

The Central Suffolk Dispatch

A News Service for the Central Suffolk Operations Group

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On a very cold evening in mid-February, the Central Suffolk Operations Group (CSOG) met at the Island Central Rail Road (ICRR). Attending this evening was Howard, Mike, John F., John J., Ward, Ron, Dave and Byron.

Howard was the roving Superintendent making sure everything ran smoothly and also assisted Ward by doing passenger train reversals at the Ronkonkoma and Richmond Hill stations. When railroad time started the first train out on the main was a passenger train followed by the Wohleking Industrial Yard Transfer, freight TR74. Well, the car cards for old 74 were nowhere to be found. Howard searched all the boxes and under the layout but to no avail. Then he happened to look in his left hand, and guess what, there they were! Then there was a loud bang and train cars started tumbling out of the innards of the layout and smashing on the floor. That was shortly followed by a runaway diesel locomotive flying out of the staging tunnel portal. After the engine was corralled the situation was assessed. Howard had to climb under the layout to check out the rail situation and clean up the mess. It looked like the car(s) suffered severe damage. That beautiful new detailed white tank car we noted in a previous session might have been one of the victims.

Engineer Byron happened to mention to the Supervision that train TR74 was progressively getting longer and longer from session to session and before long it won't fit in Wohleking freight yard. The Superintendent then made some sort of disparaging remark about the previous Monday ROG session engineer, but we are not going to go there.

Ron was the Dispatcher for tonight's get together. He appears to have that job nailed. In fact, he had everything so well under control he was able to sneak in a few winks. We think this was about the time his radio calls sounded something like, "You're cleared to North Lake, and beyond ZZZZZzzzzz." But then again, maybe he has this operation down pat now that he can run the session by memory from this relaxed position! He was later overheard at the end of railroad time stating that in his opinion this was the best operations session ever. Well, what do you think?



Dispatcher on the job.

Ward was the Dunton Yard Master and operated without the aid of an Assistant Yard Master or Hostler. He did a fine job and it was a pleasure to pass through the yard and enjoy his companionship. As you may remember, Ward is great at finding the more shabby areas on other people's layouts. Tonight he pointed out an area, which might fit that bill, just outside the Richmond Hill station. We will expand on that later. The following photograph illustrates



The Yard Master operating at "Ward Speed." Did you see a train go by here?

the Yard Master hard at work keeping things moving in Dunton Yard.

Now we arrive at the job of the Far Tower Operator. In Jeff's absence, at the start of the evening, Howard asked if there was a volunteer to jump into the Farmingville hole. Before the words were out of his mouth, Dave's hand shot up so quickly that Mike didn't have time to unfold his fingers so he could raise his arm to indicate he would volunteer. On an exit poll, Dave was asked about why he was so interested in doing that job and was it fun. In his reply he stated that there is a lot of switching activity up there, one gets to talk to all the engineers as they pass through Farmingville, the view of the layout is terrific, one gets to sit down the entire session, people bring you cookies, Dellwood switching duties are included in the package, and it is just a wonderful job. Right, Dave! Do you have a fence that needs painting? With all things aside, however, he did come up with a unique method of keeping cars from rolling down the incline toward Carlsen.



Dave's anti-rolling fix. What do you think of that, Jeff?

Talking about cookies, we just received information about a cookie delivery by train over on the Great Northern, and the suggestion that a cookie train be constructed on the Island Central. Well, we don't know how many of our readers actually read this stuff, but those that do may well remember that the CSD suggested something of that sort months ago. This was back when Jeff first started filling the job of the Far Tower Operator and had to climb down to secure his pretzels. The CSD suggested that a lumber flat car or an open gondola be assigned the task of transporting a real commodity to a real consumer just like the big rail roads do. And by the way, a straight brown pretzel is more prototypical looking than a shorty gondola stuffed with cookies which may have overhang issues. Right, Howard? Maybe the cookies could be mushed inside a box car! Before you know it operators will want their water delivered in a tank car, Yuk!

Mike was involved in a few incidents that need reporting. What incidents you might ask. Well, let us start with the episode where Mike was operating his freight standing at Liberty and his train was proceeding into Carlsen on the other side of the layout. All of a sudden came the cries

from Carlsen; "Mike! Mike! Stop your train!" Mike was observed hot footing it around the East Utica peninsula yelling, "I can't! I'm not plugged in!" The second involves an incident that occurred in the back-waters of Carlsen. The following photographs show Mr. Steinburg



Mr. Steinburg sitting in back of his store having a puff.



Freight car jumps the tracks.

minding his own business when a freight train came roaring around the bend heading for Farmingville. "That speeding freight came around the bend and the leading truck on the gondola just jumped straight up off the tracks. Just jumped straight up, I tell you. Darn near wet my pants it came so close!" said Mr. Steinburg. Mike was able to push the derailed train back toward



Mike pushing his freight back toward Carlsen.

Carlsen to a point where the Superintendent was able to intervene. His remedy was to five-oh the gondola and turn it around. Mike then continued his journey into Farmingville without complications. Someone suggested he try operating in reverse to test the truck fix to see if it would operate in that direction but he stated that was the next guy's problem.

John was observed operating the coal train all over the place. Here is a photograph of him



John at College Point.

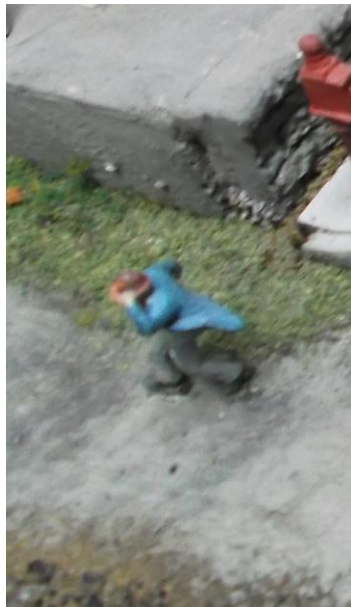
switching coal hoppers at College Point.

Who had the bright idea to let engineer Byron operate passenger train(s) P20/21 with the locomotive with the loud horn? The Superintendent encouraged Byron as he approached Farmingville to sneak up on the Far Tower Operator and scare him awake with a horn blast. JJ also encouraged Byron to scare someone else. Byron quickly stated, "John made me do it" meaning JJ. Coal train John, even quicker, pointed out that, "It was the other John."

Okay, now for the Ward story. The following photograph shows the activity at the Richmond Hill taxi stand. Ward was first to point out the shady and unkempt area up against the fence near the tracks. On casual observation it looks like a local dump site with cinder blocks and left over building materials and stinking garbage cans. What kind of business enterprise is going on in those taxis do you suppose? We are not too concerned with the Vice Squad but take a closer look at the garbage can near the street lamp. Yes, that is, what appears to be, a dismembered female torso un-sanctimoniously dumped in there head first, if she still has one. Maybe a better call would be "bottoms-up." It is obvious she was wearing pink panties and her feet are gone. Oh, my! Ward, you really found another one. We may have caught the culprit in the act, if our reporter was there a little sooner. Take a close look at the second photograph. Does anyone recognize the little weasel high tailing it away from the scene of the crime? Well, the scene of the crime was probably over there in East Utica, Ward's other favorite seedy place; this is just the dump site. Howard, have you checked the morning East Utica Police Missing Plastic People Bulletin?



Today's scene at the Richmond Hill taxi stand.



Can you identify this little weasel guy? Please call the East Utica and City Police.