



Ties & Tracks

Newsletter of the Dayton Railway Historical Society
And the Miami Valley Railfans Subdivision



Volume 48

#7

July 2024

Miami Valley Railfan Subdivision Meeting Time/Place

Saturday 7/13 7:30 pm at the West Carrollton Community Center (library)
300 E Central Ave, West Carrollton, OH 45449

Program

Slides/digital by the members.

Like usual, the first 30 minutes or so will be movies converted by Aubrey Flock.

Food Before Meeting

For those interested, prior to the meeting we will meet at 5:30 pm at Frisch's
8181 N Springboro Pike, Miamisburg, OH 45342 (west of Dayton Mall)

DRHS Meeting Time/Place

Tuesday 7/16 5:00 pm dinner, 6:00 pm meeting starts
at the MCL Cafeteria, 4485 Far Hills Ave, Kettering, OH 45429

Program

The Waynesville, Port Williams & Jeffersonville RR, by Roger Starnes

The "Grasshopper Railroad" was a nickname for a short line railroad that ran from just north of Waynesville, OH to Port William, OH, and on to Jeffersonville, Ohio. The proper name of the original line was "The Waynesville, Port William and Jeffersonville Railroad", but was quickly named "The Grasshopper" by those who lived near the line. The owners had purchased an old, used "Grasshopper Type" engine as the first on the line. The line changed names and owners many times, but the nick name stuck.

The line was eventually part of the DT&I and later owned by Henry Ford. Mike Mason of Port William, OH and Roger Starnes of Sabina, OH collaborated in 2015 to write a book on the "Grasshopper" that was published in 2017.

On July 16, 2024, Roger Starnes, co-author of the book, will be doing a PowerPoint presentation and sharing old "Grasshopper" hardware used on the line. He will also be selling "Grasshopper" books, reproduction stock certificates, maps of the old line(s) (both routes), and will answer questions about the line.

Before 07/16/24, you can learn more about what Roger shares on the line from the sites below.

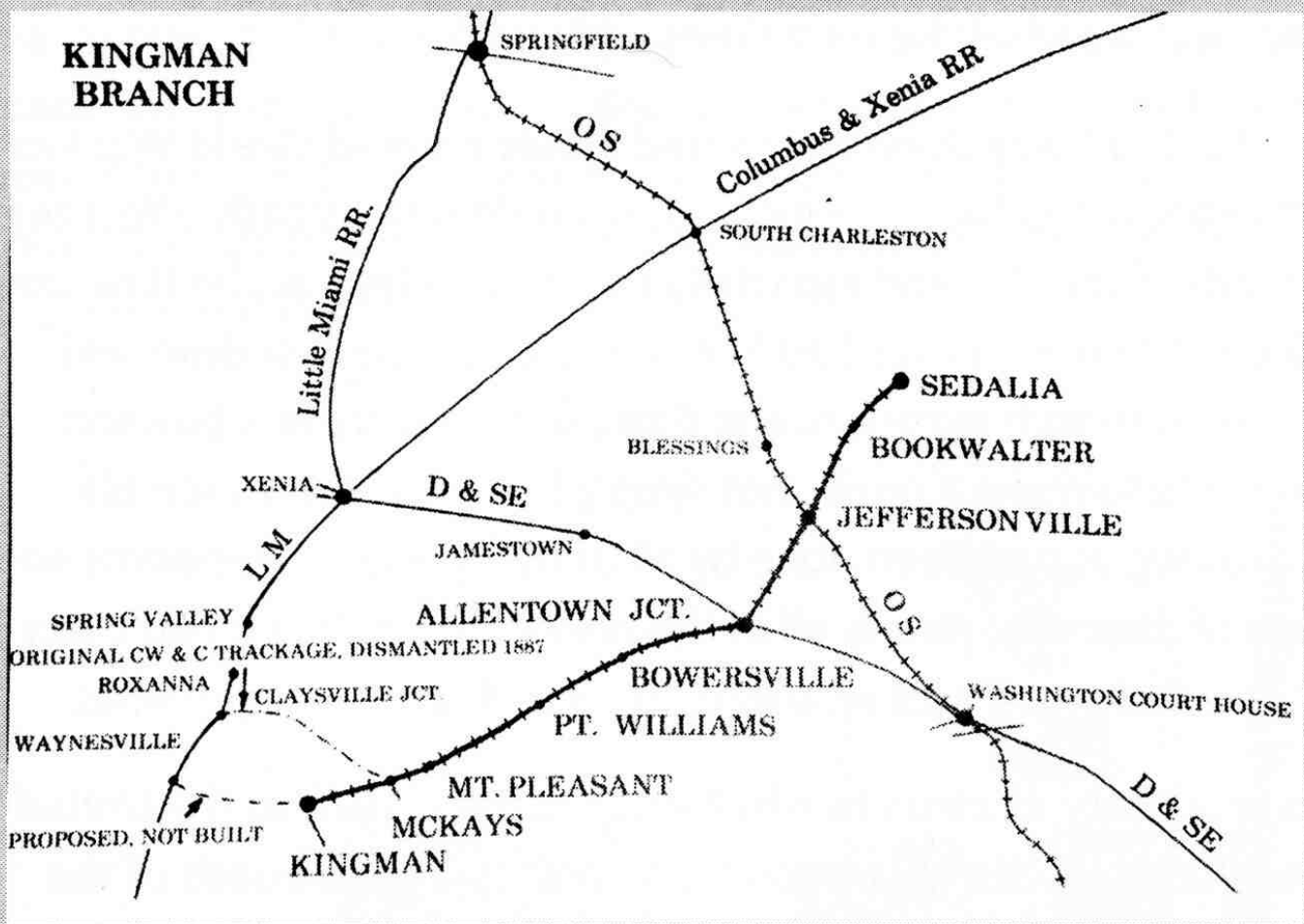
<http://grasshopperrailroad.com/>, <https://www.facebook.com/grasshopperrailroad/>

Or you can give him a call or email him for more information at:

roger.starnes70@gmail.com

937-287-0145 mobile

Roger will have some books for sale for \$20. Each book comes with a reprinted stock certificate for FREE. Certificates individually are \$2 each, and a 5' x 3' Grasshopper map is \$30 each.



Map of the old Grasshopper lines, including original route to Claysville



The Story of the
Waynesville, Port William and
Jeffersonville Railroad

The "Grasshopper" Railroad
From Farmers to Ford

By Mike Mason and Roger Starnes

Grasshopper Railroad thrived 1879-1934

It was through the Boy Scouts and leaders that the history of the Grasshopper Railroad in Clinton County (this was owned by Henry Ford for a time and he often visited it) was prepared.

Mr. Frederick J. Buckley and Mr. James B. Gumley compiled the history of the line for educational background to the Boy Scouts of the Robert E. Hadley District. Their railroad tracking shield was earned by following the railroad bed from Port William to McKay's Station.

Miss Kathryn Williams who heads the Genealogy Committee of the Clinton County Historical Society, prepared the report for society records and her report was read by Mrs. Herbert M. Hadley at the Sunday afternoon program of the society. Extracts:

By 1875 Clinton County population had grown to 20,000 and the principal industry, as it is now, was agriculture.

Since the 1850's, Sabina, Wilmington and Blanchester had been served by a railroad but Chester and Liberty Townships in the northwest corner of the county remained isolated.

In 1875 a group organized what was first called the "Waynesville, Port William and Jeffersonville Railroad" and by 1879 a narrow gauge track was laid from Roxanna in Greene County to Jeffersonville in Fayette County via New Burlington, McKay's Station, Mt. Pleasant and Port William. The name was changed to "Columbus, Washington and Cincinnati" and later to "Cincinnati, Columbus and Hocking Valley" reflecting the hopes of the builders.

By 1881, the tracks had been changed to standard gauge and the hamlets of

McKay's Station and Mt. Pleasant had become economically important. McKay's had a grocery and blacksmith shop and by 1882 thousands of bushels of wheat and corn had been shipped from there.

At Mt. Pleasant, there was a country store, post office, steam saw mill and later, a grain elevator.

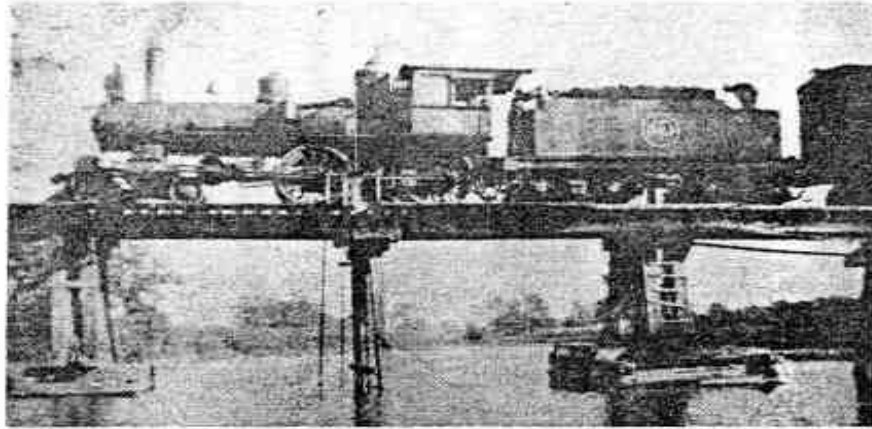
A spur was built as far as South Kingman and the grade prepared as far west as Harveysburg in Warren County. A grain elevator and stockyards were located at the Kingman terminus. At the other end of the line in Clinton County, Port William became a thriving center of shipment of grain and livestock.

In time, the road became a spur line of the Detroit, Toledo and Ironton, running from Detroit in Michigan to Ironton on the Ohio River and was owned by Henry Ford.

By 1931, the amount of freight hauled had dwindled to the point that government regulatory authorities permitted the road to be closed. In that year the track was taken up from Kingman to Port William and service from Port William to the east was terminated in 1934.

A few of the stories about the railroad still told: the engineer had to back the train all the way from Port William to Kingman — there was no turntable or roundhouse; frequently, the crew would stop the train in the woods along the right of way and take their guns from the cab for a few quick shots at squirrels and other game; Henry Ford himself was occasionally seen operating a hand car on the line apparently enjoying and inspecting, his railroad.

“THE GRASSHOPPER”

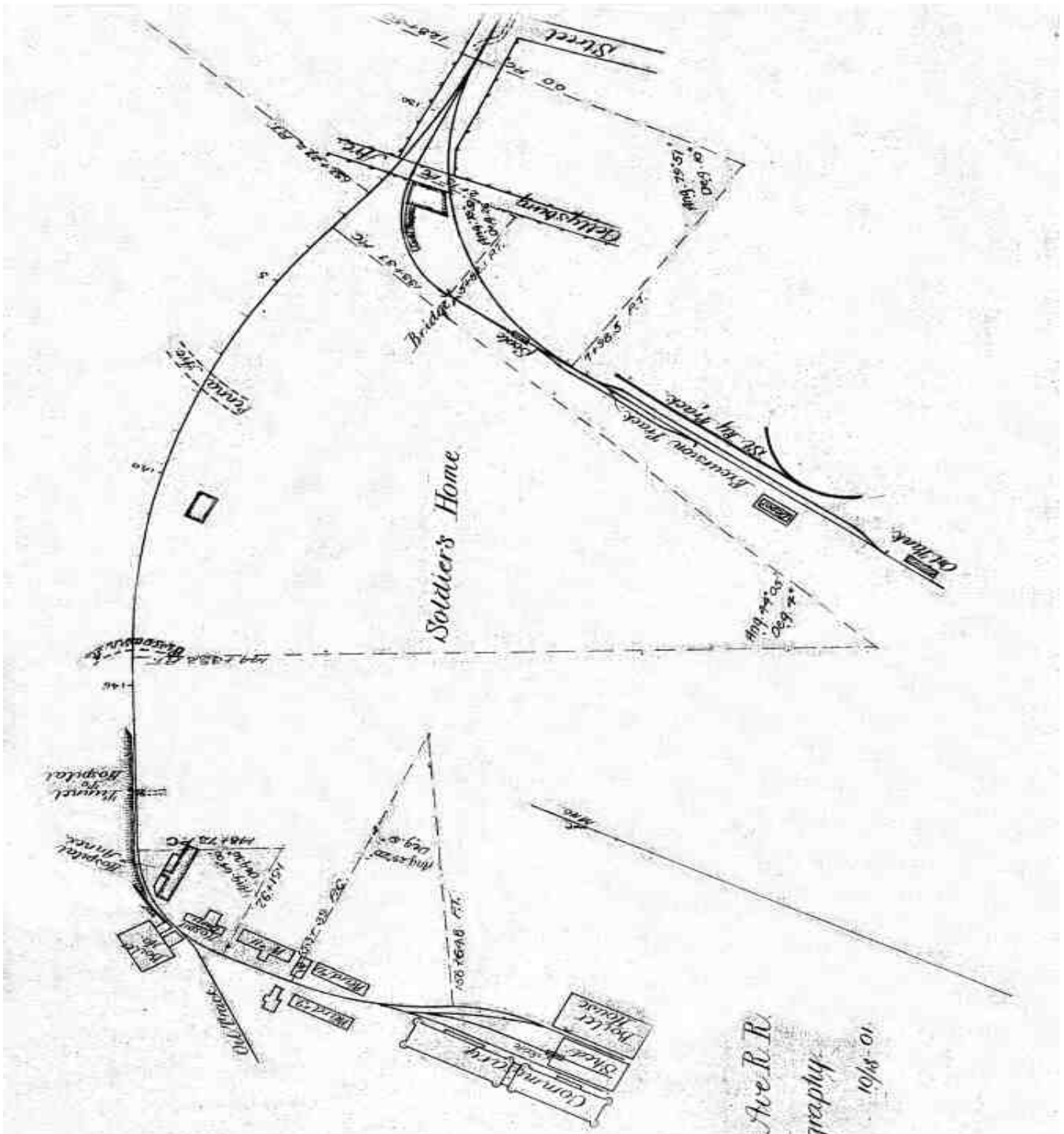


A certificate of incorporation for the Waynesville, Port William and Jeffersonville Railway was filed December 9, 1875 with \$200,000. capital stock. The name of the narrow-gauge railway was soon changed to Columbus, Washington and Cincinnati. It was supposed to connect Columbus and Cincinnati but it never fulfilled its founders' dreams.

Opened in the fall of 1878, the project soon collapsed and all that was left was the road connecting Sedalia in Madison County to Kingman in Clinton County, a distance of about twenty miles. In the winter of 1881-82 it was dismantled and standard gauge track was finally laid in 1894.

The railroad, affectionately called "The Grasshopper," was operated for years as a part of the Detroit, Toledo and Ironton Railroad and was once owned by Henry Ford. The train ran forward down the line, but upon reaching Kingman, with no place to turn, made the return trip backward to Jeffersonville. It carried mostly farm products, but passengers could ride in the caboose and the trainmen stopped to suit their passengers' whims.

With the coming of good roads and large trucks "The Grasshopper's" usefulness diminished and by the early 1930's the runs were stopped and the track removed. "The Grasshopper" was only a memory



Tom Morrow found a map that will answer most of our questions about the trackage at Dayton's Soldier's Home.

C. H. & D. Ry. Home Ave. R.R.

Alignment & Topography.

Scale 200' = 1" 10/18-01

--- **3i RR Holdings GP LLC and Regional Rail are acquiring the Cincinnati Eastern Railroad LLC**, according to notices filed with the Surface Transportation Board. Cincinnati Eastern is a short line that operates 69.45 miles of track in Ohio under lease from Norfolk Southern Railway, according to the notices, which were posted June 14. The short line operates from Cincinnati to Peebles, Ohio, with a connection to NS in Cincinnati via Clare Yard. 3i and Regional Rail also operate the Indiana Eastern Railroad and Ohio South Central Railroad. (Progressiverailroading.com)

--- **Amtrak is making a major investment in Bryan, Ohio**, amid a statewide push to expand passenger rail service in Ohio. In 18 months, the train station next to Main Street at the north end of Bryan and the area around it will be transformed through a \$5 million investment from the railroad company. The new train station building will include a 350-foot platform, a station building with an air-conditioned waiting room and bathrooms and accessibility improvements including new parking, ramps and sidewalks. (Dominique O'Neill, wtol.com)

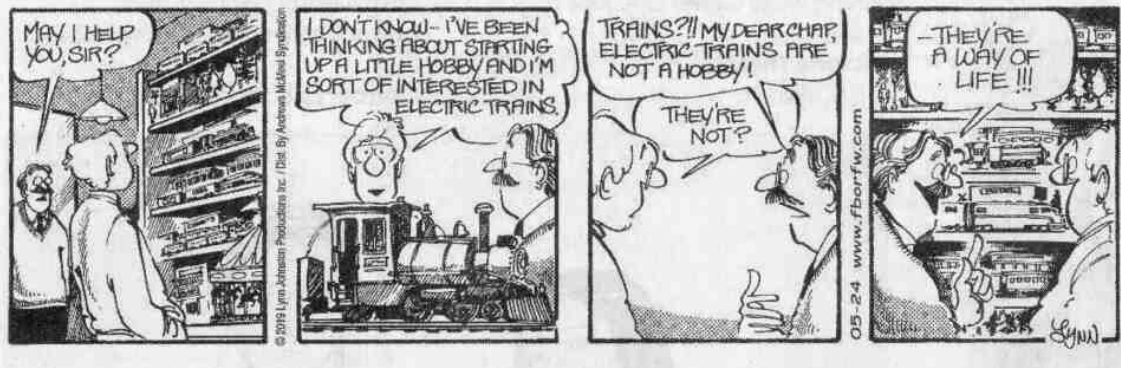
--- **CSX has undertaken an important project** to improve the infrastructure at its Cumberland, Maryland rail yard. This strategic initiative aims to reconfigure the yard for enhanced safety and productivity, enabling the railroad to more efficiently manage increased traffic destined for the Midwest. Among the changes taking place over the next few months, CSX is removing the hump and the hump tower from the yard, and placing additional tracks optimized for flat switching in its classification yard.

These changes enable the CSX team to assemble trains on two automated tracks while simultaneously moving other cars, effectively reducing car handlings, doubling their production capacity and ensuring faster and more reliable delivery of customer goods. The infrastructure enhancements at the CSX Cumberland yard are expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2024. CSX expects to undertake similar infrastructure enhancements at its Willard, Ohio, and Hamlet, North Carolina yards. (Csx.com)

— **CSX Harpers Ferry, WV** — CSX's former Baltimore & Ohio double-track main line at Harpers Ferry was shut down on Monday June 24 after ties on the bridge caught fire. This led to the cancellation of Amtrak's *Capitol Limited* and disruption of freight service and MARC commuter rail operations. The bridge sustained significant track damage, but rail traffic is back in operation. (Trains Newswire)

— **Moraine, OH** — In some local news, Norfolk Southern has installed new walkways on both sides of the former NYC bridge over the Great Miami River in Moraine.

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



UPCOMING EVENTS edited by Art Kinser

27-28 Jul 2024, Train Show, Van Wert Co. Fairgrounds, 1055 S. Washington St., Van Wert, Ohio
Sat 10:00am-4:00pm, Sun 10:00-3:00pm, Adm \$6

3-4 Aug 2024, Train Show, Johnson Co. Fairgrounds, 250 Fairground St., Franklin, Indiana
Sat 10:00am-4:00pm, Sun 10:00am-3:00pm, Adm \$7, Info <http://www.cidnmra.org>

3-4 Aug 2024, Train Show, Shriners Temple, 326 Southland Dr., Lexington, Kentucky
Sat & Sun 10:00am-5:00pm, Adm \$5

4 Aug 2024, Great Midwest Train Show, DuPage Co. Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Rd.,
Wheaton, Illinois, Sun 9:00am-3:00pm, Adm \$7, info www.trainshow.com

10 Aug 2024, Summerail, Marion Palace Theater, 276 W Center St., Marion, Ohio
Sat 10am-5pm Railroad Show & Sale, 1pm-10pm multimedia presentations
Adm \$5 Show & Sale only, \$30 Show & Sale and Presentations, cash or check only at the
door, www.summerail.com

8 SEP 2024, Model Train Show, 12505 Cty Rd 99, Findlay, Ohio
Sun 10:00am-3:00pm, Adm \$5, Info www.nworrp.org

8 Sep 2024, Great Midwest Train Show, DuPage Co. Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Rd.,
Wheaton, Illinois, Sun 9:00am-3:00pm, Adm \$7, info www.trainshow.com

20-21 Sep 2024, Indy 2 Rail O Scale Show, La Quinta Inn, 5120 Victory Dr., Indianapolis
Fri 3:00pm-7:00pm, Sat 9:00am-3:00pm, Adm \$20 (both days),
Info www.indyoscaleshow.com

28 SEP 2024, Rail Festival, Fostoria Jr-Sr High School 1001 Park Ave., Fostoria, Ohio
Sat 10:00am-4:00pm

5-6 OCT 2024, Train Show, Cuyahoga Co. Fairgrounds, 19201 E. Bagley Rd., Middleburg Hts.,
Ohio, Sat & Sun 10:00am-4:00pm, Adm \$15 (Two Day), \$10 (One Day),
Info www.thegreatbreatrainshow.org

6 OCT 2024, Great Midwest Train Show, DuPage Co. Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Rd.,
Wheaton, Illinois, Sun 9:00am-3:00pm, \$8, Info www.trainshow.com

27 OCT 2024, Train Show, 735 Lafayette Rd. (St Rt 42), Medina, Ohio
Sun 9:00am-3:00pm, Adm \$7, Info www.conraddowdell.com

27 OCT 2024, Swap Meet, American Legion Post 66, 132 N. Wiggs St., Griffith, Indiana
Sun 10:00am-2:00pm, Adm \$2, Info www.blackhawkrailwayhistoricalsociety.org

DRHS/Dave Oroszi
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Dayton Railway Historical Society and Miami Valley Railfans Subdivision

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www.daytontrolleys.net/drhs/drhs.htm

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The Dayton Railway Historical Society (DRHS) is a non-profit, historical and educational group of railfans serving Dayton, Ohio and the Tri-State area. We have a 501c3 tax-exempt status granted by the US Internal Revenue Service. This means the DRHS can receive tax-deductible gifts, bequeaths and transfers of funds. Our Treasurer will issue a receipt to all givers of such gifts.

Dues are \$10/year for an emailed PDF in color or \$20/year for a mailed hard copy in B&W

Send checks to DRHS, Tom Grady, 4888 Goodyear Dr., Dayton, OH, 45406-1128

The DRHS normally holds meetings /programs on the third Tuesday of each month except August, and tend to be more of the historical nature of railroads and trolleys.

The Miami Valley Railfans (MVR) is a Subdivision of the DRHS and normally holds meetings/programs on the second Saturday of each month, except for August and October. These meetings tend to be more on current happenings in the railroad industry.

For both groups, see the meeting notices on front page for programs and location of meetings.