THE MARKER LIGHT

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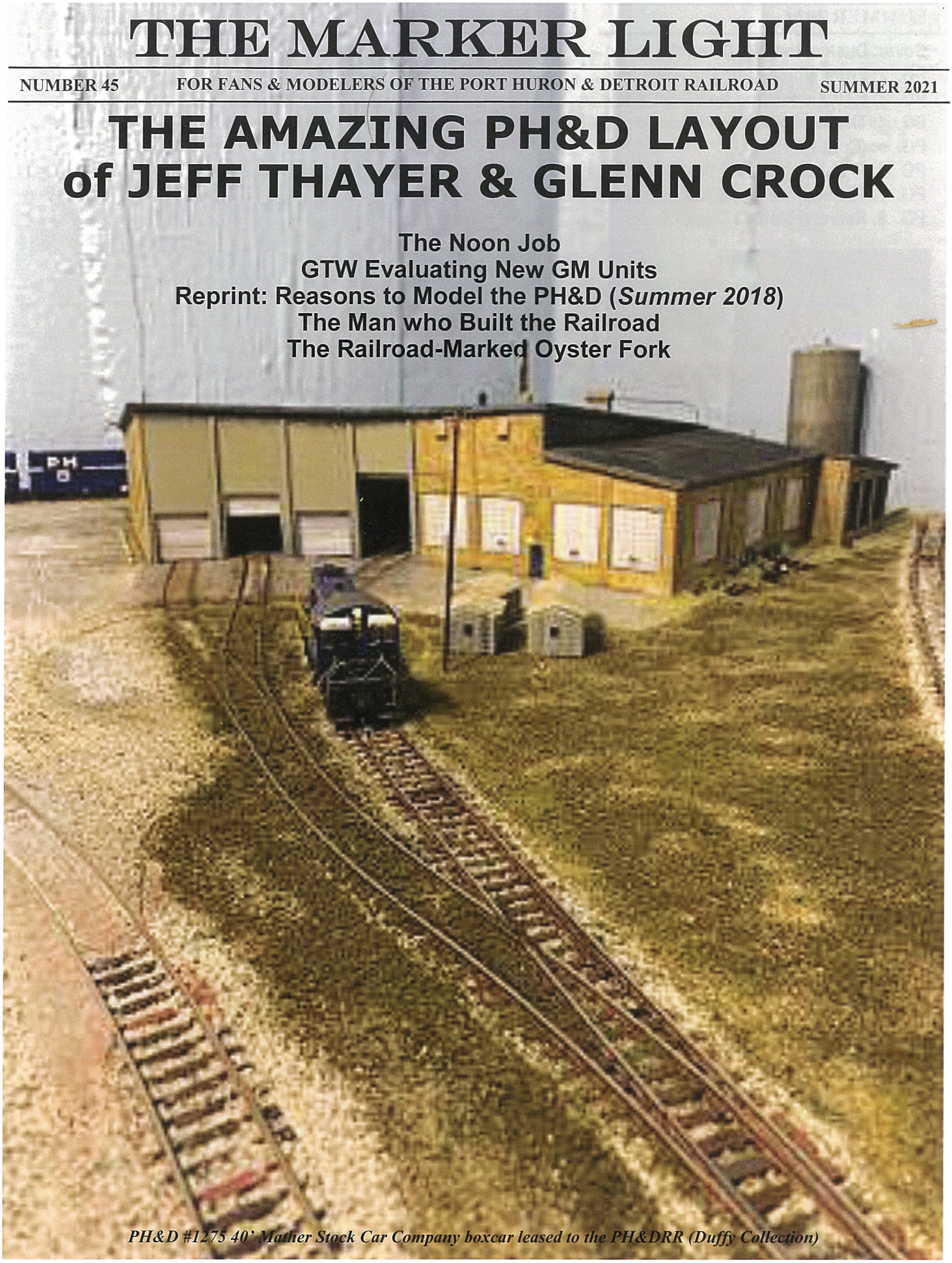
THE AMAZING PH&D LAYOUT of JEFF THAYER & GLENN CROCK

The Noon Job
GTW Evaluating New GM Units
Reprint: Reasons to Model the PH&D (*Summer 2018*)
The Man who Built the Railroad
The Railroad-Marked Oyster Fork



PH&D #1275 40' Mather Stock Car Company boxcar leased to the PH&DRR (Duffy Collection)

FROM WHERE I SIT

Dear Friends of the PH&D,

Now isn't that a cover! In this issue, we visit with the creators, Glenn Crock and Jeff Thayer, and learn how it came to be. To my knowledge, they are the only ones who've modeled the PH&D. A refresher course is on page 8. Back in 2015, two young men appeared at our Christmas Brunch at the Dorsey House. It seems that they had been quietly working on their layout since before the Society was formed! About a month ago, I received a text with pictures of their PH&D layout. I had to look twice at the roundhouse to see if it was real or a model ! The images prompted a trip to their home to see it first hand. As you'll read in the feature article, the amount of detail and effort they put into it is truly impressive. As they continue each week to add more detail, we'll keep you updated in future issues.

Their layout prompts a revisit to the *Reasons to Model the PH&D*. These still apply and relisting them may encourage you! Myself, I'd model a shelf layout based upon Marine City. It would recreate the simpler times of a small town village freight station. My engine would be the excellent version of the Red and Gray, constructed by our old friend, master modeler, Dennis Klymko. You may remember our coverage of Marine City in the Spring issue of 2013.

I'm what you'd call an Ostreophile, a lover of oysters. You either love 'em or hate 'em. My first was many years ago and I still remember the ice-cold, fresh, briny taste. Taken with the juice of a fresh cut wedge of lemon, it totally satisfies. And millions of diners agree! Over 100 years ago, the lucky ones who traveled the rails and ate in dining cars, also relished these bi-valves. The railroads supplied special railroad marked forks for its diners. We'll take a look at these.

Lastly, we visit The Man Who Built the Railroad, William N. Boyd. In 1953, he retired after 45 years. Tall, imposing, he was still around in 1965, when I met him one day while working on the section gang. That story is on page 7.

Have a great summer. Big news coming.

Sandy Duffy

THE NOON JOB

It's 1:00 o'clock and Engine #60 rumbles out to latch onto its caboose. It'll head up to Michigan Yard to assemble its train. This ALCO S2 is powered by a 1000 horse power engine. It should handle the mostly empty 30-40 cars, to be spotted at the railroad's downriver customers.

If they're going as far as Marine City, the train will return around dusk and drop off its loads to both the C&O and the GTW interchanges.

By the looks of faded paint of both the engine and the caboose, it's been awhile since they've been painted. Ol' Nate would retire soon which paved the way for his replacement, Bruce Sawdon, to apply the new and distinctive red, white, and blue that became the new colors.

GTW Evaluating the GM Units

This is a Russell Sawyer photo, taken in the late 1940s. Somehow he got wind of these new GM units being run through their paces switching the yard up at Tappan. The Grand Trunk was evaluating their performance. Across the way, the PH&D yard is full of a mix of post-war 40 footers. Railroads continued to use them well into the 1950's until the manufacturers caught up and started producing the new 50' cars.

THE PH&DRR LAYOUT of JEFF THAYER & GLENN CROCK

Does everyone remember the "Ten Reasons to Model the PH&D" which was in issue #33? To my knowledge, no one had actually undertaken this project. Until now. Members Jeff Thayer and Glenn Crock from Rockwood, Michigan near the Ohio border, have been working on a PH&D layout since 2005. They discovered the PH&D when they came upon an all blue Roundhouse model PH&D boxcar in a Lavonia hobby store in 2004. The car, PH&D #1019, was based on the 50' ribbed side cars built and delivered to the PH&D in 1977 (see issues #13 & #14). They chose 1977 because of the arrival of those larger 50' freight cars.

Realizing it was a nearby "local" road, they bought the car. When they returned to Glenn's home, they got on the computer and began to learn about the PH&D, the locomotives, and the history. They found that, based upon the size, design, and location of the road, it would be a perfect short line to model. Accordingly, they began to design and build a layout in 2005.

Almost 5 years later, Glenn was at a swap meet, with his son Ben and wife Kim, when a gent walked by wearing a PH&D ball cap. He stopped him and asked and found out about the Society. He was on the computer that evening and learned about the Society. Not long after, both men drove up to Port Huron and began taking the first of hundreds of photographs. At the McMorran train show of 2015, Glenn joined the Society, bought a few shirts and the *Modelling the PH&D* binder.

Since the layout had partially been built, they began changing it, based upon the new information in the binder. They really got enthused when they found out that "...there were other people interested in the railroad."

They built in phases using photographs. Phase I was constructing the yard, the Chrysler plant, St. Clair Rubber, Diamond Chrystal, and the homes along 32nd Street. "We try to stay focused on one chunk at a time." Phase II included the roundhouse, office building, and adding more to 32nd Street. For 32nd street, they built each of the homes from scratch using the photos. Both father Glenn and son Ben worked on each craft-built home as well as the roundhouse and office. Glenn remarked, "The more Ben likes it, the more I like it and the more time we spend together on it." I asked Ben what he likes best about model railroading. He said "I like to make things and copying them to make them look like what they look like in real life." Wonderful. And isn't that the goal of model railroading?

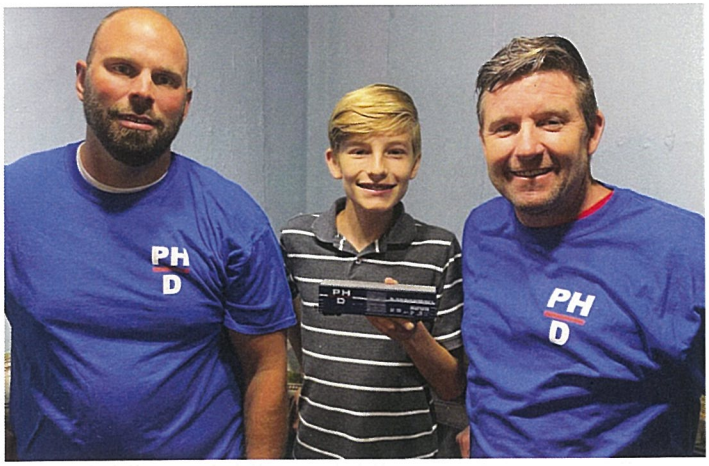
The real "stars" of the layout are the roundhouse and office buildings. They took pictures of each building walking around and capturing every angle and every facing wall. The details are noteworthy. They laid down the correct size of gravel in the parking lot. Jeff remarked "We started that right at the beginning of Covid. The scenery involved a learning process, static grasses, gravel, making trees, the ballasting. It was just easier to do that on a "smaller canvas. Each one of these buildings has taken close to a month building them. A lot of these models you can't buy. The office building is two buildings connected. The roundhouse was made out of a Cornerstone roundhouse."

Glenn: "With the Cornerstone Roundhouse, we just cut the front off, made the windows, the door on the side, the glass blocks, and added the side addition. We made a couple of trips up to get more pictures and measured from the roundhouse to the track in real life so we could scale that to get that track running the right side of the Wye."

They obtained and custom painted all three engines which run on DCC plus sound. Glenn remarked that he especially liked the solid blue livery of engine #60.

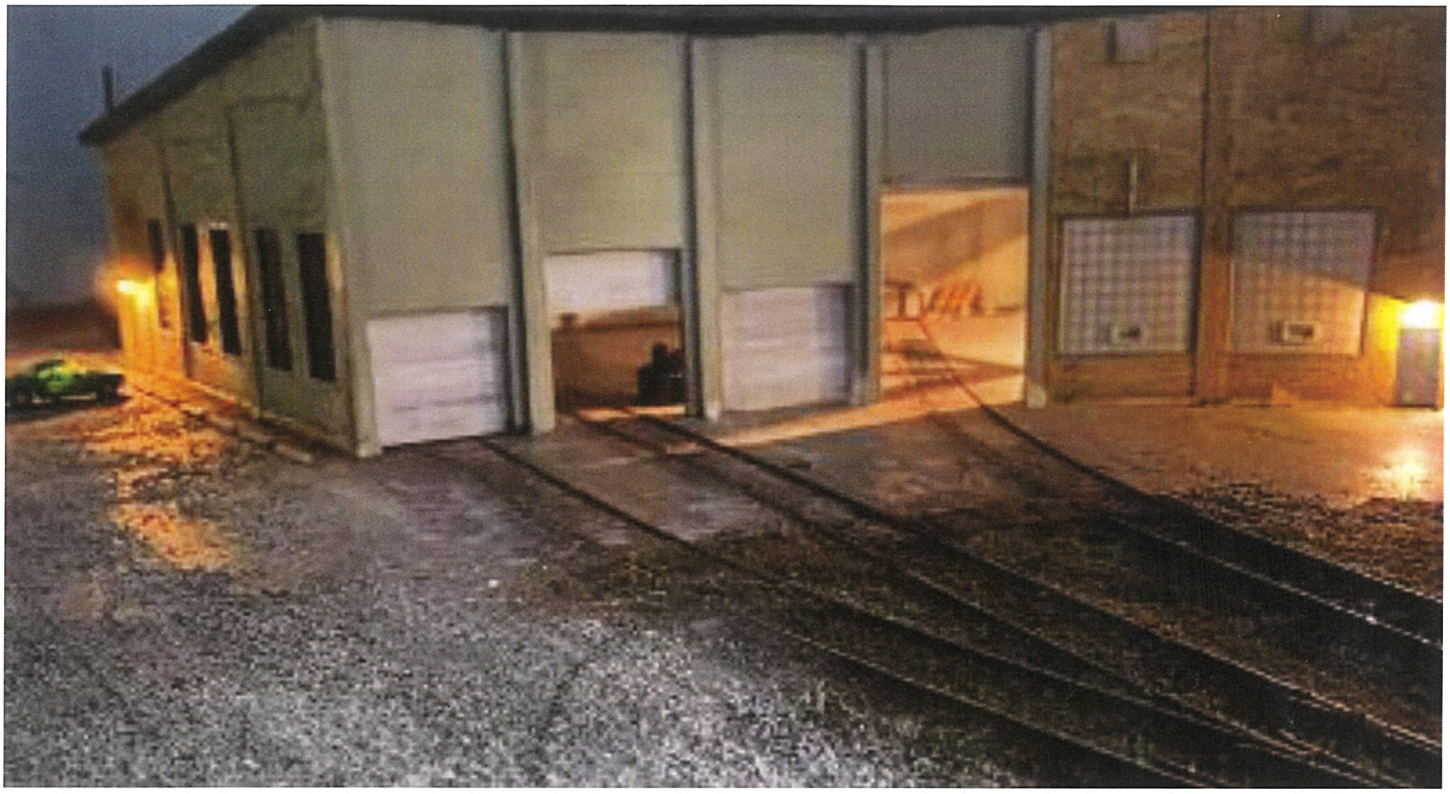
They still put in a couple days a week adding and improving. Their current project is to finish the 32nd Street portion. They have shots of every home that fronted the line between Dove Road to Ravenswood, in 1977. Each home has been scratch-built by the father and son team. Although the scenicing details have yet to be applied, each house has its own charm and signature detail. It's careful attention to the minute detail that enhances the realism.

These young men have begun a very impressive project. Future plans include detailing the existing Marysville freight station, building both the St. Clair and Marine City stations, and reviewing their inventory of more than 250 pieces of rolling stock to make sure they "match the prototype". We shall look forward to their progress!



Ben Crock holds the Roundhouse 50' PH&D boxcar that started it all. Jeff Thayer (L) and father Glenn beaming!

This is the Roundhouse model of the PH&D 1019. The series was numbered from 1000-1099 and first appeared in 1977. We've covered that in issues #12 & #13.



It's dusk and almost time for the night job here at the PH&D roundhouse. The attention to detail pays off in every respect. The walls of the roundhouse, the vents, the glass block walls, the correct curvature out of the south-facing engine bay, the size of the gravel, and the lights over the doors. These guys didn't miss a thing. They even included the remnants of the old turntable!

The attention to detail really pays off. I should probably tell 'em about those two crabapple trees.

The boys didn't miss a thing; remember that old sycamore tree?

REASONS TO MODEL THE PH&DRR (Revisited)

This issue's feature on the incredible Thayer-Crock PH&D layout is a great reminder to revisit the reasons why modeling your layout on the PH&D makes excellent sense. Let's review these insights on why the PH&DRR is such a perfect railroad to model.

1). The 19 mile line was essentially in the shape of a "T-Square" running from north to south. At both ends were interchanges. At the top, we interchanged with the GTW & PM, while down in Algonac, we connected with the Algonac Transit Company, a short transit line owned by Chris Craft. This design is perfect for a very tidy "Point-to-Point" layout. You'll have interchanges at both ends, while serving downriver customers in between. With this linear design, constructing a shelf layout makes the best sense.

2). In essence, the PH&D was an industrial switching railroad. It used switch engines from its start in 1917 to 1984. All steamers were 0-6-0 configuration, while the postwar engines were ALCO diesel "S" units. For modelers, you need only one ALCO S unit, saving you money.

3). With only one engine, there is no need to invest in the more expensive DCC, another way to save you more money. Additionally, there is no need for signaling with only two trains daily, one at noon, the other at 11:00.

4). As far as operations, there is plenty, all based upon prototype experience. First, plenty of switching moves up in the Michigan Road yard while making up your train. Loads to and empties from the GTW were handled west of Tappan Tower on a three track siding, part of the Mount Clemens Subdivision. For the PM/C&O, there were two separate interchanges: loads and empties were taken at a connection just east of Michigan Road, while loads from us were dropped off at the other end, east of the wye. Departing south initiates a second phase, spotting cars for the customers that needed them. Then the return trip required bringing loads and empties back up to both GTW and the PM.

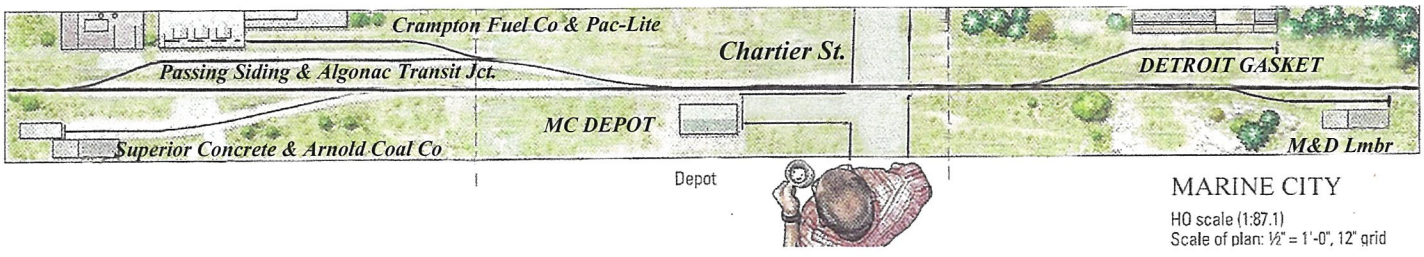
5). For most of its history, the railroad had an impressive list of customers with very diverse commodities. This will require an inventory of different car types. In the diesel era, there were 3 lumber companies, 2 salt plants, 2 coal power plants, a propane facility, an auto parts and motor plant, as well as smaller companies that shipped plastic, wire, and beans. The PH&D had a rich history of leased cars, starting with the wooden 40' outside braced Mather cars of the 30s and 40s, right up to the large quantities of new 50' ribbed side PH&D boxcars assigned to the salt companies and Chrysler Corporation. Additionally, Morton Salt required numerous bulk covered hopper cars. And the lumber loads came in on flat cars and box cars. Past issues of *The Marker Light* have covered these in the series "Matching the Prototype".

6). We had three freight stations: a two story brick building in Marysville and two downriver, identical depots. Each had their own yards and sidings. Both downriver stations had loading docks, used for LCL (Less than Carload) loading. The Marysville building had a long 5 bay loading dock used by Grief Brothers, which shipped industrial spools. The station had two spurs coming in from a trailing switch. All three stations were REA (Railway Express Agency) designated which meant "walk-in" customers could ship larger packages such as footlockers, crates, or boxes.

7). The line also contained what you could refer loosely as "subdivisions". For example, the South Park area had a spur that meandered east all the way to the river and served as many as four businesses. Another example is the "Dow" spur, east of the Marysville Freight Station, and south of the Chrysler Plant. Incidentally, this also crossed the PH&D's only diamond! The Dow spur was built in the 1940s to serve war-related industries, such as the magnesium plant and the Gar Wood boat plant. The other "sub" is the nearly one-mile long spur branching off east into St. Clair, to serve the salt plant and two lumber companies. This led to a substantial, multiple passing-siding yard.

8). Although there is no evidence to indicate any regular passenger traffic, from time to time, railroad clubs were allowed on line and would travel all the way to Marine City and back. It's another switching experience using foreign equipment! In 1971, management did acquire a private car from the C&O. For the brave, a reasonable copy of *Castleblayney* can be had using a model of the Ferdinand Magellan, a heavyweight, open-ended, observation car. Its design closely matches the window configuration since both were Pullman cars close in plan numbers.

The Marker Light has featured segments of the line which offers opportunities. In the Spring issue of 2016, #25, there's an excellent example of the Marine City terminus which lends itself to a nice shelf configuration.



The PH&DRR Point-to-Point shelf design has it all: three freight stations, multiple interchanges, assigned cars, carloads of coal, salt, auto parts, lumber, and bulk beans. The bottom line: it offers the best combination of plenty of switching and operation!

THE MAN WHO BUILT THE RAILROAD

The PH&DRR and its predecessor, The Detroit, Bay City & Western, owe their existence to one remarkable man: William N. Boyd. As most of you know, he was the Chief Engineer beginning with the Handy Brothers in Bay City. He built both railroads all the way to its terminus, which ended at the Independent Sugar Company in Marine City.

One morning, we were working at Brown Street in St. Clair. He and my father appeared at the site. They approached me and I was introduced and we shook hands. Bill was a tall, imposing man with clear blue eyes and snow white hair. Even in that summer's heat, he was wearing a suit and had come to St. Clair to evaluate the Pine River bridge to see if it could handle a generator weighing 1,250,000 pounds (*see ML #28*). He looked at me kindly and curiously and then we walked together down the track a bit. As we walked along the ties, he described those early days, building the railroad. He had been there at the very beginning and had experienced all the struggles to finally bring the line into Marine City (*see ML #41 & #42*). Nearly 50 years later, I would learn more about his strained relationship with my grandfather. But that's another story!

Chief Engineer "Bill" Boyd at his desk in the downstairs Superintendent's office. Ca. 1953

COLLECTORS CORNER: The Railroad-Marked Oyster Fork

"He was a brave man that first ate an oyster," wrote Jonathan Swift. Indeed. Oyster appreciation is on another level of gustatory delight. Before the Europeans first set foot upon the New World, native populations had been consuming oysters for a few thousand years. Huge piles of oyster shells ("middens") were found along the Atlantic coast, dating to 200BC! Oysters are found all over the world. And they all have their different tastes, smells, brininess, color, and salinity which is due entirely to the environment in which the are grown.

"The Great Oyster Craze" occurred in the last half of the 19th Century. Since they were so cheap, everyone was eating them, rich and poor alike. With advancements in storage and the improved refrigerator car, it was possible to ship iced crates of oysters by rail from the eastern seaboard across the country.

The center of oyster consumption in the U.S. was along the Atlantic Coast, generally between Maine and New York. The finest varieties were harvested in Long Island Sound which supplied thousands of pounds to hungry working men and women. Their popularity among the upper class began in the 1870s and peaked around the turn of the century coinciding with the "Gilded Age". A favorite saying of multimillionaire Andrew Carnegie was "The first man gets the oyster, the second man gets the shell."

The popularity of oysters was at an all time high at the turn of the century. So was high class dining which was now possible on Pullman dining cars. By then, Pullman had brought his "hotel on wheels" to match the tastes and expectations of the travelers expecting a higher standard of service. This was the beginning of heavy plate service and linen tablecloths. Menus reflected the luxurious variety of sumptuous entrees. And every major railroad with fast Limited's were competing against each other to outdo their competitor. It was *der rigueur* to feature oysters on the menu.

Major railroads produced these specialty oyster forks imprinted with their logos. Every "name train" had their own oyster fork which had its own unique design, from art deco to the more ornate. In service, the oyster fork never appeared on the table. It was always supplied once the order for oysters was written by the customer, upon an order pad supplied to each diner by the dining car waiter. Within minutes, a fork would be brought and placed at your place setting. Here are examples of railroad-marked oyster forks for your scrutiny.

(L2R) NYC, Front & Back, NPR, Front & Back, RI, Front & Back, RI, 3 Greenbrier (C&O), FEC, 3 Santa Fe, Front & Back

SPECIAL THANKS!
Like to thank GTW

The Incompetent Always Blames Others.