

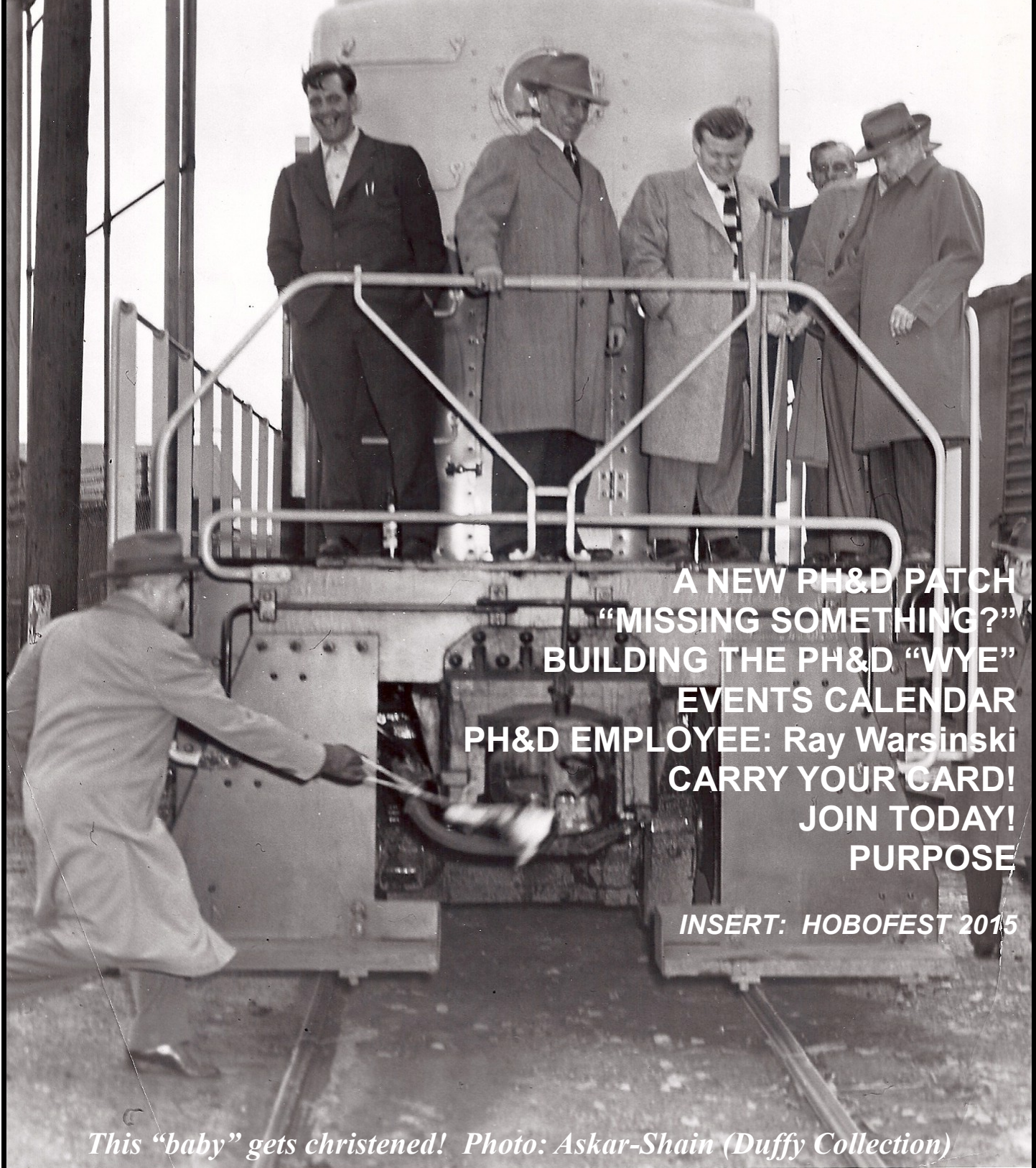
THE MARKER LIGHT

NUMBER 23

THE PORT HURON & DETROIT RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FALL 2015

ENGINE #51 ARRIVES!



A NEW PH&D PATCH
"MISSING SOMETHING?"
BUILDING THE PH&D "WYE"
EVENTS CALENDAR
PH&D EMPLOYEE: Ray Warsinski
CARRY YOUR CARD!
JOIN TODAY!
PURPOSE

INSERT: HOBOFEST 2015

This "baby" gets christened! Photo: Askar-Shain (Duffy Collection)

Cover: Diamond Crystal Salt president Robert Farr does the honors with the new #51 PH&DRR ALCO in June of 1945

PG. 2: From Where I Sit; New PH&DRR Patch!

PG. 3: "Missing Something?" Back issues of The Marker Light available for purchase!

PG. 4: Engine #51 Arrives

PG. 5: (#51 Cont.)

PG. 6: Building the PH&D "Wye"

PG. 7: ("Wye" Cont.)

PG. 8: 2015 Calendar; PH&DRR Employee: *Ray Warsinski*; Join; Purpose of the Society; Board of Directors



Dear Friends of the PH&D:

Here we are reaching the fall season. Your Society has been quite busy working on the railroad office. So many to thank who believe in our vision and help us even with small steps. The work on the two rooms is nearly complete which will give us a two offices that look nice and fenable us to conduct business! Carpets, desks, lights, it's all good!

Hobofest 2015 is here! This is my favorite time of year and gives us a chance to celebrate the life of those brave souls who went out looking for work when the tough times were upon them. Using the rails to go from town to town has become almost a thing of legend. Our "jungle" boss, the "Michigan Kid", has that experience, and will be tending the fire with a huge pot of Mulligan stew. That Saturday, someone might even have the Michigan home opener on a transistor! Believe it's Oregon State. Anyway, come on out, learn some history, see live steam, and watch Class I trains go by!

Glad to report that our Board Member **Chad Thompson** is on the mend after surgery recently. Be good to have you back in action, Chad!

Sad to report the passing of **Ray Warsinski**. Ray was a brakeman and conductor and worked along side his brother **Norm** and brother-in-law **Bruce Sawdon**. Like all PH&DRR employees, he arrived "train time" to get out, get the job done, and come home. R.I.P. Ray.

Kurt Stetzer, our unofficial PH&DRRHS photographer, has just released a new PH&D book! It's the second volume, following the first which was introduced last year. This new book features high quality black and white images from the Company's final year of operation. Be sure to add this to your PH&D library!

Hope to see YOU at *Hobofest!*

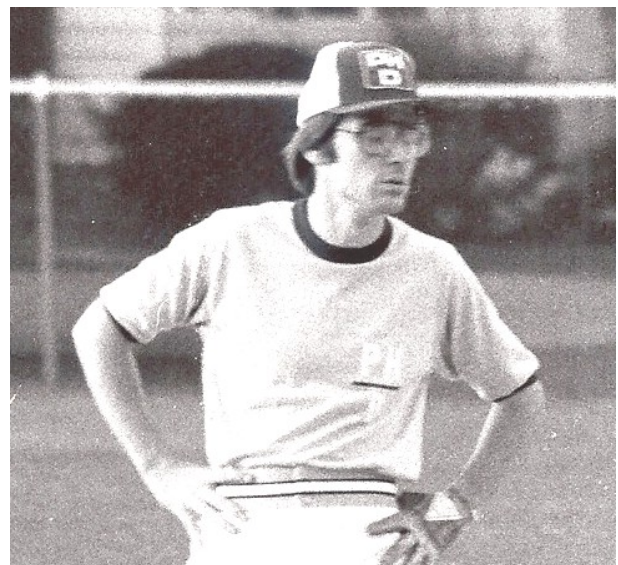
Sandy Duffy

NEW PH&D PATCH AVAILABLE

At the beginning of the 1980s, the PH&DRR Company fielded a softball team. Seems there were enough employees and friends who wanted to play and become part of the local league. The Company was on board and paid for shirts and ball caps. The caps sported the PH&D logo. These are now very rare.

Recently, the Board of Directors decided to reproduce this patch and is now offering them for sale. Find yours at *Hobofest!*

\$3



Jim Wood on base and in style.



MISSING SOMETHING?

**BACK ISSUES OF *THE MARKER LIGHT*
AVAILABLE IN LIMITED QUANTITIES**

**FILL IN YOUR COLLECTION
BEFORE THEY'RE GONE**

4.00 EACH

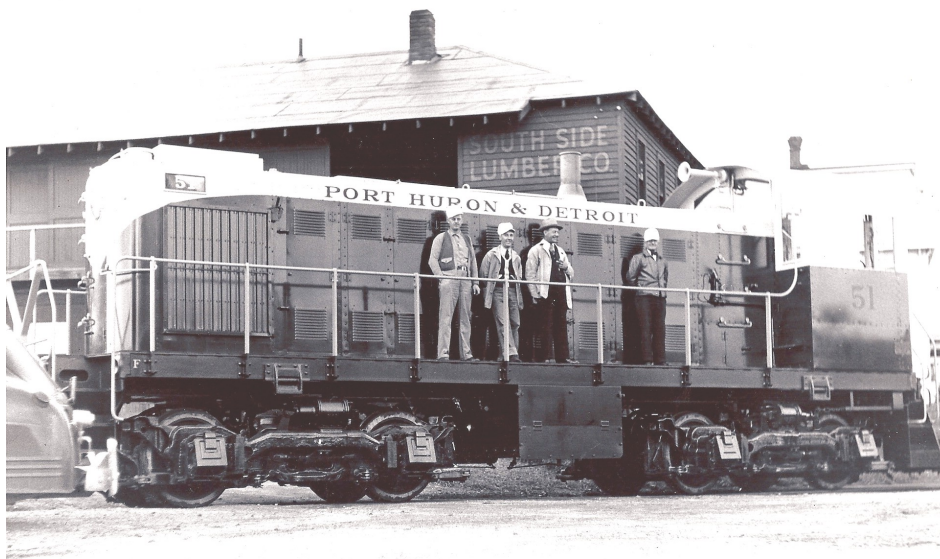
Available at Hobofest 2015 or

Online at phdrailroad.com



ENGINE #51 ARRIVES

It was in 1945 when the PH&DRR received two brand new 660 HP American Locomotive Company diesels. Both engines cost the company over \$62,000 each (in 2015 dollars, allowing for inflation, this works out to over \$800,000 each!).



First stop with the new engine, South Side Lumber Company. From left, Al Wurzel, Joe Deemer, Ernie Rebeske, and engineman Ben Reed. The boys look resplendent in their white caps. And look how that engine shines!

It was of course the result of a study conducted by Chief Engineer William Boyd and General Manager George Duffy to determine the cost benefit between operating a coal-fired steam engine or a diesel locomotive. Both men made trips by train to all the major manufacturers including Fairbanks Morse, Baldwin Locomotive Works, General Electric, and American Locomotive Works. The study was finished within a year and presented to management (James E. Duffy, Sr. and James E. Duffy, Jr.). It was turned down. By 1942, George is in the Engineer Corps of the Army and ends up being sent to India as part



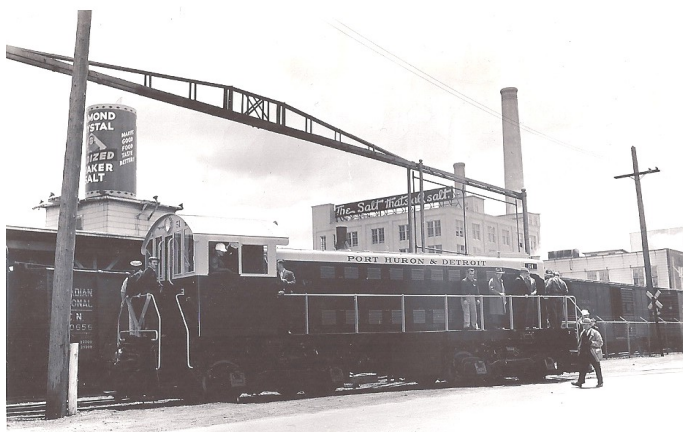
Salt President Bob Farr prepares to climb down as the crowd gathers just outside the gates of the Diamond Crystal.

of a Railway Operating Battalion. While he was away, the purchase of two ALCO engines was authorized and these arrived in 1945.

The first engine to actually cross onto our rails was #51. With Ben Reed as engineer, Ernie Rebeske, conductor, Al Wurzel, and Joe Deemer, they made a test run to Marine City. The plan was to switch Marysville, and then stop at the Diamond Crystal Salt plant, where various dignitaries awaited, and then on to Marine City. On hand at St. Clair were Diamond Crystal Salt President Robert M. Farr, H.R. Shannon, a representative from the Diesel Division of ALCO, James E. Duffy, Jr., Vice President and General Manager of the PH&D, and William Boyd, Superintendent. Mr. Farr was given the honors of smashing a bottle of champagne into the cab coupler, after the train delivered its load of 48 cars.

It was indeed a beautiful day to see a beautiful engine and #51 in her bright red and gray livery!

Perhaps in a future issue, we'll feature that "steam versus diesel" report!



Ernie Rebeske strolls in front of #51 before it heads south. In this shot, we see the famous Diamond Crystal Salt shaker which was a visible to everyone driving by on M-29.



Al Wurzel rests on the foot board while the dignitaries await the trip to St. Clair and Marine City.

BUILDING THE PH&D "WYE"

The corporate offices of the Port Huron & Detroit Railroad Company weren't always enclosed within a "wye". In fact, when the extension from Port Huron South to the Morton Salt plant was finished, the interchange with both the Pere Marquette and the Grand Trunk Railway (as it was known ca. 1900) was, shall we say, "primitive" at best. The connection dated to the formation and operation of the predecessor Port Huron Southern, which was a line financed by Joy Morton from Chicago and local south park industrialists. The "Southern" served industries which were largely owned by the shareholders of the railroad and ended at the Morton plant just north of present day Marysville, formerly known as Vicksburg. Morton needed a rail connection to serve this huge salt plant and formed and built the Port Huron Southern to answer his need.

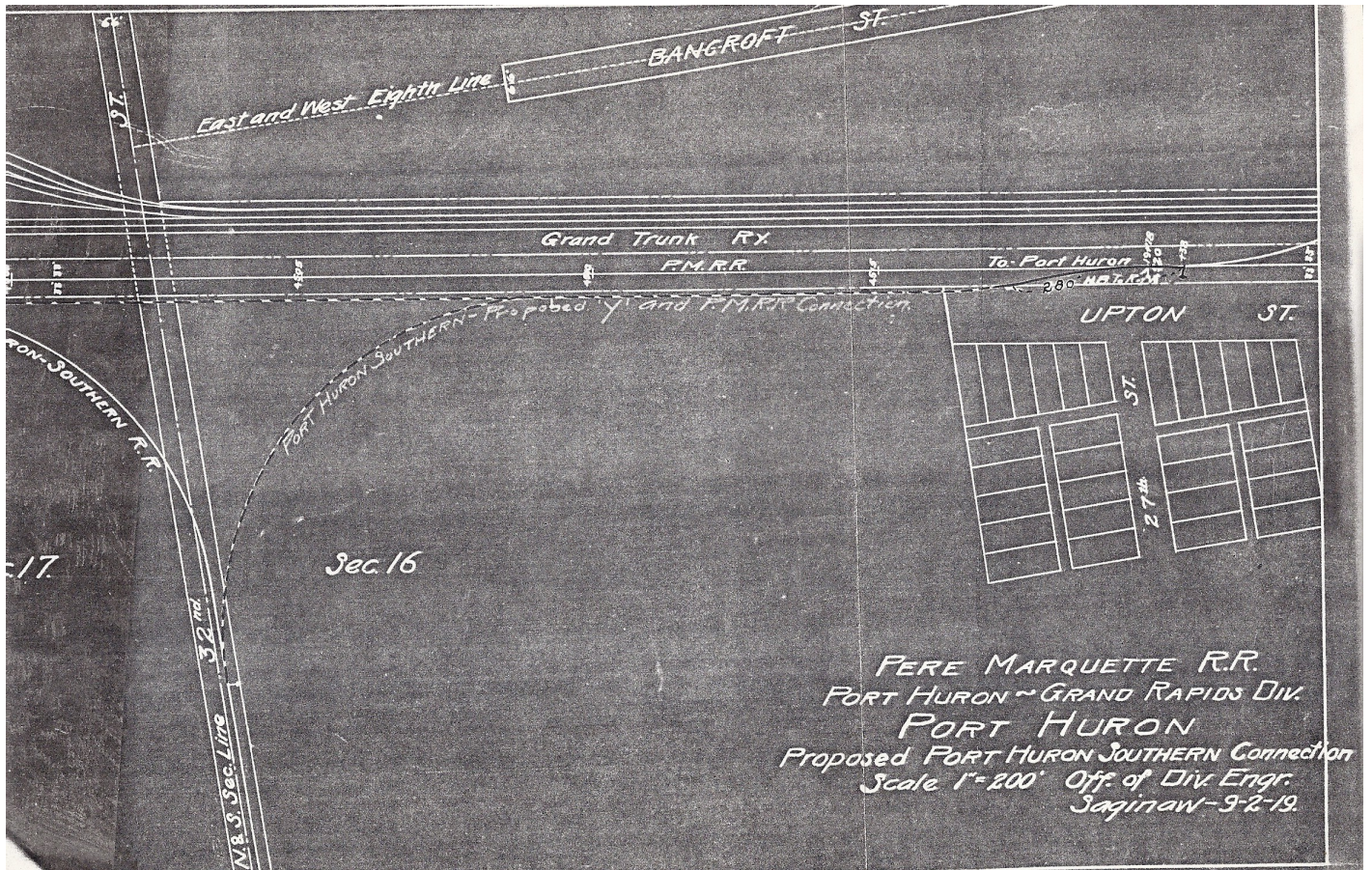
Switching was a straightforward operation. A small saddletank switcher picked up a string of empties at west Tappan and headed east backwards (no "wye" or turntable) and then south following a curve at 32nd Street. It dropped off cars along sidings and team tracks in South Park and finished at the terminus at the Morton plant. A 36' wooden boxcar served as a maintenance and yard facility. On the return trip, the engine pulled the loads north back past the 32nd Street curve and dropped them off at West Tappan for the junction with the Pere Marquette and Grand Trunk Railway. We should note that on October 31, 1916, a letter from Robert K. Warren, President of the Port Huron Southern Railroad, acknowledges a memorandum of agreement between the Southern and the Grand Trunk Railway, made on June 1, 1903, for a construction of a main transfer track of 5080' with a delivery track of 1250' "near Tappan Junction".

In 1916, with the Detroit, Bay City & Western approaching Port Huron after building the massive trestle spanning Mill Creek, the Handy Brothers needed to cross the east/west rail lines to connect with the Port Huron Southern. The brothers were experienced entrepreneurs, having bought and sold the Pontiac, Oxford & Northern Railroad as well as running a lumber yard, numerous coal mines, and a box factory, and set their sites to buy the Southern. After the purchase, and having won over the city of Port Huron with an impressive publicity effort, it wasn't long before they received permission to link up with the Southern and establish an entry into the city. Shortly after, passenger trains from Bay City began dropping off riders at the impressive new depot at the end of railroad street.

Having established entry into the city and a junction with both the PM and the GTR, the brothers gave Chief Engineer William Boyd the go-ahead to extend the line down to Marine City, which was finished in 1918. At this date, there were no facilities at 32nd Street except a small yard office. The roundhouse, turntable, coaling tower, and the 15,000 gallon water plug weren't scheduled to be built until 1920.

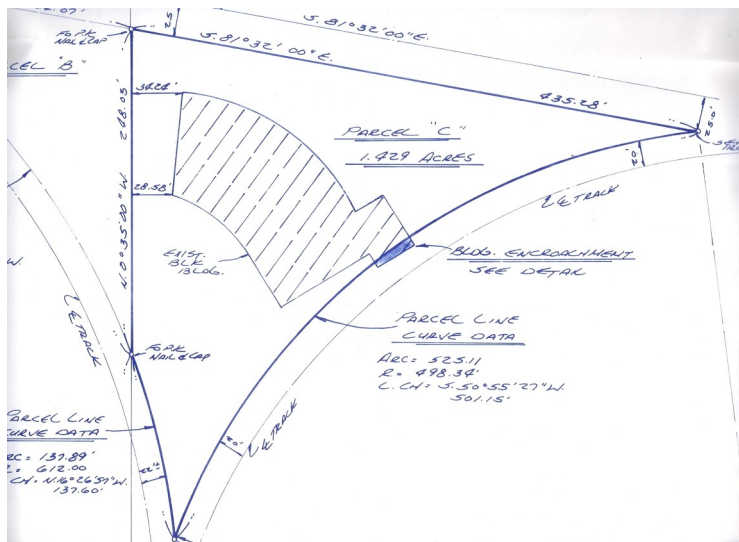
In 1919, it was an extremely busy year for the DBC&W. In June, both depots at St. Clair and Marine City were begun. A month later, on July 1, 1919, and after the Handys were advised by Bill Boyd, work began to improve the interchange arrangement with the Pere Marquette with the construction of a *Spur track easterly parallel to P.M.RR to point of connection w P.M.RR at P.H.S.RR property line for purpose of transferring cars w the P.M. RR. known as the P.M. east transfer track*. A second AFE authorized Boyd to construct the *East leg of wye track commencing at Sta. 85 plus 46 on 32nd Street and making a connection w P.M. east transfer track length 1022'*.

The east leg curve functioned as a method to turn engines and to connect with the new PM spur track. When finished in December, the DBC&W "wye" was completed. Work began to expand the facilities by building the two story office, the 4 stall roundhouse, the 60' turntable, a 15,000 gallon water tank, and an impressive coaling tower. It was all running smoothly for the Handy boys.



Engineering Department Print Pere Marquette Railroad

Here's the drawing of the proposed east leg of the wye with the connection and junction with the Pere Marquette, dated September 2, 1919. Although the Handys had authorized Bill Boyd on July 1, actual construction probably began that fall, as the PM still considered it in the "proposal" stage that September. No matter. According to the AFE logs, the project was completed on December 5th, 1919. The log refers to a 1022' transfer track which allowed plenty of room for a number of cars to be spotted for pickup by either road. Now, the DBC&W/Port Huron Southern had the layout to allow the turning of engines and a more efficient interchange with the Class I Pere Marquette Railroad.



2014 Survey Map

Here's the current diagram of the east leg of the wye which is essentially the same as the proposed map above. Missing from both drawings is the parallel runaround that was used as a storage track for two PM 400 series cabooses/"turken" coops.

2015 EVENTS CALENDAR

Sept 10	Board Meeting	32nd St Wye	6:00PM
Sept 11	Hobofest 2015		6:00PM
Sept 12	Hobofest 2015	10:00AM-5:00PM	
Oct 8	Board Meeting	32nd St. Wye	6:00PM

All members and guests are welcome to attend monthly board meetings.

Saturdays at the Wye is in effect. Check the website for last minute weekend gatherings and schedules.

Website: www.phdrailroad.com
Email: info@phdrailroad.com

If you'd like to come up on a Saturday and spend time watching and photographing trains, make sure you have a paid-up membership card allowing unlimited access to the Society-owned half of the "wye" property. Please stay off CSX property including the Roundhouse.

PH&DRR EMPLOYEES:

RAYMOND WARSINSKI

Ray signed on as a section hand in the 1950s. It wasn't long before he was needed for train service and became a brakeman and conductor from then on. He was always a loyal railroad man who was genial and worked with everyone with a smile. He was often assigned the extra job of running *Castleblayne* down the line to Marine City and back, with Bruce Sawdon as engineman. In the photo, Ray wears the white hat.



JOIN NOW AND GET ONBOARD!

The *Port Huron & Detroit Railroad Historical Society* needs your talent! We invite you to join committees, contribute your time with hands on restoration projects, and be on board at this early, critical stage.

Membership, publicity, web design, resource development, lawn mowing, and acquisitions, are just a few of the areas that you can help out with.

For only \$30 a year, you'll receive 4 nifty newsletters, a chance to help create the area's first railroad transportation museum complex, have exclusive Member-only access to the 32nd Street "Wye" and a Class I rail yard.

Mail to: PH&DRRHS, P.O. Box 217, Marysville, MI 48040.

PH PORT HURON and DETROIT RAILROAD CO.
 - St. Clair Blue Water Route -

D PORT HURON & DETROIT RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP CARD

NAME: _____

JOINED: ____ / ____ MO/YEAR

Regulations covering access to U.S. rail yards are in effect, administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and enforced by local enforcement agencies. Accordingly, those with PH&DRRHS membership cards must, if requested, present their cards to authorized personnel from either CN, CSX, or St. Clair County Sheriff's officers. When visiting, please stay on the west side of the yellow line (PH&DRRHS property).

The purpose of

The Port Huron & Detroit Railroad Historical Society is:

To collect, archive, preserve, and present, all for the education of the community, historical documents, photographs, drawings, artifacts and equipment relating to The Port Huron & Detroit Railroad Company and its predecessors, The Port Huron Southern Railway and The Detroit Bay City & Western Railroad, as well as the Grand Trunk Western/Canadian National, and the Pere Marquette/Chesapeake and Ohio.

To obtain, restore and maintain the roundhouse at 32nd Street for use as a museum, as well as other structures, artifacts, and rolling stock, as they may become available;

To accumulate, conserve, and index all data relating to the above-named railroads for the use of scholars, rail fans and scale modelers.

**BOARD of DIRECTORS
2015**

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- Bruce Sawdon**
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Special Thanks

**To founding board member
Allen Stevens for a generous gift!**

Special Thanks

**To long-time member Hugh Hales
For covering this month's issue!**

Special Thanks

**To Kurt Stetzer for his very
Gracious donation!**