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Message from the President

Fellow members, the summer is coming to a close and fall is around the corner. In this quarter's letter there will be some acknowledgments and some serious news.

Let us start with recognizing the following people for their service to the society. First of all, to Harry Meem, for this is the last issue he is producing. Harry, thank you for your 15-plus years as editor. Harry is not completely leaving us, for he has agreed to assume the role of publication chairman and will continue to mentor the new editorial staff over the next year.

I also would like to say thank you to John King for his contributions to the 2016 calendar, nice job.

The convention this year is just finished when you read this letter and I'd like to say a special thank you to Andy White, Bill Cramer, and Mike Lytle for all their time and efforts in producing another outstanding convention. Next year's annual convention will be in the Buffalo area and Andy White and Brian DeVries are taking the lead on the 2016 convention. Next quarter we will announce the 2017 and 2018 conventions.

Wade Rice work hard to pull together the Eastern Mini-Con in Ivyland, Pennsylvania, in August with the cooperation

of the Reading Technical and Historical Society; many thanks, Wade. The 2016-2018 Eastern Mini-Cons will be in the Baltimore area.

Now to the serious business at hand. The bus trip to Amherst, Massachusetts, is not going to happen. We only had a handful of people express some interest.

The building fund has slowed down and few contributions have arrived in the past few months. The officers are looking into other means to raise funds and the building committee met with an outside source to discuss our goals.

To jump-start the building drive we are going to do silent auctions at Society functions starting with the 2015 convention. Contributions are coming in and I hope we have a good response. Other fund-raising suggestions are welcome, but be advised: If you suggest it, we need you to lead it. Officers currently have their hands full and the directors are working on projects I have directed them to have ready by next year.

Finally, the most serious of news. Starting with membership renewals for January 2016 there will be a ten-dollar, in every membership class, increase in dues. Here are the reasons for the big jump.

We have not had an increase for ten years and what you could purchase for
(Continued on page 35)

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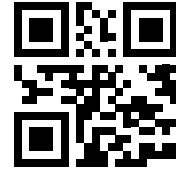
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Memberships, once accepted, cannot be returned.

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On the Covers

Front Cover: B&O GP-30 6944 got a new nose Sunburst, fresh paint and its original number back in a B&O Railroad Museum restoration unveiled September 4.

See pages 25 and 31. (Amanda Barrett photograph, B&O Museum)

Back Cover: B&O GM50, a GP-40-2 in a commemorative paint scheme, negotiates A-Bros Crossover in Youngstown, Ohio, with the eastbound *Pittsburgher* on August 14, 1980, in this Dave Ori photograph. See the Youngstown coverage on pages 3 and 10.



An eastbound B&O train passes one of Republic Steel's furnaces in Youngstown, Ohio, in the 1960s. Note that one of the diesels is a former passenger GP-9, distinguished by the "torpedo" air tank atop the body. In the foreground is A-Bros Crossover, of which more later. A color position light signal and semaphore help control traffic here. (Don Riel collection)

The B&O Railroad in the Mahoning Valley

Serving Youngstown's Mills When Steel Was King

By Don Riel and Richard Widera

First of Two Articles

Although the B&O Railroad played an important role in serving the steel mills of the Mahoning Valley, little has been written of its operations. Don Riel and Richard Widera, both of whom worked for the B&O in the Youngstown/Warren area of Ohio, wrote this article based upon their recollections of the operations in the Mahoning Valley in the mid to late 1960s.

The 1960s were a very prosperous time for the steel industry and for the railroads serving the area. The demand for steel spiked due to the escalation of the Vietnam War. The steel mills in the area were operating at or near capacity. The railroads were handling large volumes of iron ore and other material needed in the steel making process, as well as heavy volumes of outbound loads of coil steel and pipe.

The Playing Field

Haselton yard was located on the east side of Youngstown, just west of Center Street. It was bordered on the south by Republic Steel's Youngstown mill and the Mahoning River. On the north side it was bordered by the double-track Pennsylvania (later Penn Central) mainline from Youngstown to Ashtabula, Ohio.

The double-track B&O New Castle, Pennsylvania, to Willard, Ohio, line, running east to west, crossed the Mahoning River at the Haselton yard office and split the yard into two parts, the South yard or Ore yard and the classification yard.

The west entrance switch to the South yard was located off the eastbound mainline at the east end of the Mahoning River bridge. The South yard consisted of 10 tracks (Numbers 18-20 and 26-32).

Starting with the track adjacent to the eastbound mainline, car capacities were:

Track Number 18	55 cars
Track Number 19	45 cars
Track Number 20	35 cars
Track Number 26	30 cars
Track Number 27	35 cars
Track Number 28	50 cars
Track Number 29	45 cars
Track Number 30	35 cars
Track Number 31	30 cars
Track Number 32	27 cars

All the tracks except Number 32 were used to store iron ore for Republic Steel. Track 32 was the interchange track from the PRR (PC) to the B&O. Any ore the PRR had for Republic would be delivered directly to Republic's ore yard on their lead or on their ore dumper track. The yard's close proximity to the Republic Steel mill made it easy to deliver cars of



What was left of B&O Number 8, the *Shenandoah*, came off the Mahoning River bridge in this picture from the early '70s. The B&O had been allowed to discontinue Number 8 everywhere but in Ohio by the time this picture was taken. The Haselton yard office is to the right. (Don Riel photo)

district. So on occasion Youngstown cars would be set off at Ohio Junction and we would have to send a yard crew to bring the cars to Haselton.

During the summer of 1968 *Lorain 92* handled a tremendous amount of iron ore for Youngstown.

As the day rolled on, so did the traffic: Number 396 passed through Youngstown around 9 a.m.; *NE 96* around 9:30; the *New York Trailer Jet* around 10; the *New Yorker* around 11:45; the *Baltimore Jet* around noon.

Then eastbound action would slow—the *Northeasterner/Pittsburgher* passed through around 6:30 p.m. and passenger Train No. 10 departed Youngstown at 7:15.

And on occasion we would see trains of empty coal hoppers moving east.

Westbound, Number 5 departed Youngstown at 1:42 a.m. *Cleveland 97* arrived at Haselton around 3 a.m. and set off Youngstown cars.

Willard 97 passed through around 4:30 a.m.; passenger Train 7 departed Youngstown at 8:42; *Chicago 97* was usually through about 11:30 and *PW 97* around noon.

Painesville 97 arrived at Haselton yard

around 2 p.m. and set off Youngstown cars. The *Chicago Trailer Jet* came through around 5:30, followed by the *Chicagoan* around 6.

The *Detroit Steel Special* would arrive at Haselton around 8 p.m. and set off Youngstown cars, which on a regular basis included unit coal trains to be interchanged to the P&LE at Gateway yard. The train would pick up DeForest, Akron and Willard cars.

The *Detroitier (Second Detroit Steel Special)* passed through Youngstown around 9 p.m. *Lorain 97* arrived at Ohio Junction around 10 p.m., set off cars and picked up cars for Akron and Lorain.

Passenger Train Number 9 departed Youngstown at 10:28 p.m.

On occasion we would have coke trains moving west.

Five People on All Jobs

During the 1960s the State of Ohio had a full-crew law in effect that required five people on all yard and mill jobs.

There were three crews on first shift at Haselton yard. The 6:30 a.m. crew would take inbound Youngstown perishable cars and piggyback cars to the freight

house and stay there during the unloading and reloading of piggyback cars.

The 7 a.m. crew would perform switching duties in the yard and would pull the tail track, which was located off the eastbound mainline just west of the Mahoning River bridge at Haselton. This track held 20 to 24 cars and was the outbound track for loads of coil steel and pipe from Republic Steel. The yard crew would deliver to this track empty gondolas for Republic.

The 7:30 crew would deliver cars to and pull cars from the P&LE Gateway yard, deliver and pull cars from the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Mill and deliver cars to the PRR (PC) at their Wabash yard. This crew would be given an Mu'ed pair of Alco switchers.

Second shift began in the afternoon. The 2:30 p.m. crew would switch out piggyback and other cars from the freight house and cars brought in during the day from the P&LE, YST and Wabash yard. The crew would also line up pickups for westbound trains.

The 10:30 p.m. crew (third shift) would switch cars in the yard and line up pickups for eastbound trains.



Same photographer, same site, panned slightly right to show the engine house, servicing facilities, shop track and a clutch of Alco switchers. (DR)

and pull empties from customers located on the Branch during that time.

And there was the P&LE Gateway yard, whose entrance was just east of Center Street. In order to deliver and to pull cars from the P&LE the yard crews had to cross over both B&O mainlines at A-Bros Crossover. Due to the heavy volume of traffic being interchanged between the P&LE and B&O we had to interchange daily to the P&LE and sometimes twice in one day. The B&O would deliver cars to the P&LE on Tracks 13 (160 cars) and 14 (100 cars) and receive cars from the P&LE on Tracks 16 (98 cars) and 17 (98 cars).

The Campbell Mill of Youngstown Sheet and Tube was located just east of Center Street. The B&O delivered cars into the mill. Delivery was usually made to Track 1 and Extension 1 inside the gate unless other tracks were designated by the Youngstown Sheet and Tube yardmaster.

The P&LE joint crews that served YST would bring outbound freight to

the B&O on Tracks 1 (35 cars) and 2 (35 cars) in Delaney yard. The B&O stored special equipment for YST on Tracks 3 (11 cars) and 4 (8 cars) in Delaney yard. This equipment consisted of bulkhead gons, coil gons, bar gons and DF boxcars. Tracks 5-7 were out of service.

YST required a daily shuttle train between its Campbell Works and Brier Hill Works. This train ran seven days a week. There was a movement of bars, billets, scrap, plates, rounds, and tar between the two mills. This movement was handled by the P&LE January through April. The B&O handled this train May through August and the PRR handled it September through December.

Cars used in this service were steel bottom gons either 52 or 65 feet long. Cars were in this service for about 30 days. At the end of this period they were completely burnt up—sides buckled and with multiple penalty defects such as bent stirrups and hand holds.

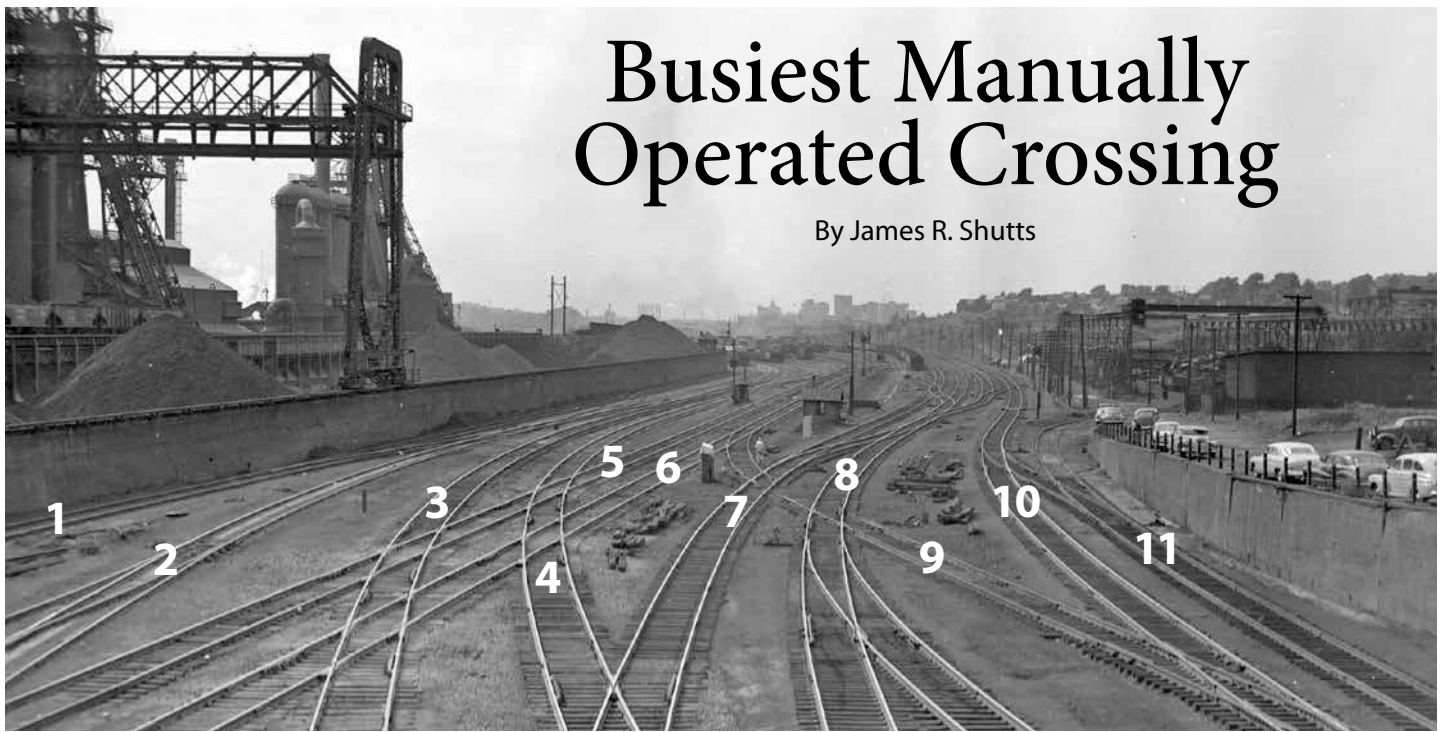


A closer look at CH Tower, dwarfed by the mill structures around it. The east yard office is barely in the picture. (DR)

(article continues on page 12)

Busiest Manually Operated Crossing

By James R. Shutts



The tracks at Youngstown's A-Bros crossover, used to serve Republic Steel and controlled by hand from the Center Street shanty. Each railroad's signal was a color light, with the B&O's being green, the Erie's red, the PRR's yellow, and the NYC's white. ① "Wall Track," Republic Steel track between the three Haselton blast furnaces north of Center Street and the two blast furnaces south of Center Street. Also known as the "Wabash track," it was used by the Erie (Conrail) to access Republic Steel when handling bottle trains between Republic Steel at Youngstown and Republic Steel at Warren. ② B&O lead to the P&LE Gateway yard, Youngstown Sheet & Tube's Delaney yard and the PRR Wabash yard and the B&O South yard. ③, ④, B&O east- and westbound mainlines. ⑤, ⑥, PRR mainlines. ⑦ Erie connector track east to the P&LE Gateway yard. ⑧ Erie connector track west from the P&LE Gateway yard to Erie's NK yard and NYC eastbound connector to Gateway Yard. ⑨ Connector for field track deliveries; PRR westbound mainline to field track, which is outside of picture. ⑩ NYC westbound mainline from Gateway yard to Ashtabula, Ohio. ⑪ Field Track; all field switching by Erie, PRR, and B&O. P&LE/NYC set off cars at the east end of the Field Track, which is just east of the Center Street highway bridge. This was immediately north of the B&O's westbound mainline and was accessed by the B&O from the westbound mainline. (E.L. "Tommy" Thompson photograph, BORHS collection)

It was a one-punch fight. And out of the ring came the Youngstown heavy-weight, the winner and still champion. The Indianapolis boys threw in the towel when their challenger went down for the count of ten thousand. Thus ended another bloodless feud which left Youngstown, Ohio, and its Center Street crossing still holding the cup as the nation's busiest manually operated railroad crossing.

Five major railroads, five hundred trains every twenty-four hours, ten thousand cars a day!

The claim has been disputed many times but, like the railroaders in Indianapolis, the contestants have quietly withdrawn when figures began to fly. There are, of course, busier railroad crossings in America, but they are under interlocking control. Only on Youngstown's East Side do so many trains pass one point entirely by hand signal.

If you're hard-bitten enough to withstand steel-mill smoke, fumes and iron-ore dust, you can see the whole operation from Center Street vehicular bridge in Youngstown's Haselton district. Under this bridge, within a space only 200 feet wide, pass so many trains that a photographer had to wait half an hour for the moment when he could make a 1/50th second exposure of the crossing unobstructed.

In the city the Baltimore & Ohio, the Erie, the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, the Pennsylvania and the New York Central stations are widely separated. Just east of the downtown district, however, the valley of the Mahoning River narrows and all the lines except B&O are squeezed on the river's north bank between commercial property on one side and steel mills on the other. Only a few hundred yards west of Center Street the B&O swings from the south to the north bank



The train directors' cabin was literally in the shadow of Center Street bridge in Youngstown, with a caboose stove and little else. (Edwin C. Kirstatter collection)

and then quickly curves across the track-age used by the other four lines, taking a right-of-way furthest from the river.

The train directors have their office in a comfortable bungalow, warmed by a caboose stove, just under Center Street bridge. But they have little time to enjoy the fire. Keeping the crossing as clear as possible means checking up