



CENTRAL STATION

Newsletter

ISSUE NO. 1

EARLY FALL 2020



ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD HERITAGE ASSOCIATION WELCOME ABOARD !

Back in 2007 when the Illinois Central Railroad Heritage Association (ICRHA) was founded through the efforts of rail author/historian and graphic artist Mike Schafer, a primary focus was on producing a quality magazine, namely the ***Mid-American***. This effort was successful and to date, twenty-five issues have been published (albeit a bit tardy at times). The bylaws of the ICRHA also made a provision for a newsletter for the membership.

The bylaws stipulated that this newsletter was to be named ***Central Station***, to honor Illinois Central's iconic main station and executive office building located on Chicago's near south side at

12th Street adjacent to Michigan Avenue. For those of us old enough to remember, this was the home of Illinois Central's passenger trains during their greatest years. Sadly, the station was demolished in 1974, a few years after the inception of AMTRAK.

To this writer's knowledge, no issue of a ***Central Station Newsletter*** was ever published for the membership. For a variety of reasons, which I will outline, the ICRHA Publications Committee has recognized that this is an opportune time to finally start releasing a ICRHA newsletter.

While plans are that the ***Mid-American*** will continue to be the

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Director At Large: John Morris

How to join the ICRHA: Membership is open to anyone with an interest in the Illinois Central Railroad, as well as its predecessors and successors. Application forms are available online from our website: www.icrha.org

The Central Station Newsletter is available free to interested parties via download from a link on the ICRHA website: www.icrha.org

John Morris, Newsletter Editor

Illinois Central Railroad Heritage Association

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COVER PHOTO: The "Seminole" passing northbound near Monee, Illinois in the early 1950s.

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premiere publication of the ICRHA, we hope that the addition of the **Central Station Newsletter** will enable ICRHA to stay in touch with our paying membership on a more regular basis. We also hope it will be a vehicle to encourage non-members to join our group and expand our activities relating to the Illinois Central Railroad.

When the first issue of the **Mid-American** was released in 2007, the internet was in its infancy and social media was unheard of. Fast forward to the present. Through the efforts of administrator Jack Ferry, ICRHA now has a presence on Facebook that has over 3,500 followers. We hope to encourage those followers who are not already members, to develop an interest in joining ICRHA.

While the interest and participation in the ICRHA Facebook page is very encouraging, many challenges lie ahead for all railroad historical organizations, such as ICRHA. Postal, publishing, and distribution costs are continually rising. At the same time, much of the membership of these organizations is rapidly aging or no longer with us. We hope encourage members of all ages to actively engage in the many aspects and benefits of the ICRHA.

With the above considerations in mind, the ICRHA **Central Station Newsletter** is available to all interested parties via free download to promote ICRHA membership and our flagship publication, the **Mid-American**. Specifics as to how to download future free editions of the **Central Station Newsletter** will be directly provided to ICRHA members, and on the ICRHA Facebook and web page.



ICRHA NEWS AND UPDATES - SEPTEMBER, 2020

MID-AMERICAN DELAY

We are very much aware that the ***Mid-American*** is tardy and hope to have it in the hands of our members in the next few weeks. We apologize for the delay and appreciate your patience.

The next issue will include an interesting article on the history of IC's timetables through the years, by Paul Jaenicke; an overview article documenting IC's second-hand passenger car purchases, by Phil Gosney; and a feature on dining on the Illinois Central. A new ***Mid-American*** Portfolio section of previously unseen quality photos will also be included.

UPDATED EMAIL LIST

The ICRHA Publications Committee is currently in the process of updating the email addresses of our paid membership and also those members of the ICRHA Facebook page that desire to receive copies of the ***Central Station Newsletter***.

We realize these days that many people are apprehensive about sharing their email address due to the potential of receiving spam. The Publications Committee will make every effort to keep this information secure and will never share this information.

You ask why the interest in email addresses. There are multiple reasons, including staying in touch with our

membership, providing ***Mid-American*** updates and distributing this newsletter to interested parties. Another major reason is cost containment. ICRHA finances are tight and the costs of mailings is increasingly expensive. Other than the volunteer preparation and administrative time required, there is no cost of distributing the ***Central Station Newsletter*** in a PDF format via an email attachment. We also plan to add a downloadable link to ICRHA web site at icrha.org for this newsletter in the near future. The ***Mid-American*** will continue to be distributed by mail to paying members as always. To update or to be added to the ICRHA email list, please send your email address to:

secretary@icrha.org

CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

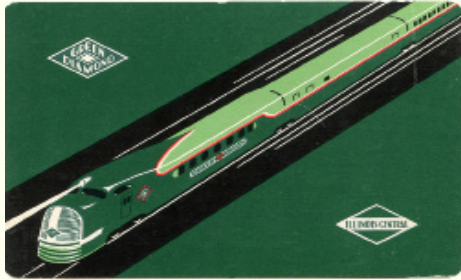
Fear not! We are not asking for money. However, we are looking to those with basic writing skills for future articles and contributions to both the ***Mid-American*** and the ***Central Station Newsletter***. We are looking aggressively for previously unseen high quality photographs, and those of historic interest. We prefer that high resolution scans and articles be submitted electronically to:

centralstationeditor@gmail.com

ICRHA PLAYING CARDS ARTICLE

The editorial team is current working on an article and graphic display of Illinois Central playing cards through the years.

These cards, such as the one at right, which were available on the original *Green Diamond*



Diamond

streamliner of 1936, were primarily sold for travelers entertainment and souvenirs. In later years they were also utilized for marketing of freight services and general advertising. Many of these cards are examples of fine period artwork and graphic design. If you have historical information regarding the development and production of these cards, please contact the editor at:

centralstationeditor@gmail.com

THE LOST ILLINOIS CENTRAL INTERLOCKING TOWERS IN ILLINOIS

The ICRHA editorial team is interested in developing an article and photographic views to

document the history of the various interlocking towers utilized by

the Illinois Central. These interlocking towers were symbolic of what many of us



consider the golden years of railroading. Today, only a few remain standing on the Illinois Central and those few that do have been repurposed. This project will include gathering photos and technical information about the respective towers. There is always the human interest angle regarding the staff that manned those towers as well.

If you would like to contribute or participate in researching this project, please contact our publication team.

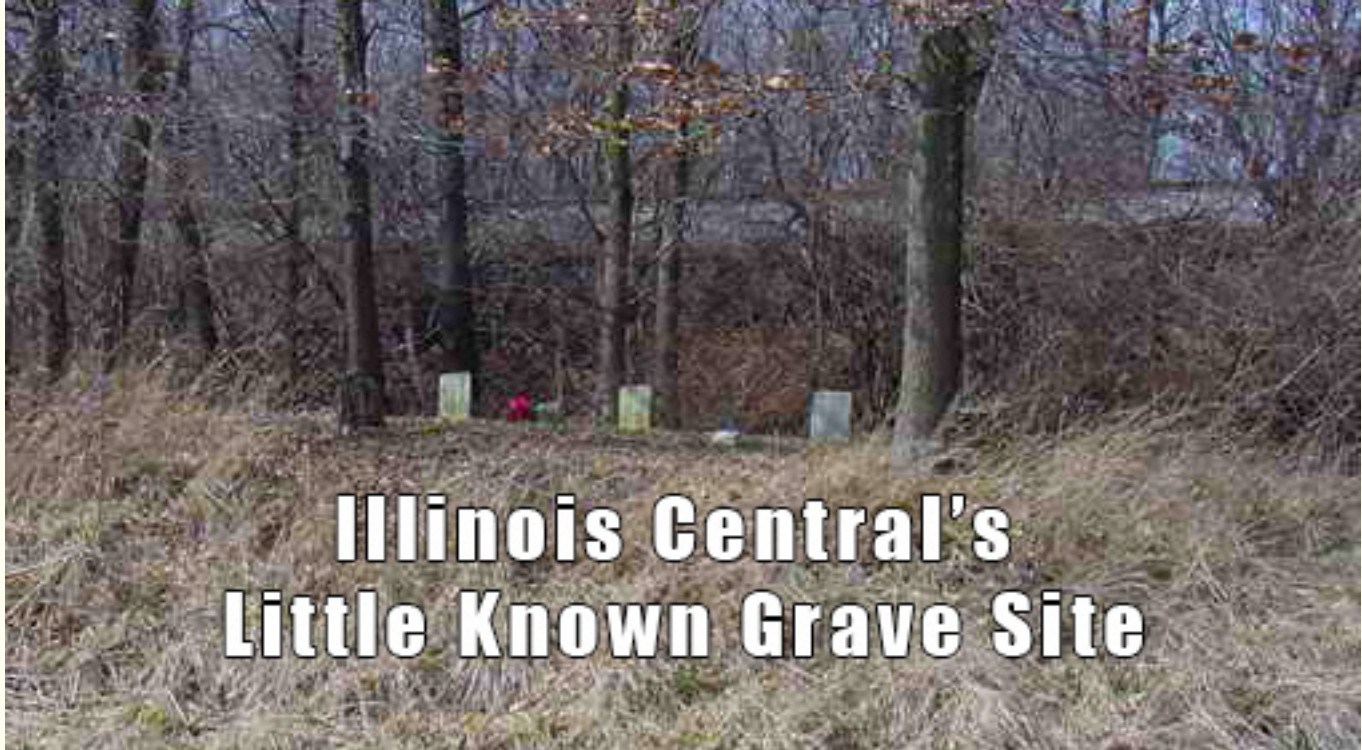
FUTURE ICRHA MEETINGS

Because of the COVID-19 situation, future in-person meetings are on hold. We do hope to establish more regular board and member meetings when the current situation improves. Until that happens, we will “run-in-place” and try to communicate via this newsletter, on Facebook, and the *Mid-American*.

IMPROVED ICRHA WEBSITE

We are aware that the current ICRHA has become outdated and needs updating. We anticipate that this will be addressed and completed early this fall. Included will be updated links for membership forms, *Mid-American* subscriptions, back issue order forms, and staff contact information. We will advise on Facebook when the new web site is operational.

Website address: icrha.org



A forgotten grave site adjacent to the Illinois Central mainline can be seen to this day near Milepost 182 near Neoga, Illinois.. The current CN mainline is just visible past the row of trees. A respectful IC Superintendent saw to it's proper care.

BY PAUL JAENICKE

Near Milepost 182, just north of Neoga, Il on the former Illinois Central mainline lies a little known gravesite, that is a clear reminder of the hard times that pioneers endured before the coming of the Mainline of Mid America. Buried at this location are three children that are believed to have died of a common illness for the period called "milk fever". Two of the children were brother and sister and went by the name of Mariah and Luther Wait. Mariah was 7 years old and passed away in October of 1852. Her brother, Luther passed away at the age of 11 in November of the same year. Harvey Parks who was buried in the third site had passed away in August of 1854 at the age of one. Whole families could be wiped out by such diseases and children were the most vulnerable. Today such illnesses are rare and can be very easily treated.

One wonders how many other unknown

gravesites were along right-of-ways on the Illinois prairie during this time. In 1853 when the Illinois Central took title to the nearby right-of-way, the deed specifically excluded this portion of land. Through the late 1800's and early 1900's little was done to maintain the site until a Division Superintendent by the name of H. Battisfore in 1918 ordered four cars of riprap stone be brought in to build up the gravesite. Intense water run-off from the right-of-way was threatening to wash out the graves and Superintendent Battisfore ordered that this was not to happen no matter what the cost. In the early 1950's a ditch was built around this area to give improved drainage. The site lies just east of the current CN mainline and is a small reminder of what pioneer life was like before the development of the Illinois Central Railroad.

Photo Gallery



When the IC introduced the new streamlined *Panama Limited* in 1942, several publicity photos were commissioned, including this view of brand new E6 units 4004 and 4003. When delivered, the four E6 units were assigned to the *Panama Limited* and carried the train name. Units 4001 and 4003 survived until the inception of AMTRAK in 1971 and powered the very last run of the *Governors Special*.



The *Land of Corn*, headed by E7 No. 4012, built in 1946, is passing through the Berwyn station stop. Note the engine is in its original as-delivered paint scheme, the full width diaphragm on the leading coach, and the single horn on the engine. This photo from the late 1940s Berwyn closed as a mainline passenger stop in 1954. Both photos: JACK FERRY



One of the earlier IC steam fantrips was sponsored by the Louisville Chapter of the NRHS on October 27, 1957. It operated from Louisville Central Station to Central City, Kentucky and return. This trip provided many superb runbys with historic photo opportunities. The IC was just starting to repaint its passenger equipment into the familiar orange and brown scheme that became standard, as evidenced by two cars in the consist.

John Morris Collection



MODELING THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL

The Publications Committee recognizes that modeling and layouts relating to the Illinois Central are of interest to many ICRHA members. We hope to include more material on this activity soon. Suggestions for future articles relating to all aspects of modeling the Illinois Central are welcome for possible publication in the *Mid-American* or *Central Station Newsletter*. Please feel free to share ideas with the editor.

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The ICRHA Publications Committee welcomes your suggestions and comments regarding this newsletter. This is a first issue, so we recognize some fine-tuning and enhancements may be needed.

Among possible ideas are to include a “switchlist” for members to buy and sell Illinois Central related items, human interest stories about individual members and a Q&A column.

Depending upon the degree of interest and successful distribution of this newsletter, we hope to be able to allow commercial advertising at affordable rates to help ICRHA defray ongoing expenses.

Please feel free to submit your thoughts and ideas to the email address below. We will be happy to hear from you.

Best regards to all from your ICRHA Publications committee team! Once again, feel free to contact us at:

centralstationeditor@gmail.com

Now Available !

Mid-American Back Issues



Back issues of the ICRHA *Mid-American* magazine are available for \$9.95 per issue or three for \$25.00. Shipping is \$2.95, regardless of the number of issues requested. An order form listing all available issues can be downloaded from our web site at:

ICRHA.org

