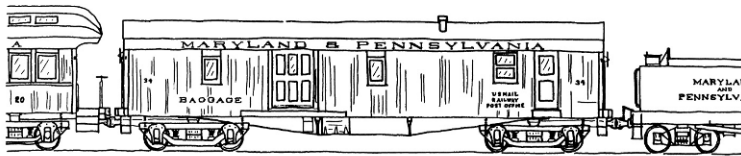


# THE YORK MAIL



Published quarterly by the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad Preservation Society

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Fall 2010

## Muddy Creek Forks: Coming to Life in Miniature

by Craig Sansonetti

It's still a work in progress, but the new diorama taking shape on the second floor of the A.M. Grove Store is already causing a lot of excitement among visitors and docents alike. Under the leadership of Steve Fisher, an outstanding group of modelers is bringing the Muddy Creek Forks of 1917 back to life.

For years our docents have faced the daunting challenge of convincing visi-

Right: In 1917 the newly built milk collection building sparkled in fresh white paint and the livery stable/livestock barn, ice house, and silo occupied the space where the Society's Repair Shop now stands.



Left: The stone house in 1917 looked just as it does today, but the surrounding scene included several buildings that have since disappeared.

tors that a hundred years ago the sleepy village they see today was a bustling hub of commerce. Being able to see a realistic representation of the entire village at its peak of prosperity will convey that reality in a way that even the best historic pictures cannot. Every part of the scene will reflect business activity, and the central role of the railroad will be absolutely obvious.

The 14 foot long diorama is being constructed across the north end of the sec-

Continued on page 4

## ***President's Message***

by Jerry McCloskey

### ***TIME TO BE A MARKETEEER (AGAIN!)***

*If this message strikes you as familiar, it should, as it mirrors this column's focus from last autumn's newsletter. You'll note elsewhere in this issue details on our annual Heritage Day celebration, which will be held on Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup>.*

*Heritage Day is a unique opportunity for the Society to promote our mission. The Society's varied undertakings are in full bloom that day and available for public presentation, study, and enjoyment. If you've attended prior Heritage Days did you ever notice anyone not having a good time? It is a great chance to introduce others to our Society's ongoing progress.*

*In my note of last year, I made mention that during my sessions as a Docent, I try to ask visitors how they heard of us. There are varied answers referencing our appearances in publications and the like, but an answer I hear frequently is that many are repeat visitors and they're bringing others with them! If we get them to MCF the first time, they'll likely return. I have witnessed the same thing this year during my tours as a store clerk or ticket agent. Just this past Sunday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, I was approached by a woman whose husband was out exploring our equipment. She told me that she was certain her husband would soon join the Society and would be a frequent volunteer working on the equipment. She asked what support role may be available to her as she didn't want to be a "train widow". Such is how volunteers are born! The key component is getting people to visit Muddy Creek Forks.*

*We are distributing press releases, flyers and the like to promote Heritage Day. You can help immensely. I am asking all of us to use Heritage Day as the time to invite others to visit. Please tell others about Heritage Day even if you can't*

*attend yourself. The Village appeals to more than just railroad enthusiasts. The General Store, Ticket Office, Post Office and contents of each are not readily viewable elsewhere. The Roller Mill and its attendant structures continue to amaze visitors who had little interest in milling prior to visiting. The bucolic setting enhanced by the presence of the creek is a destination unto itself.*

*Please, reach out and invite someone.*

*Thanks for your support!*

*Jerry*



## Save the Date!

The M&PRPS 2010 Annual Meeting  
will be held in the A.M. Grove Store  
in Muddy Creek Forks

on

**Saturday, October 30, 2010**



**Mark your Calendar  
now  
and Watch the Mail  
in early October  
For  
the Official Meeting  
Announcement**

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P.O. Box 5122  
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Becky Herman, Editor  
Send material for publication to:  
Becky Herman  
555 Loma Vista Court  
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147  
Phone (970) 264-2171  
Fax (970) 264-3535  
e-mail: becky.herman98@yahoo.com

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## Muddy Creek Forks: Coming to Life in Miniature, cont.

ond floor just at the head of the stairs. It depicts the village from the mill dam at the north to the railroad tool shed at the south. Every structure known to have existed in Muddy Creek Forks in 1917 will be included. Vintage photographs and historic records from the surveyors who measured the railroad and surrounding structures for the 1917 right of way maps were used in planning the diorama to assure the correctness of the scene.

Below: The approach to Muddy Creek Forks looks a bit strange with the addition of the livery stable, ice house, coal bins, and old store to our current familiar scene.



In order to depict each building accurately, the diorama team of Steve, Dave Renard, Ted Baccala, and Alan Anderson had to scratch build a total of 27 buildings, ranging from the impressively large cannery to the store outhouse. Did you know that there were coal bins along the mill siding or that the barn had a silo? Long gone structures like Machinery Hall, the old store, the livery stable, and the ice cream saloon flesh out the scene. The quality of workmanship is very high, and even such pedestrian structures as the corn cribs are little gems when examined closely.

Since late spring Steve and Ted have been building benchwork and sculpting the ground contours of the village. This challenging work is approaching completion, and scenery materials are now being applied to finish the scene. Each Sunday this summer the completed buildings were put in place, and our docents have found the diorama, even in its unfinished state, to be a valuable focal point in their discussions with visitors.

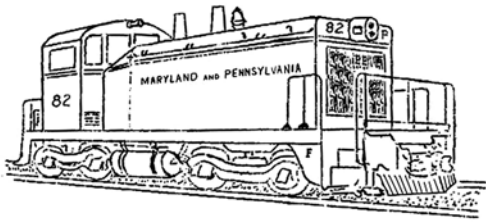
Steve and his colleagues are working hard to bring the diorama to a reasonably finished state for Heritage Day this fall. Be sure to come to admire their work and get a real sense of Muddy Creek Forks in the time of our great grandparents. But don't think that the diorama is really finished. Plans are underway to add a passenger train and a freight train with equipment appropriate to 1917, more trees and vegetation, vehicles, and human and animal figures to bring the scene to life.

Steve, Dave, Ted, and Alan have shared their extraordinary skill as modelers and hundreds of hours of work to make the diorama a reality. Thanks to their efforts it should be a highlight of our museum for years to come.

Below: The ice cream saloon and a wagon shed for store patrons stood across the track from the four building mill complex, which included the old store.



# The Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad Preservation Society



Invites you  
to journey in time at



A Tale of Rail,  
Mail, Shale, & Milk Pail  
(How the Ma & Pa Railroad transformed our communities)

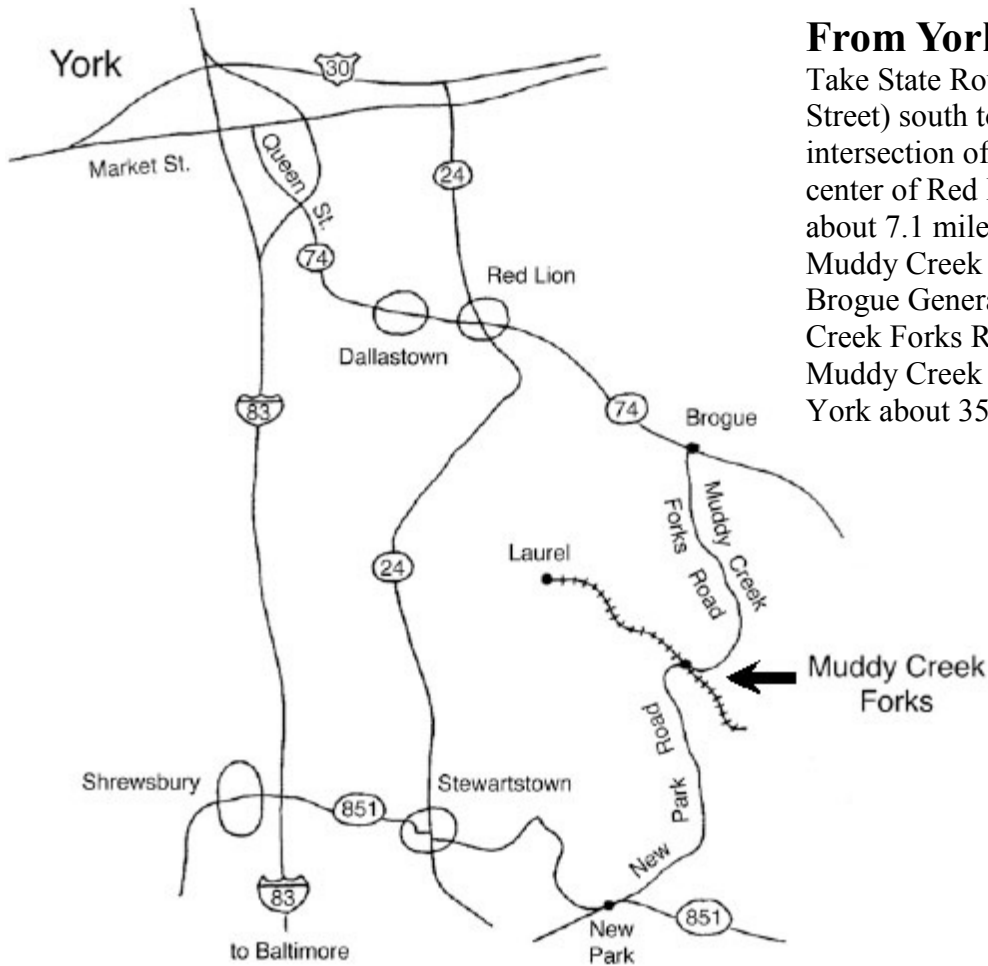
at our **OPEN HOUSE**  
**in Muddy Creek Forks Village**  
**Saturday September 25th**  
**10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Take Motorcar Train Rides  
Engage Costumed Interpreters in Lively Discussions  
Explore Ma & Pa Locomotive No. 82 and Caboose No. 2007  
Tour the General Store and Railroad Station built in 1899,  
Historic Roller Mill, and Grain Elevator  
Railroad and Village Exhibits & Equipment  
Track Working Demonstrations  
Antiques  
Slide Shows  
Children's Crafts and Activities  
Delicious Food

**Fun for the whole Family !**

Can't make it Sept. 25th?  
The village and train rides will be open Oct. 9, 10 & 17, 1-5 p.m.  
See our website - [www.MaAndPaRailroad.com](http://www.MaAndPaRailroad.com)  
(Directions are on the back)

# How to get to MUDDY CREEK FORKS, PA



## **From York:**

Take State Route 74 (Queen Street) south to Red Lion. From the intersection of Routes 74 and 24 in the center of Red Lion continue on Route 74 about 7.1 miles to Brogue. Turn right on Muddy Creek Forks Road just before the Brogue General Store. Follow Muddy Creek Forks Road about 5 miles to Muddy Creek Forks. (Driving time from York about 35 minutes)

## **From Interstate 83:**

Take the exit to State Route 851 at Shrewsbury. Follow 851 east through Stewartstown to New Park. Watch signs carefully. There are three turns in Stewartstown and another between Stewartstown and New Park. In New Park when 851 bears right toward Delta take the left fork onto New Park Road. Follow New Park Road about 6 miles through Gatchellville to Muddy Creek Forks, (Driving time from I 83 about 30 minutes)

## Store Chimney Restored

*by Craig Sansonetti*

Ever since the Society purchased the village of Muddy Creek Forks in 1993, the Building Committee has been watching and debating the condition of the store chimney. Extending far above the slate roof, the narrow brick chimney leaned alarmingly toward the west. As early as fifteen years ago the Committee explored the cost of rebuilding it, but the cost was high and photographs showed that the pronounced list had existed for a long time. Until recently it seemed that the condition was not worsening.

The winter of 2009-2010, however, was a particularly harsh one and took a toll on the 110 year old chimney. Upon examining it this spring, members of the Building Committee noted a marked deterioration. There were open cracks in the mortar, and the first few courses of brick under the cap seemed to be pulling apart. If the chimney were to fall, the damage to the store roof would certainly be severe. There seemed to be no alternative to tearing the chimney down to roof level and rebuilding it.

Pete Tinsley, chairman of the Building Committee, took the lead in contacting masonry contractors to seek bids for the work. Several companies declined to bid due to the height of the roof, the awkward location for erecting scaffolding, and the difficulty of safely dismantling the deteriorated chimney. The three bids that were received varied by a factor of nearly three in price. After considering the widely varying prices and the capabilities of the contractors, Troy Leiphart of Red Lion was selected to do the job at a cost of \$7800.

The aim of the project was not just to rebuild the chimney but to restore it as nearly as possible to its original appearance. Readily available modern brick differs in both color and dimensions from the brick used when the store was built. The chimney had been constructed with two layers of brick, a total of almost 2000 bricks in all. Fortunately, the old mortar was so badly deteriorated that the contractor was able clean and reuse virtually every brick. The slate cap, however, split when removed and was unusable. A new slab as large as the original could not be found, so it was necessary to install a thinner and slightly smaller cap.

The restoration was completed in early August and the chimney, which should now be good for another hundred years, stands as straight as when A. M. Grove moved into his new store in 1899.



Prior to this summer's restoration, the store chimney had leaned markedly to the west for many years.



The restored chimney was built entirely of reclaimed original brick. The extensive scaffolding, which extended to the top of the chimney when the work was in progress, had been partially removed before this picture was taken.

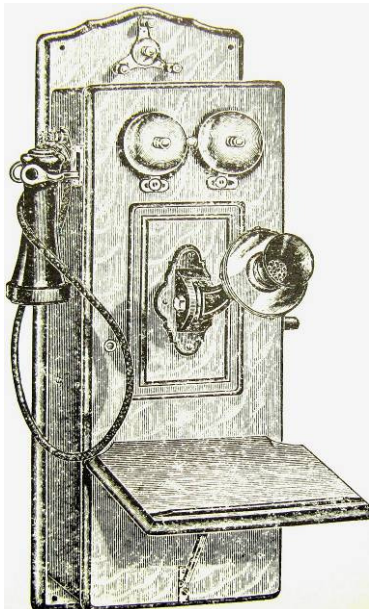
## Didja Know?

by Jean Sansonetti

(An irregular column of unusual facts  
about the railroad, the village, and the 1915 era)

Nowadays most folks carry telephones with them everywhere they go and take for granted that they can be in touch with anyone in the developed world at a moment's notice. But it wasn't always so. Didja Know that A.M. Grove in Muddy Creek Forks was part of building better connections to the country around him?

The telephone was invented by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876, just two years after the Ma & Pa Railroad came to Muddy Creek Forks, and patented soon after. Bell was actually trying to create a much improved telegraph (which works by stopping and starting the flow of electricity in a circuit) when he discovered that sound could be transmitted if the contact was maintained and the signal varied. The Bell Telephone Company was formed in July 1877. By the end of the year there were over 3,000 phones in service; and by mid-1878, the number had grown to about 10,000. The Bell patents lasted 20 years, then a host of independent phone companies began to form all over the country. The accompanying photo from the 1908 Sears catalog shows the kind of phone people were using.



We don't know exactly when it began, but the first mention we have that A.M. Grove had started the York Eastern Telephone Company is this note in the front leaf of his 1900 diary:

*"Dec 22, 1899*

*Secured a loan of \$1000.00 by giving as collateral Certificate #1 of York Eastern Telephone Co. of 16 shares par value of \$25.00 per share -*

*Total \$400 and one \$500.00 York Telephone Company first mortgage, 5% gold bond, dated November 1, 1899. # of same 106. Above loan secured for one year. Rate 5% although rate marked on note is 5 1/2 % . I am to have whole of 1/2 %*

*Alex M. Grove  
John H. Wilson*

*Jan. 7 1901*

*Received above bond #106 of J. H. Wilson. I also paid Interest due Dec. 22, 1900*

*A. M. Grove"*

A glance at the January 7, 1901 diary entry yields this additional comment on the transaction: *"Received from J. H. Wilson York Telephone Bond #106 for \$500, which he held as security on note dated Dec. 22, 1899 for \$1000. But I paid interest of \$50.00 and told him I would want it for another year."*

As the company began to grow, notices began to appear in trade journals. In the March 1903 issue of *The Electrical World and Engineer* we find this information: *"YORK PA The York Eastern Telephone Company, capital \$8,000, has been incorporated. The directors are A. M. Grove of Muddy Creek Forks, W. H. McCall and John H. Wilson of Gatchelville, Henry S. Merryman and Benjamin F. Norris of Fawn Grove, Joseph A. Gailey of New Park, and Calvin M. Shaw of Stewartstown."* One interesting observation is that the director J. H. Wilson was the person who had loaned A.M. Grove the money using Telephone Company stock as security. In addition, the places where exchanges were set up were Fawn Grove, Brogue, and Stewartstown. So it seems that these enterprising businessmen had banded together to build and expand the company to serve their local firms and communities.

As a business, the phone company paid it's fair share of taxes. The 1906 Report of the State Treasurer on the Finances of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania includes the information that the company paid \$23.25 in taxes on capital stock and \$16.00 in gross receipts taxes. By 1912 the gross receipts tax was \$53.89, and in 1918 it was \$67.26.

In the 1909 Volume of *Telephony*, by Harry B. McMeal, the following is noted: *"The York Eastern Telephone Company, an independent organization, has been expanding its lines and service in the county to a great extent. A new switchboard was installed in the exchange in Brogueville[sic] and over a hundred telephones are connected with this exchange already. The company has a large waiting list for service in this section, and, with a large force of Installers and linemen these contracts are being taken care of as quickly as possible"*

Continued on page 7



## Heritage Day Specials

*Every Heritage Day has new and exciting things to experience,  
and here are a couple of this year's specials:*

- 1) The incredibly detailed new diorama of Muddy Creek Forks.
- 2) The beautifully crafted model Ma & Pa Railroad cars  
by Joe Bower.
- 3) The pen-and-ink drawings of local artist  
Charles Long.
- 4) Spotted Fawn Shay's  
hand-made crafts.

*Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to come join the fun on*

**September 25th!**

If on your name there is green  
 Your dues are still to be seen  
 If you send them in  
 The fun can begin  
 And MCF is the scene