

# THE SEMAPHORE



**Newsletter  
of the  
Minnesota  
Transportation  
Museum**

**March 2016**

## In this issue:

- 1**  
Osceola opening  
Twin Ports Report
- 3**  
National Train Days
- 4**  
Volunteer Recognition
- 5**  
I went down to Georgia
- 8**  
Coming Events
- 9**  
BNSF Legacy display
- 10**  
Annual Meeting



**Opening Day is almost here!  
Saturday April 30th**

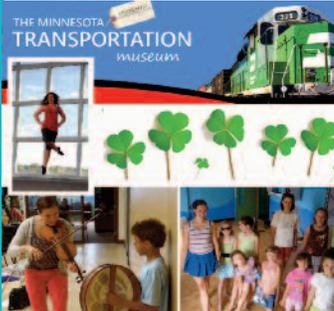
### Schedule

**Marine on St. Croix  
11:00 AM 2:30 PM**

**Dresser  
1:15 PM**

We are just a month away from the resumption of operations at Osceola. It promises to be a great year as we have already booked over 20 special charter group runs.

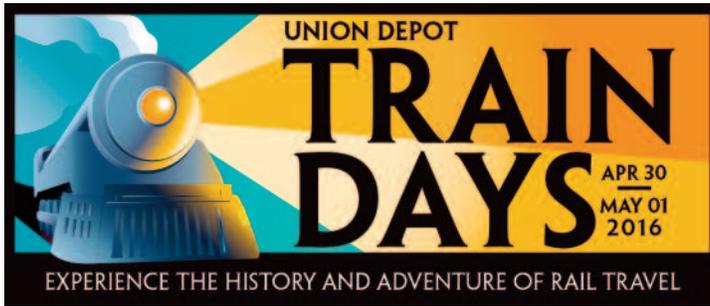
## TWIN PORTS GN 1084



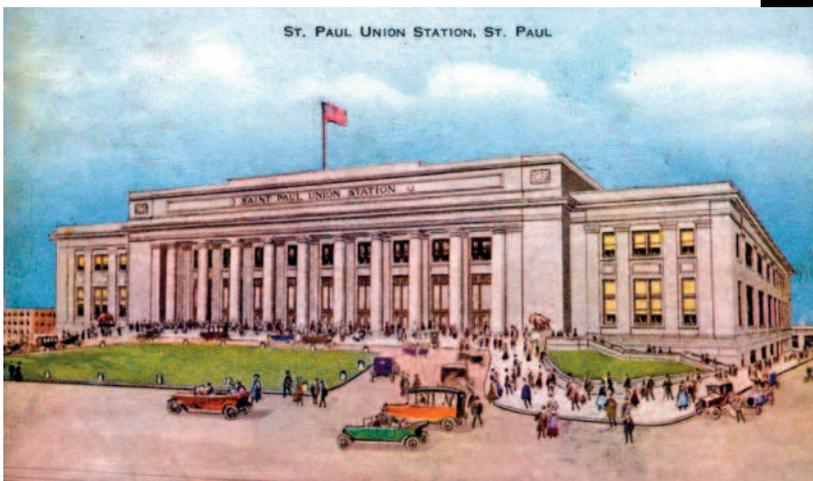
**Crowd of over 200  
at the "Irish"  
Tots n' Trains  
March 16th**



Since our last report, the major hurdle accomplished is the removal of the concrete sub-floor. This allows access to structural work repair below the floor and the installation of new flooring. Thanks to our volunteers and the help of Jobcorps.



This is Mr. & Mrs. Plaisance waiting on the very late first #8 from restored SPUD for Chicago.



By Steve Glischinski, *Trains Magazine*

ST. PAUL, Minn. — St. Paul Union Depot managers will celebrate their building’s 90th anniversary this year with a two-day festival that will include historic and modern railroad equipment, discussions and photo sessions, vendors, model railroads and live entertainment. The event is co-sponsored by Kalmbach Publishing Co., publisher of *Trains Magazine*.

Ramsey County (Minn.) Regional Railroad Authority is organizing the celebrations which will take place April 30 and May 1.

“We’re pleased to support such a fitting celebration of a wonderful historic landmark,” says Kevin P. Keefe, former editor of *Trains* magazine and currently Kalmbach’s vice president-editorial. “Unlike so many American cities, St. Paul has not only saved its great railway station, but also revived it for its original purpose. How wonderful that Union Depot is not only part of a glorious past, but also the future.”

It was 1926 when the St. Paul Union Depot Co. completed the final portion of the new Union Depot in St. Paul. Construction began in 1917 and was slowed during World War I, but the final portions were completed during the “Roaring 20s” when nine railroads and more than 200 trains served the building. Noted architect Charles Sumner Frost designed it in the neoclassical style. Original construction costs were \$15 million.

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Organizers said Union Depot Train Days would highlight the history and future of passenger train travel, the historic and current role of freight railroads in the region, and the area's changing transportation trends and needs. It will also showcase the restored Union Depot, which has played a role in the revival and growth of St. Paul's downtown and Ramsey County since it re-opened in 2012.

Some of the exhibits and activities planned for Union Depot Train Days include:

Milwaukee Road steam locomotive No. 261 under steam with cab tours. No. 261 once pulled passenger trains out of the depot when it was in regular service between 1944 and 1954, and pulls Friends of the 261's North Pole Express excursions at the depot each December.

Amtrak's Exhibit Train, making its first visit to Minnesota.

Soo Line FP7 No. 2500A from the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth, Minn., which pulled the Soo's Winnipeg, Atlantic Limited, and other trains out of depot.

The Minnesota Transportation Museum's Great Northern SDP40 No. 325, which pulled the Empire Builder and Western Star out of the depot between 1966 and 1971.

Northern Pacific Railway RPO/Baggage/Coach No. 1102 built by Pullman in 1914. Union Depot was once the third largest mail-handling depot behind Chicago and New York, and No. 1102 will commemorate the Railway Mail Service that was integral to the depot's operations. The car is now owned by the Minnesota Transportation Museum.

Vendors selling books, model trains, and railroad memorabilia.

A night photography session of railroad equipment.

Model train layouts.

Clinic discussions of operations and trains at the Union Depot from the 1940s to the 1970s featuring Great Northern employee Gary Nelson, and photographers Charles B. McCreary and Byron D. Olsen.

Musical entertainment by Choo Choo Bob's Train Store.

A diesel locomotive simulator. *(Continued on page 4)*



(Continued from page 3)

“We are excited to expand Train Day to a whole weekend in celebration of the 90th anniversary of the completion of construction at Union Depot. The expanded event will include new vendors, the Amtrak Exhibit Train’s first visit to Minnesota, and the grand opening of Lowertown Bike Shop in the station,” says Deborah Carter McCoy, spokeswoman for the county authority. “Special ticketed events will also be offered for photographers, foodies and historians.” The last passenger trains to serve the station departed on April 30, 1971, the eve of Amtrak. While the depot’s head house eventually reopened, the waiting room sat empty for more than 40 years. Passenger trains returned to the building in May 2014 thanks to an investment of approximately \$242 million to purchase the building and surrounding land, and restore the interior to its original appearance.

Today Union Depot serves as a transit hub served by light rail trains, intercity and metro buses, and Amtrak’s Empire Builder. There is also a bike path through the depot area, and a new bicycle shop will open in the building during Train Days. 🚲

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## Congratulations!

MTM Volunteer Dan for his Silver Beaver Award from Northern Star Council.  
This is scouting’s highest award to be presented by a council in the Boy Scouts of America.

### Dan Fortin



- Northern Lights District
- Assistant Scoutmaster
- Merit Badge Counselor
- Active Member at Sacred Heart Catholic Church
- Bronze Pelican
- Volunteer at Three Rivers Park District and the Minnesota Transportation Museum
- Knights of Columbus Choir
- US Navy Retired
- Brotherhood Member, Order of the Arrow
- 40 years as an Adult Leader



*Visiting a museum outside our area*

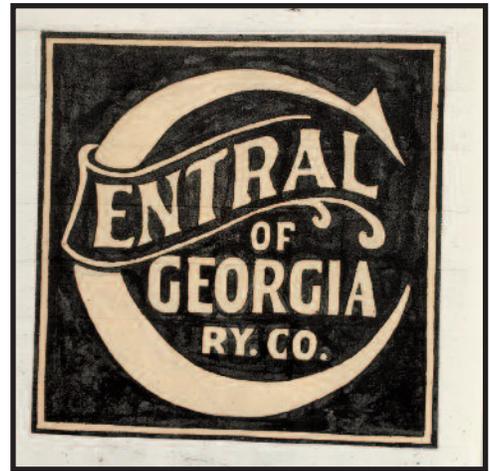
## Georgia State Railroad Museum

Warren Plaisance

Earlier in March, my wife and I were on vacation in the deep south. During the trip in Savannah, GA I had some free time of my own to explore on foot from the hotel. A google search came up with a railroad museum about 10 blocks away. I was interested because the description said it was based at a former roundhouse. Sound familiar? The entrance is through one end of the roundhouse foreman's office, where there is a gift shop and ticket counter very similar to our own. The admission fee was \$10 on a Tuesday which included a train ride on the museum grounds. Their roundhouse looked like none I'd been in before. The structure was all cast concrete and brick without enclosed walls or doors on the interior side of the roundhouse facing the turntable. Nor were there any window glazing in the window openings. They did have photo murals printed on canvas hung in most of the window openings which was a neat touch. The overall impression was that of an open air roundhouse with only the roof and 3 very open walls for protection. Obviously built with the southern climate in contrast to our Jackson Street Roundhouse as buttoned up as possible for our Minnesota winters.



*This is a roundhouse window with fabric photo panels.*



Beyond the roundhouse are the remains of all the supporting shops. Some were restored while others were brick walls with little else. The train ride was with GSRM 7069, former USAF 7069, a GE 44 tonner built 12/42. Our passenger car was rebuilt as a short tourist open coach lettered Savannah Central. Passes handed out at the ticket counter gave the time of our ride and had to be handed back to the car attendant as we boarded the car. The ride was along two short stretches of track connected to the turntable which the GE 44 tonner and short coach rotated together to line up with each track. There was a guided tour of the museum's 3 business cars otherwise locked up and inaccessible. All of the museum staff are paid employees and not volunteers. The museum grounds were clean and uncluttered with very few parts or rusting equipment scattered around. Another feature was the abundance of plaques explaining each of the buildings purpose and operation. Since this museum is marooned from any active rail line, what you have is what you get. Very hard to make any additional acquisitions as they would have to be trucked in. It was interesting to see another museum so far removed from our own. Fun to compare and contrast!

*(Continued on page 5)*

The Historic Railroad Shops complex is among the finest remaining examples of Victorian railroad architecture and design and is the most intact antebellum railroad repair complex in the country. It was designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service. On-site displays include antique shaft driven machinery, locomotives and railroad stock, model train layouts, an operating turntable, and the oldest portable steam engine in the United States. The Historic Railroad Shops offers a valuable educational experience for students and has also become a popular local tourist attraction.

The complex has been maintained as the Georgia State Railroad Museum and a general industry museum by the Coastal Heritage Society with the assistance of the City of Savannah.

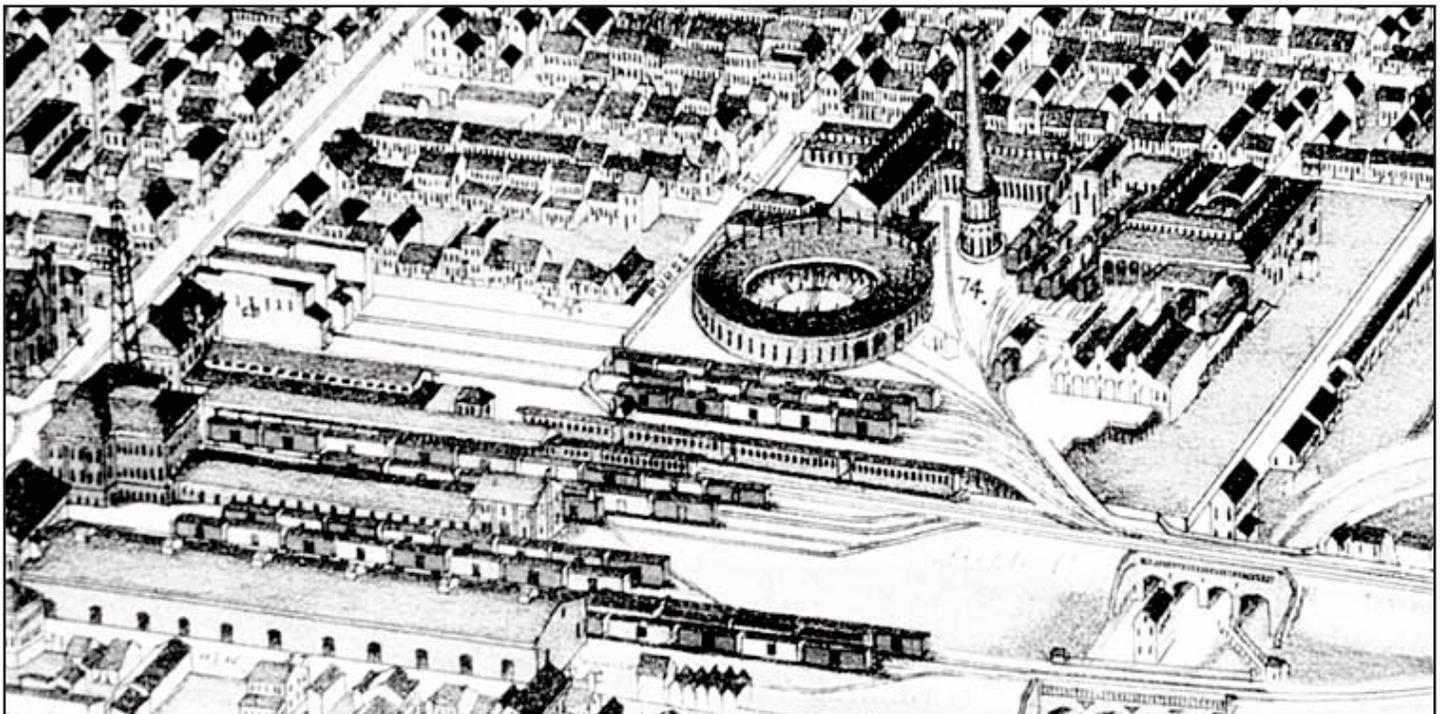
The Central of Georgia Railway started as the Central Rail Road and Canal Company in 1833, and built a passenger station, freight terminal and some shops in the Louisville Road area of Savannah around 1836. However, none of those structures remain today. By the mid-1840s the railway had expanded to 190 miles of track, and the CG began construction of new shops in 1851. The first completed building was the carpenters' shop in 1853, followed by the original roundhouse, machine shop, tender frame shop, blacksmith shop and several other buildings in 1855. Additional buildings were constructed at the complex into the 1920s.



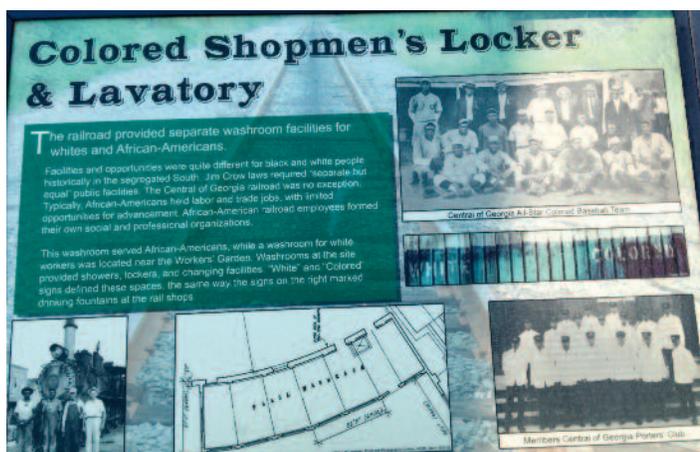
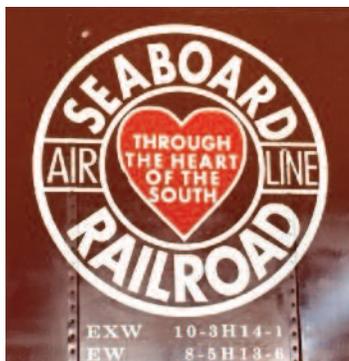
The Southern Railway purchased the CG in 1963 and closed the Savannah shops. Subsequently the railway transferred the complex to the City of Savannah. The Coastal Heritage Society, a non-profit organization, opened the museum on the site in 1989.



# Central of Georgia Offices, Depots, and Shops, Savannah



This 1891 view shows the Central of Georgia facilities in Savannah. On the left are the railroad's general offices, warehouses, and passenger station. In the center are the roundhouse, smokestack, and shop buildings. At bottom center are the two railroad bridges over the canal. Amazingly, most of these structures have survived into the 21st century. (From Photocopy of section of panoramic map of 'Savannah, Georgia 1891' showing Savannah Repair Shops; drawn and published by Augustus Koch, Morning-News Lithograph, Savannah, GA. HAER GA,26-SAV,55-2.



## Coming Events



**Board meetings** are on the third Thursday of every other month.

April 21st  
June 17th

### Annual Meeting

March 17th, 2016

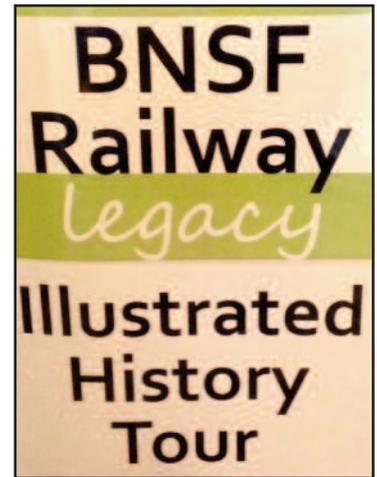
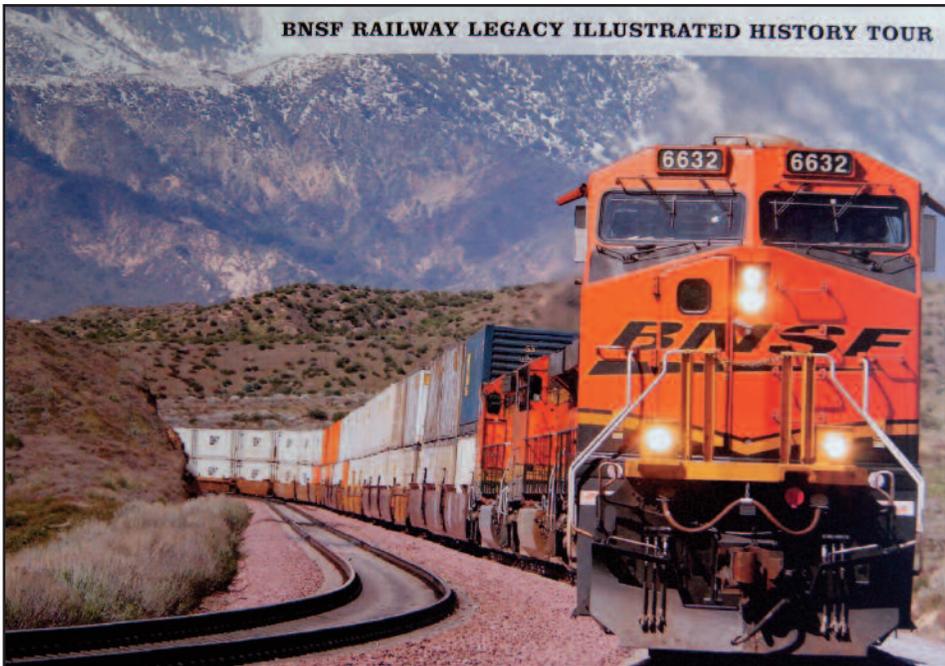


**Did you hear that Tripadvisor recently named the Minnesota Transportation Museum number 1 on it's list of hidden gems?**

<b>March</b>	3/19	0900	JSRTR Code class
		0900	Forge, Scout Badge work
		10:30	Hyder b'day 3yo 14k
		1330	Maxwell b'day 5yo 10k 4a
	3/26	1030	Tommy b'day 10k 20a Rock Car
	1330	Jack b'day 7yo 9k	
3/27	-----	Easter	
3/30	1000	Owatna Senior gr 22s	
<b>April</b>	4/2	0900	JSRTR Code class
		1030	Charlie b'day 3yo 20 total Rock Car
		1330	Jack b'day 6yo 25 total
	4/6	1030	Tots 'n Trains
	4/9	0900	Forge - Copper Class
		1600	Butler/Nelson Wedding Reception
	4/14	1900	TCD/NMRA
	4/16	0900	JSRTR Code class
	4/20	1030	Tots 'n Trains
	4/21	1830	MTM B of D Meeting
4/30	1100	Opening Day OSCVR	
	1430	OSCVR group	
	4/30 - 5/1	National Train Days	
<b>May</b>	5/3	1100	OSCV Dining Charter
	5/4	1030	Tots 'n Trains
	5/8	-----	Mothers Day
	5/11	1100	OSCV Lunch Charter
	5/12	1900	TCD/NMRA
		1100	OSCV Dining Charter
	5/14	1200	C&NW Convention 140 box lunches
	5/17	1100	OSCV Ride Charter
	5/18	1030	Tots 'n Trains
		1100	OSCV Lunch Charter
5/19	1000	Thurs (tent.) Church group 40s	
	1100	OSCV Brunch Charter	
<b>June</b>	6/11	1100	OSCV Dining Charter
	6/17	1830	MTM B of D Meeting
	6/19	-----	Fathers Day
	6/21	1100	OSCV Dining Charter
	6/30	1100	OSCV Dining Charter
<b>July</b>	7/23	1030	Matthew b'day



This month concludes the look at the Legacy Illustrated History Tour located in the Great Northern Railway Drover's Coach. Here are the last two photos from the display.



13. BN 6234 engine pictured at the Jackson Street Roundhouse maintenance facility. It is in service today out of Osceola, Wisconsin, on the Osceola & St Croix Valley Railway, an operating unit of the Minnesota Transportation Museum.

14. BNSF 6632 leading a stack train. Containers from around the world are removed from transoceanic ships, loaded onto train cars, and delivered to intermodal transfer yards. There they are sorted for local business and warehouse destinations.



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joanna@trainride.org

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**Classic Buses**

193 Pennsylvania Ave E  
St. Paul, MN 55130-4319  
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contact@trainride.org

**Minnehaha Depot**

Minnehaha Depot c/o MTM  
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## A NOTE TO THE MEMBERSHIP FROM THE CHAIR & THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Regarding the voting process at the MTM Annual Meeting on March 17, 2016, there was some confusion regarding the numbers of open positions on the Board of Directors.

During the vote counting process following the first election at the Annual Meeting, it was discovered that seven (7), not six (6), candidates were required to fill the vacancies on the Board. An "appointed" Board member had decided not to run for election and his vacancy was overlooked when figuring the overall number of vacancies.

During the vote counting process, a motion was made, 2nd and approved to increase the size of the Board from fourteen (14) to fifteen (15) voting directors plus one emeritus director, total sixteen (16). This number would be "in effect" for next year's Board of Directors' size at the first Board of Directors meeting following the annual meeting on March 17, 2016. This action would bring the total number of available vacancies on the Board to eight (8).

There were a total of eight (8) nominees running to fill vacancies on the Board so at the last moment it was decided to fill all vacancies (8) via acclamation (no opposition).

Following the annual meeting on March 17, 2016, the Board convened in order to elect five (5) Officers/Executive Committee members. George Bergh-Chair, Phil Wellman-Vice Chair, Jon Van Niewaal-Treasurer, Eric Hopp-Secretary, Don Mason-At Large.

George Bergh, Chair



*Loading up plates at the MTM Annual Meeting. Catered by Bacon Me Crazy.*