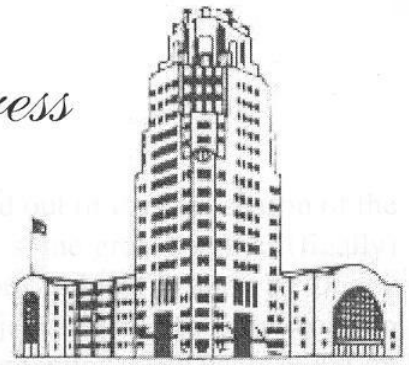


Empire State Express



March 2019

PUBLICATION OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER NRHS, INC.

Editor: John C. Dahl Email: newsletter@nfcnrhs.com

The meeting of the Chapter will be held at 8:00 pm on Friday, March 8, 2019 at 8:00PM in the Degraff Community Center, 139 Division St., North Tonawanda, NY.

ED WEBER's LOOK at THE DELAWARE, LACKAWANNA & WESTERN in the 1950s



From around 1949 and continuing mostly throughout the 1950's Edward Weber photographed the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western. He was particularly interested in the railroad's stations and towers. Out of this informal (at first) photo project grew the large collection we will view starting with the Buffalo to Binghamton section of the railroad. Much of Ed's work appeared in the iconic, two volume Thomas T. Taber III history "The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western in the 20th Century" published in 1981. The photo series ran in the Bulletin of the Railroad Station Historical Society over a six year period in some 16 installments. This is a view of the DL&W as it was before the merger with the Erie and the subsequent downgrading of the *Route of Phoebe Snow*. DL&W depot, Groveland, NY, May 18, 1958 Ed Weber photo.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Very soon we will be turning the corner on the season. March 21st is the vernal equinox when we reach equal day and dark. Yeah, it will get warmer, the days are getting longer, you, know, the season is changing. I think we are over the hump.

OK, this is where I say “Trust Me” and you all nod in agreement. It’s a little chilly in the middle and north sections of the station these days. That makes it hard to work on things but as the temperature goes up a few degrees we will get back to it. There is a lot to do.

So if the weather should cause us to cancel our regular monthly meeting, check on your TV on channel 2 first, WGR 550 AM, WYRK 106.5 FM, and Oldies 104 FM on the radio as well, all the usual places. We will try to make the decision soon enough to make the 5 pm broadcasts. Let us hope we do not need to print this notice again until next fall.

We attended the WNYRHS Toy & Train Show this month and did well. Thanks to Becky and Greg Gerstung and Ben Hilts for the help in hauling materials and setting up. Thanks to Dennis Hurley, Bruce Becker, Bob Korthals and Dave Bartczak for helping at the table. Thanks to Dennis Hurley and Al Le Teste for hauling materials back to the museum and unloading them.

The Annual Banquet is coming up soon. Do you have your reservation in? It’s always a good time and Nancy Andrycha and Becky Gerstung have set up a good meal and some fun and Duncan Richards will present a great program. Please remember that it’s at midday, not in the evening.

A lot of the work has been done on EL-2 in the last two years. There will be more to come this coming season. With this in mind, we must not forget the goal of having it placed on the Nation Register. That process continues.

Finally, for the very few of you who have not renewed, please get that done. We don’t want to lose you. Until then, I’ll see you at the meeting.

Jim Ball

RAIL TRAVELER – THE DEVILS NOSE

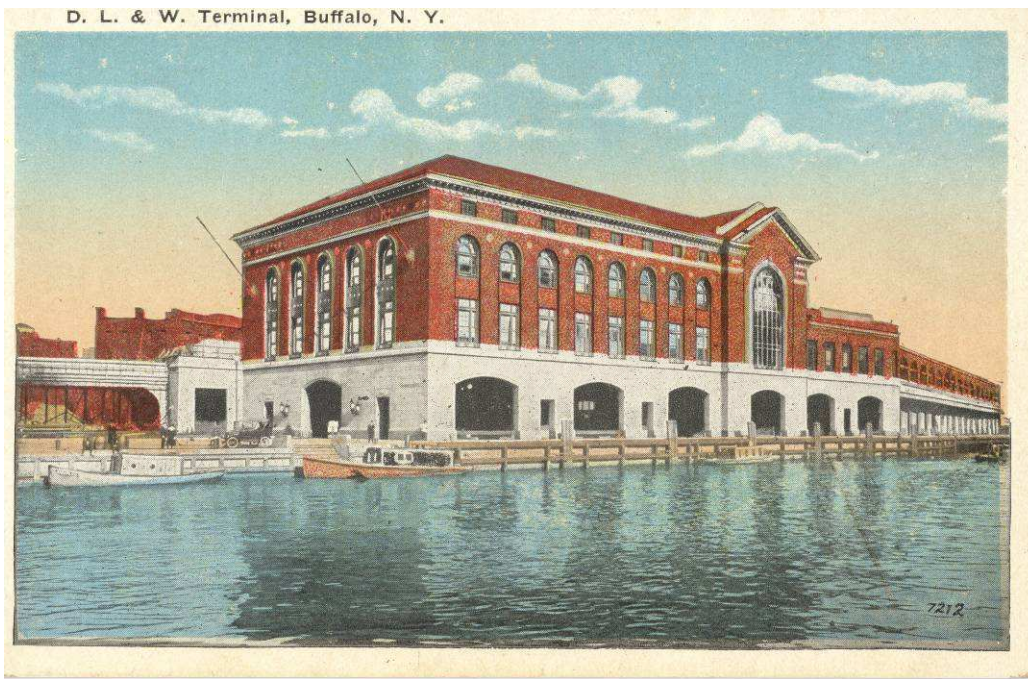


A place certainly ‘off the beaten track’ is Ecuador, South America, and the Devils Nose railway. Running from Alausi to Silambe through the gorgeous scenery of the high Andes this is perhaps one of the more spectacular of railway lines in the Western Hemisphere. The famous massive rock formation known as the Devil’s Nose is seen here. With multiple switchbacks the train descends a full kilometer in height between its endpoints. It’s one heck of a train ride. Photo by Mark Tiede, December 7, 2018

The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Terminal in Buffalo

The illustrations shown here are reminders of the glory that once was the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western's Buffalo terminal. Wanton vandalism befell the station after it was closed with the merger of the Lackawanna with the Erie. Abandonment and a final act of civic sponsored destruction allowed it to be demolished in 1980 for the light rail system's servicing yard. Special thanks to Bob Andrycha for providing several of these historic images

The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad's one time palace at the end of the line in Buffalo was just one of several grand stations along the "Road of Anthracite". The splendid depot at the foot of Main St. on the Buffalo River waterfront was an outstanding example of the era when rail passenger service reigned supreme.



Construction of the Buffalo station and its associated track elevation began in 1914, to replace the woefully inadequate original terminus. With a war raging in Europe, the DL&W was busy building its new station. Opened in February 1917 at a cost of the then staggering amount of three million dollars, the station was pressed into service as the United States entered World War I. Trains of the Nickel Plate Railroad, the Wabash, and Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh (later Baltimore and Ohio) also utilized the

station. Trains entered the stub end station's Bush style train-shed on an upper level structure built using DL&W's characteristic style of heavy reinforced concrete. The "Lackawanna Romanesque" dark red brick common in many of its turn of the century depots and other structures was repeated with the Buffalo station. The interior however, was one of the most lovely, classical palaces ever built by a railroad.

One entered a grand two storey high room whose coffered ceiling and skylights highlighted its fancy marble wainscoting and tile walls. Ticket offices, waiting room lobby, restrooms and baggage services occupied the street level areas. Great Lakes passenger steamboats docked on the Buffalo River side of the facility. Double flight marble tread stairways with exquisite banister railings ushered travelers up to track level. The upper waiting room was fitted with several sets of dark oak benches each ornamented by electric brass reading lamps. Huge arched windows decorated by fancy ironwork grill patterns flooded the space with natural daylight. Railroad offices, a men's smoking room and women's restrooms were also found on this level. A lunch room with counter and kitchen, parcel room and news stand occupied a pie shaped footprint between the waiting room and the train concourse. The reinforced concrete and steel train-shed was another hallmark of DL&W construction, and effectively eliminated locomotive smoke in the shed. Scranton, PA.'s station also featured a similarly constructed train-shed.

DL&W Terminal continued



Neglect was her death warrant. Shortly after the DL&W and Erie merged, the station was closed and put up for sale. Sadly, no one wanted a building built for railroad passengers and with the heating facility needing replacement the huge complex was basically abandoned. It did not take long for the vandals and scavengers to arrive.

Beginning in 1977, and for two years after, I and other friends made a few pilgrimages to the abandoned hulk at the foot of Main St. Her windows were all

smashed; any removable metal had long since been stripped away by scrappers. A mock guillotine stood in the waiting room and no doubt the now spooky, forbidding place was the site of hazings or worse by crazed fraternity brothers. The upper floor offices were no better, falling plaster, broken glass, smashed wood and paper rubbish were everywhere. The grand staircase was in ruins; many of the marble treads and parts of the railings removed by some salvager looking for a quick dollar. The once beautiful oak benches lay overturned, broken and wrecked. But above the destruction, the magnificent ceilings and terra cotta vaulting that rivaled anything built in ancient Rome remained intact, still beautiful, and still vibrant. Miss Phoebe Snow's mansion at that late date still echoed of her past glory.

DL&W Terminal continued

We knew in 1977 that the Terminal would not last much longer, and yet there was always hope that someone would recognize this historic structure for the value it could have added to a revitalized waterfront as a museum or gallery. But it was not to be, and in 1980, demolition began so that the site could be made into the servicing yard for the light rail system. - JCD

“Says Phoebe Snow:
While some may wait
And hesitate
To bring their stations
Up to date

They’re new and bright
When you alight
From off the Road of Anthracite.”

A B&O train heads out of the Terminal in the late 1940’s. As successor to Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh, the B&O had trackage rights into the Terminal. *Jeffrey Nugent photo. Niagara Frontier Chapter, NRHS archives.*



DL&W Terminal continued



The upper waiting room is a shambles but above, elegance still can still be seen.



Only the train shed survives today. What could have been made into a first class space as a museum still awaits reuse nearly sixty years since the last train departed. Here ghosts of the Lackawanna of old shared space with the weeds, and waterfront pigeons and vagrants who claimed this as their territory. *Library of Congress.*

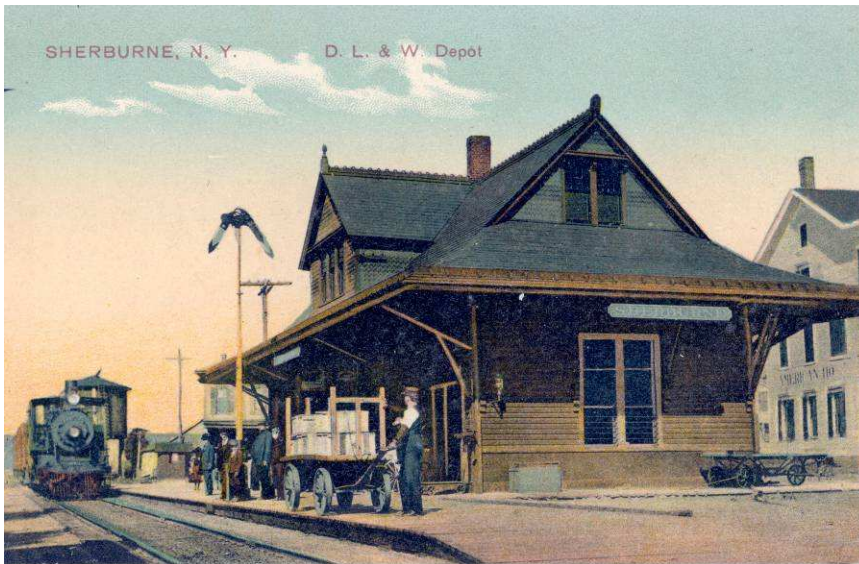
A LAMENT FOR A QUEEN



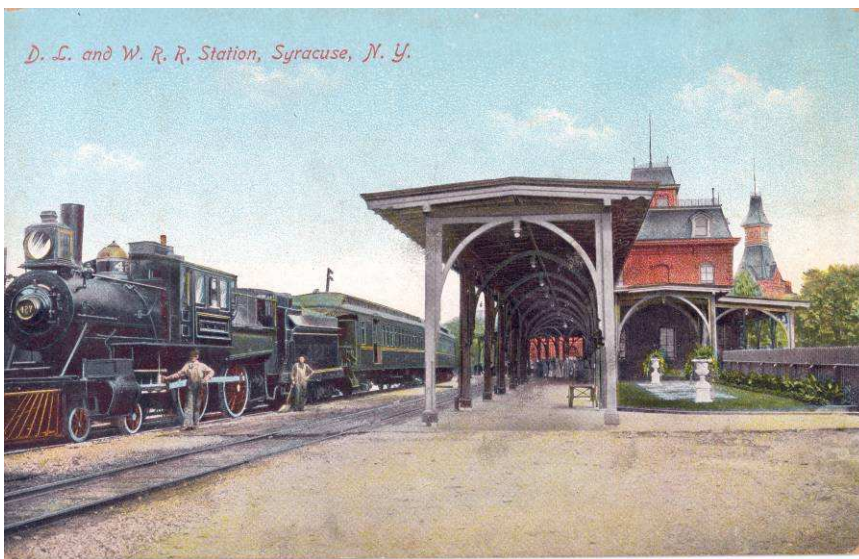
The ruined waiting room of the DL&W terminal is seen in its final days before demolition in 1980. The famous quote by the New York Times regarding Penn Station also applies here: "We will probably be judged not by the monuments we build but by those we have destroyed."—"Farewell to Penn Station," New York Times editorial, October 30, 1963. *Photo courtesy Landmark Society of Western New York*

DL&W POSTCARDS from the Age of Steam

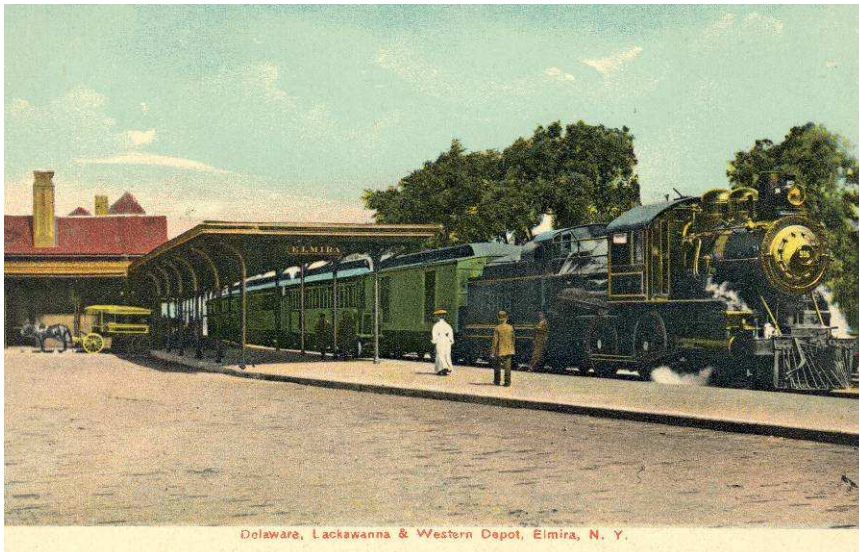
A few colorful postcards of the Road of Anthracite from her prosperous years as a 'blue chip' property.



Sherburne, NY



Syracuse, NY



Elmira, NY

DONORS HONOR ROLL

The following members have included donations along with their dues payments.

Howard Wharton	Thomas Gascoigne	Harold Lee
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Calvin Cornwell	Lon Wilson	Lynn Bullen
Robert Barnett		

Thanks to all for your generosity.

ON THE TRACK AHEAD

For April, Chapter member Walter Simpson will discuss diesel locomotives and fuel efficiency. This is much more than just a technical analysis; your favorite locomotives will be seen in a way you probably never considered them.

ANNUAL BANQUET - LAST CALL FOR RESERVATIONS SATURDAY MARCH 23 – 11:30 AM - NOTE TIME FORMAT

You still have time....but not much! Full particulars were in the flyer which was included in the February issue of the ESX. Note the time format, doors open 11:30 AM with dinner served at 12:30 PM. Join us for the meal, fellowship, silent auction and outstanding program by Duncan Richards covering the last of Steam in China. For information call Becky Gerstung 434-5665 or Nancy Andrycha at 822-5111.

CHAPTER CALENDAR

- MAR 8 Regular meeting, at Degraff Community Center, 8 PM. "Ed Weber's Look at the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western in the 1950s"
- MAR 23 Annual Banquet, Ilio DiPaolos Restaurant, Blasdell, NY. "Steam in China by Duncan Richards". Reservations flyer included February ESX. Note start time, 11:30 AM, dinner served at 12:30 PM, silent auction and program following.
- APR 12 Regular meeting, at Degraff Community Center, 8 PM. Diesels & Fuel Efficiency by Walter Simpson

The Niagara Frontier Chapter NRHS, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) publicly supported organization.

Contributions may be deductible for income tax purposes in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service.

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