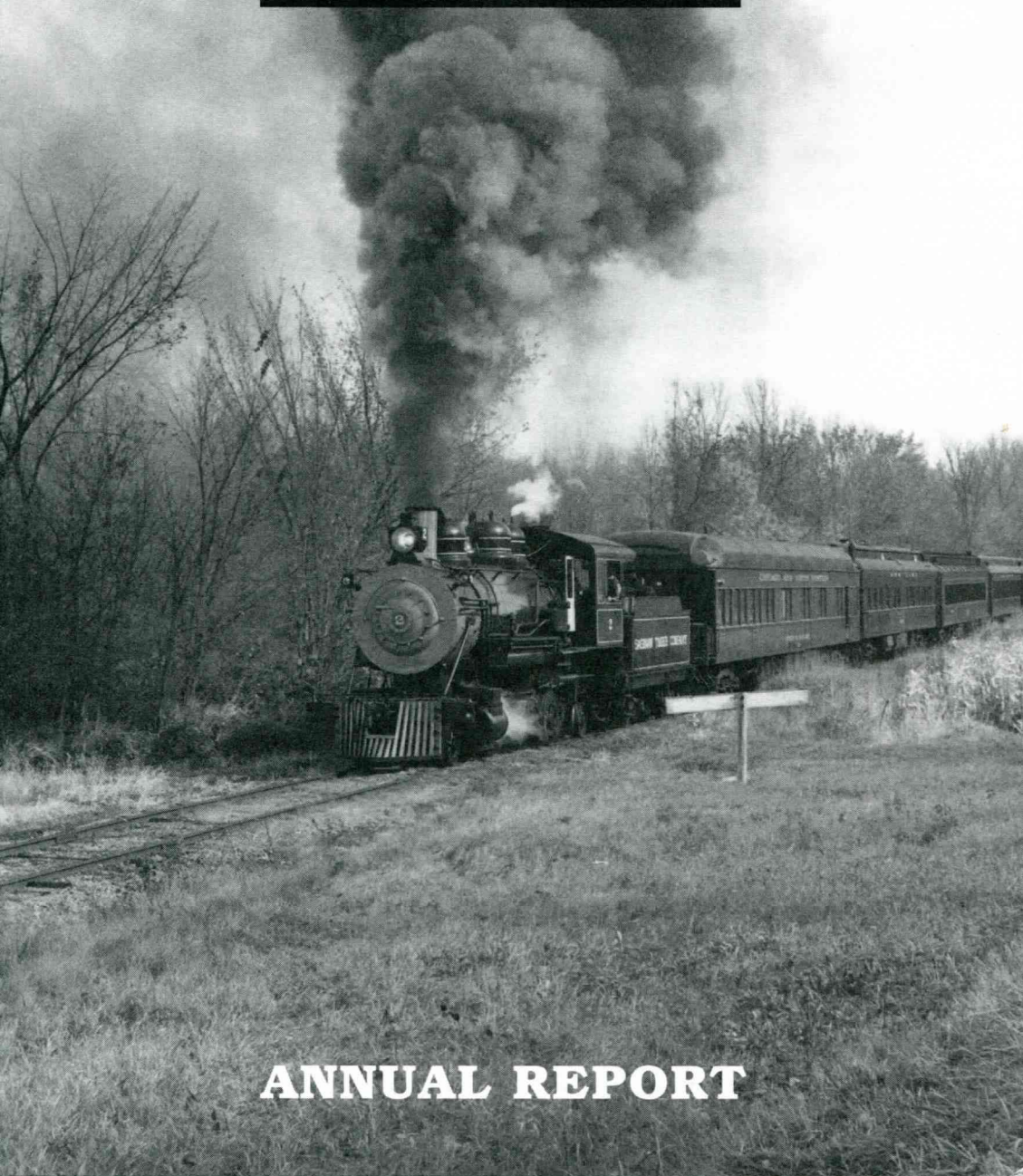
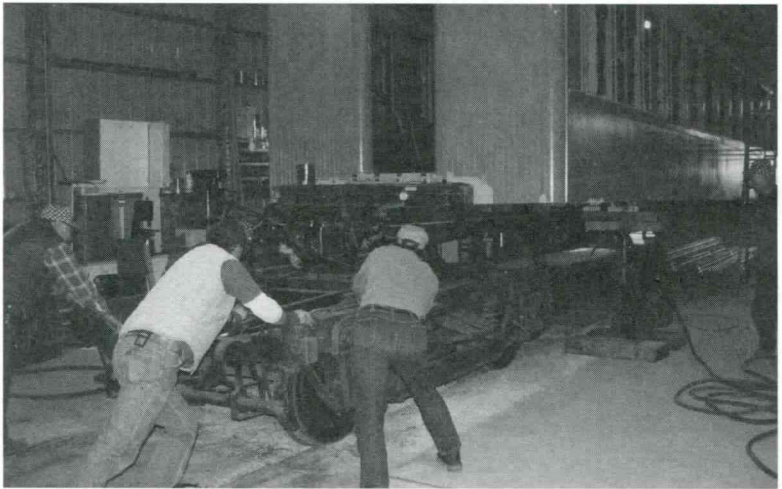
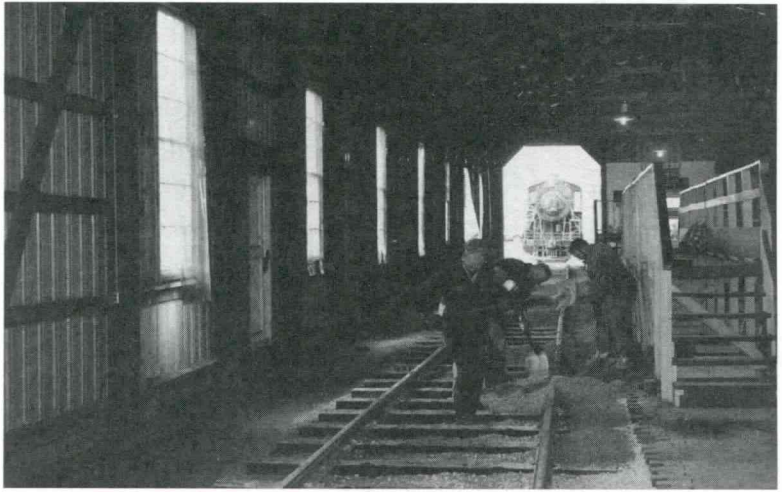

MID-CONTINENT
RAILWAY
Gazette

VOL. 32, NO. 2, MAY 1999



ANNUAL REPORT



TOP: Tie replacement in the Coach Shed was completed with Track #3 work during Spring Fling weekend in 1998. ABOVE: Car Shop workers replace a truck under Copper Range coach #60 after refurbishment during the summer of 1998. Work will continue on this car during 1999. William C. Burhmaster photos.



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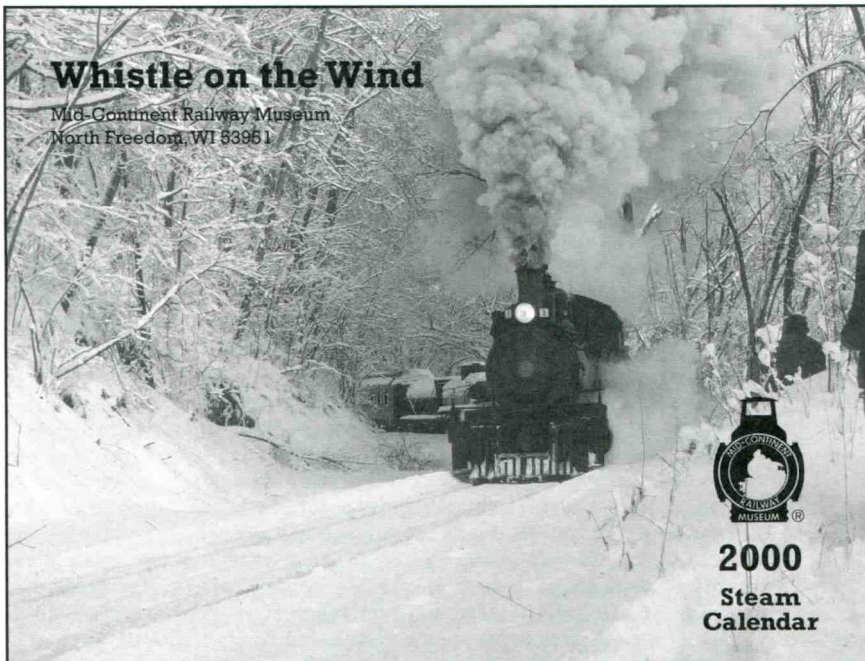
Introduction

This year's annual report of the *Gazette* has run late for several reasons. First and foremost, *Gazette* editor John Gruber resigned to concentrate on his ever-expanding editorial duties at Pentrex. We thank John for his many years of dedicated service to the Mid-Continent membership and for bringing this publication to an even higher standard. Second, with museum activities progressing at a feverish pace (see the reports in the following pages), the Society's officers have had further demands on their museum time. To coordinate and receive reports from many has been a daunting task.

But as you can see, things are happening at Mid-Continent. Spring Fling this past April saw many projects completed. Saginaw Timber #2 received a fresh coat of paint. The Curator Dept. prepared wooden cars for a special train operated early in May. And general house-cleaning was done on the entire property to ready for the summer season.

For the first time in many years, the Mid-Continent Steam Calendar has been printed in the spring so that it may be sold at the gift shop over the summer. Members will receive their copy of the calendar later this year, but in the meantime, additional copies are available to members at a discount. Call the General Office for details.

Lastly, the Board of Directors has called a special Members Meeting to be held at La Rue tavern at 7:00 pm on Saturday, June 26, 1999. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on a resolution to approve an amendment to the corporation's Articles of Incorporation, and to vote on adoption of Restated Bylaws for the corporation. All voting members will be receiving an information packet in the mail with more details. Voting members must be present to cast a vote; no proxies will be allowed. So please plan to attend. See you at North Freedom! ■



“Another Year, Another Step Forward”

Don Meyer, Executive Director

A SIMPLE ASSESSMENT of this past fiscal year would show that:

- Ridership was down, but ticket revenue was up because we increased coach fares;
- Gift shop sales were even, meaning we sold more merchandise to fewer people;
- We sold a new type of merchandise, original artwork, through the Depot Gallery; and
- Cash contributions surpassed \$100,000 for the first time in the museum's history, mostly on the strength of the Help Steam Live campaign.

The results were mixed, but overall they were good. We posted our second consecutive year of double-digit growth in net assets. Our cash position continued to increase while our liabilities declined. The credit for this good performance belongs to a handful of leaders (officers, directors, and superintendents) who have taken positive steps in changing the way we do business.

Step One in that process was to control spending. This began in 1995 by creating a better system of planning and budgeting. Superintendents were asked to set priorities for their desired projects and given definite spending limits. They were also asked to estimate their cash needs so that management could plan for seasonal changes in cash flow. But that was not enough. Controlling spending did not meet the competing demands on the museum's limited resources.

Step Two was increasing those resources. This step had the twin objectives of increasing both ridership and contributions. Trying to boost ridership focused on gaining name recognition. Last May we took the C&NW #1385 to Reedsburg for their sesquicentennial celebration. As a result we made new friends and are now prominently featured in their magazine ads promoting tourism in the Reedsburg area. We were also on TV all summer in the Chicago area. This was a joint venture with the Circus World Museum and the Wisconsin Dells Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Increasing contributions started with the nurture of our members and becoming more accountable to them. Quarterly appeal letters began with a report on what we had done with their previous donations before making an appeal for further gifts. And every gift was acknowledged with a receipt and thank you letter, personalized with a hand written note to the donor. The point was to say we care and that we appreciate the commitment made by everyone who supports the museum through their financial contributions.

We also worked to expand our donor base through developing non-member donors, particularly on the corporate and foundation level. The Mathews Foundation (St. Louis, MO) has been our only consistent outside source of funds, averaging \$5,000 a year in contributions towards various projects dealing with our operating fleet. A grant from the Quirk Foundation (Watertown, WI) this past year, for the acquisition of the mobile wheelchair lift, was a major step in adding to the kind of support we have received from Mathews. It has continued through the

contributions to our Help Steam Live campaign, capped off by the grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. For the 1999 fiscal year we are seeing the Lake Shore project, anchored by the challenge grant from the Jeffris Family Foundation (Janesville, WI) propelling these efforts further as we bring in new donors; new partners in our pursuit of fulfilling our mission.

A goal is to free the museum from its dependence on a single income source (ticket sales) by making sure that no one source accounts for more than 30% of our total annual revenue. And to this extent we have had some success. In 1995 ticket sales represented 60% of total revenue, gift shop sales 27%, and contributions 3%. In 1998 those percentages changed to 48% for ticket revenue, 21% gift shop sales, and 19% contributions.

Step Three was adding new sources of revenue, which will also affect this 30% rule. Last year's Depot Gallery is the prime example. For its inaugural year, we sold paintings from local artists about Mid-Continent and featured the works of Gil Reid and Margaret Maily. But the heart of this endeavor was the Ted Rose exhibit, which exceeded our wildest hopes (and Ted's too, I think). Gross sales for the Gallery were \$35,000 or 6% of our total revenue, moving it ahead of membership dues as a source of income. In the near future we will attempt to add other revenue producing services such as paid tours and food service. We hope these endeavors will both expand total revenue and move us further away from our reliance on ticket sales.

Step Four is to expand our awareness of visitor expectations, primarily through the use of customer surveys. In the past we have limited these surveys to the off chance that someone would sign the guest register, hidden in the depot. That register was removed last year to make way for the Gallery exhibits. So this year guests will be handed a survey card with every ticket purchase. We want them to respond to some key indicators that will help us understand why they chose to visit Mid-Continent and what will make their future visits more enjoyable.

Step Five, the next step, may be the most important one of all. It involves an organizational change that members will be asked to make later this year. A By-laws Committee, originally appointed by former President Tom O'Brien and confirmed by current President Ken Breher, has drafted a complete revision of our by-laws. Some features are meant to bring us into compliance with current Wisconsin law. But the more important features address changes that members have discussed and debated for some time as to how we should manage the museum.

The proposed by-laws will:

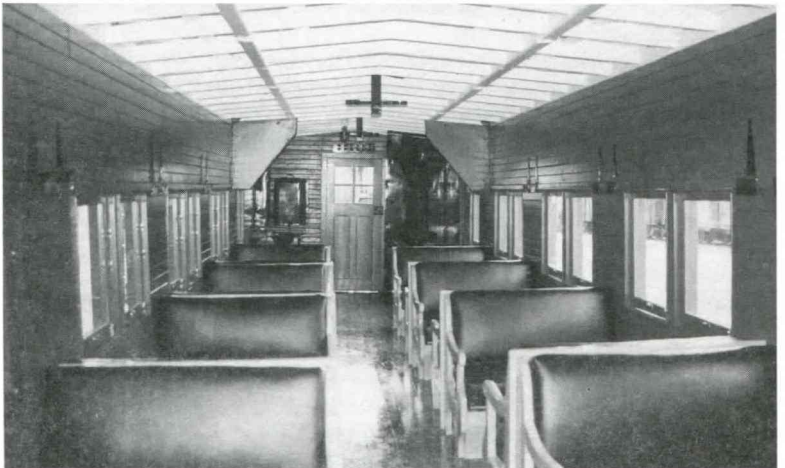
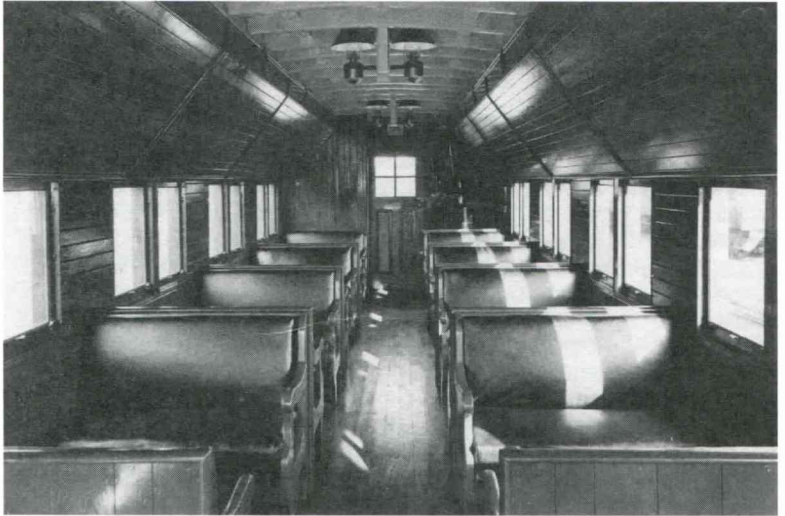
- Allow non-members to be appointed as directors;
- Change the board's focus to fund raising and long-term planning;
- Put more authority in the hands of the superintendents; and
- Coordinate their efforts under the leadership of the Executive Director.

Ken Breher will call a special members' meeting for the purpose of approving or rejecting the proposed by-law changes. This will give the voting members the chance to help us take another step in the progress we have made this past year and indeed over the past several years.

And where is this progress taking us? To the past, of course. My dream for Mid-Continent as we approach the year 2000 looks something like this. Visitors to the museum are carried back in time through the impressions we create by our setting, operations, personnel and exhibits. Their passage comes at a pace more appropriate to the end of the 19th Century than to that of the 20th. And when they leave the museum grounds, they will take with them a greater understanding of their own railroad heritage and a desire to return for more.■



C&NW Drovers Caboose #10802's 15-year restoration finally saw completion in 1998—the car has returned to revenue service. It was last used in 1968. The exterior had been finished in 1995 for the C&NWHWS meet; bunks have yet to be reinstalled. BELOW: This photo from 1937 was used to aid in researching paint color schemes. BOTTOM: The completed interior at North Freedom.



The Curator's Department— A Year in Review

Don Ginter, Curator

Several significant projects in the Curator's Department were either completed or came a step closer to completion this past year. The 1998 Spring Fling weekend saw the completion of one of these projects. A three-year tie replacement program in the Coach Shed was completed with the rebuilding of display track #3. This track and area was the worst of the three tracks rebuilt, as over the years, mud from the hillside had washed under the west wall of the coach shed. This necessitated not only the removal of some spoil from under the rebuilt track area, but digging out the mud all the way over to the west wall before bringing in new Pink Lady quarry material. Due to the large amount of spoil that required removal and new material moved in, the Spring Fling weekend actually started mid-week prior to the weekend with several volunteers giving up vacation time to get this project off to an early start.

Ballasting of the new track was made much easier this year. With some valuable help from the museum's Engineering Department and the local railroad, a ballast car of Pink Lady chips was obtained from Rock Springs, with transportation donated by the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad. This reduced the time to reballast the track from hours to minutes and certainly saved many poor backs and the skid loader operator's seat.

In October, after museum operations closed, the third 80-foot section of concrete walkway was poured in the Coach Shed. This completes the track rebuilding project and concrete walkway down the east side of the building.

By June, with the snows melted and the ice off the northern lakes, a safari was organized to the Duluth-Superior area. The object was to bring home a 1912 Peteler Car Co. built Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range refrigerator car, which was now on the endangered list. This car had been purchased earlier from the Lake Superior Museum of Transportation in Duluth. The two-day event started well with a bright sunny day. The trip north by several museum volunteers was highlighted by a pie-eating foray as one of the volunteers had a favorite pie shop in every town we passed through. The trip culminated in being several hours late meeting up with some of our other volunteers vacationing in the Duluth area. Work extended into the evening readying the car for the next day's move.

The next day dawned cold and rainy, but plans had been made and Deppe's trucks from Baraboo were in the area. A brand new one million dollar mobile crane showed up at the site by 9:00am and was soon unfolded and pointing skyward. Moments before the refrigerator car body was to be lifted off its trucks, a bolt of lightning, followed immediately by a loud clap of thunder, filled the air. The crane operator then proceeded to explain how his crane boom pointing skyward, well above the roof level of the surrounding cars in the rail yard, made an excellent lightning rod. The crane boom was soon lowered and the thunderstorm waited out.

A little more than an hour later, we were ready to try again. One of the things in our favor was that the crane operator had plenty of experience picking up rail cars. With the many railroads in the area,

including industrial, and their rail yard operations, there were many opportunities to push cars off the end of the tracks or have other mishaps. The operator and his crane were usually dispatched to right the railroad's wrongs. The refrigerator car body was soon loaded on a semi-truck and its trucks on a second semi. By noontime, Deppe and his second driver were headed back to North Freedom. No sooner had the loading been completed, than the sun started to reappear. The volunteers found a dry place to change clothes. Your Curator removed his brand new rain-soaked maroon sweatshirt and discovered he was red, clean through to the skin. The ride home was quiet for some tired volunteers with no further pie stops made unless they coincided with a mealtime.

In an effort to increase our train seating capacity for special events, the Curator's Department teamed up with the Operations Department and undertook a crash program during late summer to complete the restoration of our C&NW #10802 drovers caboose. While the Operations group rebuilt a wooden side frame on one of the caboose's trucks, the Curator's volunteers completed stripping the interior ceiling and rebuilt window openings. The seat cushions were sent out to be reupholstered, interior walls, ceiling, floor and seat frames painted and the stoves blackened. Our heritage tourists appreciated the addition of the caboose to our train consist on the Autumn Color weekends.

Over the past year, the restoration of the Copper Range coach #60 has progressed with the help of many volunteers. Efforts inside the car have been focused on preparing the oak interior for stain and varnish. The bleaching process is going slow as it is difficult to lighten the dark water stains in the oak. Materials for the interior are coming together as ceiling panel material and seat upholstery were acquired. The ceiling panel material will be installed once the staining and varnishing of the oak interior is complete. The red plush mohair material has arrived and the upholstery process will get underway this year.

On the exterior of the car, most of the effort has been put into rebuilding the end platforms and buffers. To date, new steps and oak end beams have been made and replacement buffers are being fabricated. The coach was jacked up to allow the trucks and draft gear to be worked on. The trucks were needle scaled, primed, and all of the bolts tightened. The truck bolsters and side bearings were shimmed and lubricated. This year the platform work should be completed and the siding will be painted with a fresh coat of orange and maroon paint.

When the weather turns inclement, some of our volunteers have been working on facility improvements in the car shop. Additional shelves have been built and more concrete pads poured along the east side of the shop. All of this contributes to a cleaner, safer and more efficient shop environment.

Looking ahead into 1999, two major projects will dominate our work schedule. The ongoing Copper Range #60 restoration stands a good chance of having its interior and exterior body work completed this year and a primary research project on determining the early built configuration of the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western #63 coach has already been started to lay the groundwork for its anticipated restoration. Other projects include; moving our newly acquired 1905 Pullman-built Cazenovia Southern combine car from Lake Delton to the museum within the next month, complete the painting and relettering of our Soo Line #29667 stock car and this fall, returning to the Coach Shed to pour the first 80 foot length of concrete walkway on the west side. There are many other projects on our list. Volunteers are encouraged to participate. We can always find projects that match your interests and skills.■

Treasurer's Report

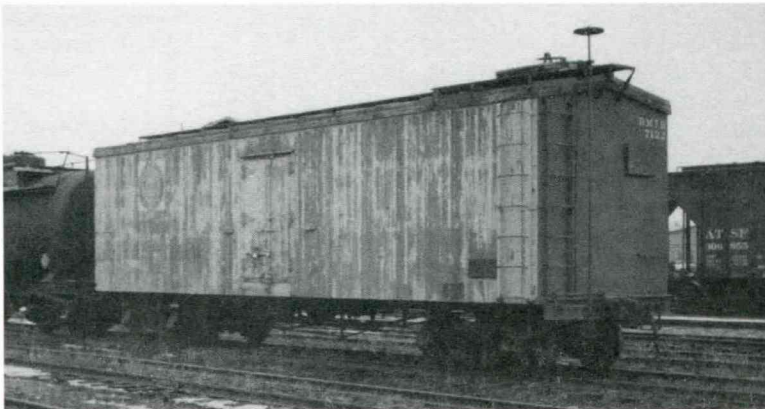
Fiscal Year Financial Analysis

William C. Buhrmaster, MCRHS Treasurer
March 3, 1998

Audited financial results for the 1998 fiscal year indicate that the Society had a record financial year. Total revenue for the year was \$612,124, which exceeded 1997 performance by over 7%. Revenue was ahead of plan largely due to contributions (\$119,240 combined unrestricted and temporarily restricted) and the income from the Depot Art Gallery (\$35,840). Operating revenue from ticket sales (\$314,834) and the gift shop (\$171,626) combined to perform ahead of the plan (8.7%).

Total expenses were \$545,196, which is 10.4% greater than 1997 performance. Expenses tracked well versus the plan throughout the year, with the exception of the unbudgeted expenses incurred from the Depot Art Gallery. The most significant expenses for the Society are Wages and salaries (20%), followed by Gift Shop merchandise (16%). Expenses in the Mechanical department ran under budget by over \$24,000, as some of the work that was planned for the year was postponed. During the year, notes payable were reduced by \$14,488 leaving an outstanding balance of \$93,841.

In December, the MCRHS Board of Directors approved a \$513,600 operating budget for the 1999 fiscal year. Significant challenges and expenditures lie ahead for the museum as additional improvements and restoration projects get underway. The need for income from fund raising efforts and contributions continues to play an increasing role (increased to 19% of total income in 1998) at the museum. The Help Steam Live program has been successful in raising the \$250,000 targeted for getting the #1385 operational. Donated funds are providing general support as well as funds for specific projects like the Jeffris Family Foundation challenge grant (\$350,000 goal) under way for the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western coach #63.■



DM&IR reefer #7122 as seen at Duluth, Minnesota before movement to Mid-Continent at North Freedom. Paul Swanson photo.

Statements of Financial Position

October 31, 1998 and 1997

ASSETS	1998	1997
Cash	\$ 171,676	\$124,934
Accounts receivable	2,246	471
Pledges receivable	30,555	30,873
Inventory	61,013	55,841
Prepaid expenses	6,333	6,125
Other	464	464
Property & Equipment	<u>388,102</u>	<u>391,536</u>
Total assets	\$ 660,389	610,244
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 0	2,818
Accrued expenses	4,408	3,885
Notes payable	<u>93,841</u>	<u>108,329</u>
Total liabilities	\$ 98,249	115,032
Net assets		
Unrestricted	428,505	420,509
Temporarily restricted	<u>133,635</u>	<u>74,703</u>
Total net assets	\$ 562,140	<u>495,212</u>
Total liabilities/net assets	\$ 660,389	\$610,244

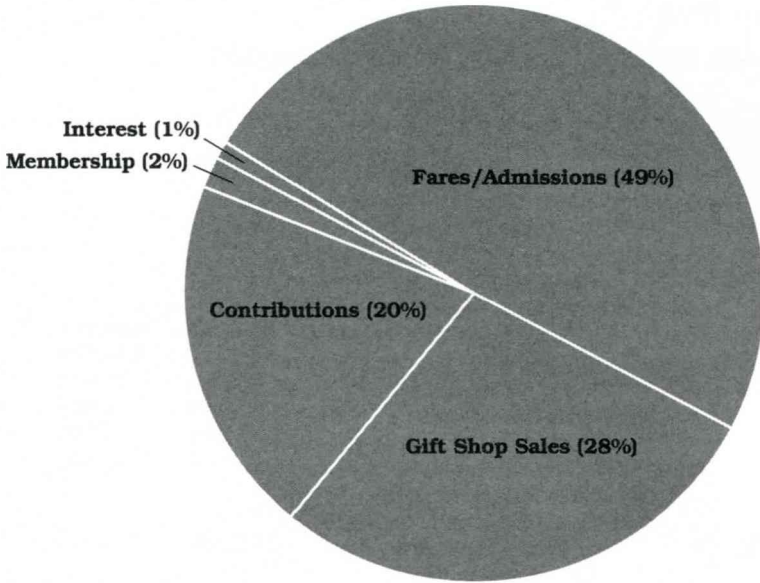
The financial statements here are a part of the Financial Report as of and for the years October 31, 1998 and 1997, audited by McGladrey and Pullen, LLP, Madison. The complete report is available at the Mid-Continent office in North Freedom, Wisconsin.

Statements of Activities

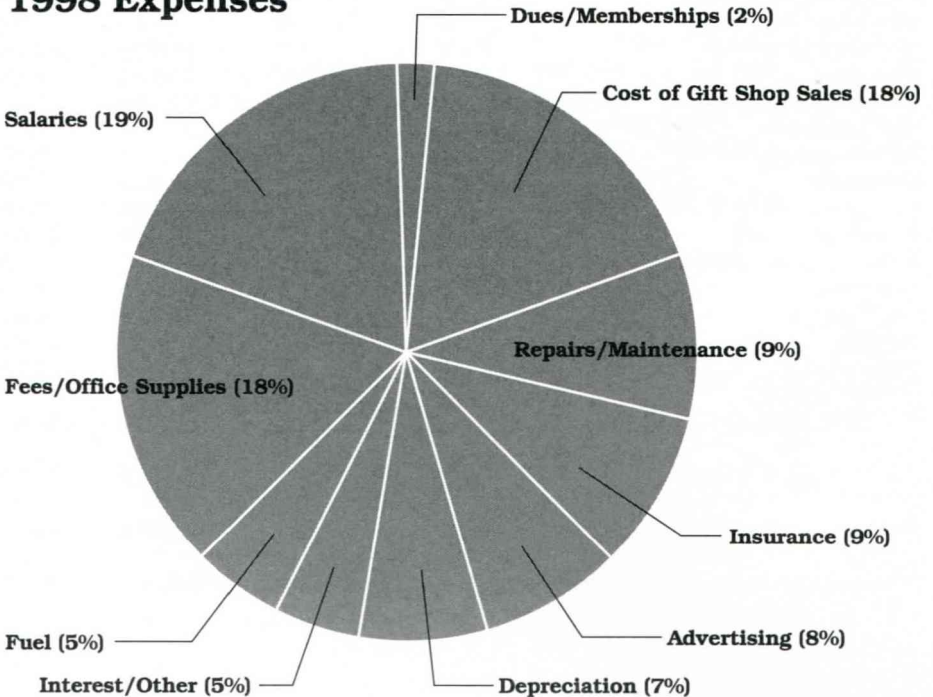
Years Ended October 31, 1998 and 1997

	Unrestricted	Temporarily unrestricted	1998 Total	1997 Total
Revenue, gains and other support				
Fares and admissions	\$291,722	\$ 0	\$291,722	\$286,362
Gift shop sales	164,311	0	164,311	130,784
Contributions	52,275	66,965	119,240	95,030
Memberships	14,310	0	14,310	14,448
Interest income	1,941	2,660	4,601	1,306
Miscellaneous	17,940	0	17,940	41,519
Net assets released	<u>10,693</u>	<u>(10,693)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	<u>553,192</u>	<u>58,932</u>	<u>612,124</u>	<u>570,349</u>
Expenses				
Salaries and fringe	105,095	0	105,095	98,630
Cost of gift shop sales	95,708	0	95,708	73,275
First class supplies	5,720	0	5,720	6,973
Dues, memberships	9,999	0	9,999	10,312
Prof fees	18,478	0	18,478	7,930
Office supplies	20,746	0	20,746	7,423
Other supplies	28,756	0	28,756	27,275
Advertising	45,962	0	45,962	45,757
Telephone	6,416	0	6,416	6,934
Insurance	50,129	0	50,129	50,188
Occupancy costs	16,438	0	16,438	13,853
Repairs, manintenance	48,451	0	48,451	59,768
Fuel costs	27,601	0	27,601	24,668
Depreciation	39,874	0	39,874	39,406
Interest	10,456	0	10,456	12,541
Other	<u>5,367</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,367</u>	<u>8,702</u>
Total expenses	<u>545,196</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>545,196</u>	<u>493,635</u>
Increase in net assets	7,996	58,932	66,928	76,714
Net assets beginning	<u>420,509</u>	<u>74,703</u>	<u>495,212</u>	<u>418,498</u>
Net assets ending	\$ 428,505	\$ 133,635	\$ 562,140	\$ 495,212

1998 Revenues



1998 Expenses



Donors

For the fiscal year ended October 31, 1998

*indicates gift to Help Steam Live

\$25,000 and more

Anonymous*

\$5,000 and more

Anonymous*

Donnelley Family
Trust
Mathews Foundation
Vincent Mathews
Quirk Foundation
Union Pacific
Foundation
Wisconsin State
Historical Society

\$1,000 and more

Anonymous*

Chris Burger
Edward Burkhardt*
Richard Levis
Richard McLeod*
Randy Merzdorf

\$500 and more

Jeff Bloohm
Ray Buhrmaster
F.A. DuVal
Sandra Hamlet
Warren Jackson*
Robert McKay
Jon Nienow*
Elizabeth O'Connell

\$100 and more

Joe Arington
Lavon Armstrong
William Armstrong*
Dennis P. Arnold*
Brian Bachman*
Band Box—Tomah
Frank Bartusek*
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Bill Jeffer
Art Jennrich
Aaron Johnson
David Johnson
Ed Johnson
Mark Jones
Al Joyce
Charles Karpelenia
Lynn Katzenberg
Elliot Keller
Robert Kurth
Glen Kwarciany
Fred Lange
Jerry Lapidakis
David Mattoon
Dave McConnell
Trevor McConnell
Van McCullough
Mike McEvoy
Kelly McKay
Carol Mennenga
Jerry Mennenga
Chuck Millot
Jeff Nelson
Jim Neubauer
Stan Nordeng, Jr.
Tom O'Brien, Jr.

Dean Odekirk
Lowell Odekirk
Ken Olson
Art Oseland
Christopher Pacha
Rick Peters
Bryan Phillips
Kevin Pickar
Diane Pierce
Carl (Skip) Pierce
Scott Pierce
Kathy Pilon
Don Pingel
Kathy Pingel
Harvey Radke
Bill Raia
Ed Ripp
Bob Ristow
Ken Ristow
Deanna Rodriquez
Bill Rose
Mark Rosemont
Roy Sauer
Marie Scherkenbach
David Schleicher
Tom Schneider
Rusty Schramm
Bryon Schumacher
Cindy Schumacher
Janice Schumacher
Stan Searing
Ed Selinsky
Valerian Skawinski
Marjorie Slack
Jay Slinde
Mike Smul
John Sorrel
Trish Stankemuth
Garrett Stark
Paul Swanson
Mark Toomey
Fred Vergenz
Greg Verstein
Dave Wantz
Bob Welke
Darcy Welke
Matthew Welke
D. Witman
Ray Zilvitis

Timetable

Schedules on the Internet: www.mcrwy.com



WWI encampment, June 5-6
Hobo Weekend, June 19 - 20
Civil War encampment is July 17
Daily service ends Labor Day
Autumn Color, October 1-3 and 8-10
Weekend service ends October 17
Santa Express, November 27-28
Snow Train, February 18-20, 2000

Call 608-522-4261 for information or email: midcon@baraboo.com.

COVER: Saginaw Timber #2 will serve as the duty steam locomotive for the 1999 season while #1385 awaits her firebox repairs in the shop. #2 is seen here during a recent Autumn Color. Paul Swanson photo.

**MID-CONTINENT
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Gazette

Mid-Continent Railway Historical Society

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