



Seven-Point-Four

the newsletter of the Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad, Inc. A Pennsylvania non-stock not-for-profit organization, tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



April-June

Second Quarter 2017

April-June

THE NEWLY ELECTED BOARD is off to a productive start. We held our first board meeting just three weeks after the annual meeting. I have formed three committees to help focus our efforts on our main priorities.

Here are the committees and their respective duties:

- (1) Preservation and Restoration of the Stewartstown Station: fundraising, painting, window repair, replacing the roofs and sidewalks, and ensuring the overall historical charm of the station.
- (2) Flatcar: building the open-air excursion car.
- (3) Updating the By Laws: the Friends organization has grown exponentially in the past year, and some revisions are necessary to catch the organization's bylaws with up the changes. The committee members are working to come up with suggestions that will later go before the general membership at large for a vote.

Anyone who wishes to participate on any of the above committees is more than welcome to serve. Please contact us at friendsofstrtr@hotmail.com if you are interested.

We are also working on improving our marketing and communications. The Friends' website recently received a facelift. Mike Ruane was kind enough to donate hosting for the new site. Thank you, Mike, for assisting. Ray and I are working to computerize the membership tracking database and accounting records.

A lot of work is going on at the Railroad. I would strongly encourage everyone to get involved in some way. Working on the railroad is very rewarding, a great way to meet new friends, and learn new skills in the process.

Thank you!

— Dave Watson

FLATCAR PROJECT UPDATE

Friends' member Ken Bitten recently removed 1/4 of the deck of the flatcar. We are working to assemble another team of volunteers to remove the remainder of the deck. Once this is completed wire brushing and painting will come next. Our goal is to finish the car so that it's usable by the end of the summer. We are about 50% of the way with our fundraising efforts. If you wish to contribute, we will greatly appreciate your donation. We are also looking for volunteers. Please contact the project manager, Dave Watson, to express your interest.

THE FRIENDS RECEIVES A GENEROUS GRANT FROM GOOGLE

The Friends' of the Stewartstown Railroad was recently informed that it was awarded a \$10,000 a month in-kind Ad-words grant to use for promoting the Friends' organization on the Google search engine. Friends' President Dave Watson was very instrumental in securing the grant. We look forward to using this generous grant to promote our activities in helping the restoration and rebuilding of the Stewartstown Railroad.

OUR OWN YOU TUBE® CHANNEL

In our ongoing efforts to extend the Friends' communications outreach, we have created a new channel on YouTube®. You can find the link on our new website. This channel will be used to create periodic video updates on our activities and happenings around the railroad. We invite you to tune in and check it out!

HELP WANTED

The Friends Organization is currently in need of a secretary to attend monthly board meetings. Duties include recording minutes, distributing minutes, and voting on matters presented before the board. If you are interested in serving in this position, please let us know. No past experience is necessary, and we will train.

HIGHWAY WORK AHEAD!

For those of you who travel to Stewartstown via I-83 and PA Route 851, please take note: the bridges and interchange of I-83 over PA Route 851 in Shrewsbury (I-83 exit 4) are scheduled for some major roadwork in the not-too-distant future. This will result in some detours in the area so you will need to stay alert and plan accordingly.

Both the northbound and southbound I-83 bridges are to be replaced and PA Route 851 will be widened to allow for more traffic lanes. Initial plans call for the Route 851 to be designed as a "diverging diamond" interchange to allow for better traffic flow on and off of I-83.

If you have photos of the Stewartstown Railroad in the past or present, please consider sharing them for publication in the newsletter. Thanks!

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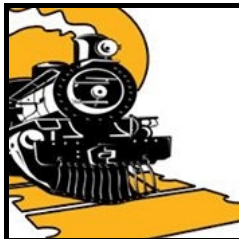
On the web at www.stewartstownfriends.org

David Watson, *President / Flatcar Project Manager*
David Diano, *Vice President, Volunteer Coordinator*
Owen Stedding, *Secretary*
Raymond E. Reter, *Treasurer / Newsletter Editor*
William Larduskey, *Director-at-Large*
Madeline McCabe, *Director-at-Large*
M. Larry Morgan, *Director-at-Large*
Lauren Stahl, *Director-at-Large*
David Baur, *Senior Museum Operations Docent*
Kay Hoshour, *Corporate Registered Agent*

Articles and news items to be considered for publication in 7.4 need to be submitted by the first of each month to allow time for editing, fact-checking, and possible consolidation with other submitted items to create comprehensive articles. When submitting photographs, please submit as .jpg files and identify the photographer who took the photograph.

The Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad outreach program has supported the following organizations through membership in and/or by donations to:

Farm & Natural Lands Trust of York County
Heritage Rail Alliance
Mason-Dixon Public Library
New Freedom Heritage, Inc.
Preservation Pennsylvania, Inc.
Southern York County Business Association
Stewartstown Fall Fest
Stewartstown Historical Society, Inc.
Stewartstown Senior Center
Stewartstown Summer Theatre
The York County Convention and Visitors Bureau
York County History Center



REMEMBER:

You can purchase train ride tickets in advance with your credit card through the *WhistleTix* service on the railroad company's website:

www.stewartstownrailroadco.com

ROLLING STOCK REPORT:

STEWARTSTOWN RAILROAD'S BURRO CRANE

by Mike Ruane

If you were driving in the Stewartstown area on the weekend of June 9th, there's a chance that you may have seen what looked like a small crane riding down the Stewartstown Railroad tracks. Mostly yellow, partly rust colored, with a long black boom and cables, we're talking about the Stewartstown Railroad's burro crane.

The burro crane is a Model 15 crane, serial number 15088, with a lifting capacity of 24,000 pounds. It was built by the Cullen-Friedstedt Company of Chicago, Illinois, and delivered to the Sutton Company of Oyster Point, Virginia in May 1942. It was originally painted battleship gray, had two floodlights on the front of the cab, and had dual electric horns. It weighs just over 32,000 pounds, and is powered by a Hercules JXD six-cylinder gasoline engine.

Most recently owned by the Strasburg Railroad, which purchased it in 1965, it was sold to one of the Stewartstown Railroad's directors, and Friends member, Mike Ruane. He purchased the crane, in non-running order, and had it transported to the Stewartstown Railroad in April of 2015. After some repairs to the engine and control cables, the crane was put in service, first used to move a defunct siding on the west leg of the Stewartstown "wye." It was most recently used to move lengths of rail used in the railroad's rebuilding of the Mt. Airy Road crossing.

Future plans for the crane include using it for replacing culverts, bridge repairs, and any other work out on the line that needs lifting. As our rail wears, it will eventually need replacing and a machine like this is essential for such major projects. It will soon receive a new coat of paint and lettering.



The Stewartstown Railroad's burro crane at the Bailey Springs crossing.
Photo by Earl Long.

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

May 6, 2017 / PRELIMINARY MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by President, Raymond E. Reter at 11:40 a.m. in the Heritage Hall of the Stewartstown United Methodist Church, in Stewartstown, Pennsylvania.

Introduction of current officers and board members. Absent from the meeting were Dave Watson, Dave Diano, and Kay Hoshour

Reading of the Minutes for the May 14, 2016 annual meeting. Minutes approved as read.

President's Report

Overview of 2016 projects and accomplishments.

1. \$2,045 was provided for track and right-of-way supplies and services.
2. \$2,851 was spent on museum operations.
3. \$1,020 was invested in the Friends endowment fund. This includes a \$1,000 purchase of Stewartstown Railroad Company stock directly from the railroad. The endowment fund currently is invested in Norfolk Southern Corporation, Stewartstown Railroad Company, and The York Water Company. Total amount invested is \$20,779.
4. Compliance with the Friends non-profit status included outreach to the community to encourage tourism and education. Activities in this area amounted to \$840.
5. The Friends applied for a donation of a former Pennsylvania Railroad flat car from Norfolk Southern Corporation in December 2016. We were advised in January 2017 that the request had been granted. Our intent is to repurpose the flatcar into an open-air excursion car. The Friends has applied for a grant from The Dailey Foundation to help finance the restoration.

Treasurer's Report

The previously distributed financial report was reviewed. Questions on the endowment fund were answered by the President

General Discussion

Topics discussed while the counting of the ballots continued:

Establishment of a Strategic Planning Committee to project goals and objective 2–5 years ahead for the Friends organization. The President reached out to attendees to encourage participation in the Strategic Planning Committee and also to encourage volunteers to restore the flatcar.

Total membership and donors in 2016 was 150.



Friends annual membership meeting, May 6, 2017.

Photo by William Larduskey.

Newsgroup of York was discussed as an additional way to boost membership.

Stewartstown Historical Society Audiovisual Program

Doug Winemiller, of the Stewartstown Historical Society, presented the Society's updated audiovisual program on the Stewartstown Railroad.

Election Results

Following the audiovisual program the results of the election were announced:

President:	David Watson
Vice President:	David Diano
Secretary:	(write in candidate, TBA)
Treasurer:	Raymond Reter
Directors-at-Large:	William Larduskey Madeline McCabe Lauren Stahl Owen Stedding Larry Morgan (was offered the position of secretary)

The meeting adjourned at 1:50 P.M.

Train ride at 2:30 p.m. Meet at the Stewartstown train station.

Submitted by:

Lauren Stahl

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VISITING MIGHTY MO'S BIRTHPLACE, PLYMOUTH, OHIO: PART 1

by Bill Histed; photos by the author except as noted.

Bill Histed grew-up in a community not far from Plymouth, Ohio which was once the home of Fate-Root-Heath, the manufacturer of the Plymouth-brand of industrial-size locomotives. In this two-part series of articles for 7.4 Mr. Histed shares his thoughts and reminiscences of the company that produced three of the Stewartstown Railroad's locomotives: number 6, "Little Mo," unnamed number 8, and number 9, "Mighty Mo," which still travels the rails of the Stewartstown Railroad.



Stewartstown Railroad's locomotive #9, the "Mighty Mo."
Photo by Earl Long.

One of the most famous locomotives in the United States today is the "Mighty Mo" of the Stewartstown Railroad Company. Laugh if you want, but can you name even ten other locomotives *in service* on railroads? Mighty Mo has been on our railroad for decades, giving reliable service and delighting young and old alike. How many railroad locomotives are even given a special name? Most are identified only by numbers, such as 8067 or 308 or 0911.

The English legend of "Thomas The Tank Engine[®]," is just that, an English legend. Our Mighty Mo, a 35-ton gasoline-powered locomotive made in Plymouth, Ohio is a *real* working legend. Why should the number one loveable locomotive of children and adults in the United States *not* be a U.S. engine?

Before we go poking around the closed factory site, let's take a look at the community itself.

Many Pennsylvania Connections

Plymouth, Ohio is almost exactly the same size as Stewartstown. For nearly 90 years, the company that made Mighty Mo was the center of the local economy, the largest employer in Plymouth. Right before it closed in the late 1990s, it employed some 120 people in a town of around 2,000 people.

Plymouth at one time was a vibrant little town. The village is located in two counties, Richland and Huron

County, Ohio. Plymouth is the home of at least two nationally famous people, David Locke, who with the pen name of Petroleum V. Nasby was President Abraham Lincoln's famous writer. Lincoln once told him in a letter that if he had his writing talent, he would switch jobs with him. Lincoln laughed loudly when reading Locke's column which poked fun at just about everyone in the Civil War years. Locke owned the weekly *Plymouth Advertiser* newspaper before moving on to greener grass in Bucyrus, Ohio, the county seat of Crawford County, and then onto the *Toledo Blade* in Toledo.

A more recent person of fame from Plymouth was Eleanor Searle, who was born to the village doctor, George Searle, and his wife. The Searle home stands today in Plymouth, a huge home with a carriage house that was recently a bed and breakfast. Eleanor loved music, which her father had the money to nurture, sending her to Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida, which has a tea room named in her honor. A national magazine once featured Eleanor prominently, noting that a small town doctor's daughter from Plymouth, Ohio, was marrying one of the richest men in the nation, Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney. News personality Anderson Cooper is a nephew to this one time Plymouth girl.

When her marriage to Whitney failed, Eleanor waited a while before walking down the aisle again, this time as happenstance would allow, another one of the richest men in America, Leonard "Mac" McCullum, head of Continental Oil of Texas, which later became a part of Phillips Petroleum. To her credit, Eleanor gave away a lot of their money. She knew music and she also knew how to find rich men. Also to her credit, she was an accomplished singer. She sang opera, mostly before her first marriage and before her second marriage. Among her last singing credits was singing for Evangelist Billy Graham.

All of this is said, of course, for the benefit of our own Stewartstown "Mighty Mo" Plymouth locomotive. We can't afford for him to get a big head. He needs to know he is not the *only* famous name that came out of Plymouth, Ohio! The other two have passed on . . . Mighty Mo keeps on ticking, as the old wristwatch commercial used to say.

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Another Pennsylvania connection is that the main founder of what was to become Plymouth Locomotive was a man named J.D. Fate who came from Pennsylvania where he knew how to make bricks. Fate and a partner or two had fooled around with making other things before locomotives, including brick making machines, a knitting machine, up to 200 trucks and *one* Plymouth prototype car in 1910. Nothing really took off and lasted until the small locomotives.

Now, come with me on a recent visit to the long-closed Plymouth Locomotive factory in Plymouth, Ohio.

Falling down Plymouth Plant Campus

The small Plymouth locomotives saved some short lines. They were easy to operate. One person could run a Plymouth, versus two needed with a steam locomotive. They did not require as much maintenance. Noted in an ad in a national magazine placed by Plymouth, "Always ready, no hauling coal or water. No firing up, no boiler problems."

The first ones were gasoline driven only. Later would come propane, kerosene and diesel fuels. But running many Plymouths took some learning, as many had a clutch and transmission type of arrangement, not too different than many early automobiles.

Not much can be said for the former Plymouth Locomotive plant that was located in an old residential part of town. Today, it is a sad sight . . . as if making a pilgrimage to a favorite shrine and finding that it is no longer cared for.



The almost deserted Plymouth Locomotive Works campus in 2016.

This is where Mighty Mo was created—in the frightening World War II year of 1943. Would the birthplace of a President or famous movie star be treated this way? In fact, it is estimated that over 7,500 locomotives of different sizes and gauges were built on this property during some nine decades. And several thousand Plymouth and Silver King tractors were also made in these buildings from the 1930s until the mid 1950s. A lone figure walking around



One of the Plymouth assembly buildings

the number of buildings of various ages making up the Plymouth site, I thought for sure a neighbor in the distance would call Plymouth Village Police and report me as a suspicious man wandering around the site. Several people saw me walking from building to building, peering through the glass. No one bothered to call the police, probably figuring it would be a useless cause. There's not much inside any of these buildings . . . a part of one building is leased out to a local car collision repair shop. The 50-ton crane is still in one of the buildings, having fallen to the floor when part of the roof collapsed. As I walked around, waiting for the police to show up at any minute, I could see further deterioration of the buildings since I had been there one year earlier. More windows were broken out by vandals, another building roof had collapsed.

On this visit, I saw something else that was different from a year earlier. The single track going into the former Plymouth Locomotive plant was severed at the old former Baltimore and Ohio Railroad branch that for generations took completed locomotives to their new homes at railroads, switching lines, mines and military bases. Today, that old B & O line is operated by Ashland Railway, a short line of about 58 miles.



Another empty manufacturing building on the former Plymouth campus.

Bill Histed's article on the Plymouth Locomotive Works concludes in the next issue of 7.4

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MT. AIRY ROAD CROSSING REBUILD

by Mike Ruane

Earlier this year Shrewsbury Township informed the railroad that Mt. Airy Road was going to be repaved this spring. If we needed to do any work on the Stewartstown Railroad's grade crossing, this would be an opportune time to do it, and they would make sure that the paving was done correctly. After meeting with the township officials, Stewartstown Railroad Vice President John von Briesen and volunteer John Nolan developed a plan.

On Saturday, June 9th, the work began. At Stewartstown, the railroad's burro crane was fired-up and went down to the rail stockpile to retrieve five previously selected lengths of 85lb. rail. The rails were hoisted out of the pile and onto a flatcar and transported to the Bailey Springs crossing for loading onto John Nolan's tractor trailer. As he drove the rails to the crossing a crew loaded up the tool car, air compressor car and green A-8 and headed down the line to the crossing in Shrewsbury.

Over the next two days a full crew removed the old rails and ties, graded, tamped, and aligned the new crossing. The railroad had purchased brand new ties for the crossing, and they were put in place, and the rails were spiked. By Sunday afternoon enough rail had been laid to cover the crossing, but had not been tied into the main line. On Monday, a smaller crew of John Von Briesen, Larry Morgan, John Nolan, and three of John Nolan's employees finished the crossing, ready for paving. By the time this newsletter is published, Mt Airy Road should be re-opened, and this will be the best crossing on our line.

Our weekend crew included Chris Lutz, Mike Kelly, Owen Stedding, Mark Koppenhaver, Larry Morgan, Mike Ruane, John Nolan, 'Reb', Jim Hogan, Alex Hogan, John von Briesen, and Dee Bush. We'd like to extend an extra-special "Thank You" to John Nolan of Diamond Crossing Enterprises for the use of his equipment, his hauling and donations of material, his and his employees' time. We literally could not have repaired this crossing without him.

The Mt. Airy Road crossing is a good example of some of the challenges facing the railroad nowadays. Just a few dozen years ago, it was a dirt road ("Church Road" on older maps) with only three or four farms on it. The traffic crossing the tracks was very light, and the crossing at that time was boards laid down between the rails, like a boardwalk. Now, with two townhouse developments, and two shopping centers, the road receives much more traffic. The railroad relies on the Friends' support to help us tackle such projects as they arise.



Our volunteers at work rebuilding the Mt. Airy Road grade crossing.
Photo from Friends Facebook page.



Volunteer track crew take time out to pose for the camera.
Photo courtesy of Mike Ruane.



The almost completed Mt. Airy Road grade crossing in Shrewsbury, PA.
Photo from Friends Facebook page.

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RAILROAD RULES CLASS

by Ken Bitten

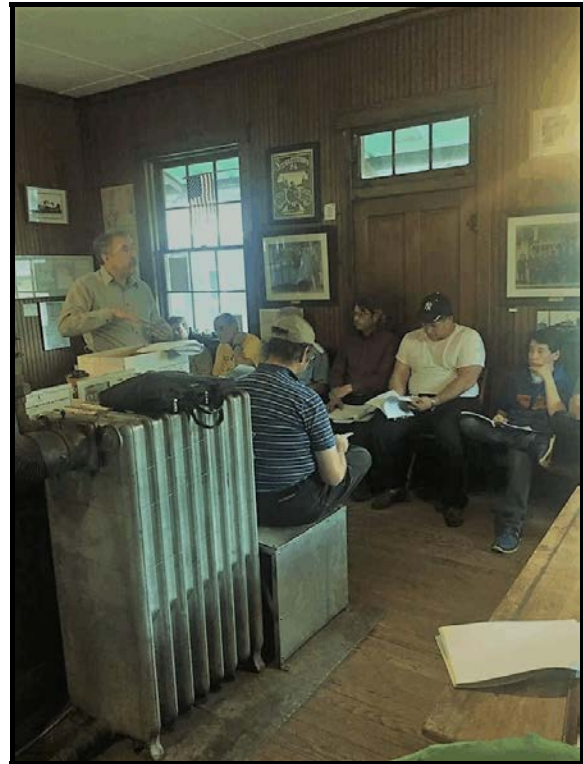
Every railroad counts on training to be sure that railroad operations are performed safely. Passenger railroads have the additional responsibility of making sure that trains are operated in a manner that ensures the safety of their passengers as well. Therefore, the Stewartstown Railroad trains its personnel, and tests them to ensure that they have a good understanding of the proper procedures.

Like most railroads, the Stewartstown Railroad has a variety of different rules. Unlike many larger railroads which have joined together to use a common set of rules, the Stewartstown Railroad has always maintained its own separate rulebook. After 133 years, we have seen no reason to change. The rules are broken down into Air Brake Instructions, Air Brake Rules, Special Instructions, General Rules, Operating Rules, Safety Rules, and On Track Equipment Rules.

On Saturday, April 29, a rules class was held at the Stewartstown station. Rules Examiner Ken Bitten provided a review of many of the different rules along with explanations and examples to help everyone understand. At times, there were extensive discussions, and lots of people asked questions and participated. At the end of the class, 18 people took the rules exam and most people passed. There were several that achieved a perfect score! After the class, Ken took a group of students out and performed some hands on instruction so that everybody could take their newfound knowledge of rules and translate it into actually working with the railroad equipment.

All railroads use very large, heavy cars and locomotives and the utmost care is required to operate them safely. For example "Mighty Mo" weighs 35 tons. To put this into perspective, it weighs about as much as 20 automobiles all by itself! Needless to say, if not carefully controlled, Mighty Mo could do a lot of damage. Similarly, the cabooses weigh 25 to 30 tons each, and our coach weighs 70 tons! Not the kind of thing to be dealt with casually or without a healthy measure of respect.

The Stewartstown Railroad has a very good safety record, and classes such as the one held in April help ensure that that continues. Friends board member Owen Stedding is helping to organize and update the rulebook, and David Diano has agreed to be a proctor for those people wanting to take the rules exam who missed the class, so the Friends are at the forefront of improving and continuing this critically important safety process. Friend's member Ken Bitten commented "I was particularly pleased to see some of our younger members involved in taking an active role in the discussions during the class. The junior railroaders are our future, and we want to make sure that they have the knowledge to be an integral part of the railroad."



Stewartstown Railroad 2017 rules class being taught in the station waiting room.

Photo from the Stewartstown Railroad Facebook page.



Equipment being staged in the Stewartstown yard in preparation for a weekend's work on the Mt. Airy Road crossing.

Photo from the Stewartstown Railroad Facebook page.

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IN SEARCH OF CUSTOMERS: PROMOTING THE RAILROAD

We sometimes forget that the borough of Stewartstown is somewhat “off the beaten track.” While anyone sitting in the waiting room of the station in Stewartstown would marvel at the volume of traffic passing the station, the traffic is mainly due to the increase in housing in the area which has made Stewartstown a “bedroom” community for Baltimore, MD and York, PA. There’s simply not enough “to do” in Stewartstown to siphon folks off the nearby expressway as they travel between the better-known tourist areas of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania Dutch country, Baltimore Inner Harbor, and Washington, DC.

The Friends organization joined the York County Convention and Visitors Bureau (YCCVB) several years ago to obtain access to more publicity aimed at attracting out-of-town visitors. We are listed in the YCCVB annual *Visitor’s Guide*, and on their website.

In anticipation of starting “big train” operations with a coach having increased capacity, last year, the Stewartstown Railroad Company also joined the YCCVB to increase its marketing efforts. The railroad company will be promoting its services to tour bus operators in addition to those visiting the area on a day trip or longer vacation periods.

This year the railroad participated in the YCCVB’s “Made in America” tour on June 16th. The railroad was listed in the promotional newspaper distributed in advance of the event, which directed participants to the various sites in the county open for tours. Dave Baur, the Friends senior docent, had our audiovisual equipment playing one of the videos highlighting the Stewartstown Railroad and handed-out Friends membership applications, railroad company excursion schedules, and copies of the various issues of the *Stewartstown Whistler*, our other promotional item.

If you have photos of the Stewartstown Railroad in the past or present, please consider sharing them for publication in the newsletter. Thanks!

Right: A find in a local shop yielded another bench for customer comfort on the Stewartstown Railroad’s station platform. It soon will be given a fresh coat of paint.

Photo from the Stewartstown Railroad Facebook page.



The Friends ex-PRR flatcar on the “wye” track in Stewartstown awaiting volunteers to remove the decking and start construction of the open-air observation car. *Photo from the Friends FB page.*



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