

SCRM NEWS

The South Carolina Railroad Museum Newsletter

Volume 39 Number 2 Spring 2011

From the Editor:

Hope everyone has had a wonderful winter. When I told my friends up north that Columbia had shut down for a week after a 4" snowfall, they were hysterical. Of course, it was the ice that did us in.

I trust that all of you recently received a mailing about our new officers, and the new governing structure of the Museum. So far, things have been moving forward very smoothly, and we are all excited about the upcoming season.

PLEASE HELP: We are in need of additional staffing for the first class car for the upcoming operating season. Needed are servers and hosts. If interested in helping, please contact Ron Jarosz, Kelvin Woods or Marty Chaney.



1. Give this enrollment card to the cashier with your BONUSCARD one time during the program term.
2. One percent of your purchases will be donated to your designated group through May 31.
3. Call 800-768-4438 if you have any questions.

THE SOUTH CAROLINA RAILROAD MUSEUM INC



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Please don't forget: if you shop at Bi-Lo and have not yet scanned the above bar code please do so when you next shop at that supermarket. You need to scan the bar code only once a year, along with your Bi-Lo Bonus Card (keyring) to include your purchases in the 1% rebate program. We recently received a check for over \$100! In

July, I will notify you about upcoming changes in this program.

The past few months have been busy. The Board authorized some track work including new ties and spikes. Phil Woodell has an explanation later in this newsletter. We also incurred a major loss when two backhoes were vandalized (one was on loan from the Town of Winnsboro). Both have been repaired and we are hoping for an insurance settlement to cover some of these costs.

In addition, we were given another motor car which is currently being overhauled and repaired by Frank Brubaker and others, and Adam McDowell has finally tackled Loco #82, a 1941 45 ton side-rod switcher which has needed help for a long time. He has actually jacked up the unit, removed one truck and found the problem in the gearbox. Now to find replacement parts and put it all back together...



Help!! Please consider writing something for the next newsletter and send it to me at HenryN215@aol.com, or to SCRM, PO Box 7246, Columbia, SC 29202.

Henry Nechemias, Editor <>

A Short History of the Museum's Land Acquisitions

By Gene Allen

As a Museum member, whether you are an active member or your visits to Rockton are infrequent, you may have wondered just what land the Museum owns. Perhaps you assume (as I did when I joined the Museum in 1994) that the Museum owns all the property on which it operates. Interestingly, this is not true. You may be surprised to learn that the Museum originally owned only certain lands conveyed by Martin-Marietta in 1983, including portions of the right-of-way and the some of the acreage at Rion. The rest of the right-of-way was covered by a series of easements.

After I became an active member, I learned that the Museum was leasing the Rockton property from Fairfield County. Through the generosity of the County, the Museum was deeded 3.0 acres at Rockton in October 1999. This includes most of the yard, buildings and parking area at Rockton.

Shortly after we closed the initial acquisition from Fairfield County, we learned that the South Carolina Department of Transportation was willing to grant us the property on the corner formed by Industrial Road and Highway 34. In May 2000, the Museum acquired .41 acres from SCDOT. This is the area where our granite sign is located.

Our final Rockton acquisition occurred in February 2003 when the County deeded .702 acres to the Museum. This, generally, is the open area between the water tower and the office building.

As a result of the three acquisitions at Rockton, the Museum now owns a total of 4.13 acres in Rockton. All of the Rockton

acreage was acquired without cost, but with the restriction that the property is to be used solely for the operation of a railroad museum. We are very fortunate to be the beneficiaries of this generosity from our governmental entities.

After my office closed the foreclosing transactions involving the Rockton property, the next acquisition of real estate, again by gift, was from the late Coit Washington. Mr. Washington, in January 2008, deeded 2.98 acres on the east side of the Highway 70 (Reservoir Road) crossing. This gift enabled the Museum to acquire fee title to a section of right-of-way as to which, previously, the Museum only possessed an easement.

Later in 2008, the Museum was presented an opportunity to acquire, again without cost, most of the land on the north side of the right-of-way just west of the Highway 321 crossing. In August 2008, Guardian Fiberglass, Inc. deeded 9.21 acres to the Museum. This parcel provides a buffer to the county's solid waste disposal facility on Highway 321. The Museum is very grateful to Guardian for this generous donation.

The most recent land acquisition of the Museum is the former Brooks Granite property at Rion. In November 2009, the Museum purchased 5.0 acres, along with an access easement, from Florine Brooks. The Brooks Granite property, and the several buildings it contains, are of considerable historical significance and can play a key role in our future efforts to develop the Rion property as an educational part of the SCRM.

The Museum is very fortunate in its ownership of these various tracts. Hopefully, when future opportunities arise, the Museum will be able financially to further expand its land holdings. <>

MYSTERY SOLVED!

By Roger Stroup

We now know why the chicken crossed the road: So he could dine on Winnsboro granite.

Ever since granite was first discovered in Fairfield County before the Revolution it was used as a building material for houses, churches and even skyscrapers in northeast cities. The exquisite blue granite from the quarry at Anderson, known as Winnsboro blue and nicknamed "The Silk of the Trade," was used to produce monuments and tombstones marketed across the country. In the 1930's the Winnsboro Granite Company (WGC) constructed large stone crushing machines at Rion and produced crushed stone for highways, railroads and even the dams for Santee Cooper.

A lesser known product of the WGC was poultry grit, a product necessary for poultry to properly digest their feed. Tests by the United States Ordnance Department determined the crushing strength of the granite explained its supreme hardness and insolubility, ideal characteristics for chicken grit. After more than 15 years of research the WGC decided to proceed with marketing its product, Ri-Stone Poultry Grit. In the early 1950's the WGC constructed the Ri-Stone plant to grind the granite into a fine grit, touted by the company and "The Supreme Insoluble Granite Grit."

Producing the grit was no small task. According to a promotional pamphlet published by the WGC in the early 1950's:

Clean, washed granite is taken into the plant by means of a conveyor belt. All of this stone that might be too large for turkey grit was

passed through a small crusher to reduce the size. Four screening processes are used to produce the desired sizes—turkey, hen, broiler and chick. By passing electricity through the metal screen cloth a much more accurate graduation can be attained than is possible by the ordinary screening process. This is the very latest word in the screening of aggregate where grit of a uniform size and dust-free is desired. Rion Crush Stone Corporation spent many thousands of dollars in putting in this up-to-date and modern equipment. Every time the granite is moved the dust eliminating equipment is at work removing every particle of dust from between and off the grit. When the grit pours from the conveyors belt into the hopper above the bagging equipment there are baffles which spread the stone and give suction equipment another chance to get any dust that still might be clinging to the stone. Even as the grit drops into the bag, there is a suction snout as the very last production against dust. Ri-Stone are particularly pleased with its dust-free character.

The Ri-Stone plant was located north of the main crusher and today's riders on the Rockton, Rion and Western will see it on the right side of the train as it passes the Garabaldi Road crossing. Today the plant still houses all of the original equipment and it appears as if someone turned off the machines and walked away. <>

Update on Track and Ties

By Phil Woodell

The crosstie cleanup reported in the last Newsletter has, for the most part, been completed. A few ties and tie butts have been discovered lurking in the undergrowth along the right-of-way. These will be shipped off site along with the new load of deteriorated ties being removed from the track this spring.

This is a result of the Board authorized track rehabilitation between MP 1.1 and 5.1. Following the end of our 2010 operating season the track beyond MP 1.1 was closed to passenger traffic pending crosstie renewal.

By mid-March, whatever unused ties we had on hand, as well as most of the 500 new ties, have been laid out ready for installation. The SCRM volunteers have labored many hours removing spikes in the old ties and pulling the tie plates. Because of the huge scope of the work involved, a railroad contractor will do the actual work of removing the old ties and inserting the new ones. The remainder of the work (re-setting the tie plates, gauging the track, spiking rails to gauge, dressing the ballast, picking up the old ties, and loading them for shipment off-site) will be done by our hard working volunteers. Please help by calling Phil Woodell at 803.606.3297!!



NOTE TO ALL MEMBERS: Classes for *Train Crew Certification* will be held on May 7 and May 28 at 9 AM. **ALL** current and prospective crew members **MUST** attend one of these classes and pass the **CLOSED BOOK TEST**. Please contact Rodger Stroup for further details: 803.318.7086 or histrycur@aol.com <>

South Carolina Railroad Museum

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