



HIGHBALL



A PUBLICATION OF THE 4000 FOUNDATION
Preserving Railroad History in La Crosse
March 2021

UPDATES

Like so many other folks in La Crosse – and around the world, for that matter -- any plans we had for 2020 ran into the COVID brick wall. That included getting out our newsletter in January! But here we are!

Due to many factors and circumstances beyond our control, the Board of Directors determined that it was in everyone's best interest to cancel **Rail Fair** for yet another year. There were too many variables in play: would the Parks Dept. be granting event permits; would out-of-town vendors be able to secure lodging; would we have enough volunteers to run a well-staffed show; would those volunteers feel comfortable operating in crowds. And while there are so many hopeful signs that our community is returning to normal, we just felt unable to make a commitment in time to put on a great show. Now we'll focus on **The Great Tri-State Rail Sale** in January 2022, and we'll hope that becomes a reality.

The **Annual Meeting** for 2021 remains in question, but it is doubtful we will be able to hold it this year. Finding a venue able to accommodate our membership is an issue, and occupancy rates also present a problem. If we are able to reschedule for late in the year, we will certainly let people know.

If you are wondering if anything is going to occur, we can tell you yes! We received word that the La Crosse and Three Rivers Model Railroad Club will be holding their 40th Annual Model Railroad Show on May 22 and 23 at the Omni Center in Onalaska. Saturday hours will be 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, while Sunday's event will run 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM.

WORK ORDERS

Let There Be Light!

- ❖ Have you noticed the new lights at the Short Line in Copeland Park, designed for night illumination and safety? They are energy-efficient LED with what can be termed a "warm light," and were installed last October. Replacing our old lighting became a priority after several failed, and the La Crosse Parks Dept. provided funds for the project. Our thanks to Parks Director Jay Odegaard,

Dave Novak and Mark Hamre for heading up the project, and Foundation member Andy Wettstein and his crew who took care of the installation.

- ❖ Other lighting repairs and reconditioning were done with the headlight, Mars light, and class lights. While much of this was for aesthetic purposes, it is part of the overall ongoing restoration. Thanks again to Dave Novak for his work with this.

Information Please!

- ❖ Our website www.4000foundation.org will be undergoing a comprehensive overhaul in the coming months. Jonah Arndt and Brian Wopat are our chief IT guys, with Stephen Borleske, Dick Johnson, Judy Kirkpatrick and Mark Hamre consulting on the effort. If you have any questions or would like to offer any suggestions or other input, please contact Mark Hamre at 608-498-9522.
- ❖ Thanks to all of you who responded to our request to update our records. Accurate and current contact information will save on printing and mailing costs, while e-mail contacts will give us a way to share information in a timely manner. And a special thanks to those of you who sent in gifts to the Foundation. It was greatly appreciated!

MILE MARKERS

2020 was a year of loss for many people, and the 4000 Foundation said farewell to several long-time members. We want to acknowledge those losses, and send our condolences to their families and friends.

Rev. A. Joseph Follmar

Fr. Joe was a life member of the 4000 Foundation, serving for several years as a Director. He was one of the principal members who wrote and edited our Grand Crossings book in 1992 which provided a wealth of information about railroading and the people behind it in La Crosse. The proceeds from the book greatly helped retire the debt incurred when moving the Grand Crossing Tower to Copeland Park. Joe was instrumental in establishing the Chicago and Northwestern Historical Society, and authored numerous articles and books about railroading.

James Lamke

Jim was a life member of the Foundation and a regular donor. Many remember the year Jim and his family came to the rescue of Rail Fair, stepping in at the very last minute to provision and operate the concessions stand. Jim was the father of former Foundation Director and Vice President Philip Lamke.

John Layton

John was a life member of the Foundation. He worked for 36 years as brakeman for the CB&Q, and the Burlington Northern railroads from 1955 – 1991. Many knew John as a vendor and frequent volunteer at many Foundation events.

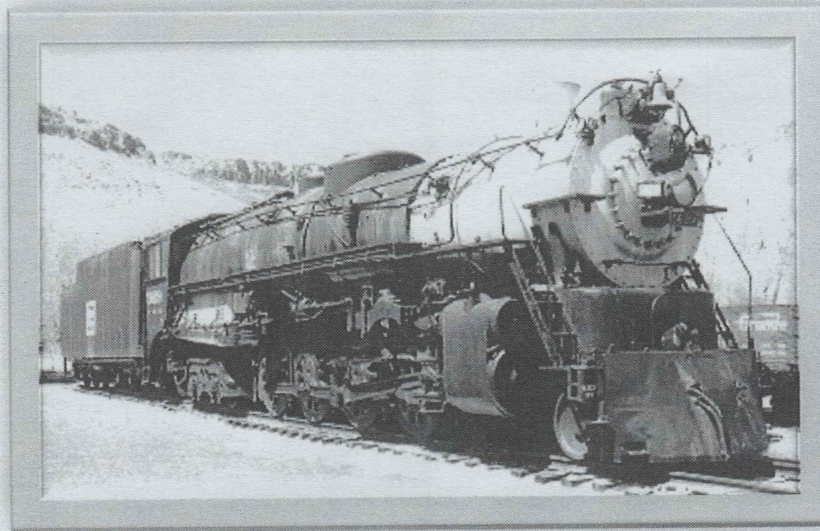
Mayme Melsheimer

Mayme was mother to Foundation member Bob Melsheimer.

Wayne Olson

A life member of the Foundation, Wayne was employed by the Milwaukee Road early in his career, and remained a lifelong Milwaukee Road fan. He was quick to offer help as a volunteer whenever and wherever he was needed, remaining active in our fund-raisers and restoration projects.

To other Foundation friends and members who lost someone we may have not known about, we send our condolences.



Once again, thank you for being a member of the 4000 Foundation and supporting our mission of preserving the valuable and exciting railroad history for La Crosse and the surrounding region.

4000 Foundation Board of Directors

Mark Hamre, President
Mark Barton, Vice President
Don Anthony, Secretary/Treasurer
Stephen Borleske
Larry Goodlund

Judy Kirkpatrick, Editor
James Noelke
Joseph Noelke
Mark Novak
Brian Wopat