



# The Mud Ring

The Newsletter of the Cinder Sniffers Inc.  
Summer 2009 Issue

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

### **MAY MEET**

This year, as in the past several years, the meeting was hosted by Becky and Don Saager at their track in Kentucky. This year the trestle was finished along with the tunnel and it is now possible to run continuously, loop-to-loop. Don's helpers had the track in fine shape with everything performing as it should. Don attracts a nice bunch of railroaders and his guests aren't too bad either. We did notice one new engine this year. A very nice 1 1/2" scale G.E. 44 tonner. Jim Buchanan has created a very complex drive system which works very well. Speaking of engines, Don is making very good progress on his Mogul with all those chassis pieces finally in place. Thanks Don and Becky for a very nice time.

### **MEMORIAL DAY RUN**

Our Memorial Day Run was a great success thanks to all the hard work by club members. We had a good collection of guests and provided 462 rides—the most we have done in a long time. There was only one derailment involving our guests and that was due to the load not being centered and the guest leaning back. Nice job Carl with the track.

We also had a nice group of relatives of our deceased members here to celebrate their lives. It is very important to remember those who have made what we have possible. It is my feeling that the Cinder Sniffers should use the Memorial Day weekend as our May run date so we may continue to honor those who are no longer with us. The following members were honored this year on the Memorial Board: Ralph and Sally Payne, Hugh Bond, Ron Simpson, Phillip Peterson, Charles Bublitz and his daughter Cheryl Riggs, Ed Stoeckel and Carl Rauschenberger. Many thanks to Chuck Balmer for casting the name signs, and Jim Keith and the Wednesday gang for creating and mounting a nice display board on the station.

We were missing our run chairman due to emergency surgery for an inflamed gall bladder. Mike is home now and doing well. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Ed Habel had his repainted engine out for the first run day in some time. Also spotted was a nicely painted drop center Sand Hutton Light Railway car. There was a mystery engine hidden under a cardboard box along with a ready-to-go-except-for-paint, operating car. Chuck Balmer had both 3/4" steam and diesel operating. He indicates that his Allegheny chassis is about completed with the last big item being the valve gear. Remember 2 sets of everything on this one. Cinder Sniffers have been busy.

### **MIAMI VALLEY RAIL FESTIVAL, JUNE 27TH AND 28TH**

Remember we are not having a run day in June, but Carillon Park in Dayton is. It should be a good time and they do serve dinner. This event is open to the public, so things could be busy. With present track layout, a very nice long run is possible. Some of our members who are also members of the Garden Railway Society will be there with their small-scale live steam loop operating.

## CAR BARN

When we built the car barn it was designed with a capacity of nine cars. A subsequent rebuilding of the inside increased the capacity to twenty-one. At the present time there are twenty-one pieces of equipment in it and it is full. We have talked in the past about how to determine what equipment is stored in the barn. The general agreement was that only those cars used for hauling the public on a regular basis would be accommodated. The extra spaces, if there were any, would be rented as a source of income for the club. This was never formalized, nor did it need to be. Up to this point our capacity has been great enough but we are near the limit and with little room for the new club engine and operating car. In checking with another club, I find that the rental fee they charge per year is 100 dollars per track, because they have a very limited amount of space. How do we resolve this issue? At the June executive meeting this issue was discussed and it was agreed that engines would be accommodated for up to two weeks if they suffered a breakdown. In order to improve access to all the cars in the car barn; wide cars must be placed in the racks and not on the access aisle. Please remember that Cinder Sniffers does not insure any of its buildings against fire or theft. **Any equipment left at the track is the owner's responsibility, period.**

## THE GREAT WALL

Work has progressed very quickly on the rebuilding of the wall by the gravel conveyer. The old wall and conveyer base was removed and a new block wall has been constructed. The replacement wall is visually pleasing and functional. Work remains to be completed on the base for the conveyer. It was decided to rebuild this using the decking from the old base, but with a new bottom. The project was carried out by Ed Habel, Carl Schwab, Lou Lockwood and Tom Tekulve with the great help of Ray Hughes and his friend Pete Villarreal. Ray brought his Kubota and made quick work of the earth moving.

## REVISING THE TRACK LAYOUT

Following the Executive Meeting, a brief discussion was held on the possibility of eliminating the switch at the beginning of the south trestle. The upper track would be extended toward the station where it would join the existing station track via a switch. This would facilitate running by providing a long continuous run with no switches having to be thrown while providing escape crossovers before and after the station. This track change could be done without having the railroad unusable for an extended period of time, since most of it could be built and tested before joining up. What do you think?

## LONDON POST OFFICE RAILWAY

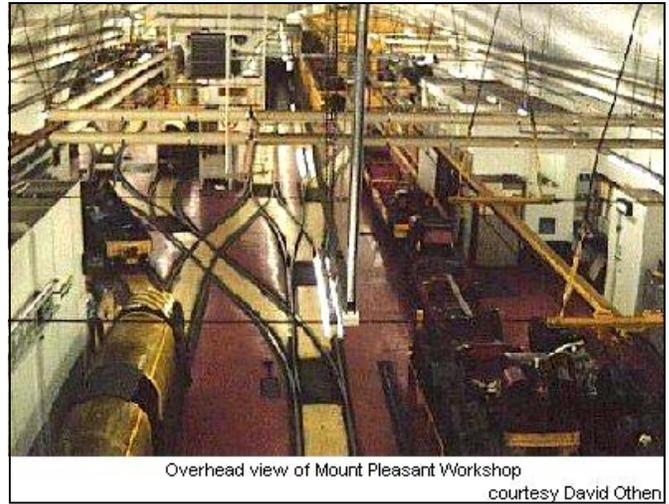
Under the headings of unusual railroads, one of the most unusual must be the London Post Office Railway. Those of us who remember the American passenger service would know that the railroads carried a lot of mail. Long after the passengers disappeared the railroads carried on with passenger trains because of the mail contracts. These lucrative financial arrangements provide the revenue to ensure profitability. The same could be said for England in general, and London in particular. Any person who has read Sherlock Holmes will remember that London in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had three daily mail deliveries and that these deliveries happened like clockwork. Since London traffic is congested at best and a dead stop at a bad time, how do you get the mail through on time? One of the schemes put forward to carry this out was an underground railway between the two major post offices. After much discussion, what was eventually built was an electric powered, 2 foot gauge line, six and a half miles long and double tracked. The line was opened in 1925 with 90 four wheeled powered units. These units carried sacks of mail under hinged hoods with the power equipment underneath. Electrical power was provided by an inside third rail similar to the system Lionel used. This basic system was quite successful and over the years stock was added, new designs of power units tried and the fully automated electrical system upgraded. There were nine stations, one maintenance depot and 23 miles of track. One unusual thing about the maintenance was the fact that they exchanged the outside curve rails for the inside rails to even out the wear on the track. The system lasted

over 75 years, operated 19 hours per day and 365 days a year. It carried up to 4 million letters every day, including during World War II. With the reduction of mail in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, service was reduced and finally ended in 2003, a victim of the Internet. For those of you who would like to learn more there is an excellent web site at <http://homepage.ntlworld.com> from which many of these details have been taken. Also, there was an underground 2 foot system in Chicago which was used for moving freight around the city, although the tunnels were officially built for the routing on electrical and phone lines. If there is interest, I will detail this system in a future edition. The London system credited the Chicago system with concept.



View of part of the Mount Pleasant Workshop

courtesy Peter Johnson



Overhead view of Mount Pleasant Workshop

courtesy David Othen

## **SAFETY MESSAGE**

There are many dangers in the live steam hobby. When operating equipment the size and weight of our trains, we need to keep in mind the physical properties. My fully loaded train weighs in the neighborhood of 5,000 lbs and can do serious damage if it comes in contact with another object or worse, a person. Members and guests must watch out for each other and lend a hand if things go wrong. One danger we can and must do something about is live steam. Anyone who has had the unfortunate experience of a sudden release of steam will certainly attest to the necessity for care. Our club rules have always required boiler inspections as the minimum that must be done to insure the safety of the operator and those in the general vicinity. Live steam has a very large amount of potential energy. That energy should be directed in such a way as to limit the dangers from cylinder cocks and blow downs. Live steam has to be contained and directed if it is going to do useful and safe work. We now have about 8 boiler inspectors trained by our Chief Boiler Inspector, Steve Chromik. We have made it very easy to find one when a boiler needs inspection. Some of these inspectors do house calls. So why do we still have individuals bypassing inspections? Most likely it is because their boilers are not to our code, or they are leaking so badly they can't hold pressure. In either case, the boiler needs attention along with the safety appliances that go with it, such as the feed water system, the sight glass and the safety valves. In any club there are different levels of knowledge and expertise. If you need help with something then please ask somebody. I don't know of any club member who, if asked for help, will not gladly give it.

Any member found to be operating their boiler without a valid boiler inspection shall be removed from the club. If you have made changes to boiler appliances since your last inspection, these must be inspected prior to operation. Safety must be number one in a hobby such as ours. These are the rules you agreed to when you became a member of Cinder Sniffers.

# CHARLOTTE'S PAGE



THE NEW BOARD TO COMMEMORATE OUR DECEASED MEMBERS LOCATED ON THE ACCESS TO THE STATION



MAY MEETING AT DON SAAGER'S TRACK— TRAFFIC WAS QUITE HEAVY ...



NEW TUNNEL WITH TELLTAILS AT DON SAAGER'S TRACK



NEWLY COMPLETED TRESTLE AT DON SAAGER'S TRACK