

The Central Suffolk Dispatch

A News Service For The Central Suffolk Operations Group

Located In The F. P. Carlsen Printing Co. Building

Carlsen, New York 11738

dateline: The Stone Canyon Rail Road, February 25, 2016

The CSOG met at the Stone Canyon RR on Thursday, February 25, 2016. The operators for this session included John, Howard, Mike, Ron, J.J., Ward, Jeff, Jack and Byron.

John operated the rail road as Dispatcher, the Stone City Yard Master was Ward, Jeff assisted Ward and operated as the Hostler, Howard and Mike operated trains individually, Ron and Jack worked together, and JJ and Byron provided a splendid example of what team work is all about. It was a great session with a large number of trains on the rails simultaneously. It was overheard that this was the largest number of trains ever run during a SCRR session.

The Owner and Dispatcher appeared quite pleased with the performance of the crew tonight, and the way the layout handled the heavy traffic. Maybe they just weren't tuned it to what was happening on the back roads and out-of-the-way places, like...let us see, oh yeah, the yard! We understand the management sent out a number of photographs of tonight's operations, but we didn't get any! Howard and Jeff apparently took exceptional liberties poking fun at the photograph of the hard working coal train crew. And the Dispatcher declaring, "My hat's off to all you guys...." He didn't have a hat on to start with! The only guy wearing an appropriate hat was that fellow working on the coal train crew. Most people just don't understand. When one operates the coal train it is necessary to wear a hat and bandana. Otherwise, one will be sucking in all sorts of coal dust and spend the evening getting the cinders out of one's hair and cheeks.

Continuing with the Dispatcher; tonight it finally happened. You are well aware of the layout in Flat Rock with three tracks in front of the passenger station. The dispatcher insists on positioning the coal train on the track directly in front of the station while coal cars are delivered and picked up at the Stone City power plant. The operators of the coal train in the past have recommended stopping on the center track while conducting their business, just in case a passenger train arrived that needed to use the inner track. This is how the Southern Pacific operates on the San Francisco peninsula and the recommended procedure on the Great Northern Rail Road over there on Oak Street! Well, like we said, tonight it happened. With all the new traffic on the rails this evening, a passenger train did arrive while the coal train was sitting in front of the station. The coal train crew, in total disgrace, had to back their train out all the way to Stone City Heights to clear the track for the la-tee-da priority passenger train. But this is not the end of the story. The engineer of the passenger train accused the crew of the coal train for not setting the east turn out correctly. It was discovered later by the coal train crew as they proceed eastbound on the westbound track that the crew of the passenger train did not properly align the same turn out after they crossed over it. The two trains later met in the Stone City Yard and a confrontation quickly arose. There was a lot of shouting and posturing going on but cooler heads prevailed and the two crews shook hands and called it even. And now you know the end of the story.

The yard appeared to be under a lot of pressure early in the session. At one point there were three trains observed lined up nose to tail on the yard approach track waiting to get into the yard. An

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engineer was overheard making the comment that he wanted to hurry up and overload the yard crew.

A young man came running up to our reporter out of breath with a story of a mishap over in the Flat Rock industrial area. Our reporter hot-footed it over there with the young man only to



Police arrive at the scene of a railroad hit-and-run. CSD photo

discover the tragic scene. As an eye witness, the young man related the following account. A person, it has yet to be determined gender, was walking along the main industrial road in the direction of the industrial park. Just as this person started to cross over the double main tracks a freight train came roaring around the bend and struck the pedestrian. The young man stated that the freight did not sound his horn as it neared the grade level crossing to give warning of an approaching train, and then continued eastbound after the impact. There

was no chatter over the radio about this incident, at least on channel 10, the rail road base frequency, so maybe the crew, Ron and Jack, didn't realize they hit the individual. Sure, sure...



Removing the body from the side of the tracks. CSD photo

The first responder was a Little Fork Constable, as indicated in the included photograph, who realized immediately that the individual was dead. Later the local mortuary crew arrived and removed the body in the flat bed of a pickup truck. What a classless act. Just like picking up a roadside deer kill.

Talking about tragedies, let us revisit the use of helper service pushing on a caboose. It is going to happen! We visited with the engineer of the freight that received the helper service and was astonished to learn that the conductor, rear brakeman, and the Pepsi Cola cooler were re-located to the locomotive just in case that massive steam engine crushed that little 30 ton caboose. Let us

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not forget that helper service is not only required to push a train upgrade it is often required to help retard the train on the downgrade. We bring this up just in case the problem is how to exit the helper locomotive from in front of the cabooses. This could very easily be accomplished using the crossover at Red River Canyon. But be it far from us to suggest how to safely run a rail road.

We were not quite sure whether to believe what we observed with our own eyes from our vantage point by Flat Rock. Way down on the far end of the yard by the caboose storage track it looked like engineer Ron and hostler Jeff were playing checkers with locomotives and freight cars. First, Ron jumped his locomotive over Jeff's caboose and that was moved out of the way. Then, Jeff jumped something over one of Ron's cars and that was re-positioned. And that is how that went until someone blocked our reporter's line of sight. We didn't get the results of who won but there was a whole lot of "five oh'eds" going on!

The Little Fork Police were busy tonight. A 911 call came in apparently from a worker at the stock yards about trains blocking a crossing for an inordinate amount of time. He complained he



couldn't crossover to get to his job. His employment is feeding the cattle. This has to be accomplished on schedule before they all fall down again for lack of nourishment, which you may recall has happened in the past. Well, the cattle were all found laying on their sides once which could have been caused by lack of sustenance. The local police were on the job trying to clear the crossing, as evident in the included photograph. We believe that engineers Ron and Howard were operating these trains. Jack was overheard, when being interrogated by police, that he had

Stock Yard worker blocked by railroad congestion. CSD photo

nothing to do with it and that it was caused by the other two guys.

When the coal train arrived at the Stone City Yard the caboose and crew were supposed to be relieved. But no, the yard crew was so busy and out of position to make the exchange that the Dispatcher gave dispensation to swapping cabooses to relieve their load. The crew then had to work a double shift that went well beyond union rules. This may have directly resulted in the wake of incorrect turnout positions following the coal train around the layout. Even though the Yard Master claimed he was so busy, he had time to discuss the value of shopping for furniture at "Ward's Furniture Bonanza." He pointed out that the company had their own milling plant

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Ward's Furniture Bonanza. CSD photo

behind their splendid show room. It was also explained that they used only the best hardwoods from around the world to construct their furniture. When someone suggested that they knew from a neighbor who shopped there that their wood had a number of boreholes. Hostler Jeff, also not so busy, pointed out that this was intentionally caused by letting the infamous

"Mahogany Dun-gay Beetle" tunnel into the wood for exotic visual effects in the finished product. It was also learned that a special extraction tool is used to gather these critters when they were nice and plump. They were then dunked in a chocolate dip and packaged for sale in the headquarters gift shop.

Ward was complaining he was so busy that he hadn't had time to get a cookie. We guess no "Twinkie" defense for the cause of the operation of the yard tonight. JJ, out of the kindness of his heart, brought Ward a cookie. What does Ward do, he claims JJ is trying to bribe him to get better service when JJ comes into the yard. Not only that, he accused the LF10 crew, local freight 10, of missing cars, or having too many car cards. We are not sure of which one, he kept jumping back and forth on that point. He claimed he didn't have time to break down TF10 so it couldn't proceed to staging. JJ and Byron had a good laugh at that one (We think it was more like number seven). However, their joy was soon dashed on the rocks of despair when the



LF10 cars showing car cards for all. CSD photo

Dispatcher took LF10 away from them and called it end of run, right there in the yard. The train crew had proof positive that everything was in order as indicated in the included photograph. It clearly shows one card for every train and every train has its card! The crew quietly moved the correct consist of FT10 out of the yard and back to staging.

In conclusion, Mike had the honored privilege of making the inaugural run of P30, the Eastbound Mine Train, headed by locomotive 7002. Well done Mike. Photo below.

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P30 at Rockwell Mine. CSD photo