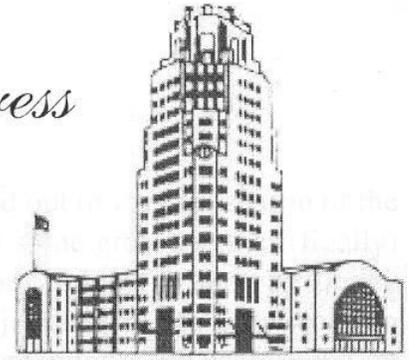


## Empire State Express



May 2019

PUBLICATION OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER NRHS, INC.

Editor: John C. Dahl Email: [newsletter@nfcnrhs.com](mailto:newsletter@nfcnrhs.com)

The meeting of the Chapter will be held at 8:00 pm on Friday, May 10, 2019 at 8:00PM in the Degraff Community Center, 139 Division St., North Tonawanda, NY.

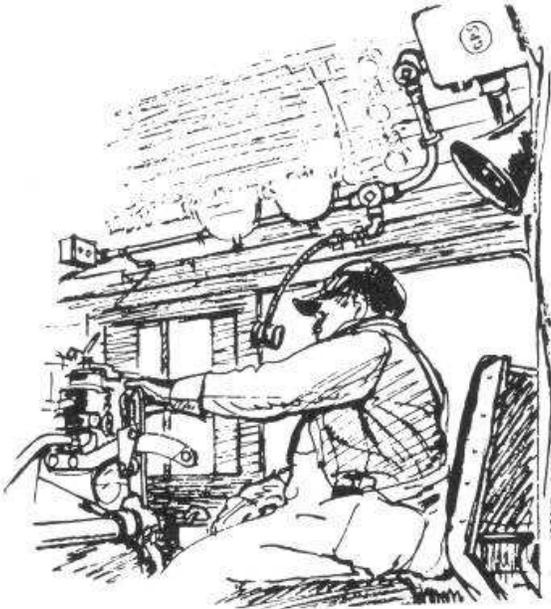
### 150 YEARS – THE GOLDEN SPIKE SESQUICENTENNIAL



*At Lancaster, NY May 3, 1969 saw the westbound Golden Spike Special headed by Nickel Plate No. 779 as she races toward a scheduled Buffalo stop with the display train. Our own James A. Van Brocklin was on hand to record the historic scene. Photo courtesy NKPHTS*

Join us on May 10<sup>th</sup> for the 150th anniversary of the driving of the golden spike, marking the completion of the first North American transcontinental railroad. Our member Bob Scheib has graciously provided two professionally made videos: “**The Transcontinental Railroad**”, tracing the history of the first railroad to the west and “**Jupiter and No. 119**” which tells the story of the replica steam locomotives constructed for the National Park site at Promontory Summit, Utah where the “wedding of the rails” took place. A special display of now historic memorabilia associated with the golden spike centennial train of 1969 will be displayed before the meeting for your added enjoyment, courtesy of Brian Angevine. Come a bit earlier so you can take in more of the proud story of our railroads in Brian’s excellent display.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The snow is gone and the grass is green again at long last. We are all coming out of hibernation after a long, way too long, winter. We have begun working at the Station on Saturdays again, pulling the Museum back together. We have already had a visitor, and some research going there as well as the Display Committee work. The Restoration Committee has already had a planning session toward work on the Archive Room Expansion. This is the one project that we will be doing ourselves. We will be looking for some general labor to help with that. Steve Frey will be heading the project. We will work Saturdays as Steve is available.

As far as EL-2 is concerned, our contractor, Niagara Construction, expects to be finished with their work by the time that you are reading this. We are hoping to get the chimney done as well this year, but that awaits the availability of Marty and Bob, the masonry guys.

In other news, Bruce Becker has established a Facebook page for us, and we also now have an E-

commerce “store” on the web. This is done through “Square” and will enable us to take Calendar orders on line as well as Gorge Book orders, sell Chicken BBQ tickets, and even take credit card payment at the Museum on the day of the event. Bruce will manage these two entities for us; he has the experience. This will certainly help us going forward.

Speaking of Chicken BBQ, Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup> is our Annual Chicken BBQ Fundraiser. Becky will need volunteers to assemble meals, take orders, run orders, direct traffic and so forth. Please volunteer, we only do this once a year now, let’s make it worthwhile.

On Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup>, I attended the Spring Museum Meeting at the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum at Rush, N.Y. After a train ride, a trolley ride, lunch and a shop tour, we got down to business. There were representatives from a dozen Museums in attendance. Otto Vondrak hosted and chaired the discussion about the issues that affect operating Museums. We all have the similar issues and problems. The next session will be at the Medina Railroad Museum, date to be advised. We will attend that one as well.

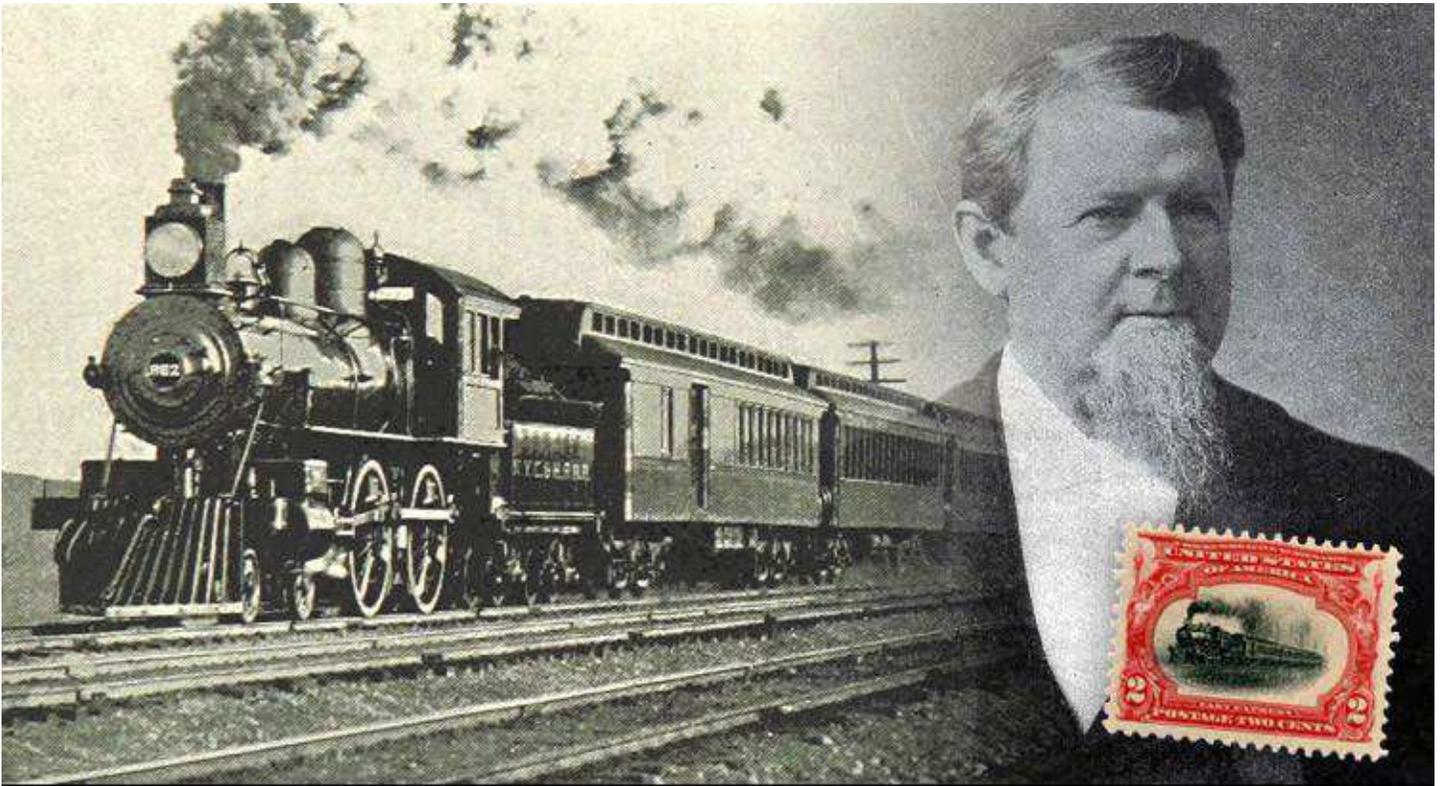
The season of touring begins soon and we publish that our Museum is open on Saturday afternoon from 1pm until 4 pm during June, July, August and September. This requires that we have volunteers in the building to host visitors. Won’t you volunteer? Call Becky at 434-5665 and she will tell you all about it.

Chapter Member Walter Simpson has a book out and the Chapter has received a copy for the Library. The book is titled “Diesel-Electric Locomotives. How they work, use energy, and can become more efficient and environmentally sustainable”. The photo on page 77 is from the Chapter Archives, used with permission. The book was published by Simmons Boardman.

The feedback on changing the meeting time seems to point to starting earlier. I’m going to propose that we start the meeting at 7pm beginning in September. Let me know what you think.

Until then, I’ll see you at the meeting.

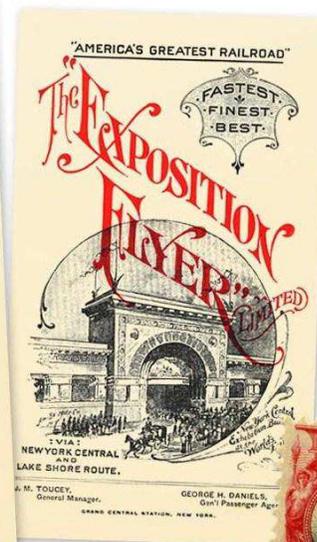
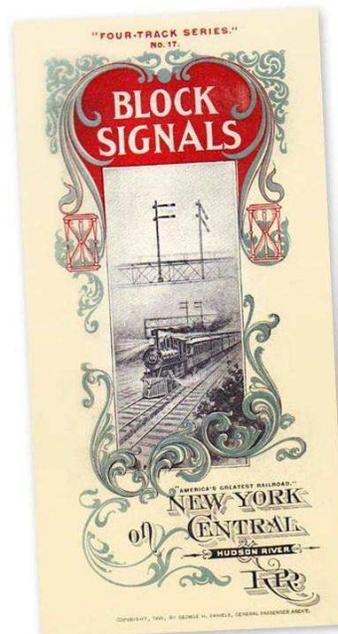
*Jim Ball*



## "Put Me Off At Buffalo" and George H. Daniels

**By Tony Schill**

Railroads, like any business, realized that advertising their services was essential to their growth and success. In the early days railroads relied heavily on timetables for this purpose, but later on more extensive "advertising campaigns" became common. Probably the most enthusiastic and creative railroad promoter ever was one George H. Daniels of the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad. Daniels was the General Passenger Agent and later the first advertising manager of the New York Central from 1889 to 1908. In his 19 years with the railroad he was endlessly creative in attracting favorable attention to the company. Daniels' many contributions to the success of the Central made him a recognized national leader in the field of advertising and publicity.



Born on a western Illinois farm in 1842, Daniels went railroading at the age of 15 with the Northern Missouri line. Following service with the Union Army in the Civil War he worked for a series of several Midwestern railroads in various positions. He then was employed by trade groups such as the Iowa Trunk Line Association. In the late 1880's Daniels became the chairman of the Chicago Eastbound Passenger Committee, the membership of which included the New York Central & Hudson River RR.

The Central was impressed with Daniels, and in 1889 hired him as General Passenger Agent. Later he was promoted to Advertising Manager, the first such position on an American railroad. Among his creations were the Twentieth Century Limited and the name "Red Caps" for the men who assisted passengers with their baggage.

Daniels also created the name "*Empire State Express*" in 1890. A few years later, in 1893, he was heavily involved with locomotive 999's famous speed run, a major purpose of which was to help the Central attract ridership to and from the Chicago World's Fair held that same year. Thanks to Daniels, the *Empire State Express* and the 999 were featured on United States Post Office two-cent stamp.

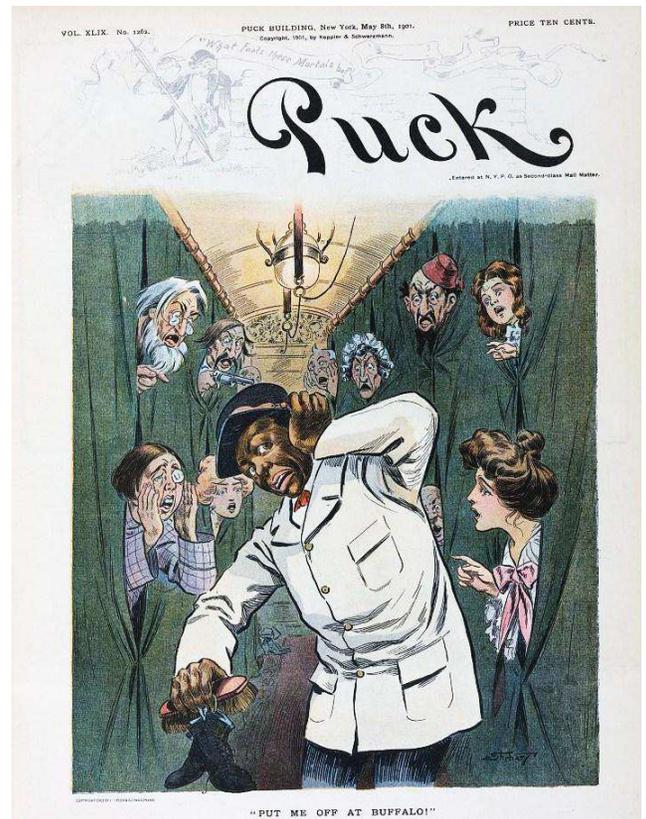
While Daniels had a commanding knowledge of railroad travel, he did on occasion miss the mark. In a 1900 interview with a New York newspaper, Daniels opined that "it may, however be safe to assume that it will hardly be possible to apply electricity to haul great passenger trains."

George Daniels was promoted from General Passenger to Director of Advertising (a new position in the American railroad industry), a post he held until 1907 when he retired at age 65. At the time of his death in 1908 he had residences in Buffalo and Lake Placid.

Now for the connection between George Daniels and the tune *Put Me Off at Buffalo*. The song was published in New York City in 1895, five years before the great Pan American Exposition (1901) in Buffalo. The lyrics were written by Harry Dillon, while the music was created by his brother, John Dillon. The song was an early sound recording and may be found with a simple internet search.

As 1900 approached, Daniels realized that the title of the song could be put to good use in the promotion of New York Central passenger service to the great event in Buffalo. Soon the words "put me off at Buffalo" were appearing in all sorts of NYC advertisements.

The comedic song tells the story of an overnight New York Central passenger who asks the Pullman porter to wake him and "put me off" when the train reaches Buffalo. The passenger then invites the porter to have a drink with him; later the porter puts off the wrong passenger at



Buffalo. The error is realized upon arrival at Cleveland, and the porter knows his railroading career is at an end.

Porters at the time were almost exclusively African-American men, and the song includes ethnic slurs common to the time in its final lines. In today's world, this would be considered offensive. The lyrics will not be repeated here. Never the less, the song was a great coup for Daniels who would go on to further achievements with the Central's flagship train, the *20<sup>th</sup> Century Limited* in 1902.



## The Pan-American Exposition

Will, it is believed, prove a greater success than any previous exposition on this continent. It is reached from every direction by the

### **NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES.**

In one of his advertisements Mr. Daniels says: "All you need to have is a ticket by the New York Central Lines; all you need to say is 'Put me off at Buffalo.'" The New York Central Lines are the New York Central, Boston & Albany, Michigan Central, Lake Shore, Big Four, Pittsburg & Lake Erie, and Lake Erie & Western Railways.

For a copy of the New York Central's Pan-American Exposition Folder, "Four-Track Series" No. 19, send a postage stamp to George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New York Central Railroad, Grand Central Station, New York.



## CHAPTER IS NOW ON FACEBOOK

The Chapter Now Has A Facebook Page!

Check it out by searching Facebook for 'Niagara Frontier Chapter - National Railway Historical Society'

Be sure to 'LIKE' our page! We'll regularly update it with details on upcoming Chapter events; items on local rail history; pictures & materials from the Chapter archives and much, much more.



## HISTORIC PLAQUE RESTORED AND RETURNED TO ROCHESTER AMTRAK STATION



Chapter members Bruce Becker (left) & Dave Skoney (right) have worked over the past several months to apply new gold leaf to the historic 1882 New York Central & Hudson River Railroad plaque now located in the passenger tunnel of the new Rochester Amtrak Station. This plaque was originally placed by the N.Y.C.&H.R. R.R. in the first station located on the site of the current station in downtown Rochester.

*Photos by Bruce Becker*



## ROCHESTER STATION DEDICATED

On Monday, March 25, 2019, the new Rochester Amtrak Station was named in honor of late Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, who tirelessly worked for many years to make the new station a reality. Left, NY Lt. Governor, Kathy Hochul and Senator Chuck Schumer were on hand for the dedication. *All photos by Bruce Becker*

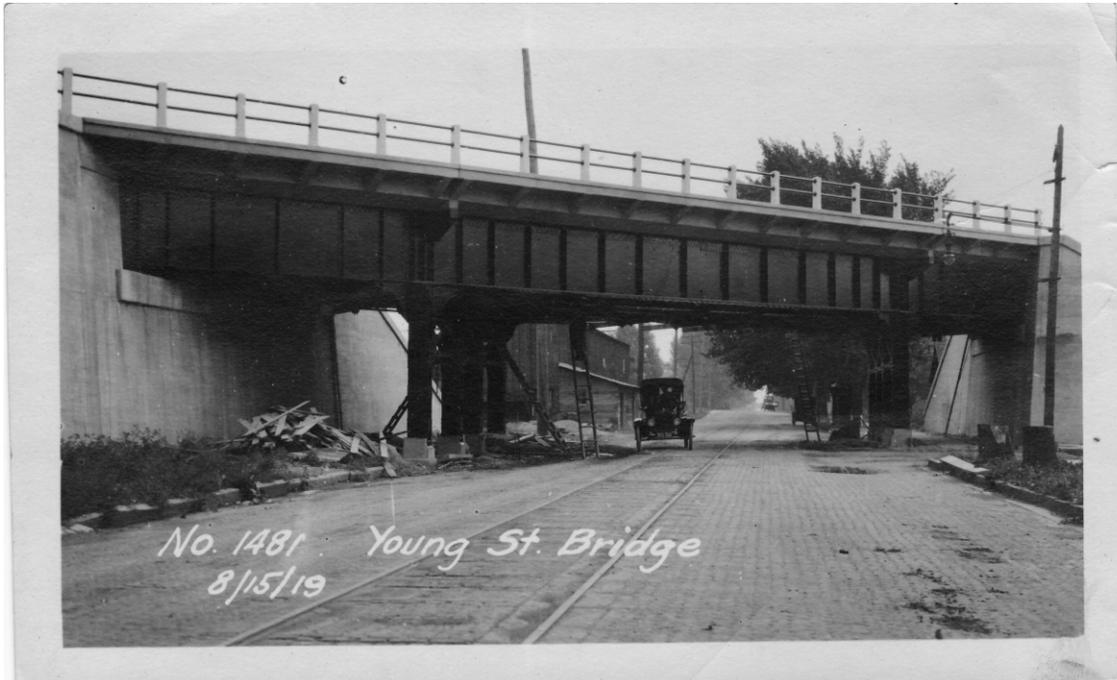


*The new Rochester station is a wonderful example of New York State's continuing support for rail passenger service. Recently Schenectady received a new station and Buffalo will also receive a new station downtown to replace the tiny and aging Exchange Street facility. It is great to see a revival of rail as an alternative to the 'fly' / 'drive' mentality that unfortunately is still the only option in so many parts of the country.*

## CORRECTION

April's Empire State Express gave the wrong email for President Jim Ball. The correct address is [jabball@roadrunner.com](mailto:jabball@roadrunner.com) If you prefer, you can always drop Jim a note at our PO box mailing address shown on the last page of every issue of the ESX.

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS SINCE TONAWANDA TRACK RELOCATION



One hundred years ago on August 15, 1919 work was well underway on the New York Central's massive track relocation project in the cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda, which moved the right of way off of city streets onto a mostly grade separated elevation. One of the several bridges constructed for the bypass is located at Young Street, Tonawanda. Note the streetcar tracks, in this looking south view. The trolley line was already abandoned by 1919. It originally extended to Buffalo when opened. Organized in 1895 as the Buffalo, North Main St. & Tonawanda Electric Railway Co. the roundabout route to Buffalo through then largely undeveloped countryside along the "Guideboard Road" (which later became known as Eggert Road) meant its early demise. This bridge is frequently in the news for unfortunate accidents. Today's much higher trucks have clearance issues with the relatively low bridge girders and many a truck trailer has lost its top here. So far, the bridge has won every time. *Photo: courtesy Historical Society of the Tonawandas*

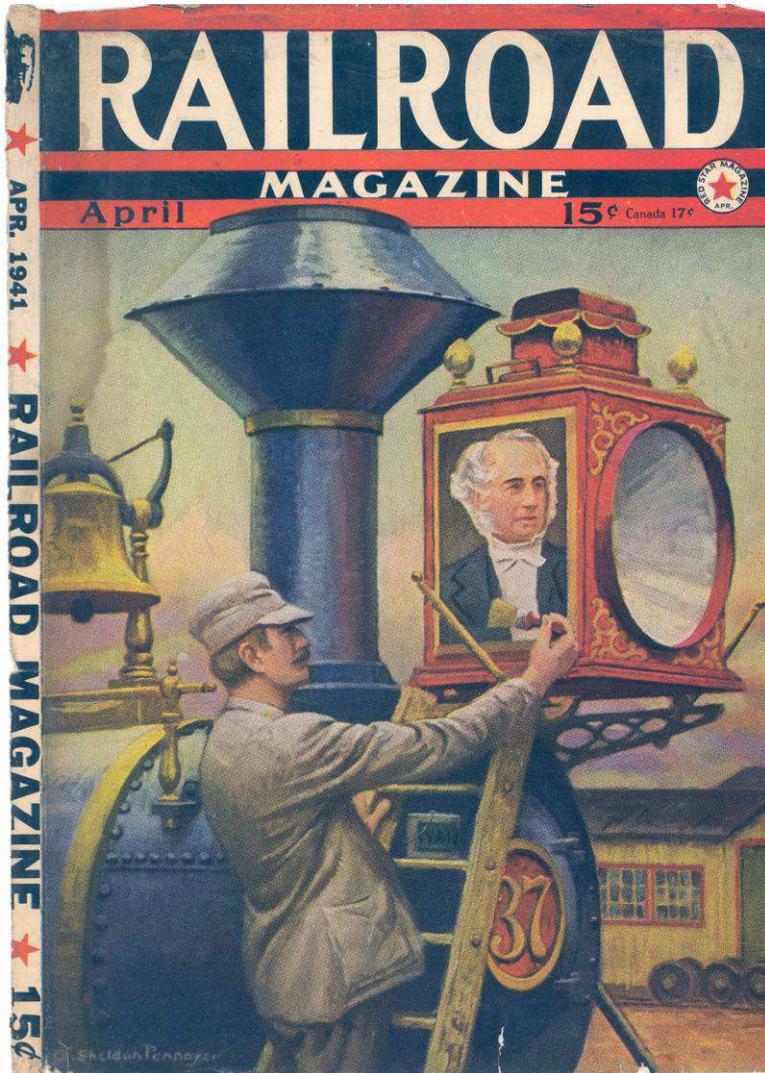
A new photo exhibit at our station this year features the story of the Central's large improvement project which has stood the test of time and still functions today as a vital link in CSX's network. Come visit the station and learn about some local as well as railroad history.

## MYSTERY PHOTO IDENTIFIED



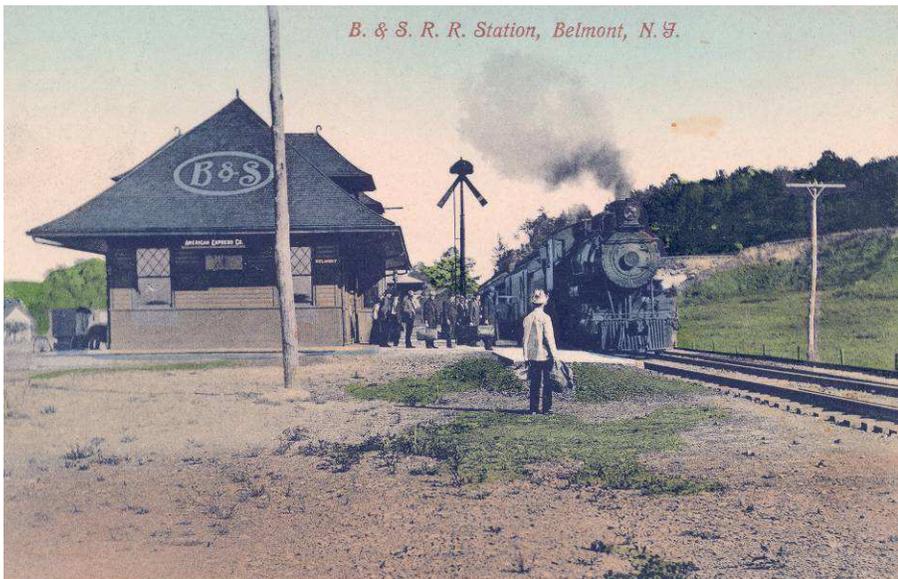
*Photo: Jon Rothenmeyer collection*

Tony Schill identified the location of last month's mystery photo. Tony writes: "It is VA tower (PRR) at Irvine, Pa (west of Warren). To the left the truss bridge belongs to the DAV&P. VA Tower (once also named IRV Tower) controlled the junction of the Philadelphia & Erie line of the PRR with the branch that ran (until the 1960's) between Irvine and Oil City. Trust me when I say that all there is today at that location is a single track on the ex-PRR line to Erie (used maybe three days a week) now operated by the B&P from Johnsonburg. Everything else is gone."



With the 150th anniversary of the transcontinental railroad, the images we often see of old locomotives are at best usually poor reminders of what they must have really looked like. Nineteenth century railroaders were proud of their engines and railroad, and often took a personal interest in decoration and upkeep. Engines were frequently named and were often very colorful. With bright paint, "Russia Iron" boiler jackets and featuring lots of fancy brass trim, they were kept in immaculate condition. The New York Central's Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt gets his portrait dusted-off and the headlight of number 37 is the centerpiece of this great illustration of those olden time days of railroading.

*Railroad Magazine cover, April 1941*



## ON THE TRACK AHEAD

Join us in June at Buffalo Central Terminal for a program by Pete Gores on the long gone Buffalo & Susquehanna RR. Opened for service by 1907 to Buffalo, the line failed to prosper in the highly competitive era when western New York was thick with iron trails. As a latecomer, the B&S never could quite turn the corner and after the deaths of its chief backers, brothers Frank and Charles Goodyear, the line fell into receivership. The line from Wellsville to Buffalo would be shut down by the late autumn of 1916. But there is much

more to the story than just that of an abandoned railway. Come hear the tale of the great railroad empire once touted as 'The New Way', the Buffalo and Susquehanna!

## CHAPTER CALENDAR

- MAY 10 Regular meeting, at Degraff Community Center, 8 PM. "Golden Spike Special" commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. Special video presentation courtesy of Bob Scheib. Memorabilia exhibit before meeting on the Golden Spike Centennial of 1969 will be provided by Brian Angevine.
- MAY 18 Chiavetta Chicken BBQ at the station, 111 Oliver St. North Tonawanda. Dinners ready 11:30 AM, Tickets \$11. Drive In, Take Out. Thank You!
- JUN 14 The fascinating story of the Buffalo & Susquehanna RR will be explored in this presentation by Pete Gores at our annual Buffalo Central Terminal meeting, 8 PM
- JUN-JUL-AUG- SEPT Station open to the public, Saturdays 1PM to 4PM. Volunteers are greatly needed to assist!

The Niagara Frontier Chapter NRHS, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) publicly supported organization. Contributions may be deductible for income tax purposes in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service.

**\*\*\* IMPORTANT REMINDERS \*\*\*** If you receive hardcopy of the ESX and your mailing address changes, please send to the attention of Neal Kerin so that your Empire State Express can be addressed properly. Likewise, if your email address changes for any reason, please let Tony Schill know by sending it to the [newsletter@nfcnrhs.com](mailto:newsletter@nfcnrhs.com) THANK YOU

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