

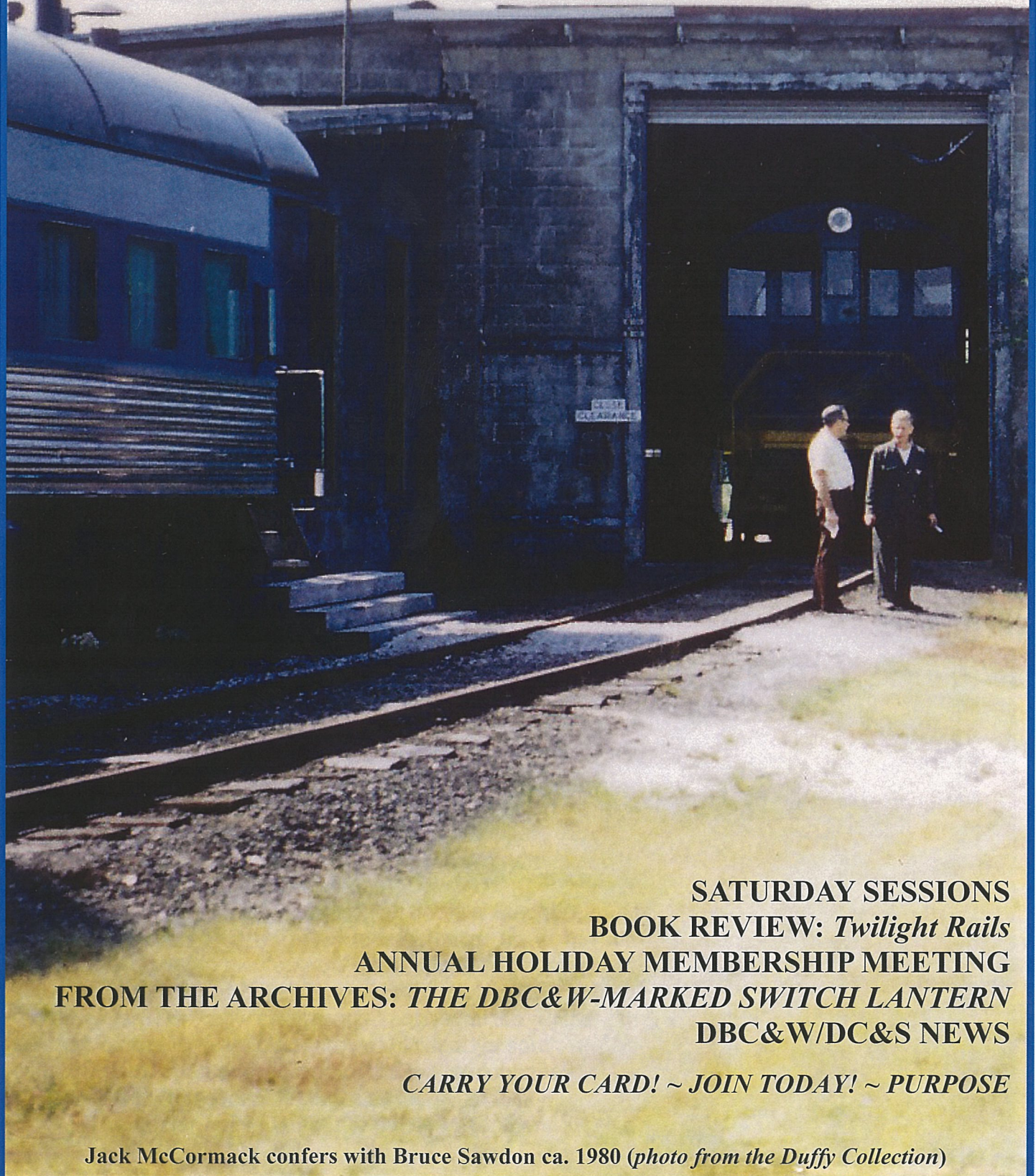
# THE MARKER LIGHT

NUMBER 8

THE PORT HURON & DETROIT RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WINTER 2011

## ***PART II: THE PH&D 40' STEEL BOXCAR IN HO***



**SATURDAY SESSIONS**

**BOOK REVIEW: *Twilight Rails***

**ANNUAL HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**FROM THE ARCHIVES: *THE DBC&W-MARKED SWITCH LANTERN***

**DBC&W/DC&S NEWS**

***CARRY YOUR CARD! ~ JOIN TODAY! ~ PURPOSE***

Jack McCormack confers with Bruce Sawdon ca. 1980 (photo from the Duffy Collection)



Cover: Ex-B&O Alco PH&D #62 awaits assignment, as Jack and Bruce compare dirty fingernails.

PG. 2: From Where I Sit; Saturday Sessions

PG. 3: Events: Holiday Membership Meeting; Book Review: *Twilight Rails* by H. Roger Grant.

PG. 4: Modeler's Corner: PART II: *The 40 Foot PS-1 Steel Box Cars of The PH&D in HO Scale*

PG. 5: (Cont.)

PG. 6: (Cont.)

PG. 7: From the Archives: *The DBC&W-marked Switch Lantern*

PG. 8: DBC&W/DC&S News; CARRY YOUR CARD! Join! Purpose; Board of Directors



#### FROM WHERE I SIT

Dear Friends of the PH&D,

Another year has come and gone; time flies, eh? We've been busy working on improving the office. Picnics saw old timers appear, along with local railfans. And caboose #62 has been repainted and being prepared for display down by the river on Vantage Point in Port Huron. Progress on all fronts!

We'd like to thank the board of directors and President Ted Frantz for keeping our goals in focus. Remember, steady progress eventually reaps reward.

If you are in the area, stop by the Quay Street Brewing Company and visit. We meet each December to celebrate and recognize Michigan's most unique short line railroad. Many folks will be there, your friends, former employees, and a chance to get updated. See you there!

Sandy Duffy, Editor



Charley Warsinski and Dave Cenci removing an office light.

#### SATURDAY SESSIONS

Let's give a pat on the back to all those folks who put in their time and effort during this year's Saturday work sessions. **Bruce Sawdon, Chuck Grambau, Charles Warsinski, Jack Allison, the Grambau boys, Dave Cenci, Dave Schultz, Earl Shoulders, Ted Frantz, Scott Beedon,** and a special nod to **Donny Burton, of Burton Studios,** our premier glass man.

Thanks to these guys, we managed to get the office windows replaced, the removal of rotted ceiling tiles and wall veneers, and helped prepare the back room for the Blue Water Area Modeler's Club.

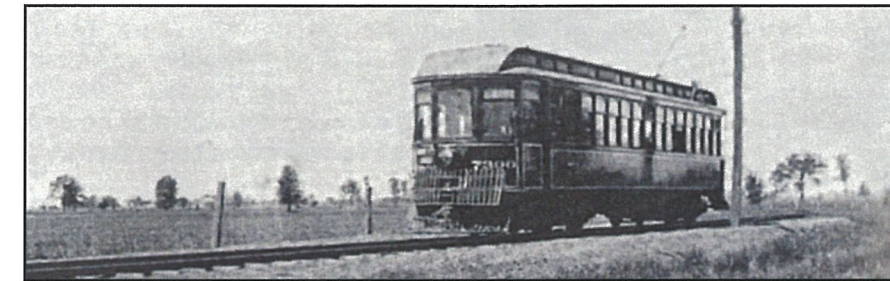
We have a very long way to go on this project but, thanks to a core group of dedicated rail fans, this early phase of removal continues to progress.

Next year, we have plans to get the heating and plumbing planned which will give us access to the office year round, to really "go to town".

## HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

DECEMBER 11 ~ NOON - 3:00PM QUAY STREET BREWING CO in PORT HURON

### FEATURE PRESENTATION:



### A RIDE ON THE DUR'S RAPID RAILWAY DIVISION

By Kenneth Schramm, Jr.

RAFFLES! COLLECTIBLE PH&DRR COFFEE CUPS! ULTRA-HIP PH&DRR BALL CAPS! 50/50!  
SUPER-RARE VINTAGE PH&DRR AUCTION ITEMS!

"MODELLING THE PH&DRR IN HO SCALE" MANUAL \$20 (plus NEW 1920-1930 Customer List)

MOUNTED, FRAMED & NUMBERED, SPECIAL-EDITION CABOOSE #62 COMMEMORATIVE STILL AVAILABLE

PLUS: Examine the only known example of a DBC&W-stamped switch lantern!

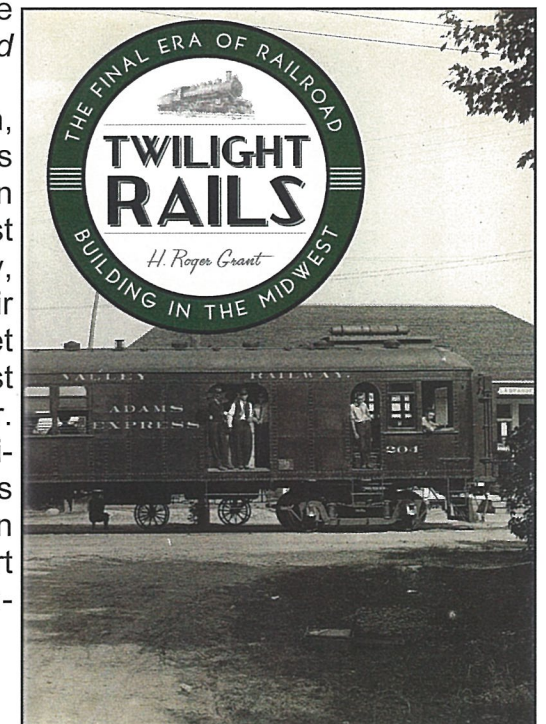
Meet Old Friends! Make New Ones! Spend Three Hours Immersed In Michigan's Most Unique Short Line Railroad!

#### BOOK REVIEW: *Twilight Rails* by H. Roger Grant

H. Roger Grant is a distinguished professor at Clemson University. According to his Clemson bio, he "is recognized as one of the world's leading authorities on transportation history and American railroads." *Twilight Rails* tells the story of the final phase of railroad construction in the Midwest. What is of interest to us is Chapter 3 entitled "The Handy Line; *Detroit, Bay City & Western and Port Huron and Detroit Railroad*".

This is the first in-depth recounting of the formation, operation, and demise of the DBC&W. His account includes the early business activities of the four Handy brothers in Bay City, at a time when the entrepreneurial spirit was most active. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, it seemed the Handy boys had a hand in everything. Their enterprises included a box factory, coal mines, sugar beet refining, a lumber yard, and railroads. At their height, it must have been euphoric, having all these "balls" up in the air. Then, one by one, the "empire" unraveled. In the end, suicides, law suits, and bank receiverships ended the Handy's enterprises. The only entity remaining was the PH&D. In Grant's words, "The penetration of the Handys south of Port Huron was a smart decision, attested by the continued financial success of the Port Huron & Detroit."

The book retails at under \$30 at Amazon.com.





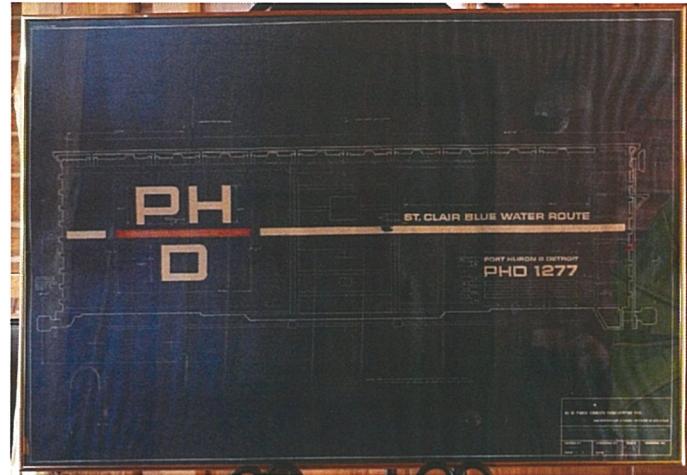
MODELLERS CORNER  
PART II: THE 40' PS-1 STEEL BOX CARS OF THE PH&DRR IN HO SCALE



Kay Houghton with two W.B. Ford PH&D 40' boxcar blueprints

The result was the now famous "St. Clair Blue Water Route" design in a red, white, and blue motif, with the capitalized white lettered "PH" over "D", separated by a red stripe. Within a decade, this would be applied to the company's motive power as well.

"It all started at a cocktail party," said Kay Houghton (fka Mrs. George Duffy). "We had been invited to the Ford's in Grosse Pointe for a function for Ben's wife Edith. Walter Ford (no relation) was there, because he was married to Ben's sister Josephine. He was the head of a design agency called W.B. Ford. He and George were talking about the boxcars which were about to be delivered and Ford offered to come up with a design for them."

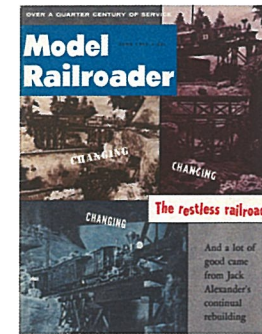
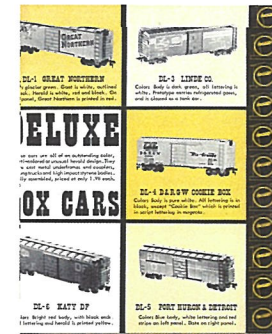
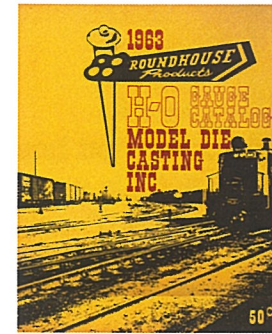


W. B. Ford Agency blueprint January 1962



Photo: Askar-Shain ca. April 1962 (Duffy Collection)

As related by Dennis Klymko's excellent article in Part I, (Summer 2011), these boxcars, new in 1947, and obtained from the New York & New Haven Railroad, were sandblasted and painted into this Ford design before delivery in the spring of 1962. They began to arrive online through a lease agreement with the United States Railway Equipment Company.



1963 Roundhouse Catalog & June 1963 Model Railroader (Dennis Klymko Collection)

With the 1962 appearance of the first steel wall boxcar for the PH&D, it didn't take long for a plastic model to appear in HO scale. Roundhouse, also known as Model Die Casting, began in 1938, and was known for its high quality detailed casting scale model trains. Their PH&D #1126 is the first commercially produced HO scale model. According to Gary Kenney, owner of Pastime Hobbies, the Roundhouse 40' steel sided box car in HO scale appeared in the 1963 Roundhouse Products Catalog, which went out to dealers for the fall show in October of 1962. That would presume that earlier that year, decals had been produced to be applied to blue colored 40' box car molds. The catalog showed a picture of PH&D #1126.

Industry rival Athearn was quick to respond and within 6 months, an ad for their version appeared in the June 1963 issue of Model Railroader. Listed in small print was "St. Clair Blue Water 40ft boxcar, kit," for \$2.19. Reporting marks "PH&D" weren't included.

From this point on, modelers in HO scale would enjoy a number of PH&D-decaled versions. In fact, both Roundhouse and Athearn copied each other through the years until Irving Athearn's death, when Athearn changed hands. In fact, Athearn would use the MDC molds exclusively into the 1990's and beyond.

In 2004, both Athearn and Roundhouse were acquired by Horizon Models. Then, five years later, in 2009, all manufacturing left the U.S. for China with warehousing facilities in California. Therefore all 2005 released PH&D 40' boxcars were still made in the USA.

Collecting these 40' versions can be a rewarding effort. If you model the PH&D during the 60's, these are the ones to have on hand. Let's take a look at some known examples.

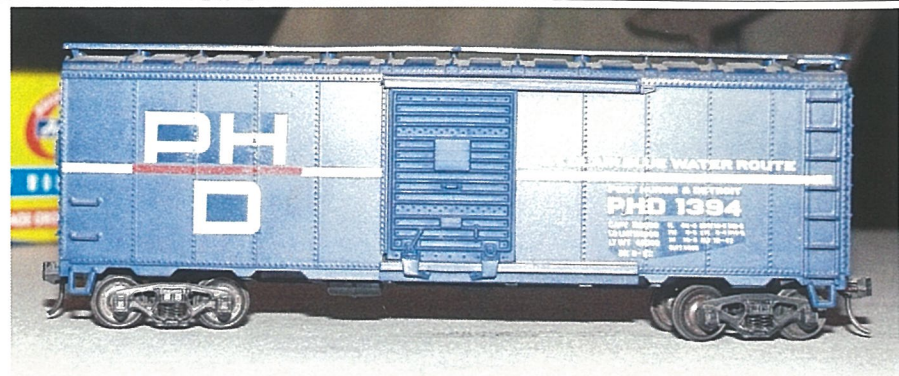


Roundhouse PH&D #1126 (Kay Houghton Collection)

PH&D #1126

Here's this first model from Roundhouse. From a design and accuracy standpoint, everything is wrong: decal scale and placement, as well as the six-panel door. It looks as if Roundhouse decaled a standard 40 foot boxcar mold and got it out the door. For collectors though, it's now a real rarity and should fetch a high online premium.





Athearn PH&D #1394 (Duffy Collection)

**PH&D #1394**

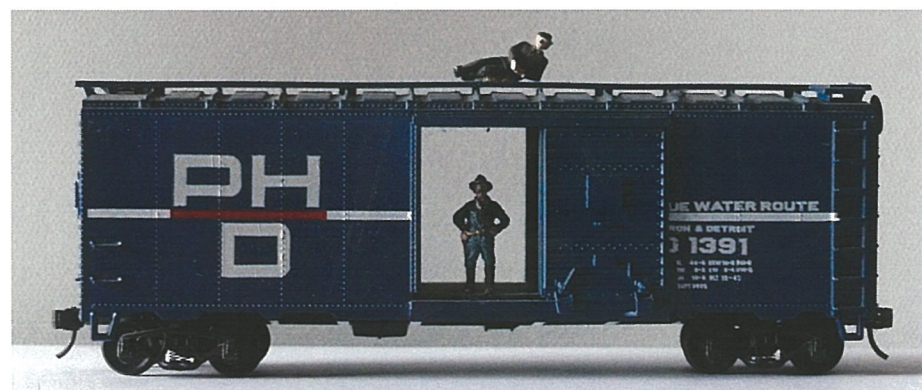
This is interesting. We have a shot of the prototype, #1394, taken when the cars were delivered "new" in 1962. If we compare the photograph (page 5), several discrepancies appear. The "PH" should have been sized to take up half of both the second and fourth panel. The door isn't a "Superior" version and has no stripe running through it. The data information is not only incorrectly scaled, it's positioned in the center, and not on the far right. Sources indicate this is an MDC (Roundhouse) casting offered by Athearn. Model no longer in production.



Athearn PH&D #1195 (Duffy Collection)

**PH&D #1195 (Ath70330)**

Introduced by Athearn in 2005, #1195 appears to be the closest match to the Ford print. First, the "PHD" decals are correct. The length of the red stripe beyond the "PH" on either side looks correct. Second, the white stripe is extended across the door, which doesn't happen on other examples. Third, the shorter seven panel "Superior" door indicates this car is based upon the first series numbers which the #1195 falls into. Also, this door matches the prototype unlike the others which have double bottom clasps. In short, this is the 40 foot PH&D steel side box car that comes the closest. The reporting info on the right panels is still centered however. Model no longer available.



Athearn PH&D #1391 (Duffy Collection)

**PH&D #1391**

Although appearing similar to #1394, the length of the red stripe is different. We also note incorrect doors and the data decal on the right panels is still centered. So now we have three totally different PH&D 40 foot versions. Model not available.

**FROM THE ARCHIVES: THE DBC&W-MARKED SWITCH LANTERN**

About a month ago, I went up to visit my mom. After awhile, and before I started to leave, she mentioned that I needed to take more stuff. A lot of "stuff" had been boxes, containing books and files. This time, she brought out a box containing three switch lanterns. Two were unmarked but appeared vintage. The third was another matter. It was a lantern with an steel patina, with a top embossed with "STAR HEAD LIGHT CO". I looked lower and gasped at what I saw. Stamped upon the upper rim was "D.B.C. & W. R. R.!" I was holding an honest-to-goodness Detroit, Bay City & Western Railroad switch lantern. My mom told me that it had been in my dad's possession for quite some time.

A few weeks later, I started doing some digging. An online inquiry brings up the *Star Headlight & Lantern Company*, which is still in business.

The company was formed in 1889 as the *Star Head Light Company* with 5 investors, located in Rochester, New York. A year later, one George Washington Jacobs bought them all out. To this day, his offspring continue to operate the company.

In 1915, the company changed its name to the *Star Head Light and Lantern Company*. It may have no significance, but this lantern has the earlier company's marking. Remember that the DBC&W RR was active between 1908 and 1923 which may indicate that the lantern was produced and ordered by the railroad previous to the 1915 date.

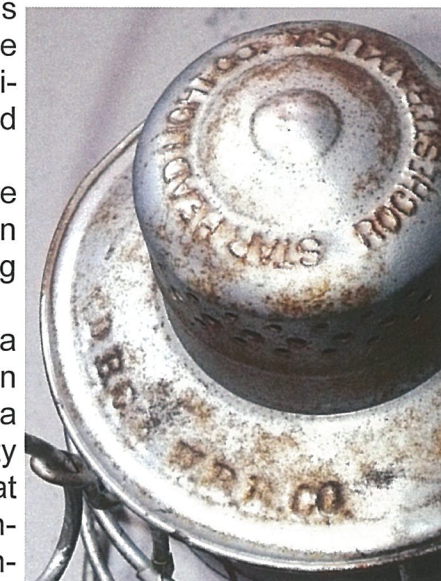
On the upper lid is found "D.B.C. & W. R. R. CO." These letters have been stamped rather than raised, as is often found on other lanterns. Examining the underside, reveals that this marking clearly was done at the factory.

Most interesting is the red globe which is marked with a

raised "Pere Marquette" in script, surrounded with a rectangle. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence that the DBC&WRR had extensive and shared relationships with the Pere Marquette. Having a red globe marked with the PM merely confirms the close ties. In fact, in the early days of the DBC&WRR, both lines shared rolling stock if required and there is no reason to believe that they wouldn't "loan" equipment as well. Either that or George got this from an old DBC&W employee who inserted a globe. Whatever the reason, the globe seats perfectly into the bottom.

There is no burner found with the lantern.

So now we have an authentic, vintage switch lantern from a predecessor rail line to add to our collection!





# DETROIT, BAY CITY & WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY



## DBC&W - DC&S NEWS

The DBC&W - DC&S group is planning our 5th "Road Rally". This one will take place in the late spring and will cover the Pere Marquette's Almont branch. The 34 mile Almont branch ran between Port Huron and Almont and was the last PM branch converted from narrow to standard gauge. It was removed in 1945. Stay tuned for more info as it comes along. [ <https://sites.google.com/site/pmalmontsub/the-almont-branch-history> ]

We assisted our brothers at the PH&DRR Historical Society with work on the former office building this past summer and fall, with getting the building "buttoned up" for the winter. We hope to be able to continue to assist the PH&DRRHS in the future as the long job of restoring the former office building continues.

Dave Cenci ([railnut19@yahoo.com](mailto:railnut19@yahoo.com))

# PH

PORT HURON and DETROIT RAILROAD CO.

- St. Clair Blue Water Route -

# D

PORT HURON & DETROIT RAILROAD  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP CARD

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

JOINED: \_\_\_\_\_ MO \_\_\_\_\_ YR

PRESIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

Regulations covering access to U.S. rail yards are in effect, administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and subject to local enforcement agencies.

Accordingly, those with PH&DRRHS membership cards must stay on the west half of the "wye" parking area (PH&DRRHS property) and be able to present their cards to authorized personnel from either CN, CSX, or St. Clair County Sheriffs officers, if requested.

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, the Pere Marquette/Chesapeake and Ohio/CSX.*

*To obtain, restore and maintain the roundhouse at 32<sup>nd</sup> 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.*

## JOIN NOW AND GET ONBOARD!

The Port Huron & Detroit Railroad needs your talent. There is so much to be done, especially at these beginning stages.

We need you to help out committees, contribute your time with hands on restoration projects, and be on board at this early, critical stage.

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

You'll get 4 nifty newsletters, and a chance to be a part of creating the area's first railroad transportation museum complex! \$20 a year, cheap!

See our membership table at the December meet!

## BOARD of DIRECTORS 2010-11

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