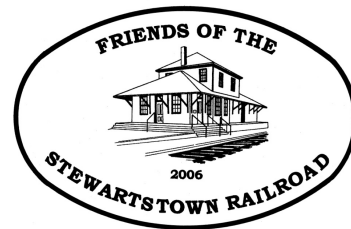




Seven-Point-Four

the newsletter of the Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad, Inc. A Pennsylvania non-stock not-for-profit organization, tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



January–March

First Quarter 2018

January–March

THE FRIENDS RECEIVE A GENEROUS DONATION FROM G AND W / YORK RAILWAY COMPANY

by Dave Watson

In January of 2017, I sent a letter to Genesee & Wyoming Inc. / York Railway Company, in-quiring as to the availability of a tie inserter, ballast regula-tor, and MA and PA locomotive #84 for donation to the Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad, Inc. A few weeks passed without a response. I followed up, and to my sur-prise, was told they would check into it. It would be almost a year before I would hear anything. A representative from G and W informed me in January 2018 that these items had been donated to us. The only condition was that we had to provide the proper IRS documentation and remove them from the property at our expense. I quickly went to work, writing acknowledgement letters and filling out the necessary paperwork to finalize the donation. An inspection trip was scheduled to look over our newly acquired equipment. The tie inserter and ballast regulator had sat out in the weather for over 10 years and saw no use during that time. It was quickly discovered that the ballast regulator was missing a front axle. While this may render the machine temporarily out of service, in time we will locate an axle and get it running again. It also presented a logistical challenge with physically moving the machine.

On Saturday, March 24, a crew was assembled of Friends' members and railroad volunteers to prepare the equipment for pickup and delivery to the Stewartstown Railroad. Six of us spent around eight hours jacking up hydraulics, releasing the brakes, and securing moving parts with chains. We also had to build a temporary rail spanning 30 feet to facilitate the equipment removal. A tie was placed under the front end of the ballast regulator (where the axle is missing) to permit it to be pulled onto a flatbed tow truck. Gordon's, Inc. was scheduled to pick up and deliver the equipment to the railroad on Saturday, March 31.

The tie inserter is in surprisingly good shape despite a few bad hoses and a dead battery. It is a Fairmont MBTX, which will be a *big* help to our volunteers as they continue to maintain the class 1 track and expand the length of the full-size train ride. It is estimated to be able to insert over 100 ties a day!

The ballast regulator, on the other hand, is more of a long-range project. Several hoses will need to be replaced

along with extensive engine repairs. When the ballast regulator is placed back into service, it will be used initially to remove mud from between the rails and ditch the sides of the right-of-way. Eventually, as the line is ballasted, it will be used to groom and spread ballast—a task that is currently performed by hand.

Finally, the locomotive, MA and PA #84, will be moved into storage for the time being where it will be overhauled before eventually coming home to New Freedom, PA. We are currently looking for a period-correct horn and bell for this locomotive—a 1952 EMD SW9. We sincerely thank G and W / The York Railway Company for their generous donation to the Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad, Inc.! In total, these donations are valued at \$25,000.

WAYNE NORMAN, FRIENDS SECRETARY, PASSES AWAY ON MARCH 4, 2018

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Wayne Norman, our beloved Secretary. Wayne was a Maryland State Senator and loved all things railroad. While our time with Wayne was short, his kindness and positive outlook will always be remembered. Wayne was thrilled to hear we received the donation of MA and PA #84. We thank Wayne for his service, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family. Wayne was 62 years of age, and had been a long-term supporter of the Stewartstown Railroad.



Locomotive #84 in the York Rail yard in York, PA.

Photo by Dave Watson.

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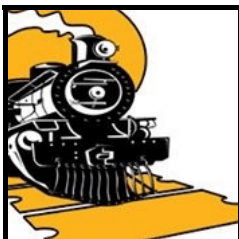
David Baur, Senior Museum Operations Docent

Kay Hoshour, Corporate Registered Agent

Articles and news items to be considered for publication in 7.4 need to be submitted by the first of each month to allow time for editing, fact-checking, and possible consolidation with other submitted items to create comprehensive articles. When submitting photographs, please submit as .jpg files and identify the photographer who took the photograph.

The Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad outreach program has supported the following organizations through membership in and/or by donations to:

Mason-Dixon Public Library
New Freedom Heritage, Inc.
Preservation Pennsylvania, Inc.
Stewartstown Fall Fest
Stewartstown Historical Society, Inc.
Stewartstown Senior Center
Stewartstown Summer Theatre
The York County Convention and Visitors Bureau
York County History Center



REMEMBER:

You can purchase train ride tickets in advance with your credit card through the *WhistleTix* service on the railroad company's website:

www.stewartstownrailroadco.com

SPRING DONATION APPEAL

This past year has been filled with astounding achievements. Our active volunteer base has increased and so have our restoration projects. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to help keep our projects moving forward. Our pace of progress can continue, however, only if we have funds available. We are hoping to raise at least \$5,000 for our general fund, which is used to cover expenses incurred as projects move forward.

You may also wish to donate towards a specific project. Specific projects include: finishing the open-air excursion car, restoring coach 1158, station rehabilitation, or returning locomotive #84 back to service. Whichever option you choose, we thank you for your continued support!

ANNUAL MEETING REMINDER

Those of you who renewed your membership for 2018 should have already received the Friends annual meeting information packet by the time you receive this issue of 7.4. Please return your ballot by mail in the envelope included with the packet or bring your ballot to the meeting to turn in at the registration table.

If you forgot to renew your membership for 2018, bring your 2018 dues to the meeting on Saturday, May 5, 2018 at 11:30 a.m. at the Heritage Hall of the Stewartstown United Methodist Church, 26 South Main Street and you will receive a ballot to cast in person.

ATTENTION WORK CREWS!

Please remember to submit your work reports and photos to the newsletter editor after each work session. We like to accumulate these reports for editing into newsletter articles to share with the Friends members and donors. They like to follow our progress!



Volunteers working on the Stewartstown Railroad mainline in early 2018.

Photo by Mike Ruane.

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THE FRIENDS' OPEN-AIR EXCURSION CAR IS ALMOST DONE

by Dave Watson

First, the good news. A core group comprised of John Bauman, Dave Baur, David Diano, Bob Dumas, Nathan Filak, Will Long Jr., Larry Morgan, P. J. Piccone, John Pope, Mike Ruane, Jack Sanford, Thomas Stahl, Russ Vollmer, and Miles Weaver, lead by project manager / designer / supply procurer / prototype developer / and major donor John von Briesen, have accomplished quite a bit since our last newsletter.

All lumber has been cut and installed around the car, forming the walls. Almost all the woodwork has been primed. For seating, we chose a very simple bench design that transverses down the center of the car. Passengers will face either side of the car allowing for a maximum viewing angle. Alternatively, they can stand up along the sides of the car and enjoy a much closer view to some of the Stewartstown Railroad's most pastoral views. A contractor was hired to install a silver corrugated roof. This should help to keep the car cool over the summer months and dry all year round. To get the car finished for service, it needs a single car air test, stairs installed, painting to all wood surfaces, and to have the center bowls greased. It is expected to be finished and in-service just in time for Summer 2018.

Larry Morgan, Friends' Director and project coordinator, provided the following information from an interesting observation that he noticed about the flatcar:

"She's a grand old car but a mystery remains. How had she served other railroads prior to coming to Stewartstown? We do know that she most recently served as a maintenance-of-way equipment car. During her time as a MOW car, she must have carried some very heavy loads. As we were attaching wood to her frame, we noticed that the frame was a bit sunken at one end of the car. It was hardly noticeable until we started attaching wood siding to the car. This distortion is visible when you stand at the end of the car and sight down its length. Let's just say it adds character to the Grand Old Car."

Now for the bad news: we have run out of designated funds to finish the open-air excursion car project. We currently need about \$1,000 more to complete the steps and painting. Please consider making a donation to keep this project moving forward. With your help, we can have it ready in time for Summer 2018!

FORMER READING COMPANY COACH 1158 PURCHASE

We are pleased to announce our latest acquisition: Former Reading Company Car 1158. The Friends' purchased the coach from the Stewartstown Railroad Company with the intention of applying for grants to enable a proper restoration. Of all the coaches on the railroad's property, coach



The Friends' open-air observation car in front of the station in Stewartstown nearing completion. Your donations will help to wrap-up this project!

Photo by John von Briesen.

1158 is in the best overall condition. The roof and car body have only a few holes, so they will require minor small steel repairs. Repair and stabilization of the roof will be performed as soon as the weather warms-up. A watertight roof is essential before we can perform interior work due to interior damage. Inside the car, three small roof leaks were found that resulted in substantial damage to the ceiling. The experience gained from the coach 1341 rehabilitation project will come in handy as we work to restore the interior of coach 1158. Coach 1158 was built in 1925 by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company.

Matt Mundis, one of our coach 1158 restoration project managers, has started working on replacement windows for our coach. He has provided the following update:

"So far, I have removed some of the heavy deposits of (topcoat) on the pre-painted window sashes. I have cut "keeper" strips, and installed glazing, complete down to a few coats of caulk. I'm currently on hold for painting, until I get the next batch of sashes glazed and caulked. That is on hold due to a large project for home that is taking up residence on my large workbench. I have also done a quick preliminary inspection of the coach, to see what all we are getting into, not too much different than the 1341 project for the railroad company. Big difference is, 1158 has a chemical toilet, slightly different than ones I deal with at work, but nevertheless, I believe I can get it functioning well. It will be a *big* benefit on passenger service to have functioning pots, particularly once the ride is extended."

Coach 1158 workdays will be scheduled in late Spring / early Summer. Please keep a lookout on our website for when they are scheduled.

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OPERATING OUR NEW SCARIFIER

by Mike Ruane

On the weekend of May 14, 2018, I had a chance to use the new scarifier out on the line, and it was quite the experience!

We had planned to do spot tie replacement that weekend, and railroad President Dave Williamson, John Nolan, John X., and I were the available crew. That Saturday was the first nice Saturday of Spring, and we figured most of our volunteers were working on their homes and yards. We set up a work group of our tie inserter, scarifier, and the green A8 with a flatcar with 64 ties on it.

My first use of the scarifier was in cribbing a 'ghost tie.' We call those spot on the railroad where a tie should be, but isn't, a ghost tie. The original tie had been removed, or rotted away in place. As was reported in an earlier issue of *7.4*, the scarifier has three rotating drums with large teeth that dig up, or scarify, the crib where we will insert the tie. These are raised and lowered by means of a hydraulically controlled boom.

The operation sounds simple: drive the scarifier to the spot where the crib should be dug, start the drums spinning, and lower into the earth. Let the scarifiers dig the crib, lift the boom back up, drive to the next spot, and repeat.

In reality, it's more challenging. First, the scarifier is a very wide machine—10'6" wide. And to make it more difficult, it is that wide at the height of the rails. Most of our other equipment is wider than the track, but higher. This poses dangers of derailment if there are logs, trees, rocks, or mounds of dirt within a few feet of the rail, and on the Stewartstown we have a fair amount of that. We had to stop a couple of times and clear obstructions.

The next challenging issue is the mix of material we have under our rails. In some areas it's ballast, in other cinders, and in many . . . York County clay. Very sticky, and it slows down the drums. But the most disconcerting material is out roadbed. Modern ties are thicker than the ones used in previous years, and we are also adding in tie plates, so our cribs need to be one-and-a-half to two inches deeper than the original cribs. Those extra two inches are usually made up of fitted fieldstone roadbed. Scarifying them out makes the boom bounce and rock, shaking the machine, and generating a lot of stone dust.

Finally, the scarifier has safeties built into it, so that when the machine comes up against some soil or rock or root that it can't spin through, it stops spinning. The operator then needs to either reverse the spin on the drums, or raise the boom a bit and try again. It takes a while to learn when you need to pull up or reverse, or if you can just power through the obstruction.

Since this is an older machine, and I was new using it, I had a tendency to keep the RPMs on the engine a little slower, and I was a little more cautious in digging the cribs, because if I broke the machine, I have to fix it! Even with these limitations, we were able to dig a crib in



The Stewartstown Railroad's scarifier preparing a section of track for tie replacement.

about two and a half minutes, on average, and we replaced and inserted over thirty (30) ties on that Saturday, in non-optimal conditions.

We have a few more operators qualified on the scarifier at this point: folks who know the limitations of machines, and have that touch that good operators have. We expect that we will be replacing ties a lot more quickly than we have in the past with this machine, but as always, we could use more volunteers to help us out.

Again, as always, if you can spend the time and lend a hand on our work weekend, we would really appreciate it—and you may even get a chance to learn how to operate the equipment we use, like the tie inserter, or scarifier, or the trains!



The Friends tie inserter arrives in Stewartstown.

Photo by Dave Watson.

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