

THE MARKER LIGHT

NUMBER 29

THE PORT HURON & DETROIT RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPRING 2017

ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE PH&D

Spring Picnic & Memorial

Acquisitions: GTW Reefer Update

Reviews:

Detroit Division CD

The Shortlines of Michigan DVD

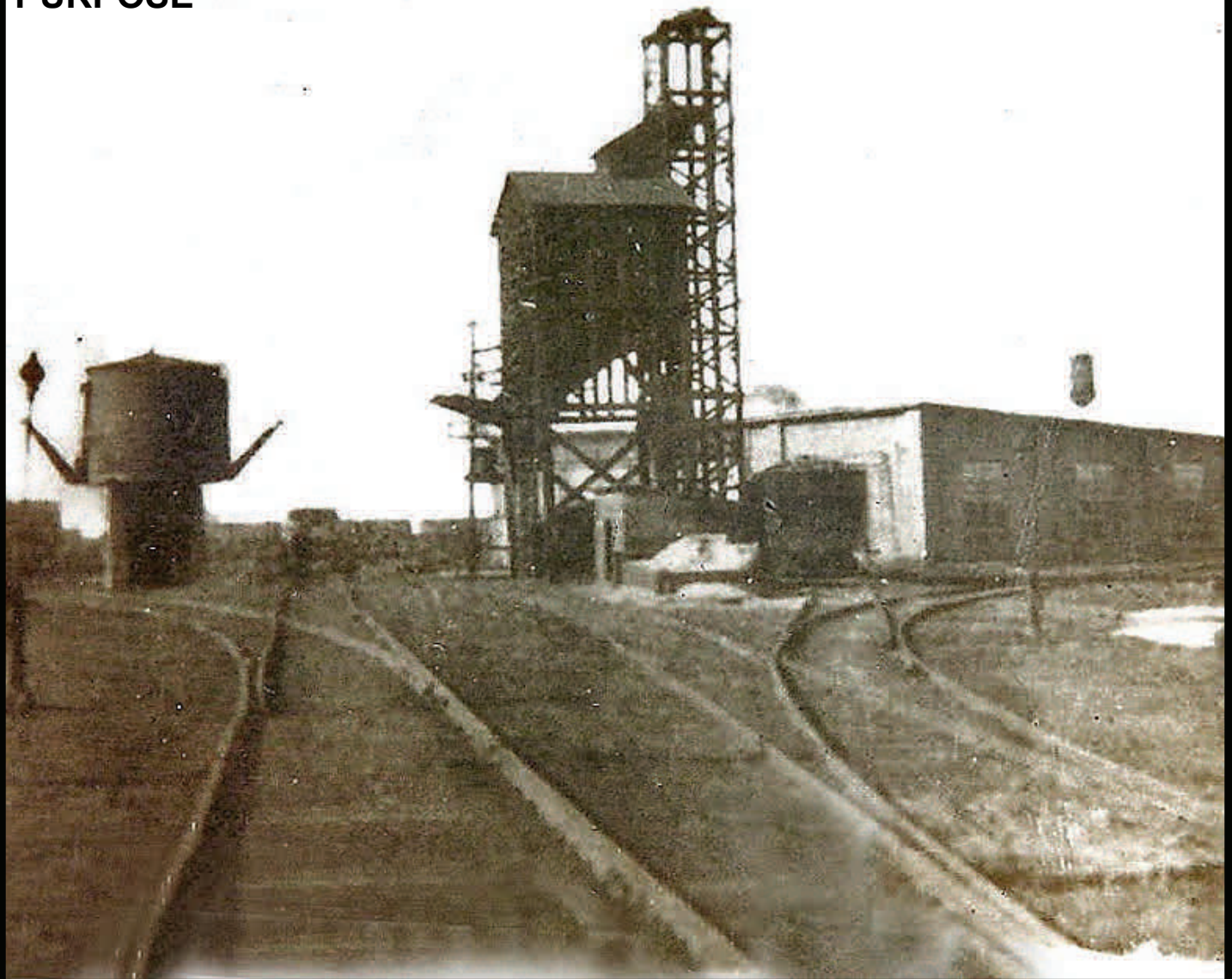
SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT: Hugh Hales

SUMMER 2017 CALENDAR

CARRY YOUR CARD!

JOIN TODAY!

PURPOSE



Cover: *The 80 ton coaling tower dominates the scene in this rare, early 1920s shot of the 4-stall roundhouse.*

PG. 2: **From Where I Sit; 2017 Spring Picnic & Port Huron Train Day**

PG. 3: **Acquisitions: GTW Reefer # 206447**

PG. 4: **Archeology at the PH&D: Exposing the past**

PG. 5: **(Cont.)**

PG. 6: **CD Review: Detroit Division; An Anthology of GTW Steam Locomotives by Dan Pence;**

PG. 7: **DVD Review: The Shortlines of Michigan from Jim Terrell**

PG. 8: **Spring/Summer 2017 Calendar; Carry Your Card; Join; Purpose of the Society; Society Spotlight: Hugh Hales; Board of Directors**



FROM WHERE I SIT

Dear Friends of the PH&D:

As you all know, this is a huge year for our Society. A number of additions and improvements are scheduled. First, thanks to the sharp eyes of a few members, we were able to obtain a donated, rare, Grand Trunk Western refrigerator car. We raised \$4000 through t-Shirt and hat sales and by June, it should be resting on our display track, ready for a new paint job.

Second, our beloved ALCO #52 is finally coming home. It was one of two first generation ALCOs which arrived in 1945. This is an expensive transport totaling over \$20,000. We are presently securing funding to cover this cost. It's a big deal when your original S-1 ALCO is reunited with its originally-assigned caboose! Donations to the Society are tax-deductible and you may direct your gift to Project 52, the GTW Reefer Project, or to our vintage mainline signals installation. All of these projects will be on site this year! For a look at our first announcement, be sure to look for "Great Trains Heartland" published a few weeks ago by Classic Trains. Get your copy today and look at the inside of the back cover. This features the poster which is for sale with that terrific image by the acclaimed railroad photographer Charlie Whipp.

Spring time and that means we fire up the BBQ! New this year is our own "Port Huron Train Day" which helps to promote passenger rail travel in Michigan. We are partnering up with MARP (Michigan Association of Rail Passengers) and AMTRAK and will have promotional material on hand. Come for lunch, bring your camera, and maybe a lawn chair, and spend a sunny day, outside watching trains, just before Father's Day!

Part of that day, we'll recognize those PH&DRR employees who have passed on. The last Trainmaster of the railroad, Bill Schultz, will be on hand to answer questions. Might be a great time to learn more about how the day to day operation happened. He can fill you modelers in.

If you have a spare Saturday, check the website to see what we're doing. Or else just come on in and enjoy watching the action. Remember, having that membership card allows you to park on Society property without scrutiny. June 1 is membership renewal. Why not re-join today!

Sandy Duffy

2017 SPRING PICNIC/PH TRAIN DAY

On Saturday, June 17, the Society will be hosting our annual Spring Picnic, in tandem with what used to be National Train Day. We welcome members and friends to help promote passenger rail service in our state.

We'll also be remembering those men and women who worked for the PH&DRR and who have since passed on. Over the past few years, we have lost members from all three departments, the section gang, the trainmen, and the office crew.

Accordingly, Bill Schultz, the road's last Trainmaster, will be presenting a short recognition ceremony honoring and remembering these dear friends of ours.

Please come out and see our new and growing exhibit on our display track and grab a bite to eat with your family! Bring your camera!



ACQUISITIONS: GTW Refrigerator Car 206447

Our effort to move this rare Grand Trunk Western car to Port Huron continues. Board member Chad Thompson is ramrodding this project and he and his crew were in Holland to remove and transport one of the trucks to our display track. They had to lift one end of the car to place a set of jacks underneath before they carefully slid it away to transfer to a low-boy trailer, supplied by Mark Kalim, who has been contracted by the Society to move the car.

Upon arrival at the PH&DRRHS wye, the truck was carefully slid off the trailer and onto our display track. A few days later, our guys applied a primer and then a coat of industrial strength black paint.

An interesting side note: this truck is stamped "GTW" along with a date of "12/54". The trucks may have been made in the Port Huron Car Shops and shipped to the builder. GTW ordered a total of 100 of these reefers from Pacific Car & Foundry and that date is July of 1955. This is the only one that survives as far as we know.



PictureArchives.NET Image Copyright Nicholas Katz

*The rare GTW 206447 at Holland, Michigan.
(Photo: Nicholas Katz)*



With the GTW reefer on jacks, Judd Brown (facing) and Society board member Chad Thompson prepare to remove the first set of trucks.



First set of trucks being transferred onto the PH&DRRHS display track. Two board members, Chad Thompson and Tom Gaffney grunting and assisting.



After being primed, a coat of protective industrial-strength black paint applied on one side. The second set of trucks will be delivered shortly.

ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE PH&D: Exposing the Past

Archaeology is essentially “digging up the past”. Evaluating what’s found leads to both fact and speculation. This is especially true in the matter of the mysterious concrete foundations at the east side of the PH&DRR Wye. Our AFE (*Authority For Expenditures*) Book recorded expenditures and retirements from 1919 to 1945. One of the things it verifies is the history of construction of the PH&DRR. This provides a starting point to help us identify the anomalies that are emerging through the surface of the asphalt of 32nd Street. Let’s begin.

In order to build the roundhouse at 32nd Street, the Handy brothers estimated they’d need between \$100,000 (\$1,277,000 in today’s inflation-adjusted numbers) and \$200,000 (\$2,544,000). Accordingly, on April 2, the state public utilities commission authorized the Handys to issue bonds totaling \$2,300,000 (\$29,380,000). The Handys stated that they intended to put part of that money on “accrued construction obligations” before committing more to the Detroit extension. This gave them the funds to build the roundhouse which would eliminate servicing the Bay City.

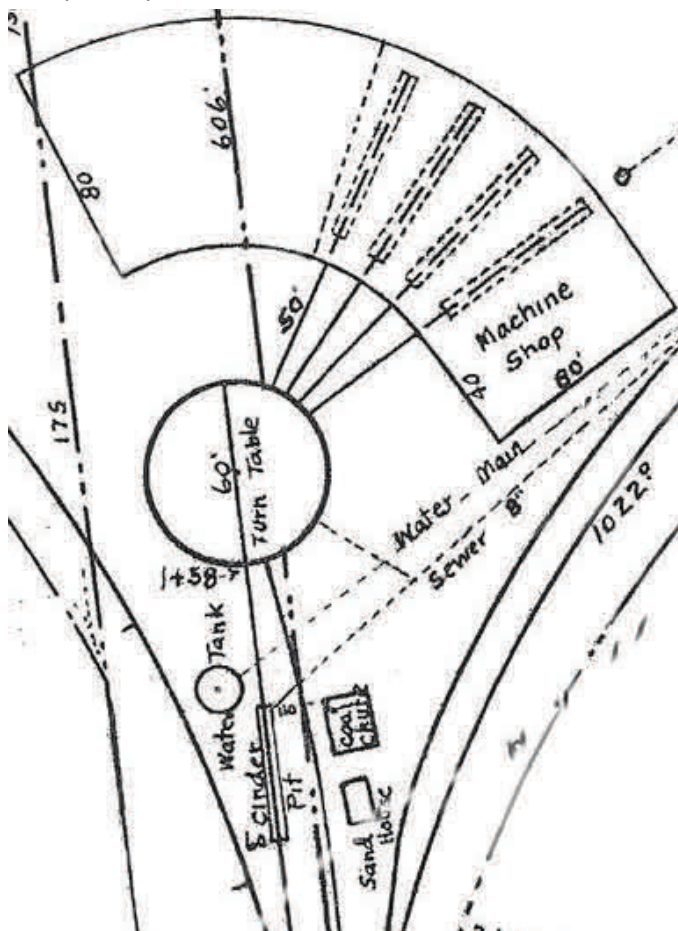
On August 1, 1920, AFE #12 authorized the construction of a “40’x80’x20’ *Enginehouse* at Port Huron, Mich. One story cement, tile composition roof, asbestos smoke jacks, 60’ deck girder type turn table, 54’ ash pit, two drop pits and two washout pits.”

On November 1, AFE #18 approves the construction of a “15m gal 12’ x 16’ *water tank* together with 3000 linear feet 3 1/2” water main to connect with city water supply.” On that same day, AFE #40 describes an installation of “230’ of track leading from main line to *cinder pit* and *turn table*.” Work began on January 15, 1921 and was completed in March. Similarly, AFE #40 authorized the construction of a “267’ spur track to be used for coaling engines at Port Huron.”

On January 2, 1921, work began on a “80 ton capacity locomotive *coaling station* complete with Electric Hoist and automatic dump bucket.” This was completed on April 15.

So that’s the timeline that tells us what went in and where. How does this align with the emerging anomalies we find in the asphalt today?

Thanks to surveyor Dave Little, who unearthed a 1920 map from County Land and Graphics, we have the clues to further investigate what lies beneath. Let it be known that the details on the map are not to scale and in fact don’t exactly portray the actual locations of the structures built in 1920. Regardless, we can also compare the map to two period photos of the 1920s and the 1930s and come to some useful conclusions.



4-*Stall Roundhouse ca. 1920*

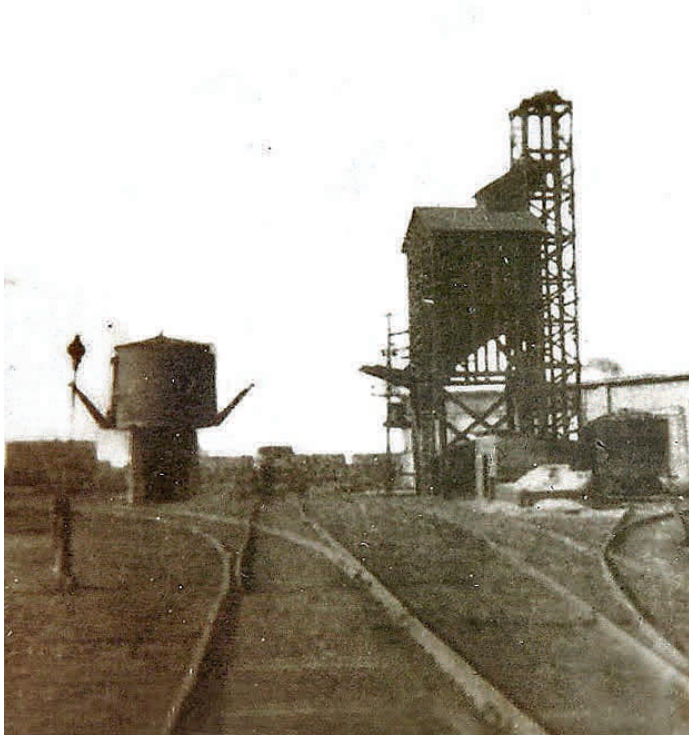
First, the map shows the two tracks connected to the turntable. One is the “230’ track to the cinder pit and turntable”, the other, the “267’ spur track to be used for coaling engines”. Second, the coal chute, sand house, ash pit, water tank, and turntable are all identified. A water main leads connects to the city water source and a sewer line drains the turntable and cinder pit.

The 1920s photo verifies and adds additional information. We can verify the two tracks west of the coal chute. The sand house and ash pit are there and offset to the tower. The water tank appears to be one with two water pipes but is actually two water tanks! And now we see a spur with a loaded coal hopper to the right of the coaling tower, which must have been installed not long after the two turntable tracks.

The track upon which sets the dismantled car frame extends all the way to near the north side of the wye. Note how far away it is from the west wall of the 4-stall roundhouse.

In the 1930 view, several changes have taken place. The 1926 fire has resulted in a larger roundhouse with the west wall now right next to this storage spur. Both water tanks are visible. It looks as though one provides additional storage to the other as no pipe extends from the one tank closest to the camera. This was probably taken in the late 1920s or very early 1930s: the walls and windows of the roundhouse look brand new. Also the vehicle nearest the camera looks to be a 1928 or 1929 vintage. Unfortunately, the turntable isn’t visible in either photograph.

What does this give us in terms of our archeological puzzle? Google Maps clearly shows surface anomalies emerging giving us additional clues. We see the concrete



In this ca. 1920 view looking north, what appears to be a water tank with two pipes, is actually two tanks side by side. The 80 ton coaling station is in back of the sand house. A loaded hopper of coal is spotted next to the tower. That (very) high mount switch stand is lined for the west wye.



In this ca. 1930 view looking south, we can see the two water plugs. By now, the original roundhouse wall has been enlarged, hence the close proximity of this spur. The coaling chute is visible just beyond the open MOW door and in the distance, we see that same high mount switch stand.



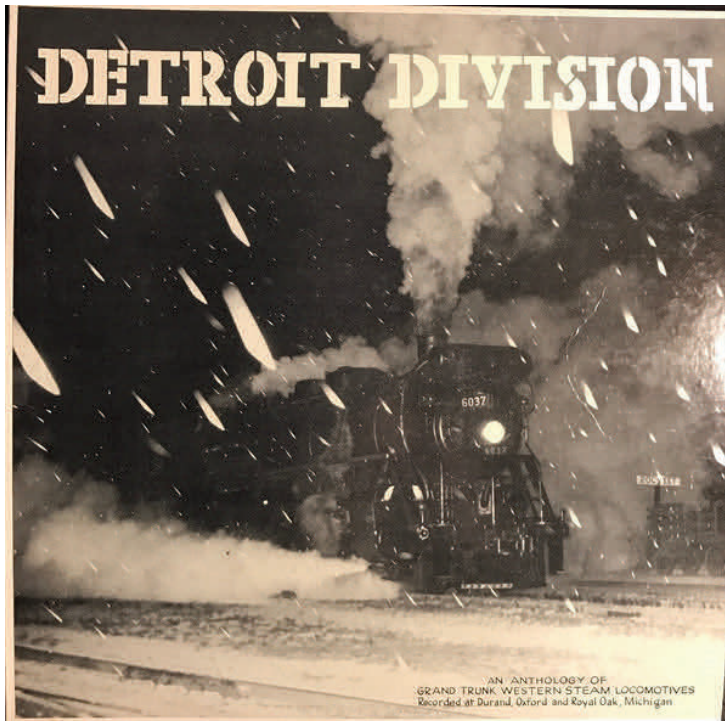
2017 Aerial Google Earth

top of the 60' turntable from the sinking asphalt. South of that are four concrete foundations. Comparing the 1920 map, we identify these as the foundations for the coal chute. Supplying clean, dry sand for the steam engines demanded a storage environment protected from the elements. Having a block house with a concrete slab provided this protection. Later, after the diesels arrived, a separate addition was constructed on the north side of the roundhouse.

Hope you enjoyed this little archaeological trip back in time!



Four coal tower foundations with sand house slab.



**REVIEW: The Detroit Division:
An Anthology of GTW Steam Locomotives
By Daniel Pence, Editor *The Semaphore*,
The GTW Historical Society Newsletter**

Detroit Division is an anthology of Grand Trunk Western steam locomotive sounds recorded by L. W. “Bud” Swearer in 1958 or 1959 (track 1, used by Art Weber with permission) and Arthur W. Weber in 1959 (all other tracks). Weber entered into a contract with RCA Victor to produce the recordings on vinyl as a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ RPM record album and released the album in 1960 as a product of Roundhouse Records. His album jacket featured a night photo by Jerry Pinkepank of engine 6037 at Durand, and jacket notes prepared with the assistance of Robert De Wolfe and Roger Meade. In 2016, Art Weber donated his audio tracks and his

right of permission to use Swearer’s audio tracks to the Grand Trunk Western Historical Society (GTWHS). Subsequently, the GTWHS produced this audio CD and used Mr. Pinkepank’s night photo again on the jacket cover and CD surface. The compilation on this 2016 release includes all tracks of the original 1960 album plus nine tracks recorded by Weber but not previously released.

“You are where any true steam fan longs to be: in the cab of engine 8305, a switcher, as it busily roams the yards near the depot at Durand. From trackside on another day, engine 8314, also a switcher, is caught in full voice as it blasts out a grade crossing signal in Durand. You hear the familiar whine of the steam generator on engine 5634, a high-speed Pacific-type passenger engine, pausing at Durand on the Muskegon-Detroit run with train #56. On another day you are trackside as trainload quantities of gravel are moved from Oxford, Michigan. A Mikado arrives from Pontiac with empty hopper cars and crashes across the NYC diamond. Engine 5043, a light Pacific, is heard arriving at the Oxford depot with its thrice-weekly northbound freight run between Pontiac and Caseville. It is a chilly March night, and you are standing near the Royal Oak depot when engine 3754, a USRA Mikado, approaches with a Detroit-to-Pontiac extra freight and roars past in all its seething powerful splendor. There are six grade crossings within a quarter mile of the depot, and the engineer tries to blow for each of them. From the Royal Oak depot on a mild February afternoon, favored with a strong south wind, Detroit-to-Pontiac commuter train #79 is heard a mile away. It is leaving Pleasant Ridge behind engine 6037, a serious-faced Mountain, and blasting a warning for each of the many grade crossings. It approaches the depot in a fury of power, stops briefly, and continues on its way.” (*Original liner notes*)

This anthology contains sounds of yard switching and through freight and passenger trains. Seven different classes of GTW steam locomotives operating in daily revenue service in Michigan in 1959 are represented, including engines 8305 and 8314 (P-5-b class 0-8-0); 3751, 3754, and 4076 (S-3 class 2-8-2); 5043 (J-3-a class 4-6-2); 5629 (K-4-a class 4-6-2); 5634 (K-4-b class 4-6-2); 6037 (U-1-c class 4-8-2); 6319, 6322, 6323, and 6328 (U-3-b class 4-8-4); and 6405 (U-4-b class 4-8-4). All of the tracks are interesting, but the following merit special mention:

Track 1, a wonderful recording of steam switchers shuffling freight cars at Durand. If set up to run continuously, it becomes excellent background sound for a steam-era model railroad yard.

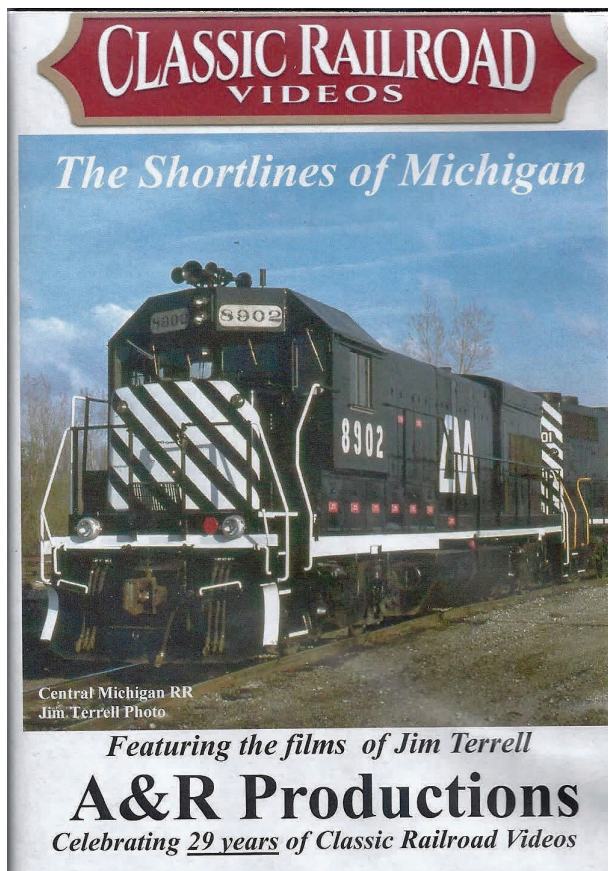
Tracks 3 through 6, totaling about 15 minutes of run time, were all in one track on the original vinyl LP. Now as four separate but related tracks, their whistle sounds convey the expectation, impatience, frustration, and, finally, satisfaction expressed by the engineer requesting clearance at the crossing in Oxford.

Track 12. Sounds made by humans occur on several tracks, but at the end of this track, the sound of telegraph operator Walt Quinn's Morse code message that a freight train has passed his station is most poignant.

Track 16, a rare occurrence of double-headed U-3-b's on a westbound freight pounding up-grade at Royal Oak.

I have vivid memories of hearing the whistles of GTW steam locomotives on summer nights as a boy in Ferndale, Michigan when I was falling asleep with the bedroom windows open. These sounds still quicken my heart.

Our thanks to Dan Pence for this very interesting review. He's the editor of *The Semaphore*, the classy publication of the Grand Trunk Western Historical Society. The CD is available through the Society's website: <http://gtwhs.tripod.com>. If you join, it's \$18.00. Non members, \$20.00.



REVIEW: The Shortlines of Michigan The Films of Jim Terrell, A&R Productions

Jim Terrell began filming railroads around Michigan in 1980 and continued until around 2000. In twenty years we see some rare scenes ranging from yard switchers, ore trains, tourist railroads, and Class I mainline giants. I suspect Terrell has a soft spot for ALCOs, since he features many roads with this iconic manufacturer.

Here's a quick rundown: The Michigan Interstate Railway, the Detroit, Toledo, & Ironton at Flat Rock, SEMTA Geeps, a Pontiac Blue Water Chapter NRHS excursion. Next, our own PH&D with 57 seconds of coverage! The roundhouse looked spotless! Of course we go to Coe Rail and see one of our ALCOs. Heading north, the Michigan Northern at Cadillac with an excursion to Charlevoix. The short lived Leelenau Scenic RR on the Manistee and Northwestern iron, then Chief Wawatam up at Mackinaw City. St. Ignace with Soo Line. Back south to Bay City and plenty of husky D&M ALCOs. Central Michigan shares the screen as well. Buy this today!

Summer 2017 CALENDAR

| | | |
|---------|-------------------------|---------|
| June 10 | Board Meeting, 32nd St. | 9:00AM |
| June 17 | Spring Picnic, 32nd St. | 10:00AM |
| July 8 | Board Meeting, 32nd St | 9:00AM |
| Aug 12 | Board Meeting, 32nd St. | 9:00PM |

All members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings.

Saturdays at the Wye has begun. Check the website for updates and schedules. 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 which allows you unlimited access to the Society-owned half of the "wye" property, marked by the yellow stripe. You may park along 32nd Street and the west side of the stripe.

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.

SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

Hugh Hales

Thought our members would like to see our own **Hugh Hales** (right), along with Bruce Sawdon. Hugh is the man who has been a huge supporter of our Society by generously underwriting the entire yearly cost of printing *The Marker Light*.

We have many others who quietly help us out behind the scenes and we will be featuring them in future issues.



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 be a part of creating the area's first railroad transportation museum complex, have exclusive access to the "wye", and learn more about this historic Michigan short line!

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

**BOARD of DIRECTORS
2017**

- Jack Allison**
- Thomas Boswell**
- Jo Burgett**
- George Y. Duffy, Jr.**
- Aaron Farmer**
- T.J. Gaffney**
- Bruce Sawdon**
- David N. Schultz**
- Chad Thompson**

Have a railroad-related artifact? We appraise for free!

(Donations greatly appreciated!)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR LATEST NEWS!

phdrailroad.com