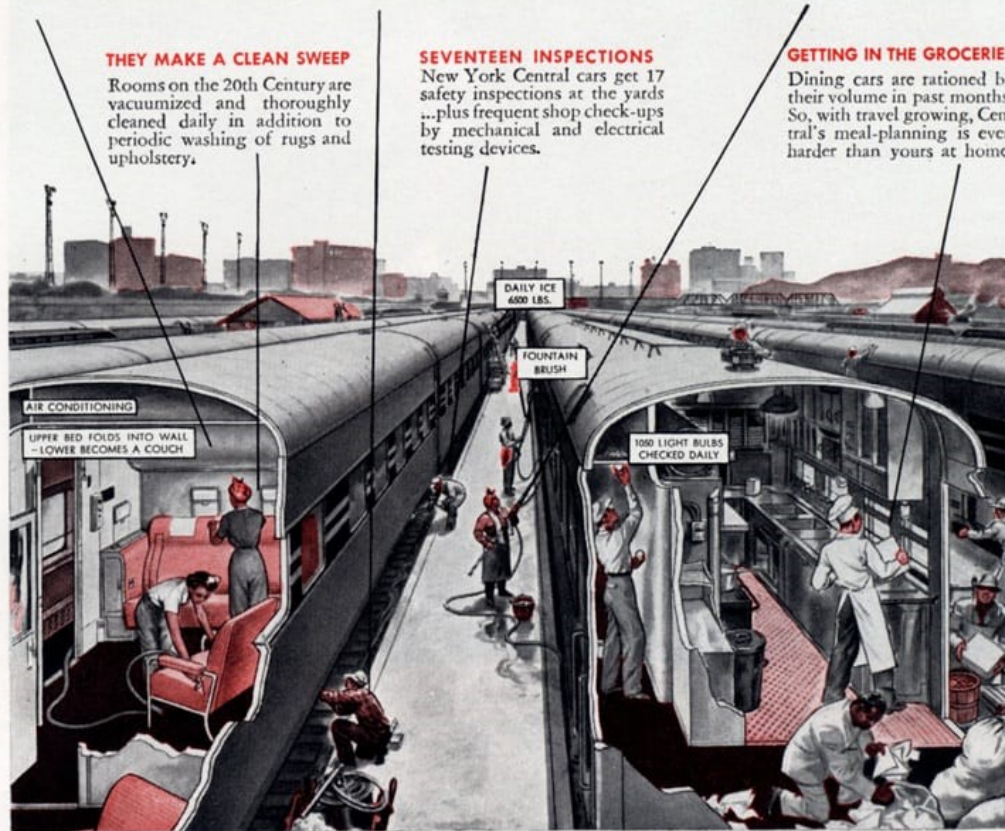
Rooms on the 20th Century are vacuumized and thoroughly cleaned daily in addition to periodic washing of rugs and upholstery.

SEVENTEEN INSPECTIONS

New York Central cars get 17 safety inspections at the yards ...plus frequent shop check-ups by mechanical and electrical testing devices.

GETTING IN THE GROCERIES

Dining cars are rationed by their volume in past months. So, with travel growing, Central's meal-planning is even harder than yours at home.



Housekeeping headaches of the "CENTURY"

Travel Volume up ... Manpower down ... and the 20th Century Limited plus 800 other New York Central trains to service every day!

HALF AN HOUR AGO, some 200 wartime passengers stepped off the 20th Century Limited. Already a switch engine has hustled the empty train out to the yards. And now New York Central service crews swarm over it.

Hammers clink against steel. Fountain brushes spurt against windows. Electric trucks hustle about with fresh ice and linen and groceries.

War adds both urgency and difficulty to

the daily servicing of more than 800 New York Central trains. Travel has doubled. Supplies are scarce. And manpower is even scarcer.

But essentials still get 100% attention. And shorthandedness has even taught new short cuts, new methods that will mean greater efficiency when Victory frees America's railroads to bring you the finer travel of tomorrow.

NEW FREE BOOKLET with fascinating, cutaway pictures that take you into a locomotive cab, troop train, caboose, hospital car, Grand Central Terminal, and other places "BEHIND THE SCENES OF A RAILROAD AT WAR." Write to New York Central, Room 1221E, 466 Lexington Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

BUY MORE
WAR BONDS



New York Central

ONE OF AMERICA'S RAILROADS—ALL UNITED FOR VICTORY

THE BACKSHOP MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS

Fran sent in some photos of his new layout last month. It was an elevated line and there many possibilities for these. For example, I came across these new products at the local big box home improvement store.



These tan concrete blocks are used with 2x6 lumber to build a raised bed planter, but could be used in stacks as supports for trackwork. Each block has a hole in the center for a rebar anchor. Each block is about \$3.50.



THE BACKSHOP
MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS
Continued

There are other variations on these raised bed designs which can easily be adapted as a garden railroad base.



Family Garden Trains has an excellent article on building a raised railroad system which can be viewed at this link:

[Building a Raised Platform Garden Railroad \(familygardentrains.com\)](http://familygardentrains.com)

THE BACKSHOP
MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS
Continued

This is the hospital layout elevated line.



Here we see a disadvantage of elevated layouts, when maintenance is needed.



THE BACKSHOP
MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS
Continued

For those who are really ambitious, this outdoor shed made to look like a depot may inspire your inter woodworker!



Taken at the Cowboy Museum in Oklahoma City.



RAILROAD TRIVIA ANSWER

When the United States entered World War I, German aviation dominated the skies. The Allies were desperately in need of a steady supply of airplanes, and the Pacific Northwest had just the thing to help: Sitka spruce.

In 1917, the Northwest was the national center of the lumber industry, and its forests were rich with aviation-grade spruce. But that year, tensions over unsafe working conditions and work hours led the radical labor group Industrial Workers of the World to organize strikes that stopped logging operations. To make sure that Allied airplane factories would have a steady stream of lumber, the U.S. Army Signal Corps Aviation Sector took control of the logging industry in the Northwest and created the Spruce Production Division to manage it.

U.S. Army soldiers and civilians ran the Spruce Production Division as part of a massive, nationalized home front effort to win the war. The Spruce Production Division was headquartered at Vancouver Barracks, in Vancouver, Washington, and by Armistice Day, had nearly 30,000 soldiers assigned to the division.

The British and French militaries realized that it was not enough to try to compete with German technology - they needed to be able to manufacture enough airplanes and train enough pilots to overwhelm the Germans. The Allies ordered 100 million board feet of lumber from the United States, and by the end of the war, the Spruce Production Division had produced nearly 185 million board feet.

The spruce logged and cut by the soldiers of the Spruce Production Division allowed the allies to build more airplanes and to respond to whatever new aviation technology the Germans might develop. From 1917 to 1918, lumber from the Northwest was used to build 16,952 U.S. Army training planes, 4,881 French planes, 258 British planes, and 59 Italian planes.

To counteract the damaging effects of the 1917 International Workers of the World strikes, a new union was established and run by the Army to serve SPD soldiers. This union was called the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen, or the 4L. The 4L secured an eight hour work day, ensured that soldiers would be paid the same as civilian loggers (a higher rate than the average soldier), and required logging camps to follow military sanitary regulations.

RAILROAD TRIVIA ANSWER—Continued

The officers and soldiers were assigned to various work duties. Each crew was designated as a squadron (this was the Air Service) and eventually there were 149 of them, ranging in size from 35 men to over 300. Most of these squadrons were assigned to lumber camps and sawmills. The army men worked side by side with civilians in the forests and mills, and all were paid the same.

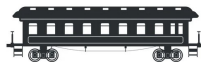
Other squadrons were assigned to construction duty, building, and maintaining infrastructure including saw mills, housing camps, roads, and railroads.



Property of MSCUA, University of Washington Libraries. Photo Coll 516

More information can be found here:

[army-spruce-production.pdf \(npshistory.com\)](#)



BUSINESSES ASSOCIATED WITH OUR CLUB



Jim's Train Sales

O & G Gauge New & Used Trains

Jim Hendley

Etowah, North Carolina 28729

Lionel, MTH, USA Trains, PIKO, LGB
Bridgwerks Power Supplies, Bachmann
Split-Jaw Rail Clamps, O & G Gauge Track

Garden Railroad Design, New and Used Track
You can now reach Jim at: hendleyjim4@gmail.com
Or....(828) 333-2523

A reminder to all our members of the Train Lovers Luncheons:

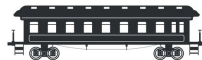
The Asheville Train Lovers Luncheons are on every 2nd Thursday of the month at the Post 25 restaurant in Arden, NC at 11:30.

The Greater Greenville Train Lovers Luncheons are on the first Tuesday of every month at the A&P Restaurant in Greer starting at 11:30 AM.

The Columbus Luncheons at Rural Seed are held at 12:00 on the Third Thursday of each month.



The usual suspects enjoying a nice lunch!



WEB BITS

April Fools Day did not pass unnoticed in the railroading world, as some organizations reported “news” in the spirit of the day.

West Virginia’s Cass Scenic Railroad posted on its Facebook page that it would dieselize most operations.

“The Shays will take a back seat this season as we look at introducing diesel-only trips to Whittaker and Bald Knob. The message is clear and the customers have spoken. By using more modern diesel locomotives, we will be able to cut down our travel times to Bald Knob, gaining access to the beautiful picturesque overlook in only 30 minutes. By doing this, we will be able to offer five round trips to Bald Knob daily, as opposed to one round-trip excursion. “

“We appreciate your support as we welcome in this exciting new era for the Cass Scenic Railroad! **Happy April Fools’ Day, as well.**”



This is not a April Fool’s Day prank, but an advertising sign.



See you at Train-Fest, the May PGRS Newsletter will be here soon.