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Wisconsin Railroad History Group Unveils New On-Line Photo Archive

BARABOO, WISCONSIN — Lake States Railway Historical Association (LSRHA) is pleased to announce the unveiling of their new on-line railroad photo archive and newly re-designed website. The photo archive features over 35,000 images from LSRHA's collections with a robust search feature. Prints and digital files can easily be purchased. All proceeds go directly to supporting LSRHA's archives operation.

"We are very excited to bring our collections to the public. Rail historians, prototype modelers, authors, editors, archivists, and others will find this a valuable research tool, easily accessible from anywhere," says Paul Swanson, LSRHA's vice-president. The group has been building the on-line presence for the last two years, scanning B&W negatives and color transparencies of many major railroads, shortlines, industrial railroads, and more. Although there are numerous standard locomotive roster photos, the collection also contains many structure views, train and action scenes, equipment photographs, and Midwest trolley and interurban views. "It has been a voyage of discovery and a pleasure going through these various collections the last two years," Swanson observes. "We plan to continue scanning negatives and transparencies from our collections for the foreseeable future. We want these to be available to the community."

Among LSRHA's photo collections reside the work of Chicago natives Bruce Meyer and Lee Hastman, Wisconsin native Ed Wilkommen, DeKalb-based school superintendent F.R. Ritzman, and avid collector William S. Kuba from Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Meyer was well-known for his late steam locomotive detail photography, and traveled extensively. Hastman, Wilkommen, and Kuba purchased and traded negatives actively to supplement their own work. There are also collections of Illinois Central and Rock Island company photography (many scanned directly from glass plate negatives), builders photos from AC&F and Ohio Falls Car Manufacturing Company, and some real photo postcards.

LSRHA's photo archive can be accessed through their newly redesigned website www.lsrha.org. "We also maintain an on-line database of our two-dimensional materials, including a large collection of mechanical drawings from Fairbanks-Morse, Sheffield Motor Car, C&NW, Milwaukee Road, Rock Island, and others," Swanson reports. These collections can also be searched through LSRHA's website.

LSRHA was founded in 2006 as a 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit Corporation dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of railroad history through an extensive collection of historic artifacts and materials, socioeconomic data, and industrial archeology relating to American railroads, with emphasis on the western Great Lakes region of the United States. LSRHA maintains a state-of-the-art climate-controlled archive facility in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Their collections concentrate on the Midwest region of the United States from the steam era to and including the first-generation diesel locomotion era.

Lake States offers memberships and welcomes donations of new collections. "Our mission is to preserve and present these valuable pieces of history to educate and inspire future generations," according to Swanson.

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Downloadable images available at this link: https://lsrha.org/?page_id=623

*Dedicated to preservation and dissemination of railroad history through artifacts and materials, socio-economical data, and industrial archeology.
501(c)(3) Not-For-Profit Corporation of the State of Wisconsin
affiliated with the Wisconsin Historical Society and the Wisconsin Council for Local History
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