



The PLS GAZETTE

A Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

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Green Signals Ahead

It was time to say good bye to our old friend... the Grand Sycamore Tree that stood proudly in the turntable/steaming bay at the east end of the PLS yard. It is now gone, see Photo 1 and 12.



The Sycamore, more than 50 years old, was already growing when the turntable was being built in the early 1970's. Why it was not removed before construction is a bit of a mystery, but knowing the stories that have been told over the years we can only imagine those doing the work just did not like the idea of removing any trees from the PLS property. It is very fair to say that none of us wanted to see the Sycamore taken down, but in past years it has been doing significant damage to the turntable and the steaming bays and the time between the repairs needed to keep the table and bays in alignment was becoming shorter and shorter. The damage was not limited to the turntable; the wall around the turntable pit has also been effected as well as the wall next to the 7 ¼" gauge track on the down grade next to Beck Tower and

right on down to the Multi-gauge bridge that crosses over the 7 ¼" and 4 ¾" tracks. Just before the start of this year's running season 100 feet of track was taken up rebuilt and many tree roots were dug up and cut out. The roots were also putting a lot of strain on some of our buried electrical cables too.

The tree removal was entrusted to BG Tree Service. The owner Bill Gambone has taken down a number of very large trees at PLS. Many of these trees were situated in locations that made their removal very difficult. The poor health of the trees we had removed and the proximity to our main yard track and overhanging our building and signal equipment made the removal a real nail biter. The Sycamore was no exception. Its location in the turntable/steaming bay with limbs overhanging the bay, yard, Beck Tower and mainline track made it such that dropping the large limbs was not possible and with nowhere to drive up to the tree with a bucket truck another solution was needed. To solve the problem Bill contracted a 76 ton crane with a 170 foot reach, see Photo 2, 3 and 4.



2019 Spring Meet Thank You

Due to a shortage of volunteers, many of you contributed extra time to ensure PLS had the best Meet possible. Thanks to all who prepared the facilities, manned the gate, staffed the kitchen, provided the Pot Luck, donated food, and jumped in to clean up at the end of the weekend.

Kathy Parris,
Kitchen Coordinator



Special Thanks to the Shupard Family for the Spring Meet Pot Luck

For several years now, Jay Shupard has hosted the club's Pot Luck at both the Spring and Fall Meets. The club is very grateful for his ongoing efforts. Our thanks to Jay, his family, and his helpers for all of their time.

Donation Acknowledgements

PLS wishes to thank the following members for donations received during June and July: Barry Shapin, James Barker, Rich Falzone, Larry Lolli, and Don Malta.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, June 23 Run Day - Members & Guests

Rain Date June 30

Saturday, July 20 **Annual PLS Picnic - 12:00 Noon**

(Train Rides will be available from 12:30 PM to 3 PM)

Picnic Rain Date Sunday, July 21

Sunday, July 28 Run Day - Members & Guests

Rain Date August 4

Saturday, August 17 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday, August 25 Run Day - Members & Guests

No Rain Date

Friday thru Sunday **Fall Meet - Members & Guests**

Aug. 30 to Sept. 1 *No Rain Dates*

Note: Rides may not be available at afternoon/evening run days following membership meetings due to possible limited participation by equipment owners. All members and their guests are welcome to attend with the understanding that rides are not guaranteed at these events.



Club Membership News

PLS welcomes new Associate Members Gerald Tucker, Ernie Anastasi Jr, Bonny Mallon, and Thomas Rowe.

Membership Gauge

As of May 31, 2019 PLS has:

111 Regular Members

166 Associate Members

5 Honorary Members

Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

President	Frank Webb	77 Roundwood Circle, Collegeville, PA 19426	president@palivesteamers.org
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One more critical item was added and that was an expert tree climber, see Photo 5, 6, 7 and 8. The man selected performed a skilled and graceful ballet, mov-



ing from one limb to another, tying the limb off and cutting it away to be lifted over the other trees to be placed south of building three where a team of cutters and men running a very large chipper make quick work of cutting and loading the logs onto a trailer and chipping the rest of the branches. The work was well organized and moved along quickly.

As you read in the opening of this message you know that the stated reason for the tree removal was because of the damage it was doing to the railroad and yes that was the original prime mover. However, the tree that all thought was healthy and sound turned out to be anything but! Once a number of cuts were made significant disease was discovered and one side of the two main trucks and the Grand Sycamore was well on its way towards rotting to the roots, see Photo 9 and 10.



The title of this article should be **THINK SAFETY!** If you look at the very last cut made before the stump grinder was lowered into the steaming bay pit to do its

work you can see the water and the pith (softened wood) that is already present. When the cut was made just above the crotch of the two main trunks gallons of water spilled out, it looked like Niagara Falls!

The last operation was to grind the stump. A large stump grinder was lowered into the turntable pit and the stump was chewed up, see Photo 11. It turned out to be one of the most difficult operations in the removal of the tree. Not much room to maneuver the large machine and cubic yards of chips were generated, but in the end all that was left was a giant pile of chips, see Photo 12.



When it was all over all that was left was a pile of chip that covered the stump. We have started to remove the chips to see what's left of the stump, but it's a LOT OF CHIPS. The balance of the tree was all taken away, leaving us with no mess to cleanup. We will miss the Grand Sycamore and the shade it provided. We will not miss the winter cleanup for all the leaves it dropped, we will not miss the damage to the turntable, bays, track and walls, and we surely not miss the damage it might have caused if the tree toppled over in a storm or high winds. We are thankful that no one was hurt by a falling limb from a tree we thought was sound.



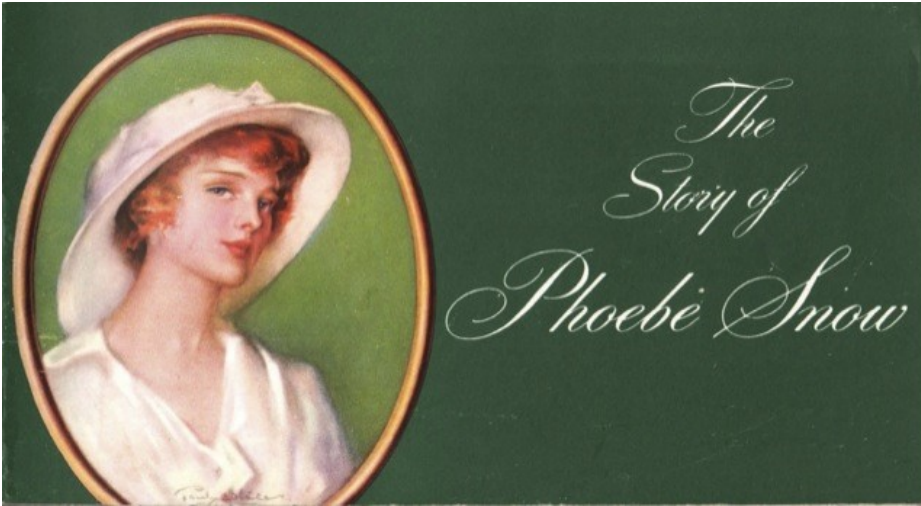
See you on the Main Line,
Frank Webb, President

Train Traffic at the Front Crossing ...



Pete Brown captured these images at the 2019 Spring Meet as trains crossed the driveway to PLS. Perfect weather prevailed for the first two days of the event with some overcast skies on Sunday. Great riding days!





Rail travel around 1900 was tough on the clothing of passengers. After a long trip on a coal-powered train, travelers frequently would disembark covered with black soot, unless the locomotives were powered by anthracite, a clean-burning form of coal. The Lackawanna owned vast anthracite mines in Pennsylvania, and could legitimately claim that the clothes of their passengers would remain clean after a long trip.

To promote this, the Calkins advertising department created, "Phoebe Snow", a young New York socialite, and a frequent passenger of the Lackawanna. The advertising campaign presented Miss Snow as often traveling to Buffalo, New York and always wearing a white dress. Calkins said he based the campaign on an earlier series of Lackawanna car cards (advertisements displayed inside coaches) - All in Lawn - created by DL&W advertising manager, Wendell P. Colton. They had been built on a rather limiting nursery rhyme, The House That Jack Built, and featured a nameless heroine dressed in white. For his new campaign, Calkins adopted a form of verse inspired by an onomatopoeic rhyme, Riding on the Rail, that he felt offered endless possibilities

The first advertisement featured the image of Phoebe and a short poem:

*Says Phoebe Snow
about to go
upon a trip to Buffalo
"My gown stays white
from morn till night
Upon the Road of Anthracite"*

You can be Phoebe Snow!

The 75th Anniversary Committee is looking for someone to portray Phoebe at the event.

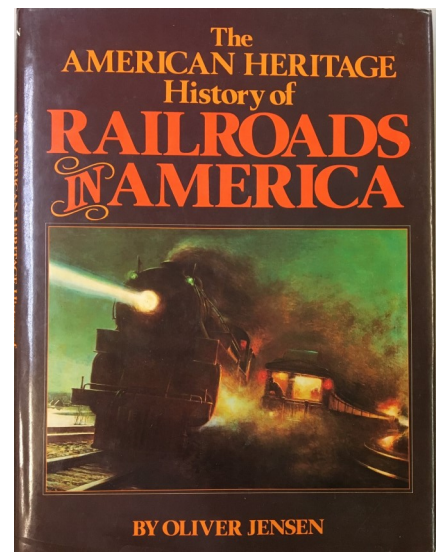
- Short Hours • Fabulous Costume • Lots of Fun

Contact the Committee: Larry Moss, Pete Brown, Bob Hillenbrand
Kathy Parris, Steve Leatherman, Ryan Bednarik, George Cooper

PLS Library

This book was recently donated to PLS and is now part of our library. Please feel free to sign it out or any other book in our growing collection of railroad related texts. The library is conveniently located in the clubhouse meeting room.

Book of the Month



Book Review

The American Heritage History of Railroads in America explores the heart of that exciting revolution by rolling down the entire main line of the U.S.A's wonderful journey with trains - from the *Best Friend of Charleston* in 1830 (which blew up) to Amtrak today.

For information contact:

Joe Gotlewski, Librarian
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**The
PLS GAZETTE**

P.O. Box 26202
Collegeville, PA 19426-0202

FIRST CLASS



Annual PLS Picnic
Saturday, July 20th
Noon - 4 PM
Rain Date, July 21th

*We supply the
Hotdogs, Burgers
and Ice Cream...
You bring a Favorite
Dish and Beverage.*