



The Liggie

Published by the Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association for Friends of the LVRR
March 2018

A relic from the Green Mountain State . . .

In the December, 2011, issue of *"The Liggie,"* mention was made of the antique ball signal that controlled some train movements within the yard limits of Wells River, Vermont. That device was retired in the early 1950s and later sold to Bill Smith of Latrobe. It stood for many years at the Penn-Ligonier Railroad Club near the Weiss Furniture Store and in close proximity to the wye maintained by the Ligonier Valley Rail Road for reversing train and engine movements.



*This antique ball signal stands at the
LVRR Museum grounds.*

Some years later the ball signal was sold to the Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association by Bill Smith's son-in-law, the late

Russ Lowden, a retired Pennsylvania Railroad tower operator.

Signals have been a necessity on railroads dating back to the early 1830s. As soon as more than one locomotive and train were in operation, it was necessary to keep the units from running into each other. Thus various signals were devised to prevent, as far as possible, collisions, derailments, and "dreadful calamities" as newspapers of the day intoned.

A marked advantage of a ball signal over a lighted or semaphore signal was that it could be seen and complied with at any angle. They were especially valuable at railroad junctions or level crossings. While ball signals never caught on too much outside of New England, many of the ball signals in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine remained in operation in to the early 1950s. In Vermont alone there were 9 ball signals in operation, including the one at Wells River.

Metal balls were displayed by day and exchanged for red lanterns by night. The signal indications varied from different stations. All of the ball signals governed engine and train movements within the yard limits of any given station. At Wells River, the ball signal governed the movements of three interchanging railroads, the Barre & Chelsea, the Canadian Pacific, and the Boston & Main.

Now, if only our Wells River ball signal could talk! Yet, in a way, it does speak about an earlier era in railroading, one that saw the transition from steam to diesel-electric motive power and the evolution of freight and passenger rolling stock.

The Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association is proud and pleased to have this ball signal as part of its collection.

All aboard!

In place of the traditional fundraising home layout tour (due to a lack of fresh/new layouts) the committee has opted to sponsor two field trips this year. Plans are to resume the layout tour in 2019.

First, on June 16, 2018, the bus will depart from the Weller Field practice field in Ligonier at 7:30 sharp. The field trip includes visiting the Altoona Railroader's Memorial Museum, riding the Everett Railroad. After the train ride we will stop at the famous Horseshoe Curve which harnessed the ascent on the Allegheny Mountains in the mid-1850s. The cost \$75.00 per person and includes all admission fees. Due to time constraints, please supply your own brown-bag lunch to eat while on the bus. The LVRRA will provide bottled water and snacks. Please make your reservation by sending a check to the LVRRA, PO Box 21, Ligonier, PA 15658. The deadline to order tickets is June 1st.

Mark Your Calendars!!!

The second event will be on Saturday, November 17, 2018, to the Western Pennsylvania Model Railroad Museum in Gibsonia and the train layout at the Science Center in Pittsburgh. Watch for more details in the June "Liggye."

New Board Members

The Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association welcomes Doug Kurtz and Donna Richards to the Board of Directors.

Doug has been a resident of Laughlintown since 2006. His father, who died in 1994, grew up in Derry. His mother, Loretta Kusinsky, grew up in the 5th Ward of Latrobe (Oakville). She frequently rode the LVRRA to Ligonier to visit with her aunt.

An Eagle Scout, he graduated from Ligonier Valley Senior High School in 1977 and from United States Naval Academy in 1981 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. He served six years on active duty in the Navy and 24 years reserve duty. He retired from the Naval Reserve with the rank of Captain.

After his time in the service, he worked for about two years in West Virginia and then took a job at Latrobe Steel. In his early years working at the

Latrobe plant, Latrobe Steel was serviced by trains using the old LVRRA tracks.

Doug has five daughters and three grandchildren. His twin daughters are 19 years old and reside with him while they attend school. Doug's wife, Tami, died of lymphoma in 2011. He always followed his daughter's activities, especially sports, as they grew up. He is looking forward to doing the same for his two granddaughters and one grandson.

A man of many talents, for several years he wrote sports stories for the Ligonier Echo. He also wrote about local history, including a story about the 1912 LVRRA wreck. He loves to ski especially at Laurel Mountain. He also enjoys riding his Harley-Davidson Heritage Softail, doing white water rafting, and playing trivia. His family has had the longest continuing organized family reunion in Idlewild Park's history, held annually for nearly 100 years.

He currently has 28 years of service at Latrobe Steel, now called Carpenter Technology, and plans to retire in a few more years. He is a member of the Ligonier Township Zoning Hearing Board, the Laughlintown Protective Association, and the Ligonier Valley YMCA.

Always a local history buff, he has become the unofficial sports historian for the Ligonier Valley High School. He is honored to be a member of the LVRRA Board of Directors, where he serves as Secretary.

Donna Richards was born in June of 1967 to James and Helen Caricia. Her parents had a camp near Kane, Pennsylvania and they rode the nearby Knox & Kane Railroad at least three times a year. Donna especially enjoyed the fall foliage but the real high point of those rides was crossing the Kinzua Viaduct.

She and her husband, Brian, have been married for 29 years. Brian, following in his father's footsteps, is also a railroad enthusiast. After Donna's first trip to the Strasburg Railroad museum, she was hooked ... two trips every year, train layouts at Christmas... it just grew from there.

Laying track was Brian's job, while she did the scenery with houses, lakes, farm animals, and trees ... which were great ways to show off her artistic talents. Donna also makes reborn dolls and other crafts when time allows.

She has been a Friend of the Ligonier Valley Rail Road since its inception and has attended all of the organization's model railroad layout tours. She finally convinced Brian and their son, Brandon, to create a layout this past year at Huber Hall. That was when Bob Stutzman asked her to be on the Board of Directors for the LVRRA, and everyone knows that Bob understands that people cannot say "no" to him!

Memorial Brick Walkway

To date, 74 individuals, couples, and/or organizations have purchased 101 bricks for the memorial brick walkway. Many of the inscriptions memorialize relatives who worked on the LVRR. Others are memorials to loved ones. Another example is grandparents recognizing their grandchildren. Some individuals simply inscribe their own name or business on a brick to show their support for the LVRRA and its mission to preserve the legacy of the Ligonier Valley Rail Road. One inscription, "Carl Tantlinger, Employee of LVRR 1948-1951" was ordered by Tantlinger, the sole-surviving former-employee of the LVRR. The LVRRA is honored to count him as a Friend of the LVRR.

Although many bricks have been purchased, there are still numerous bricks available to buy and inscribe per your wishes. An order form is located on the back page of this newsletter.

**The Mission of the Ligonier Valley
Rail Road Association
Organized in 2004**

**To preserve the legacy of the LVRR
To conserve vestiges of the LVRR
To collect memorabilia of the LVRR
To educate the public about
railroading in Ligonier Valley**

**The Ligonier Valley Rail Road Association
Board of Directors**

Dave Byers – President
Tom Hunter – Vice-president
Doug Kurtz – Secretary
Bill McCullough – Treasurer
Bob McKie – "Liggie" Editor
Bob Burcin
Kerry Byers
Armour Mellon
Donna Richards
Adam Storey

Previous Directors

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Lisa Hays — Janet Hudson — Art McMullen
Mimi Owens — Al Pilz — Bill Potthoff
Fred Potthoff — Ralph Scalise
Bill Stablein — Bob Stutzman — Pat Wallace
Carole Wright

Donors of Bricks

(December 2017 through February 2018)

Phyllis Bertok
Hugh Brallier
Kerry Byers
Bernard F. Byrne
Guy Calkins
Constance Carnahan
Bruce and Helen Carson
Becky Dempsey
Tom and Nancy Donchez
Mary Odessa Ackerman Echols
Richard H. Flock
Thomas L. Freeman
Thomas Halliday
Ida Hart
Douglas Higinbotham
Rita Horrell
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Kevin Kolishinsky
Vincent Kolishinsky
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Robert S. McKie
Dan McMaster
Ligonier Valley Class of 1959
Charlie Stough
Brooke Stutzman
Marcy Stutzman
Carl Tantlinger
Bert and Sylvia Toy
John Vucina
Michael Wingard

***LVRRA Museum
at the restored Darlington Station
3032 Idlewild Hill Rd
PO Box 21
Ligonier, PA 15658***

**Museum Hours of Operation
Saturdays, year round, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Contact Information
724-238-7819 info@lvrra.org
cnemckie@gmail.com for editor, Bob McKie**



LIGONIER VALLEY RAIL ROAD ASSOCIATION

Brick Memorial Walkway

Help to establish a capital fund to upkeep and maintain the restored Darlington Station by buying a brick(s) to honor or memorialize loved ones. The brick walkway originates at the parking lot and leads visitors to the vintage bobber caboose. A prominent marker in the path recognizes Judge Thomas Mellon and his sons as the founders of the Ligonier Valley Rail Road.

_____ 4"x8" \$50.00 3 lines of engraving up to 17 characters per line, spaces, numbers and letters

(Please photocopy this form to order additional bricks)

Purchased by: Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone No: _____ Email: _____

Engraving: *PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY/ ALL ENGRAVING SUBJECT TO COMMITTEE APPROVAL*

LINE 1																	
LINE 2																	
LINE 3																	

Bricks will be randomly placed in the walkway. Contributions may be tax deductible, contact your financial advisor.

Please return completed form along with check payable to:

LVRRA
C/O BOB STUTZMAN
605 WALNUT STREET
LATROBE, PA 15650

<p>QUESTIONS: ????? Contact: Bob Stutzman lvrra@verizon.net 724-537-2647</p>
