



# 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.



July–September

Third Quarter 2020

July–September

**P**ROGRESS continued to be made on the Friends restoration efforts on the railroad during the 2020 third quarter while following COVID-19 safety precautions. Equipment was worked on, track structure continued to be improved, and the railroad was able to offer a longer train ride to its customers as a result. All of this thanks to our dedicated volunteers and the generosity of our members and donors. *Thank You!*

The Friends held its long-delayed 2020 annual meeting using a conference call format. We thank all who participated in this exercise by sending in their ballots and joining-in on the meeting. The election of directors and officers was conducted and the current roster is shown on page 2 of this newsletter.

Now that we are in the fourth quarter of the year it's time to remind everyone of another annual ritual—membership renewal. We are enclosing a membership renewal form with this issue and ask that you consider renewing your membership in the Friends for **2021** and also consider making an optional donation if you are able to do so. We are aware that the current COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected many folks personal finances and we appreciate all donations no matter how small. So, please consider donating if you can. We can't say it often enough: *thank you* for your support!

— Ray Reter

## WELCOMING THE FALL SEASON ON THE STEWARTSTOWN RAILROAD



Locomotive #10 arriving at the pumpkin patch.

Photo by Miles Weaver.



Stewartstown Railroad's pumpkin patch awaiting the arrival of the first pumpkin train of the season.

Photo from the Stewartstown Railroad's Facebook page.



Upon arrival at the pumpkin patch, youngsters search for their perfect pumpkin to take home.

Photo by Miles Weaver.

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Friends of the  
Stewartstown Railroad, Inc.  
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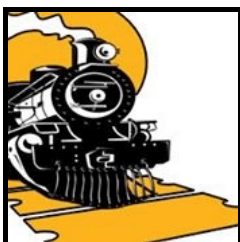
On the web at [www.stewartstownfriends.org](http://www.stewartstownfriends.org)  
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David Watson, *President*  
Michael Ruane, *Vice President*  
Thomas Stahl, *Secretary*  
Raymond E. Reter, *Treasurer / Newsletter Editor*  
Kenneth Bitten, *Director-at-Large*  
Aaron Fried, *Director-at-Large*  
James Kuhlman, *Director-at-Large*  
M. Larry Morgan, *Director-at-Large*  
Owen Stedding, *Director-at-Large*  
Kay Hoshour, *Corporate Registered Agent*  
Donna Kuhlman, *Gift Shop Manager*  
Madeline McCabe, *Newsletter Fulfillment*

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. You may e-mail your submissions to: [friendsofstrt@hotmail.com](mailto:friendsofstrt@hotmail.com)

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

Explore York  
(formerly York County Convention and Visitors Bureau)  
Farm & Natural Lands Trust of York County  
New Freedom Heritage, Inc.  
Preservation Pennsylvania, Inc.  
Stewartstown Fall Fest  
Stewartstown Historical Society, Inc.  
Stewartstown Area Senior Center  
Stewartstown Summer Theatre  
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](http://www.stewartstownrailroadco.com)

## MA AND PA LOCOMOTIVE #84

by Dave Watson

We have much good news to report on Ma and Pa locomotive #84. After our last visit to jump-start, fill with water, and let #84 idle for several hours, the decision was made to leave water in #84 for a few weeks. Much to our surprise, the water held without really losing any. This is quite a far cry from where we were two years ago when #84 would not hold water at all.

At this point, we are focusing our efforts on trying to get #84 blue carded. This is requiring us to go over everything from lights, to wiring, and the air system. We find something wrong everywhere we look! The number boards would not light up due to the sockets being rusted out. The light bulbs in the cab were blown out. The headlights did not work. And the air brake system had air leaks in places that were hard to get to. The biggest problem was the number two traction motor blower. A now retired York Rail mechanic told us we needed to do something about it before it goes—otherwise, we would probably suffer a breakdown on the way home.

Miles Weaver made an attempt to remove the traction motor blower using regular gear pullers. They ended up not being strong enough. We ended up purchasing a 5-ton hydraulic puller to remove the fan cage, and then the bearing assembly itself. Two sets of bearings were bad, costing over \$100 each! Before getting the blower back together, Miles discovered a hairline crack which required welding repairs.

At this point, the front and rear headlights have been fixed. Miles was able to use the existing back headlight to re-create the front one which had been stolen earlier this year. All bad wiring and sockets have been replaced. The biggest issue we face now is to repair one broken rear window and the sliding windows on the sides of the cab. They are fogged up so bad that you cannot see out of them. All windows in #84 are FRA part 224 compliant, so replacement is expensive. We currently need to raise about \$1,200 to purchase the back window and four pieces of replacement glass for the sliding windows to bring the locomotive up to passing for a blue card. Then it can come home! Please consider donating to help us bring #84 home. We need your help now more than ever.

Right: The Friends' former Ma & Pa locomotive #84, currently stored off-site. Photo by Dave Watson.



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### PROGRESS BEING MADE ON TRACK STRUCTURE

by Mike Ruane

On the work weekend of August 15 and 16, 2020 it was all about ties, Ties, TIES!

The Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad had recently received a donation of 205 *new* ties from Koppers, Inc. Patrick Tyrell went to the Koppers plant in Montgomery, PA, and was loaded with these new, freshly creosoted ties. He delivered the ties to Stewartstown a few days before the work weekend, placing them in the parking lot of the railroad's headquarters building.



Donated ties from Koppers, Inc. on arrival in Stewartstown.

*Photo from the Friends Facebook page.*



**Left:**  
Ties donated  
by Koppers,  
Inc. unloaded  
on the park-  
ing lot of the  
Stewartstown  
railroad  
headquarters  
building.

*Photo from  
the Friends  
Facebook  
page.*



Some of the recently donated ties from Koppers Inc. being unloaded at the worksite.

*Photo by Mike Ruane.*



New ties donated by Koppers Inc. awaiting insertion near the picnic grove.

*Photo by Mark Koppenhaver.*

On the first morning of the work weekend a crew of John Nolan, Mark Koppenhaver, Chris Lutz, Aaron Fried, and Mike Ruane began by assembling a work train, and loading the ties onto the train. John Nolan went out first driving our RCC tie inserter, followed at a safe distance and interval by our work train. The planned work area was in the vicinity of the picnic grove, near mile post 5.75.

Upon arrival at the picnic grove, the crew was pleasantly surprised to see Larry Morgan there already, doing maintenance and landscaping around the area. It looked great! The new ties were spotted, while spikes and plates were removed from the ties that needed to be replaced.

As John Nolan began removing the old, worn ties, we discovered a consistent problem with the ties in this area: *roots!* That section of the railroad near the picnic grove is heavily wooded, and for some reason tree roots had decided to grow around, under, and through nearly every tie that John had to remove. Each tie took extra time to remove. We had a crew member standing by with an axe or shovel, cutting and digging the roots that just would not break. It's a testament to John's experience and skill that as

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### PROGRESS BEING MADE ON

#### TRACK STRUCTURE—(Continued from page 3)

by Mike Ruane

many ties got removed that day.

While John was fighting with the ties, the rest of the crew was inserting tie plates on the newly installed ties, lifting and tamping where needed, and spiking enough of the ties to keep the gauge for the motorcars and work trains. The rest of the ties will be spiked and gauged over future work weekends, and then the class 1 track extended.

On Sunday, a smaller crew of Mike and Aaron went out and spiked, gauged, and tamped a number of ties that had been replaced in the area of the water cistern.

All in all, it was another productive and successful work weekend for the railroad. We can always use more volunteers and assistance, so please, if you can, come out and lend a hand. A schedule of the planned work weekends can be found on the railroad's website:

[www.stewartstownrailroadco.com](http://www.stewartstownrailroadco.com)

under the "volunteer work days" pages.



While our volunteers have been busy during the work weekends, we have also had "Wednesday evening work-crews" too! Here we show one of the Wednesday crews touching-up the track at the iron bridge.

*Photo by David Williamson.*

Please consider renewing your membership in the Friends organization for 2021.

It's your dues and donations that make all of our projects possible!

Thank you  
for your consideration!



Another Wednesday evening workcrew performs trackwork near the site of the old water cistern.

*Photo by David Williamson.*

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### EQUIPMENT NEWS

by Dave Watson

#### Coach #1158

A great deal of progress, both inside and out, was made on coach 1158 this past summer. All inside surfaces were needle scaled down to bare metal. Around 50% of the inside has been primed with plans to finish priming later this fall. We also started painting the inside grey. In the past, we used Sherman Williams paints which did not seem to mind what nap roller was used. The PPG paint that we purchased orange-peeled greatly. We are in the process of trying to sand out and repaint any rough spots encountered.

A great deal of progress has also been made on the outside of the car. The Friends' air compressor, normally used for trackwork, had to be "borrowed" to keep up with the volume of air needed to run the needle scaler. Two volunteers with the railroad sourced and donated a lightly used Ingersoll Rand Air compressor that provides enough air to operate the needle scaler. As of the time of this writing, one whole side and nearly the other side have been needle scaled down to bare metal, sanded and primed. The neighbors have made many comments that the outside of the coach was looking great. Essentially it went from being the biggest eye-sore in the neighborhood to the best-looking coach in the yard. It's amazing what a little primer can do!

Welding work will resume this fall. Next year, we will focus on getting the roof done, floor replaced, ceiling redone, and painting of the outside of the car. It is estimated that it will cost \$5,000 more to finish this car. Please consider donating to keep our progress moving forward.

**Thank You!**

#### Tie Inserter

Work is progressing on the Friends' tie inserter. Recently, a new fuel lifting pump was purchased along with a fuel pump rebuild kit to refurbish the unit. Once the fuel pump is rebuilt, it will be reinstalled into the engine, which, in turn, will go back into the machine. We then plan to start the tie inserter and assess what additional repairs and parts it may need. Stay tuned!

The Stewartstown Railroad's Santa Trains are on the schedule again this year!

Be sure to reserve your tickets early as seating will be limited due to COVID-19 precautions.

Avoid disappointment by purchasing your tickets online at [www.stewartstownrailroadco.com](http://www.stewartstownrailroadco.com).



Friends' coach #1158.

Photo by Dave Watson.



West side of Friends' coach #1158.

Photo by Dave Watson.



Full view of the west side of the Friends' coach #1158.

Photo by Dave Watson.

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### THE STATION HAS NEW FANS!

by Miles Weaver

Well . . . not those kind of “fans.” Although, on a Saturday while volunteering at the station, many of the patrons when asked said they were new to the railroad. So it looks like the railroad really does have some of those kind of “new fans” — the paying customer kind.

Vincent, the Stewartstown stationmaster is on a mission. His mission is to restore and present a heyday experience to visitors of the Stewartstown train station so that patrons can experience the living history of a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century working short line railroad. In so doing, Vincent has researched the period in an effort to devise uniforms, props, and appliances that reflect life in the station during this period.

Recently mid-century fans, of the air moving kind, were donated to the railroad. Information found on the internet dates both fans to the 1950s.

The first, donated by Vincent himself, is a General Electric (GE) oscillating 10-inch “Home Fan” model F11S106. Constructed of metal with a Bakelite (an early form of plastic) base. This fan dates to the mid 1950s, is in excellent condition, and fully functional. So you might say, “this is Vincent’s #1 fan!”

The second fan, donated by Aaron Fried, Stewartstown Railroad volunteer extraordinaire, is an “Arvin heater-fan combo” model 5130 dating to the late 1940s or early 1950s. It is of all metal construction, is also in working order, and in very good condition. Interestingly, it is equipped with a safety switch under the base to disable the heater-fan in the event of upset; showing that even as far back as the 1950’s, there were concerns of the fan’s safety. Photos and videos can be found on the internet showing the Arvin fan heating element, which is scantily protected, glowing bright red hot! Search “Arvin heater-fan combo” if you are interested. As for the station’s Arvin heater-fan combo, the heating element has been disabled for safety.

The guarding on both fans by today’s standards is sparse. I guess people living in the 1950s knew to keep their fingers and hands away from the rotating blades. Or, at least, that’s what the manufacturers must have believed.

Both fans will be on display and used in the station, behind the ticket counter safely away from patrons, to contribute to the period ambience.

If anyone can offer more information about either fan, please share your knowledge with Vincent.



New additions to the station in Stewartstown are two mid-century office fans.  
Photo by Miles Weaver.

### Stewartstown Railroad

**2020 Santa Express Trains !**

**Join Santa on Saturdays & Sundays**

**November 28, 29**

**December 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20**

**Station Opens at 10:00 a.m. Each Day**

**Trains Depart at**

**11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m.,**

**and 2:30 p.m. Each Day**

**With an additional train on Saturdays at 10:30 a.m.**

**Special Night Train at 6:30 p.m. on**

**December 12 and 19**

**Ticket Prices:**

**\$13 Adults, \$12 Seniors, \$11 Children (12 & Under)**

**Children 2 and under ride FREE!**

***Avoid disappointment: purchase your tickets in advance  
on-line at [www.stewartstownrailroadco.com](http://www.stewartstownrailroadco.com)***

**COVID-19 safety protocols will be in effect on all trains!**

**The station is located at**

**21 West Pennsylvania Avenue**

**(PA Route 851)**

**Stewartstown, Pennsylvania 17363**

**(717) 746-4998**

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