



From the President's Rider Car -- By President Frank Van Bree

Monument dedicated; By-laws await approval

On May 22, I was privileged to be able to participate in the formal dedication of a Memorial Monument to the generations of service given by the Monon's employees to their railroad.

You may recall that the City of Bloomington, Indiana, has constructed a pathway called the B Line Trail through the city following the route of the Monon track. It is beautifully landscaped and has appropriate signage at various locations commemorating places and buildings which were located along the Trail.

One such place is between Kirkwood and Fifth Streets, where the Monon Railroad stations stood. Of course our depots are long gone but right where passengers boarded the trains, the city gave us permission to erect our Memorial. You can see pictures of it and the dedication ceremony in the News and Timetables section of THL. We were most fortunate to have many retired employees in attendance. All those who contributed to the cost of the Monument will be memorialized on a plaque which will be displayed at the Society's headquarters.

Following the dedication, the board and some members headed to Pete Pedigo's place for some fun, food and business. Pete's wife, Melissa fed us while Pete and some of his buddies took us on train rides around his estate. We were there a couple of years ago, but it has been expanded and made even more realistic.

We finally got down to business and had our board meeting in Pete's beautiful home.

The most important item on the agenda was the approval of proposed revisions to our by-laws. It was reported here previously that the by-laws needed to be updated and Pete Pedigo chaired a committee to make recommendations. No members submitted any suggestions. What is enclosed with this issue of THL is the result not only of the committee's work, but the input of the directors at the last two board meetings. Our current by-laws require that the membership as a whole vote to approve any revisions. You will find this issue on the ballot which accompanies this magazine. Also, I am required to explain any changes, so listen up....

Most of the changes are grammatical and eliminate inconsistencies created by prior revisions which simply added a section here and there. This draft is an attempt to "put it all together" along with making a few additions and clarifications. For example we eliminated the Article establishing "branches." I doubt any were ever formed and if they were, they are no longer in existence. The ease and speed of modern communications and the availability of the officers and directors to the membership make

branches obsolete. For the same reason, the provision for an executive committee to make decisions between regular board meetings was eliminated.

We re-cast the Classes of Membership somewhat to more accurately define the classes and to provide the board latitude in making changes without revising the by-laws, but really made no substantive changes. The revision does make it clear however that membership will be terminated automatically after May 1 if annual dues have not been received by that date. However, we now require the membership chairman to remind members of this in THL.

We redefine the duties of some of the officers. For example we no longer require the secretary to maintain the membership roster. That is being done by the membership chairman so this redundancy is eliminated. We also transferred "business" reporting to governmental agencies to the treasurer because these reports are basically financial in nature. We will require the treasurer to keep the books according to GAAP, Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures, and in such format as to make the transition to a successor treasurer easier.

We eliminated proxy voting by the membership because the procedure for implementing it would be unduly cumbersome, burdensome and be of limited value. Members vote by secret written ballot, so you have a direct way of making your wishes known. Directors can vote by proxy at a board meeting which they cannot attend. Any other changes are, I believe, self evident and require no explanation. While you cannot make any changes in the proposed revision at this time, I will be more than happy to discuss your concerns.

The board recommends an affirmative vote for the revised by-laws. It also recommends that you vote for the officers and directors of your choice on the enclosed ballot. This is your best opportunity to be involved in the governance of your Society. As I write this, the period for nominations is still open so I don't know if there will be any contested positions. Remember, if more than four members run for the four director vacancies, the winners are the four with the most votes.

I hope you will all come to the Annual Convention and Meeting at Bardstown, Ky. this coming Oct 1-3. The convention committee has planned a great time for you.

See you there!



Warren Mitchell photo

Informational plaque is at the Monon Memorial site.



FRANK VAN BREE