



# The PLS GAZETTE

A Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

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## The Wheel Report



Good Day, PLS Members -

This is my first Gazette address in nearly 15 years and I hope I can be an effective communicator. As always, I am always happy to speak to anyone who is willing to cheerfully pitch in to carry on with the mission of this club. I do want to remind everyone that each-and-every one of us are VOLUNTEERS - DO NOT YELL AT US!

I want to thank everyone involved in the spring meet and especially those that participated in Perkiomen Day. I was very proud and pleased with the membership participation. People arrived, did their job and provided great hospitality and train rides for the visiting public. Thank you and Well Done!

According to the 2022 schedule located online, the next upcoming events will be the Membership Meeting on June 18, and for those not attending Train Mountain, the run day on June 26.

Please plan to attend the PLS picnic on Saturday, July 16. There will be no meetings on that day; it will simply be a chance for food, fun, fellowship, and train rides.

Speaking of train rides; our club locomotive, which is still at Titan Trains, is ex-

pected back soon. Even with the delay I am confident that the results will be worth the wait. We have ordered visual and performance improvements that should make the club train a focal point of pride for the membership. With this improvement, let us develop a linier process of how to care for and maintain this important piece of operating equipment. Relatedly, the club locomotive storage (Building 9) is nearing its refurbishment completion. Kudos to Henry Blanco-White, Rick Stoughton, and George Fitzgerald for their efforts in this project.

The Board of Directors continues to oversee the renovation of the clubhouse and I believe the finished results speak for themselves. If you haven't seen the meeting room, I suggest you have a look and see the improved space and lighting. One bathroom is now complete and the second bathroom is now on its way towards completion. Paul Miller is the person to see on helping out with this task. Efficiency updates in lighting, hot water systems and heating/cooling will be the outstanding hallmarks of the clubhouse. Pete Brown, Mark Cahill and Bob Morris have been working with the rest of the Board to achieve the results thus far.

Even with contractors doing the "heavy lifting", there are considerable finishing touches needed that can be provided by the membership. This includes painting, light electrical (See Pete Brown), organization/wall attachments, and light carpentry. This helps to better manage our remaining funds required to complete the project as well as keeping our financial situation solvent. As always, your generous financial support is still needed and greatly appreciated.

As we move forward, I see three primary goals for the remainder of my term as president.

- First, the renovation of the clubhouse, which I hope can be nearly completed by the fall.
- Second, all of the property including "buildings and grounds" are in a perilous state if you look closely. The past few years, pandemic notwithstanding, have revealed much deferred maintenance. This includes paint, electrical wiring, replacement of roofing, and down spout maintenance to name a few items. I have started a list which will be posted in the clubhouse and will be added to regularly. I think everyone might be surprised to see just how much work there is that does not require skilled labor but does require organization and participation from the membership. Only you, the members, can provide the maintenance needed to bring the property back up to the standards that we all need.
- Lastly, we need to rebuild our membership in both associates and regular members. This has been a heavy lift and a long-term struggle for us. I feel the time is now to take a bold new direction in actively seeking members to join our club and contribute to the upkeep and enjoyment of all we have to offer. I can offer a few thoughts only if others take control of the physical plant.

I will also be implementing a structured system for the Board of Directors that I feel is long overdue. The previous generations relied heavily on institutional knowledge passed down verbally. With that comes deviations which are not always helpful and as a result many of our maintenance routines have either been forgotten or ignored. I look to everyone in the club to lend a hand and offer how they can help.

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My 35 years of running a business makes me a delegator and less of a single source worker. The time has come for everyone to pitch in to organize and then carry on. The job is daunting, but let us begin.

Patrick J. Murphy  
President  
Pennsylvania Live Steamers

June 10, 2022



### Robert Goepel 1934-2020



PLS has recently learned of the passing of former long time Regular Member, Robert Goepel. Bob died on April 27, 2020 at the age of 88. Our belated sympathy goes out to his family.

### Carl Bruhns 2022

Our condolences also to the family of Carl Bruhns who died on May 3, 2022. Carl was a supportive long time Associate

### Donation

### Acknowledgements

PLS wishes to thank the following for donations received during April and May: Stuart Kern, Pat Murphy, Bruce Barrett, Bruce Saylor, Mark Cahill, Ross Magee, Paul Miller, Steve Leatherman, the GATSME Train Club, and the Becker Family Foundation.

## Upcoming Events

Sunday, June 18 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday June 26 Run Day - Members & Guests  
*Rain Date July 3*

Saturday, July 16 **Annual PLS Picnic - 12:00 Noon**  
(Train Rides will be available from Noon until 3 PM)  
*Picnic Rain Date Sunday, July 17*

Sunday, July 24 Run Day - Members & Guests  
*Rain Date July 31*

Sunday, August 20 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM  
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM  
Afternoon/Evening Run (See Note)

Sunday, August 28 Run Day - Members & Guests  
(No Rain Date)

**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 Probationary Members James Adams, David Kim, and William Peacock Jr, plus new Associate Member Eben Blaisdell.

### Membership Gauge

As of May 31, 2022 PLS has:

- 105 Regular Members**
- 134 Associate Members**
- 4 Honorary Members**



## Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

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# Preparations for Casting a 1.5" scale Builders Plate

By Adam Madlinger

Folks have asked me to describe the process I have used to make 1.5" scale ALCO builders plates via CAD/3D printing/casting. As I had mentioned, I've had great success with designing a plate in 3D CAD based on prototype plates and then having them 3D printed and cast in bronze via Shapeways, who handles the entire process. All you have to do is upload the CAD file and they send you the casting. I use AutoCAD but Fusion360 or other free software is readily available. Attached is a builders plate I made for my 2-8-0 and customized with the date and serial number to match the exact locomotive I am building.

The general process I follow is:

**Step 1** - Find prototype reference. I am fortunate to be good friends with a fellow NJLS member who is a well-renown locomotive builders plate collector/dealer. He was able to provide an ALCO plate from the same time period as my locomotive, so that it was relatively assured that the style (size, font, layout, etc.) was the same as would have been on my engine. The style did change subtly through the years. I digitized it via a high-resolution photograph of the plate, being careful to take the picture as straight on as I could; scanning was deemed impractical because the plate was not flat but rather curved to match the smokebox.

**Step 2** - Bring the photograph into AutoCAD [or the CAD program of your choice] and scale it to full (prototype) size. Working with it full size at first and then scaling down to 1/8th at the very end helps minimize the distortion.

**Step 3** - Trace the photo of the plate with lines/arcs/etc. in 2D. This is the "artsy" part because you find out quickly that the plates aren't nearly as consistent as you'd imagine in your mind's eye. But once you build up enough of an inventory of the letters, it starts going a lot faster because you find that (for example) the serif on the base of all the letters is virtually identical...so you figure it out for the "M" and now you have it for the "R," for example.

**Step 4** - Figure out the "missing" letters/numbers to match your prototype. The plate I used did not have every number or letter I needed for the correct serial number and date, but I was able to find photos of other ALCO plates via Google. They were too low of a resolution to bring into AutoCAD, but at least they informed what the letters and numbers needed to look like. From there, the technique of using the bits and pieces of the letters that were already drawn to assemble the correct looking letters that were needed won the day.

**Step 5** - Once everything is drawn in 2D, convert the lines/arcs to polylines via the "pedit" command (this is an AutoCAD nuance) and "extrude" to the proper height to match the desired thickness. "Join" the bodies together to make a single solid. "Scale" to 1/8th size. "Move" the solid to the positive octant (again an AutoCAD nuance), you can check the position using the "list" command. Use the "facetres" command to set the facet resolution to "10" [max] (again an AutoCAD nuance for .stl exporting). File->Export to an ".stl" file format.

**Step 6** - Upload the .stl to Shapeways (or other 3D Printing service bureau of your choice, such as Sculpteo) and order in cast brass or cast bronze, and wait for it to arrive!

P.S. I suppose I should specify that I'm still in the stone age and using AutoCAD 2004, so the commands at the end may not be the same if anyone out there has a newer version.



**UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

Reconstruction and maintenance continue as PLS works to repair all the damage from last September's Tropical Storm Ida. Here are some of the projects nearing completion.



Pat Murphy Photo

New electrical box and wiring have been added to the club house.



Pat Murphy Photo

New drywall was professionally installed in the meeting room.



Pat Murphy Photo

Men's room new drywall and plumbing.



James, John and Henry got to the "root" of the problem with the track that crosses the road.



Pete Brown Photo

Rick and Terry frame up the supports for the ballast under the "Dog House" used to store the Company Train and Work Train.



Pete Brown Photo

## Unique Rail Excursion

**National Museum of Industrial History Partners with Reading & Northern Railroad to Present Unique Rail Excursion**

**Bethlehem, PA** - The National Museum of Industrial History is proud to work with the Reading & Northern Railroad to host this special train ride on Friday, July 29, 2022. The day-long trip will depart Outer Station in Reading, PA, at 9 AM, with guests riding aboard a pair of open window Budd RDCs (self-propelled Rail Diesel Cars). The train will have three scheduled stops: Tremont, Minersville, and Port Clinton, PA. This will be the first passenger excursion to Tremont, PA in over two decades. In addition to photo run-bys in the median of Cres Street, the Anthracite Mine Rescue Station will host tours of their facility and rescue truck. Visitors will learn how skilled personnel prepare for underground coal mine rescues and witness demonstrations of the gear that helps save lives.

Early afternoon will feature a lunch stop in Minersville, PA. Guests are welcome to detrain and enjoy an ethnic buffet style lunch at the train station or a meal at the historic Washington Hotel. The train station lunch will feature local favorites such as Halushki and Pierogi, with the backdrop of Central Railroad of New Jersey 0-6-0 steam locomotive Number 113. The Historic Washington Hotel will be open special hours for lunch and will host a pop-up display from the Minersville Historical Society. Both lunch options are \$15 per person.

Another highlight will be a stop at Port Clinton, PA for a tour of the Reading & Northern Railroad steam shop. Attendees

will get an up-close look at recently restored steam locomotive 2102. This 4-8-4 type locomotive weighs 441,300 pounds and was built to operate in the anthracite region served by the Reading Company.

Guests can bring their own lunch or RSVP (online when purchasing your tickets, no later than two weeks ahead of the trip) to enjoy the meal at the train station or hotel. Light snacks and drinks will also be available for sale on the train. Seating is limited and expected to sell out. Guests must arrange their own transportation to and from Outer Station, Reading, PA (3501 Pottsville Pike, Reading, PA). Sales stop one week ahead of the trip. All tickets must be purchased in advance on a first come first served basis. Seating is limited. No sales day of the trip. The railroad reserves the right to substitute motive power as conditions require. Itinerary subject to change.

Tickets:

\$112 for NMIH Members (optional lunch is additional \$15)

\$125 for Non-Members (optional lunch is additional \$15)

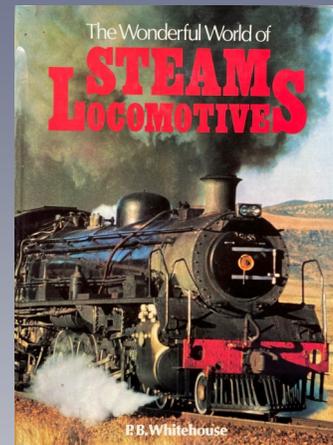
Full details and tickets can be found at: [2022 Anthracite Railroad Ramble - National Museum of Industrial History \(nmih.org\)](https://www.nmih.org/2022-Anthracite-Railroad-Ramble)



National Museum of Industrial History

# PLS Library

## Book of the Month



### Book Review

The steam locomotive stimulates more interest and enthusiasm today than it ever did through the 150 years when it was the supreme motive power on the railways of the world.

This informative and lively text complements a superb selection of over 100 color illustrations.

#### For Information contact:

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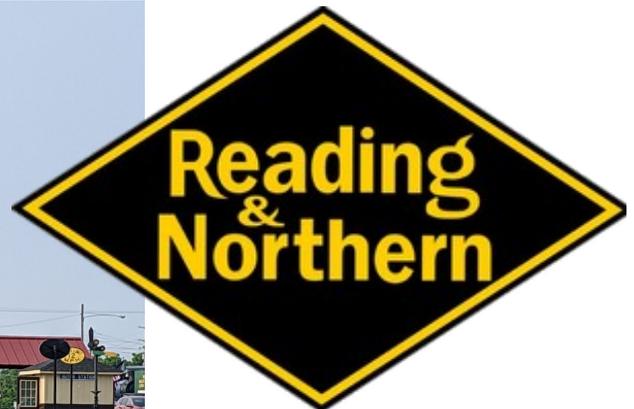
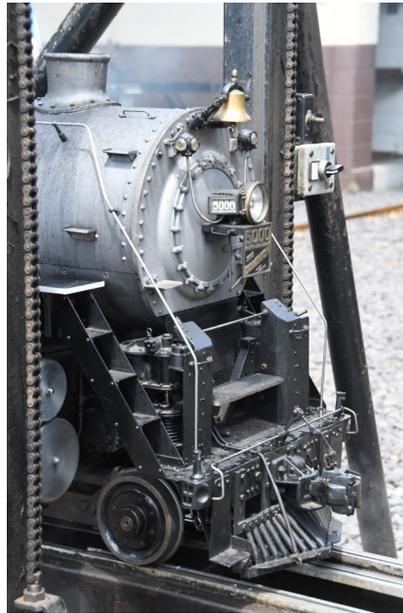


Photo courtesy of National Museum of Industrial History / Glenn Koehler

# Track Side at the Spring Meet

Courtesy of Allen Underkofler



The PLS Spring Meet was surprisingly well attended this year. We had some rain off and on all weekend but not enough to stop all the freight and passenger traffic.



# Perkiomen Day 2022

Courtesy of Allen Underkofler



Beautiful day for the annual Perkiomen Day celebration. The Company Train did not return from the plant where it was being restored after the flood but several members brought out their own locomotive power and everyone got to ride the rails.



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