

# In The Beginning

## The Creation of the Milwaukee Road

### Creation

Governor Dodge of the territory of Wisconsin **charts a railroad** to be built between Milwaukee and Waukesha.

**18-47**  
circa

### Wisconsin Statehood

Wisconsin becomes the 30th state.

**18-48**  
circa

### Expansion & Mergers

1850-1867

**18-50**  
circa

Funds are finally raised to **begin building**. The railroad reaches Wauwatosa.

The railroad makes it to Madison, the state capital.

**18-54**  
circa

The railroad connects to Waukesha and is first called the Milwaukee & Waukesha Railroad. It receives rights to **continue beyond Waukesha**, and the name changes to the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad.

**18-51**  
circa

The railroad reaches the Mississippi River.

**18-57**  
circa

The Milwaukee & Prairie du Chien Railway **purchases the Milwaukee & Mississippi**.

**18-67**  
circa

The Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway combines the Milwaukee & Prairie du Chien and the Milwaukee & La Crosse Railroads.

### Into Chicago

1873-1889

The Milwaukee & St. Paul opens its own line into Chicago.

**18-73**  
circa

**18-74**  
circa

The Railroad becomes the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway.

General offices move to Chicago and become the Milwaukee's new headquarters.

**18-89**  
circa

### The Pacific Coast Expansion

1905-1911

**19-11**  
circa

Passenger service from Chicago to the Pacific Northwest begins.

**19-05**  
circa

The CM&StP Board of Directors sees an opportunity to gain profits on the west coast. The Pacific Coast Expansion begins this year.

### World War I

The United States government takes control of all railroad operations during wartime.

**19-17**  
circa

### Early Struggles

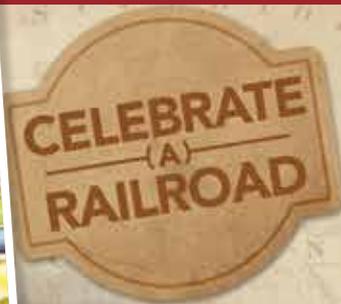
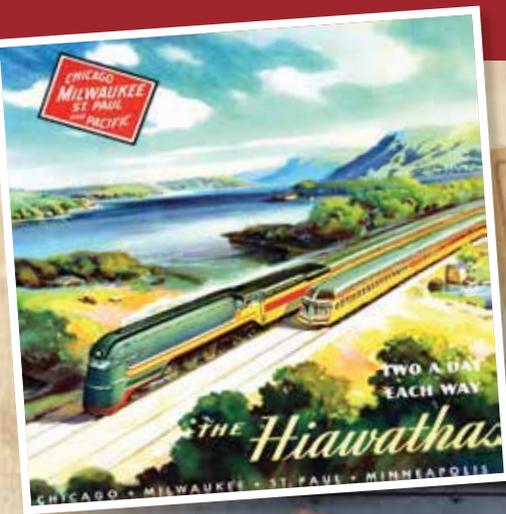
Due to unexpected costs of the Pacific Coast Expansion and changes in rail traffic, the CM&StP declares bankruptcy.

**19-25**  
circa

**19-28**  
circa

### Reorganization

During reorganization, the railroad is renamed the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad.



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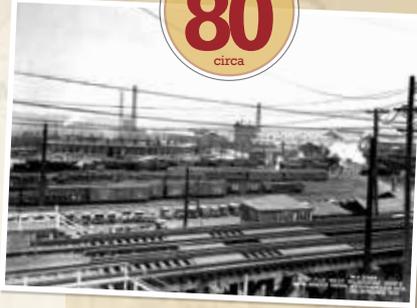


# The Milwaukee Shops

The Railroad's Repair Facility

## Creation of the Shops

By the late 1870s, the Milwaukee Road was booming and needed more space to repair equipment. So, in 1880, the Milwaukee built a new, large complex in the Menomonee River Valley. Over the years, the complex continued to expand until it covered more than 160 acres. Just like the Milwaukee Road and its repair facility, the city of Milwaukee experienced rapid growth during this same time and eventually encompassed the Menomonee River Valley Area. From the 1900s onward, the Milwaukee Road's repair facility was known as the Milwaukee Shops.



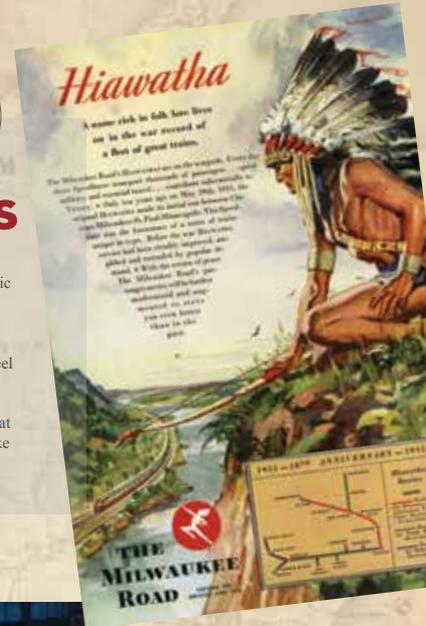
1880  
circa

# Innovative Technology

## New Developments

The Shops were at the forefront of new technology as early as the 1930s. Although this was a difficult economic time for the country, the Milwaukee was innovative and looking toward growth. Perhaps the most famous innovation during this time was the upgrading of the Hiawatha passenger trains, which used lightweight steel for strength and speed, and new welding for improved air flow resistance. New cars, like the Beaver Tail Observation Car, were also developed. During the Great Depression, the Milwaukee was the only railroad to make a profit on passenger service, and the innovations at the Milwaukee Shops were a large part of that success.

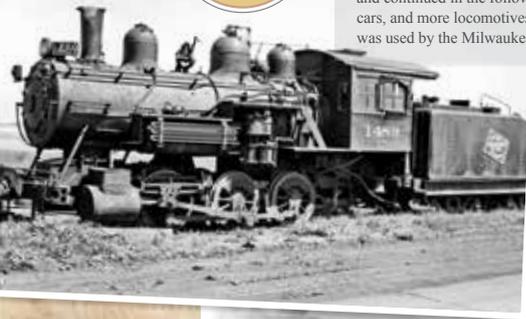
1930s  
circa



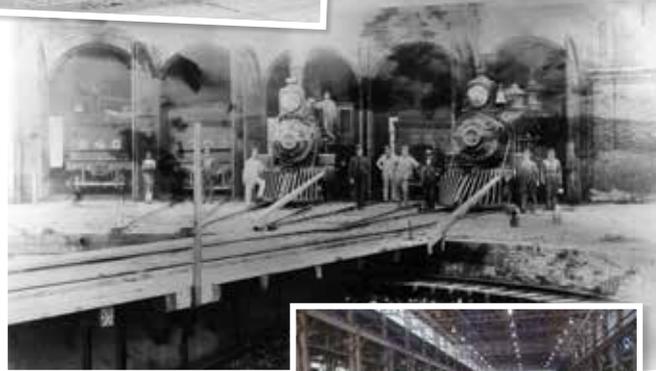
## New Locomotives

The Milwaukee Shops were responsible for the necessary repairs to the Milwaukee's locomotives and cars, and they also built equipment on-site. In 1882, the Milwaukee Shops built its first steam locomotive and continued in the following decades to make freight cars, passenger cars, and more locomotives. The equipment built at the Milwaukee Shops was used by the Milwaukee Road as well as sold to other railroads.

1882  
circa



“In 1882, the Milwaukee Shops built its first steam locomotive.”



1920s  
circa

“During the 1920s, employment at the Milwaukee Shops peaked at 10,000 men working in building, restoration, and other various operations.”

## Peak Employment

During the 1920s, business was booming for the Milwaukee Shops. Employment peaked at 10,000 men working in building, restoration, and other various operations. A report from the era reveals that 180 steam locomotives were serviced every day and roughly 73 locomotives were overhauled each month.



## 100 Years of Service

With the decline in railroad transportation and, eventually, the Milwaukee Road itself, the Milwaukee Shops were closed in December of 1986 after just over 100 years of outstanding service.

1986  
circa

## Rebuilding Projects

Because of the efficiency and capability of the Milwaukee Shops, they received two very unique projects during their operation. The first was in 1964, when the Shops rebuilt 500 old boxcars from the 1940s. The task was to reequip the cars with load restraining devices and 10-foot wide doors. They also lengthened the cars by 10 feet. Their success led to another special project in 1976, when they rebuilt 270 log flat cars for the Weyerhaeuser Corporation.

1964  
circa



The Milwaukee Shops upgraded the Hiawatha passenger trains using lightweight steel for strength and speed.

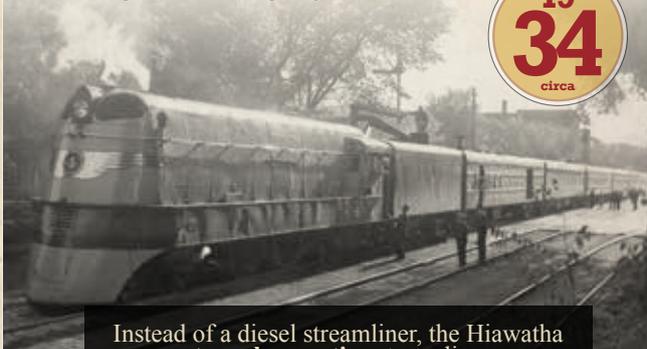
# The Hiawathas

The Hiawatha was unlike any other train

## Streamliner Competition Puts Milwaukee On Top

When the Union Pacific Railroad introduced the first streamlined diesel train, the M-10000, in 1934, intense competition ensued not only between major railroads looking to do the same, but also between the major railroads of the Midwest focused on passenger business from Chicago to Minneapolis and St. Paul. From this competition, the Hiawatha passenger train was born.

19  
34  
circa

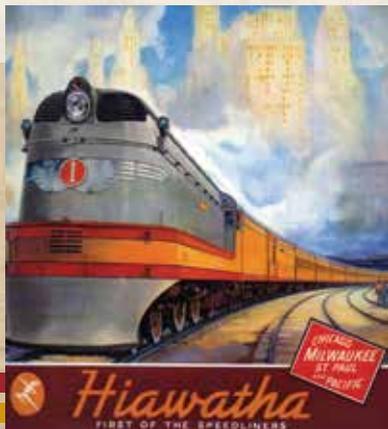


Instead of a diesel streamliner, the Hiawatha was a **steam locomotive streamliner**. Made of lightweight steel, it combined a sleek, wind-piercing exterior with a **beautiful modern interior**. The attractive-looking Hiawatha could even operate at speeds of 100 miles per hour. The name Hiawatha was chosen from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem "The Song of Hiawatha". In the poem, Hiawatha could outrun an arrow, so the Milwaukee chose this name in part to imply that the new train was as fast as the legendary character, as well as a nod to the Native American history of the region.

19  
35  
circa

## Throngs Thrill at Hiawatha

The new Hiawatha passenger train was immensely popular. **138,000 people** turned out to see and tour the train when it first made preview stops along its route. **Official service began on May 29, 1935**, from Chicago to the Twin Cities. The Hiawatha was an immediate success, and after 3 months, two more coaches had to be added to the original 6 cars to meet the demand for seats on the trains. **Often, a second section ran to accommodate all the passengers.** In March of 1936, less than a year after being in service, the Hiawatha's carried their 200,000th passenger. By the late 1930s, a second train was added in each direction - the Morning and Afternoon Hiawathas.



# The Hiawathas

## World War II brought change to the Hiawathas

No new passenger units were added to the trains during World War II, although passenger ridership increased on all Milwaukee Road trains. The Milwaukee used passenger trains to transport troops for training as well.

After the war, passenger ridership failed to regain its popularity as automobiles and airplane travel increased dramatically. In the early 1970s, Amtrak took over the Twin Cities service. Today, the Amtrak Hiawatha runs from Milwaukee to Chicago.



*Multiply him by 1,458,912--*

**MULTIPLY** him by 1,458,912 and you have the number of passengers who rode The Milwaukee Road's Hiawathas during 1943 -- as many people as the population of Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Tacoma combined -- the equivalent of the personnel in 97 infantry divisions!

Many of those Hiawatha passengers were men and women in uniform -- traveling under orders or on furlough. Many others were civilians on missions vital to war production. And so the credit of Americans, let it be said that trips "just for pleasure" were few and far between.

The nearly a million and a half that the Hiawatha fleet carried last year were swelled by millions of others who rode the Olympian, the Pioneer Limited, the Arrow, the Southwest Limited, the Chippewa, the Marquette, the Sioux and other Milwaukee Road trains.

In addition, hundreds of thousands of men in the armed forces were transported to camps, maneuver areas and embarkation ports on special trains via The Milwaukee Road and its connections. Altogether, America's railroads carried over four times as many passengers during 1943 as they did in recent pre-war years.

What form of transportation, other than the railroads, could keep the nation's passenger traffic moving so smoothly under existing war conditions? What other form of transportation could provide such swift, dependable, economical service for the mass movement of a nation of 133,000,000 people?

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**Hiawatha**  
NOTHING FASTER ON RAILS

19  
43  
circa



# The Beer Line

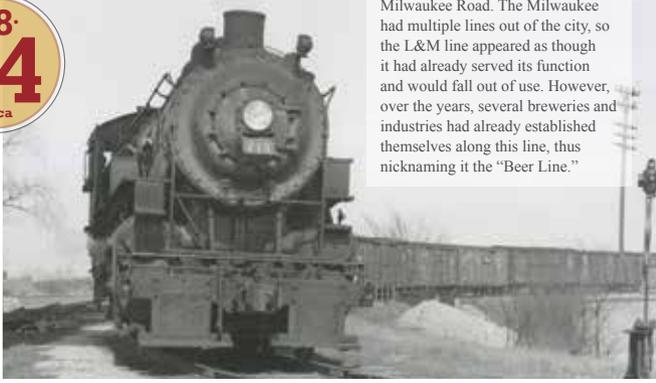
1854-1933

# Milwaukee's Busiest Line

1933-2016

## Unlikely Beginnings

1854  
circa



In 1854, when the La Crosse & Milwaukee Railroad started building tracks north out of downtown Milwaukee, no one could have anticipated what these tracks would service. Ultimately the L&M was incorporated into a predecessor of the Milwaukee Road. The Milwaukee had multiple lines out of the city, so the L&M line appeared as though it had already served its function and would fall out of use. However, over the years, several breweries and industries had already established themselves along this line, thus nicknaming it the "Beer Line."

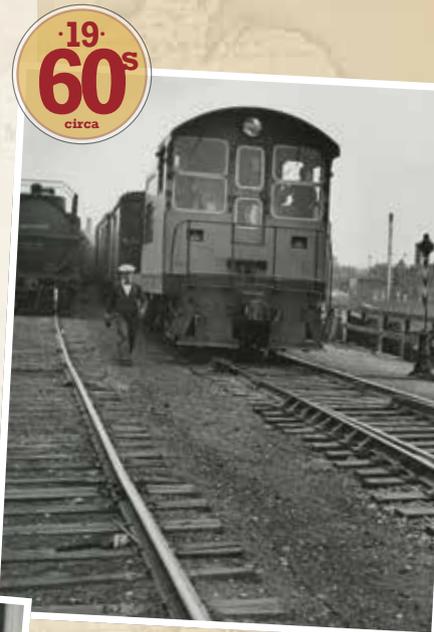
## Peak Business

1960s  
circa

The Beer Line was the busiest branch on the entire Milwaukee Road system! It operated 24 hours a day. The largest known shipment of beer was 276 carloads - 20 million bottles of beer - in just one day. During the 1960s, two trains per day would travel from the Beer Line to the main line in the Menomonee River Valley, bringing loads for distribution and shipment to other cities.

## Industry on the Beer Line

The Beer Line didn't just keep the Milwaukee Road busy with the transportation of beer though. The breweries needed constant shipments of bottles, bottle caps, kegs, and pallets along with hops and grains. Many other factories and businesses located themselves along this busy line for train service, including power plants, the Continental Can factory, the American Motors' Seaman Body Plant, box and paper product plants, six lumber yards, and a macaroni company.



## The Brew City

The conditions were perfect for more than 25 breweries to thrive in Milwaukee. Unlimited water from Lake Michigan, barley from nearby farms, and brewer's yeast from a factory in town made it easy for these breweries to succeed. Large German and Polish immigrant communities in the area were ideal consumers for the beer that was produced.



### Prohibition

In the late 1910s, a group known as the "dry crusaders" moved for an alcohol-free United States. This group wanted to ban alcohol and in doing so believed it would eliminate perceived overarching societal problems. The group was successful from 1920-1933, a period known as Prohibition. During Prohibition, breweries on the Beer Line were forced to either adapt or close. Some managed to survive by producing other products like non-alcoholic beer and soda. By the last years of Prohibition, many of the small breweries had closed, and the future of the Beer Line was uncertain.

1920s  
circa



## The End of the Line

1970s  
circa

Unfortunately, the Beer Line began experiencing decline in the 1970s. Businesses on the line began using trucking services for transportation, while still others closed or moved out of Milwaukee. Schlitz was bought by Stroh Brewing Company of Detroit, and Pabst, which had acquired Blatz in 1961, went out of business in the 1980s. Although the Beer Line was still operating when the Soo Line bought the Milwaukee in 1985, there was very little business left on the Line, and service was eventually stopped completely.

## The Beer Line Today

Most of the Beer Line is gone today with only small sections of track remaining. Miller is the only brewery of the major six from post-Prohibition that remains in Milwaukee today. Part of the industrial space that once surrounded the Beer Line is now the redeveloped Beerline B Neighborhood, a project undertaken by the City of Milwaukee. The Neighborhood is located just northeast of the old Schlitz and Blatz breweries, following the curve of the Milwaukee River from Pleasant Street to Humbolt Avenue. It's now home to apartments, cafes, and other new businesses.

1933  
circa

## Post-Prohibition Revival

In 1933, Prohibition legislation was first amended by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and later repealed, legalizing the consumption of alcohol once again. In Milwaukee, six breweries emerged from Prohibition: Miller, Schlitz, Pabst, Blatz, Braumeister, and Gettleman. The Milwaukee Road served all these breweries along the Beer Line except Braumeister, which was located on the south side of Milwaukee and served by the Chicago & North Western.



1998  
circa

Lakefront Brewery moved to Beerline B Neighborhood in 1998, preserving a small portion of the brewery tradition and history in this area of Milwaukee.

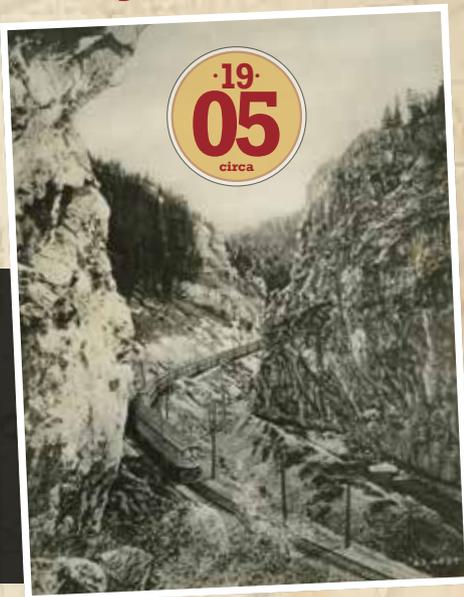
# Onward to the Pacific

# The Milwaukee Road's Sea Going Railroad

## A New Opportunity

In 1905, the Board of Directors of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway noticed that the Northern Pacific Railroad and the Great Northern Railroad were making tremendous profits from the traffic coming from Japan and other Asian countries. When these lines came from the West Coast to the Midwest, the shipments continued onto the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad. The CM&StP realized that the only way they could profit from Asian imports was to build their own line to the Pacific Northwest. That same year, the Railroad began building the Pacific Coast Extension.

The plans for the Pacific Coast Extension by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul would take the lines into South Dakota and confine them out to Seattle and Tacoma. It meant building 1,500 miles of mainline track to those destinations and 1,000 miles of branch lines. However, plans changed when the Railroad discovered a shorter route to the West Coast and one easier to build than their competitors' lines. By August of 1908, the line was open to Butte, Montana, and in 1911, passenger service began from Chicago to the Pacific Northwest.



Although the **Pacific Coast Expansion** created traffic and profit from the west coast on the Milwaukee, it also put the Railroad in a precarious financial position. The actual cost of the expansion was \$256 million, about four times the initial estimated cost. The Expansion also bypassed many of the towns between South Dakota and Tacoma. Despite the shorter and easier route out west, the line could not pick up any business along the way. These factors, along with the government control of railroads during World War I and the opening of the Panama Canal, led the Milwaukee to declare bankruptcy in 1925.



“The expansion was a big financial risk for the Milwaukee: would it pay off?”

The Pacific Coast Expansion traversed mountains and valleys, requiring labor-intensive bridges to be built.



## A Freight Train at Sea

One very foggy morning in the Puget Sound, the lookout of the USS Idaho reported “a large object dead ahead and very close.” Upon hearing this report, the captain called out to the lookout to describe what was ahead. The lookout was a new recruit from the Midwest and replied, **“You wouldn’t believe me if I tell you, sir, but it looks to me like a Milwaukee Road freight train!”**

The lookout wasn’t wrong. When the Milwaukee Road was looking to reach Seattle from their final stop in Tacoma, they were prevented from laying down trackage because their competitors controlled the area. Unwilling to give up access to the mills in Seattle and profitable transportation of lumber, the Milwaukee contracted for barge services. The rail cars were transported by barge through the Puget Sound to reach the ports that they could not reach by rail.



## Servicing the Puget Sound

In 1913, the Milwaukee bought its own barge. They also constructed a 118-foot tug boat, the Milwaukee, which was used to tow rail cars on barges to other towns with pulp and paper mills.

Over time, seven different barges were used, ranging in size from 100 to 330 feet. A single barge could hold up to 21 cars on its three tracks. On average, the Milwaukee made three trips weekly in the Puget Sound, each taking six and a half hours. The Olympic Peninsula became one of the most profitable parts of the railroad.

The barges ran a little differently than the Milwaukee’s trains. The tides in the Puget Sound, not a railroad timetable, determined when barges would be loaded and unloaded. High and low tides had variations of 8 to 12 feet, so the docks had mechanisms to raise or lower them as needed.

The Milwaukee tug ran every day from its creation in 1913 until its retirement 42 years later. The only time it was not in use was when it went into drydock once a year to be cleaned and repaired.



“At the time of its retirement, the Milwaukee tugboat had traveled 1,600,000 miles in the Puget Sound.”

# Hobos and The Great Depression

1929-1939

During the Great Depression, over 13 million Americans lost their jobs and 2 million were homeless. The Milwaukee Road also fell on hard times as business was at an all-time low. Many Americans struggled to find work, so large numbers of men, and sometimes women, started roaming the country to look for work - and were nicknamed hobos.



## Hobo Community

Unofficially, the railroads provided more than just transportation for hobos. They were also used as unsanctioned meeting places. Hobos would gather near railroad yards, sidings, and trestles when they arrived in a new town to find out more about the town and jobs available. These gathering places were called hobo jungles, which the permanent residents of towns did not appreciate. Because the hobos had nothing, they would often steal from gardens, boxcars, or even homes for food. They then would share this food in a Mulligan stew - the combination of whatever food the hobos from the jungle could find.

## A Dangerous Lifestyle

The primary means of transportation for hobos was by rail. While hitchhiking on freight trains was free - it was dangerous. The least of the hobos' concerns were the railroad police, engineers, and conductors who would force them off the trains when caught. While attempting to hop moving trains or hiding under train cars, many hobos fell off the trains and were injured or killed.

19-39  
circa

## Hobo Signs & Symbols

Not all towns had hobo jungles, so it wasn't uncommon for individuals to go out on their own to find food, work or a place to stay. In these less populated areas, hobos used a code to communicate with one another for survival. Chalk or coal marks on fences, buildings, or sidewalks told hobos new to an area what to expect - a warm meal, a beating from the locals, or indifference.



# Milwaukee Road's Electrification



## The Electrified Era 1914 - 1974

As early as the Pacific Coast Expansion, the Milwaukee considered electrifying their lines out west. Electrification did not happen immediately, because there were many questions that needed answers first. At the time no existing electrified railroad could compare to the scope of the project the Milwaukee was considering undertaking. Would electrification even work? Would the cost be manageable? Could water be a dependable energy source even in dry years?

Once the Milwaukee Road could answer yes to these questions, the project proceeded. In March of 1914, power distribution facilities were in place 440 miles west of Harlowton, Montana, and by the end of the next year, the railroad had been built and put into service. Just over a year later, in 1916, full service began. The line was so successful that the Milwaukee decided to electrify 207 more miles between Othello and Tacoma by 1920. The line ran strong until 1974, when the cost of repairs and equipment replacement became too high.

“ Would electrification even work? Would the cost be manageable? Could water be a dependable energy source even in dry years? ”

## Electric Locomotives

The new electrified line required new locomotives. The Milwaukee's first electric locomotive was delivered in 1915 and, at 112 feet long, was the largest locomotive in the world. It could take a 2,800 ton train up a 1% grade at 16 miles per hour - a significant improvement on the steam locomotive. Electric locomotives were also beneficial because they operated in temperatures below zero degrees without any problem. The steam engines would freeze up at 40 degrees below zero, which happened often in the mountain winters. Finally, the electrics conserved power by returning 50% of the power they used going up a hill when they were going downhill.



## Bi-polars

Built in 1919, 5 electric locomotives named "Bi-polars" were designed for passenger service in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. They got their name from their unique design, which looked the same whether you saw them from the front or the back. These large locomotives were 76 feet long and weighed 30,000 pounds, but rode smoothly even at 70 miles per hour.



## Little Joes

Originally built for Russia and named after Josef Stalin, the "Little Joes" locomotives could not be sold to Russia due to political changes. As a result, the Milwaukee purchased 10 of these units in 1950. The Little Joes were used for both freight and passenger service from Montana to Idaho. Even larger than the bi-polars, they were 88 feet long, weighed 566,000 pounds, but could still go 70 miles per hour.



# The Silk Trains

## The Craving For Silk

What were the fastest trains on the Milwaukee Road? In the first half of the 20th century, they were neither passenger or meat trains, but the silk trains. Believe it or not, these trains had priority over all others on the railroad, and their cargo value would often exceed 2 million dollars.

The silk trains, or "silkers," carried raw silk from Japan that would be made into clothing. The trains took on their loads in Seattle and raced to Chicago to hand their cargos over to the New York Central Railroad for transportation eastward. Because raw silk was in such high demand, each train was equipped with armed guards. Even though engine crews changed throughout the route, the armed guards never left the trains until arrival in Chicago, and crew changes only took 10 minutes to keep the trains moving. The first silk train on the Milwaukee Road traveled across the country in 1909.



19-09  
circa



## The Fastest Trains on the Rails

There were many reasons why the silkers were the fastest trains, but they largely have to do with the incredible demand for silk. This material was so valuable that the trains were insured by the hour, making quick transportation essential. There was also the concern that the price of the silk might rise or fall when in transit, which would negatively affect either the manufacturer or the seller.

19-33  
circa

## Women's Silk Fashion

Silk has a long history of use in China, dating back to the early dynasties. Because of its beautiful, soft texture and the extensive amount of time it took to produce, it was highly valuable. Silk garments were worn only by the emperor and those of high classes for many years. Silk became popular in the United States in the early 1900s. By the 1920s, silk was incredibly fashionable for women's clothing. The raw material was spun into various types of silk fabric, including chiffon, taffeta and velvet. These materials were used for many types of dresses, blouses, skirts, wraps, and robes. One most popular use of silk was for the afternoon party dress. In the summer, wearing a white silk party dress meant that you were of higher class. The white silk would soil easily, so frequent cleaning, typically by servants, was necessary. Those of lower classes would typically wear other pastel colors, such as yellow, lilac or dusty rose. These afternoon silk dresses were paired with stockings, modest heels like Mary Jane's, gloves, and a straw hat.



# The Fast Mail

Mail service begins on trains.

18-60  
circa

The first Railway Post Office is established in Minnesota for mail between the Twin Cities and Chicago.

18-71  
circa

18-84  
circa

The Milwaukee Road first refers to a mail train as the **Columbian Fast Mail**. The Fast Mail name was adopted a few years later.

3,200 Railway Post Office clerks were running 90,000 route miles in 1,900 cars nationwide.

19-00  
circa

The large volume of mail required the Milwaukee to run both Fast Mail trains in two sections.

19-50  
circa

Early: The Milwaukee Road purchases special Flexi-van trailers to carry 1,600 - 2,400 sacks of mail.

19-60  
circa

Late: Mail and express is hauled primarily by airplanes and trucks.



19-71  
circa

In April, the last Fast Mail train ran on the Milwaukee Road.

Many trains on multiple different railroads carried mail and were called the **Fast Mail**. However, the Milwaukee ran things a little differently. During the day, passengers traveled between the Twin Cities. Then, at night, the Milwaukee moved mail and express packages on trains 56 and 57. **The Fast Mail gets its name from the top speeds of these trains** - Train 57 made the trip between Chicago and Minneapolis - with multiple stops - in only 9 hours and 15 minutes!

## Passengers on the Fast Mail

Normally the Fast Mail trains did not carry any passengers. For a short period during 1954 and 1955, the Fast Mail from Minneapolis to Chicago carried passengers. The trains left Minneapolis at 8:20 p.m. and arrived in Chicago at 6:20 a.m. after making 10 extra stops for passengers. The train had no dining car or room for luggage besides carry-on luggage.



## The Makeup of a Fast Mail Train

Each of the Fast Mail trains contained 15 to 24 mail and express cars. The train from Chicago carried materials from the eastern United States, and the train from Minneapolis brought materials from the Pacific Northwest. During the 1950s, so much mail was transported that the Fast Mail trains ran in two sections, dropping off or adding cars at stops like Milwaukee, Portage, La Crosse, and St. Paul.



## Why So Fast?

Loading and unloading along the route's many stops often caused delays. Some stops required up to 45 minutes of unloading and loading time. To make up for these delays, the Fast Mail usually had the right-of-way over other trains. It would run as quickly as possible - sometimes over 100 miles per hour - to stick to the schedule.



# Deadliest War in History World War II

# Milwaukee Road Goes to War

## On the Homefront

It was late 1939, the world was at war. Although the United States had not yet joined the conflict, the country feared that like in the First World War, it was only a matter of time. The U.S. government began making preparations to create and supply war materials, and they would need transportation.

However, the last years of the Great Depression were difficult for the Milwaukee Road. In 1935, they filed for bankruptcy for the second time and, by 1938, had an \$18 million deficit. Their equipment was near the end of what the Milwaukee thought was its use. 200 locomotives were over 25 years old. Very few new cars of any kind were built, and many of the older cars were scheduled to be scrapped. It appeared as though the Milwaukee was at the end.

Instead, when the U.S. government prepared to enter the war, they needed all available railroads to help with transportation of raw goods and products. Huge shipments of lumber were hauled from the West Coast for use in the east. The lumber would be used to build training camps, and new factories for the production and manufacture of war goods. Then, once necessary supplies were produced, they needed to be transported by rail for shipment overseas.



The Milwaukee was essential to these war efforts. It moved raw goods, finished products, agricultural items, and fuel from as far as Washington and Idaho to Chicago. From there, these necessary goods would be shipped to eastern states.

As the United States prepared for war, young men were drafted into military service. These new recruits needed to be trained, and the Milwaukee did its part to transport troops for training.

In 1940, the Milwaukee Road moved 65,000 Army and National Guard troops to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. In order to do this, they used 15 trains in one day. Throughout the war, the Milwaukee continued to move troops for training. A record 25-car train was needed to take troops from Spokane, Washington, to Milwaukee – it was the largest passenger train ever moved on the Milwaukee Road.

With the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States officially declared war on the Axis powers and joined the Allied forces. The Milwaukee continued to move troops and goods throughout the duration of the war.

## Overseas

The Milwaukee wasn't just operating on the homefront, though – it even helped with the war effort overseas.

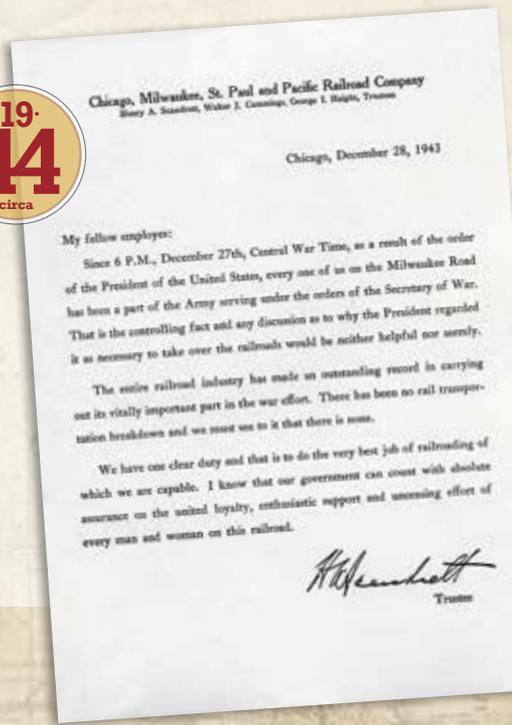
In 1944, the Allied Powers invaded Europe on the coast of Normandy in France. The fighting caused a great deal of damage to the French railroads and equipment.

In order to help repair the damage and operate freight trains, the Milwaukee Road sponsored two railway battalions. These brave men worked under constant bombing until the end of the war. Both battalions were largely staffed by Milwaukee Road employees, although other railroads also sent some men to help in this overseas effort.

The 744th Operating Battalion kept the rail lines repaired and functioning. They also operated the trains that transported supplies and equipment to the front.

The 757th Rail Shops Battalion repaired and serviced locomotives and cars. These locomotives and cars were essential in supplying the front lines.

1944  
circa



“The Milwaukee was essential to the war effort.”



# Notable Women on the Rails

# The Centennial Celebration

## Women Railroaders

It was rare to find women working for railroads before World War II, but they weren't completely new to railroading on the Milwaukee Road. Long before the United States entered World War II, women were quietly helping and working on the Milwaukee. The wives of station agents were often essential to the operation of the Road, assisting their husbands and even handling the jobs themselves when their husbands were away. Jenny O'Hern, wife of the station agent at Wakpala, South Dakota, worked as a telegraph operator in 1918. Clare Allgair also started working at Rhame, North Dakota, around that same time.

When vast numbers of men were drafted for military service, they left many jobs open that women needed to take over in their absence. In the summer of 1942, the Milwaukee hired a number of women to work as clerks in Seattle to alleviate the shortage of men. Shortly after women started taking on jobs that traditionally belonged to men, the government sponsored advertisements encouraging women to take these jobs so the men would be free to fight.

## Women's Fashion Turns Functional

Because of their new role, women's clothing began to change. The traditional feminine look of dresses and skirts was not practical clothing for jobs on the railroad or in factories, so women began to wear pants and coveralls. Not only were pants safer, but they were also warmer and more functional for other tasks like gardening and traveling.



## RUTH TRELA

Unlike many women in the 1940s, Ruth Trela did not begin working for the railroad because of the war. Her father was ill, so Ruth took on the responsibility to provide for the family. She began working for the Milwaukee Road in 1941 as a file clerk in the Dining and Sleeping Car Department. In a year or so, Ruth became secretary to one of the department's managers. Because of the volume of railroad traffic, she worked seven days a week during the war. Even after the war, she stayed on with her department until 1971, when the department was closed. She then worked another 11 years for the Milwaukee in other jobs. She retired in 1982 after 41 years of service.



## MARY BYINGTON

Mary was hired as a train order operator during the war to help coordinate the large number of trains transporting troops. She learned train operations and communications and watched for problems as the trains passed her station. Mary worked diligently at this job every day of the week during the war years. When the war ended, she decided to return to her family and not stay on with the Milwaukee.



“In 1946, the Railroad had 2,315 women working throughout the system. Many of these women stayed with the Milwaukee until retirement.”

## A Century of Operation

On November 20, 1950, the Milwaukee Road commemorated 100 years of operation with music, a reenactment trip, a parade, and a special luncheon. Over 800 people attended the large centennial celebration at the passenger station in the heart of Milwaukee.

Milwaukee Road employees created a choir and a band that performed music composed specifically for the day's events – “On the Old Milwaukee Road” and “The Hiawatha Centennial March.”



Many of the attendees were dressed in 1850-style clothing to recreate the environment in which the Milwaukee Road was born. The first trip to Wauwatosa on what was once the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad was reenacted using an 1850 vintage locomotive and period cars that were borrowed from the Baltimore and Ohio Museum.

In Wauwatosa, the crowd greeted the arrival of the century-old locomotive with cheers and more celebration before the train riders returned to the Milwaukee depot. As a special treat, the train came in “nose to nose” with the new 1950 Hiawatha. The group then paraded to the Schroeder (now Hilton) Hotel in downtown Milwaukee for a celebratory luncheon.

Special commemorative souvenirs included “Four Generations on the Line,” a special booklet; souvenir tickets to the anniversary celebration and luncheon; a special volume of the 1950 employee magazines; and “The Milwaukee Road – Its First 100 Years,” a book by noted Wisconsin author August Derleth.



November 20, 1950



# The Passenger Trains



Before the widespread use of airplanes and automobiles, passenger trains were the primary means of transportation in the continental U.S. The Milwaukee Road had 19 named trains and numerous other unnamed local trains by the beginning of 1948, just before trains fell out of popularity.

**19  
48**  
circa

## • THE • PIONEER LIMITED

Chicago – St. Paul – Minneapolis

**Fun fact:** The Milwaukee was the first railroad to bring a train to the Twin Cities from Chicago, and this train was named after that feat. It was always a first-class train equipped with the latest features.



## • THE • FISHERMAN

Chicago – Wausau – Minocqua – Star Lake

**Fun fact:** Originally called The Fisherman's Special, this train was used to transport vacationers to Wisconsin's Northwoods.

## • THE • MINNESOTA MARQUETTE

Chicago – Madison – Austin – Minneapolis

## • THE • VARSITY

Chicago – Janesville – Madison

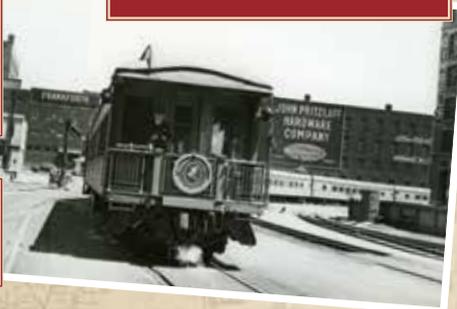


**19  
15**  
circa

## • THE • SOUTHWEST LIMITED

Chicago – Milwaukee – Kansas City

**Fun fact:** Service began almost immediately after the Milwaukee reached Kansas City in 1887. Early trains made 59 stops on this route. It was named the Southwest Limited in 1903 for the Kansas City to Chicago portion and applied to both directions in 1915.



# The Milwaukee Road 19 Named Trains



## • THE • ARROW

Chicago – Omaha – Sioux City – Sioux Falls

**19  
71**  
circa

## • THE • TRAVELER

Chicago – Milwaukee

**Fun fact:** The morning train was named in recognition of the Milwaukee Travelers Masonic Lodge, which was made up of the Milwaukee Shop employees. The name fell out of use in October of 1968 but continued to run as Train 24 until Amtrak took over passenger service in 1971.



## • THE • MARQUETTE

Chicago – Madison – Mason City

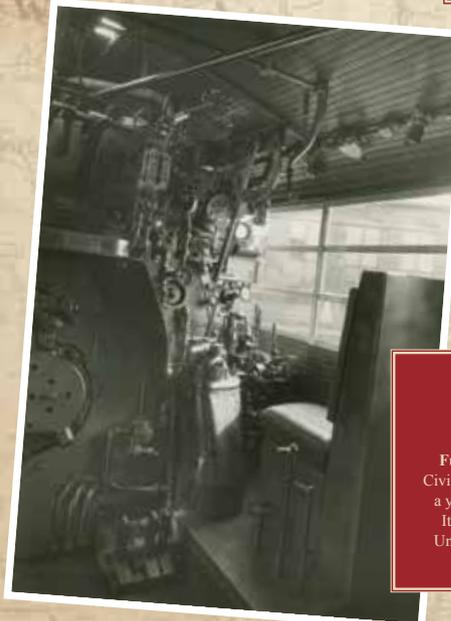


**19  
27**  
circa

## • THE • SIOUX

Chicago – Mason City – Rapid City

**Fun fact:** In 1927, this was the longest run of any train on the Milwaukee line with the exception of the trains to Seattle and Tacoma.



## THE ON WISCONSIN

Milwaukee – Madison

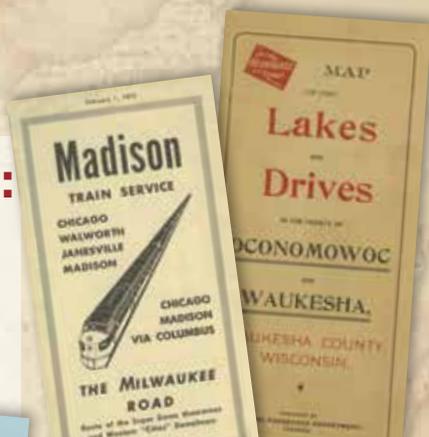
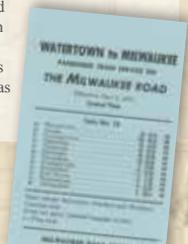
**Fun fact:** This train was named for the Civil War rallying cry of Arthur MacArthur, a young officer in a Wisconsin regiment. It was adopted as the fight song by the University of Wisconsin Badgers shortly after the train was introduced.

# The Commuter Services

## Before Carpooling: Commuter Trains

The Milwaukee's commuter services have roots in the 1890s, when in the early years of the railroad, local service ran to Waukesha before expanding westward. Later on, the Railroad ran train 23 from Chicago to Milwaukee and onward to Madison. Commuters could take the return train, number 24, from Watertown at 7:00 am and arrive in Milwaukee at 8:45 am. Then, after work, they could catch the westbound train to Madison at 5:00 pm in Milwaukee, arriving in Watertown at 6:45 pm. This train was affectionately known by commuters as the "Cannonball" and ran until 1972.

1972  
circa



## Commuter Services in Chicago

In Chicago, the Milwaukee operated commuter lines on three routes. Two of these are still in operation, and the third is now part of Chicago's elevated lines.

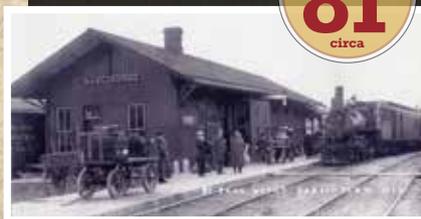
**Chicago to Evanston, IL.** When the Chicago & Evanston merged with another railroad controlled by the Milwaukee, the Milwaukee reached an agreement with the controlling railroad to operate on these lines to Evanston. The two railroads worked together so that the Milwaukee could service their customers already on the line.

**Libertyville, IL, to Janesville, WI.** This branch began in 1881 as a three mile stretch to Libertyville from Milwaukee. The northern suburbs of Chicago, including Libertyville, were growing and becoming popular summer destinations for those in the city. The train would take vacationers to and from this area. Then, in 1900, the branch was extended to Janesville as a secondary main line. This became a commuter for the many suburbs that popped up along the route.

**Chicago to Elgin, IL.** The Milwaukee obtained controlling interest in the Chicago & Pacific Railroad and developed commuter service on their West Line. In 1915, one train ran non-stop from Chicago to Elgin. This was the first example of express commuter service. By 1930, there were 14 daily round trip trains to Elgin. In 2006, this number increased to 24 trains each day.

Many of the Milwaukee Road lines are still in use today. Metra commuter trains start from Union Station in downtown Chicago and travel the same route up the main line toward Milwaukee.

1881  
circa



## The Nashotah Club

Many important and influential Milwaukee businessmen rode the Milwaukee's commuter train from work in the city to their homes and summer cottages near Oconomowoc. This included the president of the Railroad at the time, Albert Earling. This group of businessmen became known as "The Nashotah Club" and rented their own car on the Milwaukee. Because of this wealthy group of patrons, the train became known as "The Millionaire Special" because of The Nashotah Club's car and privileges.

## The Best Rolling Party in Wisconsin

Although The Nashotah Club was discontinued in the late 1920s, the club-like atmosphere remained amongst the riders of that commuter train. Commuters became regulars and developed camaraderie amongst themselves. On Friday nights, the regulars relaxed and enjoyed refreshments on the train – which is why it was called the best rolling party in Wisconsin.

# Dinner in the Diner

## Dining Cars

In the beginning of the railroad, trains did not travel great distances. As railroads expanded their lines, the trains stopped roughly every 100 miles to take on water and fuel. Passengers typically brought a box lunch with them on the train or bought food from platform vendors when the trains made these stops.

Then, in 1861, President Lincoln was served a dinner aboard a specially fitted car during his travel between Albany and Buffalo, New York. This was the beginning of a long history of meal service aboard trains.

Luxury hotel cars were built in 1867, which had sleeping berths and a small kitchen. 30-40 passengers could sleep and eat in these cars. In 1868, the first full dining car was built, and by 1875, most railroads began including dining cars on their best trains.

The Milwaukee Road did not introduce dining cars and meal service until 1892. Dining cars were the heaviest and most expensive of all railroad cars, but once they were introduced, passengers expected food service on trains. As time went on, railroads switched to cars with lunch counters and buffets that offered simple food items and saved the railroad money.

1892  
circa



Dining car service grew widely popular. In just one month during the year 1930, the Milwaukee Road consumed, on average:

- 40,000 pounds of beef
- 100,000 pounds of potatoes
- 35,000 pounds of poultry
- 13,000 pounds of onions
- 6,500 gallons of milk and cream
- 22,000 eggs

## Cookbooks and Rulebooks

The Milwaukee Road took their commitment to the highest quality of service very seriously. In 1929, a book of rules was published by the Railroad for use in dining cars. These 269 rules dictated how food was to be served. There were eight rules alone on how to prepare and serve coffee. One of these rules declared that there could be no changes in these rules. There were even rules on how to serve items as small as pats of butter. Any deviation from these rules could result in the waiter or chef being fired.

In general, two or three waiters handled the service for each dining car. Each waiter had a different status level that dictated their responsibilities. The lowest level waiter was in charge of table glasses, syrup containers, car lights, newspapers, and sweeping and mopping the hallways.

Like many other railroads, the Milwaukee served afternoon tea on their long distance trains, but the Milwaukee's procedures were completely unique. Early in the day, a female passenger was selected to act as hostess for the tea service. At four o'clock, she would pour the tea for the waiters to distribute. The hostess received a cookbook or a souvenir cup and saucer to mark their service.

In addition to the book of rules, the Milwaukee also developed a specialty cookbook for their meal service. The Railroad hired George Rector, a famous restaurateur, to select the items for this cookbook and train the chefs on how to prepare the meals. This cookbook remained in use until the end of the Milwaukee's passenger and dining car service, and was a popular souvenir.



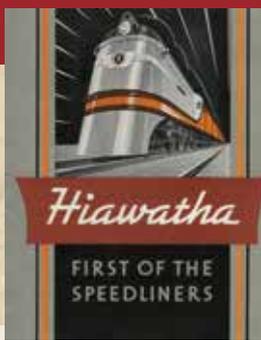
# Milwaukee Road Advertising



**EARLY**  
**1900s**  
circa

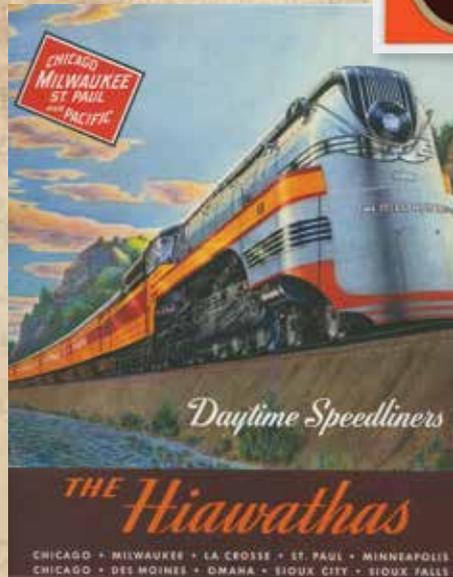
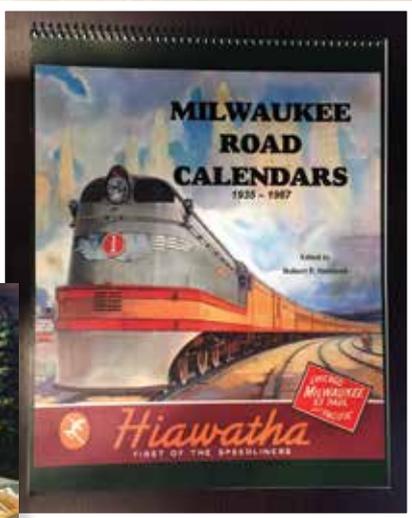
The name Milwaukee Road was coming into use and would later become a household name for the railroad. The widespread popularity of the railroad as a means of travel for people and transportation of goods was visible in households throughout the areas that the Milwaukee served.

# Milwaukee Road Advertising



## Calendars

In order to keep the Milwaukee's name in the front of passengers and businessmen, the Milwaukee Road provided calendars to the public. These calendars were a daily reminder of the Railroad's reliability, versatility, and service. The designs of these calendars evolved over time to reflect the customers' interests and the Railroad's services.



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**New Hiawathas are rollin'!**

SEVERAL Milwaukee Road Hiawathas are now rolling up into thousands miles a day of regular service in our northern and northwestern states. Safety, smooth and quiet, these new Hiawathas will give you as delightful a ride as if they were on rails in your own back yard.

With a huge fleet of new cars, the great majority of them built in Wisconsin, The Milwaukee Road has put new Hiawathas on the road—equipped with Hiawatha-improved motor and coach trains.

Hiawathas are shown on the map below. Anywhere you go in this broad area, you are sure to find a Hiawatha. For a complete list of Milwaukee Road Hiawathas, R. S. Sargent, Passenger Traffic Manager, 200 Union Station, Chicago 4, Illinois.



**JOHN'S PIN-UP TRAIN**

HOW is my pin Hiawatha coming along? Don't tell me—I know. Right on the dot, about... Every day the many Hiawathas that ply the Chicago to Omaha route are the sight of the finest of my pin Hiawathas. They will carry you to your destination and then they will be back in my hands.

So write John Sargent, Passenger Traffic Manager, 200 Union Station, Chicago 4, Illinois, in a letter to his mother, Mrs. Leo Sargent.

...according to the best Milwaukee Road tradition. When someone writes you to tell the Milwaukee Road a special good of the Milwaukee Road, be a real of home in the right old of your pin Hiawatha you can experience the thrill of traveling across the land you love.

It's a tradition all of us. The Milwaukee Road will enjoy with you.



**"... a trout stream in the front yard—mountains at the back door..."**

WHY? Well, just a few and a girl planning to leave the home of a girl. In this country you're always wanted where you're wanted, and you're wanted where you're wanted, and you're wanted where you're wanted.

That's the American way. It's the American way. It's the American way. It's the American way.



**The pup that meets all trains**

Hiawatha is a little train and the railroad is a big one. The train is the one that meets all the trains. The railroad is the one that meets all the trains. The train is the one that meets all the trains. The railroad is the one that meets all the trains.

Hiawatha is a little train and the railroad is a big one. The train is the one that meets all the trains. The railroad is the one that meets all the trains. The train is the one that meets all the trains. The railroad is the one that meets all the trains.



**DAD, WHERE DO THE TRACKS GO?**

"DAD, if you could show me, where do the tracks go? I want to know where the tracks go. I want to know where the tracks go. I want to know where the tracks go."

"Well, you'd better go to the Milwaukee Road. The Milwaukee Road is the one that meets all the trains. The Milwaukee Road is the one that meets all the trains. The Milwaukee Road is the one that meets all the trains. The Milwaukee Road is the one that meets all the trains."



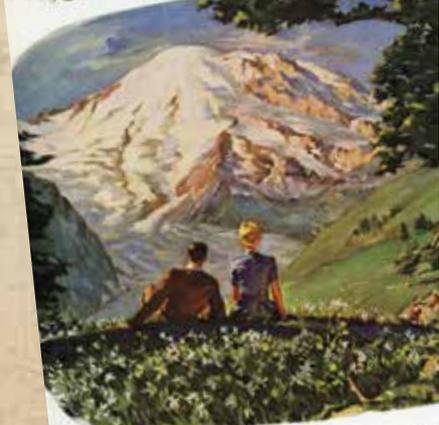
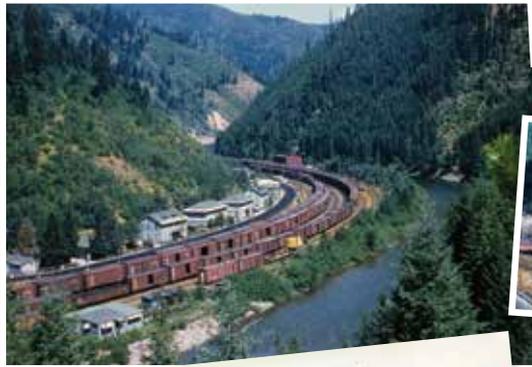
# Tourism on the Rails

# Favorite Vacation Spots of the Milwaukee

Before automobiles and airplanes became the transportation of choice for family vacations, most people traveled by train.

The Milwaukee Road emphasized their services to popular summer vacation spots, such as the Wisconsin Northwoods,

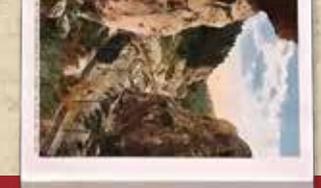
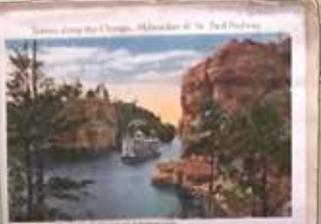
Upper Michigan, and Yellowstone National Park. Passenger services to vacation stops were popular during times of prosperity and peace. Shortly after World War II, the Milwaukee began heavily advertising their passenger service once again, encouraging people to allow themselves a vacation after a time of national sacrifice and scarcity.



Some day when I come back, we'll travel together  
 S on the Olympic—we'll take it on the honeymoon that we don't get to give to you.  
 Hand in hand—just you and I—we'll wander through the magic wonderland that's Yellowstone Park and see its spouting geysers, its bubbling pine trees, its multi-colored terraces, its breathtaking canyons.  
 We'll visit a Montana dude ranch, see—and sit atop a scenic tower and plan our year together in the moonlight as a cowboy in the distance sings a plaintive love song, or peaceful, song of the range.  
 We'll go westward and sail across Puget Sound.

From a snow-capped peak on the Olympic Peninsula we'll watch the sun sink in the blue Pacific.  
 We'll stay in a chalet in Paradise Valley at towering Mount Rainier—small though flower-dusted. All pine needles so glistening and so cool and soer. It'll be so long till we realize this dream, I hope. It's one reward victory will bring—to us.

**THE MILWAUKEE ROAD**



**Salt water cruising**  
 on mountain-girt Puget Sound spices your Washington vacation.

The marine and seaside weekend offers total relaxation and busy days... as fishermen and fishermen see at their own expense in several boats. There are the Blue Glades on the Olympic Peninsula—all near Seattle of the County are Spokane's islands and Grand Golden State. And the glacially carved bay to Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains.

• Plan your first vacation here.



**THE MILWAUKEE ROAD**



We hope you are enjoying your trip  
 The only way to enjoy it  
**MILWAUKEE**



**Coming... a new service to Vacationland**  
**Olympian Hiawathas**  
 CHICAGO - PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Scenic will bring a new conventional Olympic service. You can go on leave schedules, to Yellowstone, western shore Golden State... Mt. Rainier, Mt. Baker and other Puget Sound attractions covering around Seattle and Tacoma.

It's important for the new Olympic Hiawathas to be the all-time shipping year will be made. This includes the new engineering thing and the delivery.

The Top Golf... Paradise sleeping car that bring you luxury with economy... Amuse themselves in the Lounge car that are ever further beyond.

**Free Vacation Information**  
 For literature on vacation in the Northwest Vacationland via the Olympic Hiawathas, write E. N. White, Passenger Traffic Manager, The Milwaukee Road, 222 N. Dearborn, Chicago 4, Illinois.

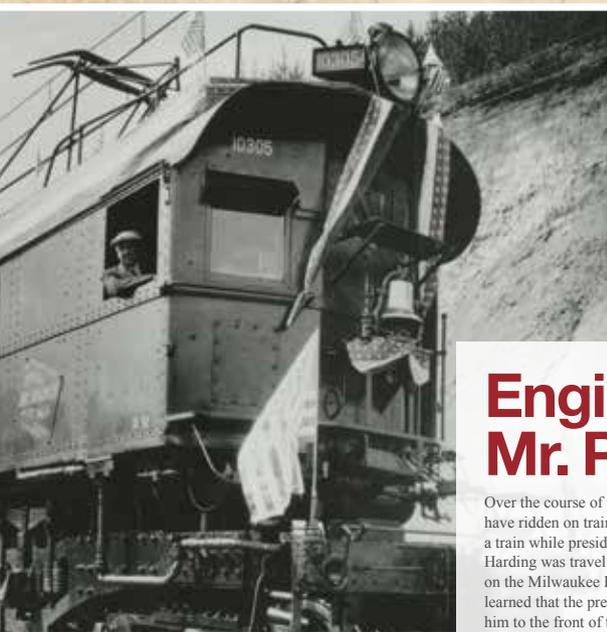


**THE MILWAUKEE ROAD**

# Tales from the Rails

## “Going to Golf”

One of the early presidents of the Milwaukee Road frequently took a private train car to Glen View Golf Club, but he always simply said that he was “going to golf.” Since the weather was sometimes rainy or cold, a large shelter was built near the golf course for the president to wait in until the train returned. After a while, the area around the golf course became more developed, so railroad officials decided it should be a regular stop and needed a name. The stop was named “Golf,” and the developing town, a suburb of Chicago, kept this name.



19  
23  
circa

## Engineer Mr. President

Over the course of the years, many U.S. presidents have ridden on trains, but only one actually operated a train while president. In 1923, President Warren Harding was traveling out west, and part of his trip was on the Milwaukee Road. When the railroad officials learned that the president was on board, they invited him to the front of the locomotive. He was given a short lesson and then took over the controls to operate the train for a number of miles.

“Over the course of the years, many U.S. presidents have ridden on trains, but only one actually operated a train while president.”



## One Town's Big Mistake

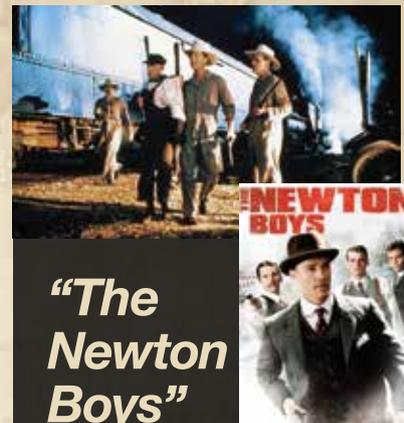
When the Milwaukee was building their lines in Iowa, a town was anxious to have a railroad in their community. They knew the railroad would help the town flourish, and help them make a large amount of money from the sale of land to the railroad. However, when the Milwaukee Road land agents came to town, the price was too high, and the agents walked away from the offer. Instead, the Milwaukee laid down track in another direction and completely passed the town. Realizing their mistake, the town decided to move everything over by 2 miles to where the railroad was. In the end, they made no money at all.

# The Milwaukee Road In The Movies

## “Danger Lights”

“*Danger Lights*” is the story of a love triangle on the railroad yard and its disastrous consequences. In the very beginning of the movie, a landslide blocks railroad tracks near the yard in Miles City, Montana. A team of railroad repairmen and nearby hobos work together to move the rocks and keep the tracks functional. When Dan Thorn, the boss of the yard, learns that one of the hobos was once a railroad engineer, he hires him for the railroad. Larry Doyle, the new employee, quickly falls in love with Mary Ryan, who is engaged to Dan. When a fight over Mary breaks out in the railroad yard between the two men, Dan is severely injured. It is then up to Larry to take one of the trains on an emergency trip to Chicago to save his rival's life.

When the producers of this movie were looking for scenery to match the film, they decided on using the Milwaukee Road. The movie was shot in Montana, South Dakota, and Chicago using Milwaukee Road equipment, buildings and scenery. The Milwaukee was not mentioned by name in the story, but its trademark can be seen on the locomotives and freight cars in the film. There were even Milwaukee Road employees in the movie! Arnold Running played the boss's clerk, and J.J. Foley landed a feature role as the Assistant General Manager. Other workers can be seen playing themselves, busy as boilermakers, mechanics, and other railroad workmen.

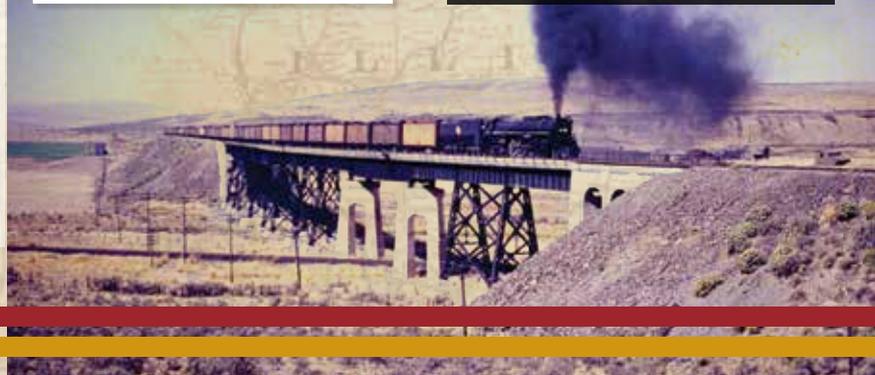


## “The Newton Boys”

This 1998 comedy-drama chronicles the story of the real-life Newton Gang, a group of brothers who were some of the most successful bank robbers in the United States. The story begins with Willis Newton, an ex-convict who was unjustly imprisoned. He becomes frustrated with his position in life and craves to move up the social ladder. In his quest to move up in society, Willis involves his brothers in multiple bank robberies, convincing them that the real villains and criminals are the bankers.

Once the banks and insurance companies wise up, the old safes are replaced with stronger ones that are more difficult to break into. The Newton Gang, aware of the changes, crafts and executes an elaborate plan to rob a cash transport, but the gang comes very close to being caught. After this dangerous attempt, Willis tries to live by the law and buys an oil spring, but things still do not work out for him. As one last attempt, the gang robs a train at night, but when one of their accomplices accidentally shoots one of the brothers, the gang is revealed when they seek medical attention.

This movie is based on a true story, and the train robbery at the end of the film really did happen – on a Milwaukee Road train. It was the last great train robbery. The train was headed north to Minneapolis when it was stopped by the Newton Gang in Rondout, Illinois, and robbed. The group of brothers was eventually caught, and most of the money was found, but over \$1 million was never recovered.



# Notable Firsts and Records

## The Longest Service by an Employee

83 years by John H. Horan

John Horan began working for the Milwaukee & Mississippi in 1855 as a shop helper. He continued to work for the railroad throughout its many changes and eventually invented a process for cleaning steam locomotives with soda ash. **He never retired**, and upon his passing in 1938, he had spent 83 of his 100 years working for the Milwaukee.

**83**  
years

He never retired...

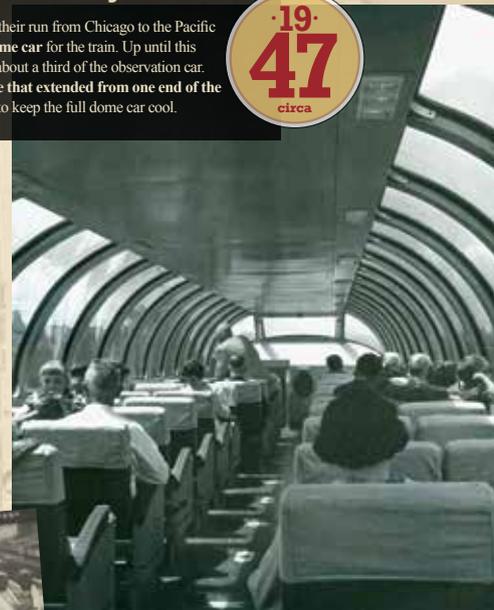


# Notable Firsts and Records

## The First Full Dome Car on any Railroad

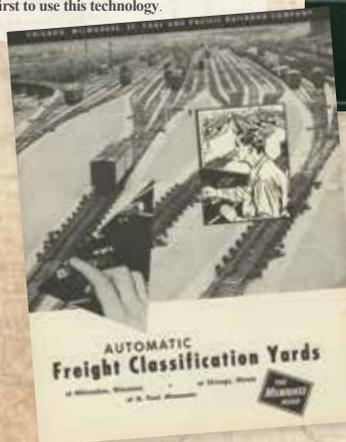
In 1947, as the Milwaukee developed a new train for their run from Chicago to the Pacific Northwest, the Railroad envisioned a **new type of dome car** for the train. Up until this point, the glass dome portion on most trains covered about a third of the observation car. **The Milwaukee was the first to create a glass dome that extended from one end of the car to the other.** Two air conditioners were required to keep the full dome car cool.

**19-47**  
circa



## The First Automated Freight Car Classification Yard Bensenville, IL

In 1952, the Milwaukee upgraded their main yard outside of Chicago at Bensenville, Illinois. The yard consisted of 70 tracks and had a total capacity of over 5,000 cars. **It was built to classify 3,600 cars in a 24-hour period.** The main control panel of the classification system separated cars from trains and sorted them onto various tracks based on their destinations. The Bensenville yard was the first to use this technology.



## The Invention of the Spill-Proof Coffee Cup William Dolphin

When a train was in motion, coffee usually spilled on table cloths. William Dolphin, Dining and Sleeping Car Superintendent for the Milwaukee Road, dreamed up a way to prevent this. After a number of experiments, he created the spill-proof coffee cup. The top of the cup sloped slightly inward and had a small lip near the top to keep coffee from splashing out.

**19-24**  
circa



## The Largest Locomotive in the World

112 feet

The first electric locomotive on the Milwaukee was **112 feet long** (or one-third of the length of a football field) and weighed **500,000 pounds**. The Milwaukee used it from 1914 until 1974.

## The Only Railroad to Operate in Every Time Zone in the Continental United States

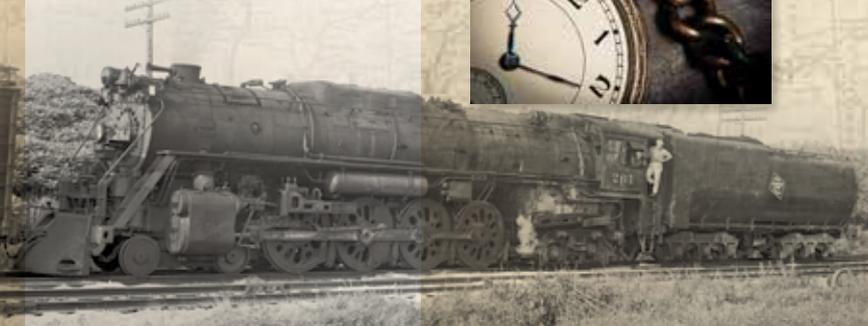
The Milwaukee Road covered **more territory across the United States** than any other. It was the only railroad to operate in every time zone in the continental United States – from the Eastern Time Zone in Indiana to the Pacific Time Zone in Washington state and Idaho.



## The Fastest Train in the World

103.5 miles per hour

One of the Milwaukee's steam locomotives for its new passenger train ran the route between Chicago and Milwaukee at 92.6 miles per hour. This was a new record for steam train speed over a distance of 50 miles or more. **At its fastest, the train traveled 103.5 miles per hour.** Although the record was later beat in England, it remains a record for steam trains in the United States.



## The Longest Electric Railroad in the World

The Milwaukee Road ran Over 600 miles to the Pacific Northwest.



## The Last Train Robbery in the United States

June 13, 1924, in Rondout, Illinois

The Number 57 train was heading north towards Minneapolis when two men who had hidden on board forced the train to stop. When it stopped, **two cars of robbers were waiting with tear gas to force those on the train to open the doors. The robbers escaped with 62 bags of securities and money.** Although they were later caught and most of the money recovered, over \$1 million was never found. After the robbers' convictions, they were transported by the Milwaukee to the prison at Leavenworth, Kansas. The movie *The Newton Boys*, starring Matthew McConaughey, is based on this gang of robbers and includes this famous train robbery.



# The Final Years of the Milwaukee Road

# The Milwaukee Road Historical Association

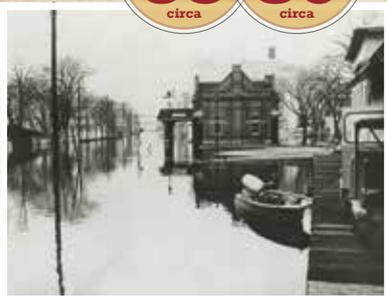
After the centennial celebration in 1950, business for the railroad took a downward turn. Although the Milwaukee came out of bankruptcy in 10 years by 1945 thanks to the income generated during World War II, advances in technology led to innovations in automobiles, trucks, and airplanes. As roads were built and developed, and air travel became more accessible, these other modes of transportation grew in popularity. Typical freight shipments handled by railroads were now switching to trucks. People who once traveled as passengers on the railroad now looked to cars or airplanes for transportation. The problems faced by the Milwaukee after 1950 were felt by many other railroads, some of whom considered merging with one another.

**“The popularization of automobiles, trucks, and airplanes had a negative impact on business for many railroads.”**



## Major Setbacks for the Milwaukee

- **1953** – A 77-day **brewery strike** costs the Milwaukee \$3.5 million in lost revenue.
- **1960s** – **Bad winter weather** leads to the temporary closing of lines and yards.
- **1970** – The large merger of the Great Northern, Northern Pacific, and Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy railroads creates **new competition** for the struggling Milwaukee.
- **1977** – The Milwaukee declares **bankruptcy**.
- **1980** – All lines to the Pacific Northwest have been abandoned. The Milwaukee leaves Seattle and Tacoma.



## Weather Problems

- **1962** – **Record-breaking snowfalls** cause a \$2.7 million loss.
- **1965** – Record snowfall causes flooding along the Mississippi River, which **closes the St. Paul yard for 3 weeks** causing damage to tracks and equipment.
- **1966** – March has one of the worst snow storms in history. **100 mile per hour winds** force the closing of 87 miles of track in South Dakota. The winds create 76 huge snow drifts over a mile long and 30 feet deep, which needs dynamite to break it up.



## Combining Forces

- **1965** – The Milwaukee and the Chicago & North Western work on a merger agreement. Although it is approved in 1968, the merger never takes place.
- **1973** – The Milwaukee enters into talks with the Burlington Northern regarding a possible merger. The Burlington Northern decided it was not in their best interest.
- **1980** – The Milwaukee partners with the **Grand Trunk Western Railroad**, and traffic from the east is forwarded onto the Milwaukee. The Milwaukee starts to make a profit again.
- **1983** – The Chicago & North Western offers to buy the Milwaukee and acquire its \$250 million debt.
- **December 28, 1985** - The Soo Line's bid was accepted and the Milwaukee Road was sold to the Soo Line.



## SINCE 1847...

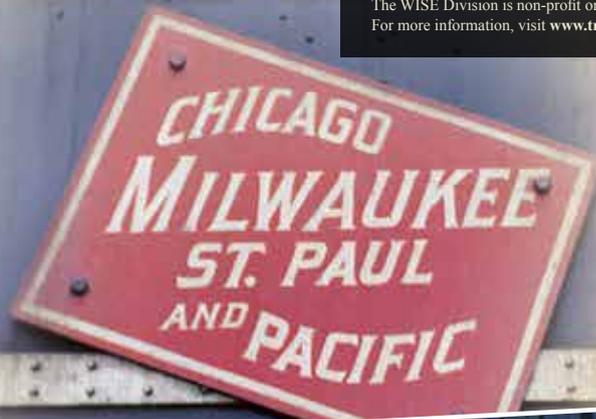
The Milwaukee Road Historical Association is an organization of passionate historians, hobbyists, photographers, and model railroaders seeking to preserve and enjoy the history, influence, and memories of the Milwaukee Road. It produces a quarterly journal, "The Milwaukee Railroader," with articles and photos about the railroad and its operations in the 13 states it served and a newsletter, the "Hiawathagram," that details the current use of the Milwaukee's former lines. The MRHA also documents and provides grants to support ongoing preservation of Milwaukee Road records, structures and equipment.

Members receive both "The Milwaukee Railroader" and the "Hiawathagram" and can participate in the MRHA Annual Convention held in June. Anyone interested in the Milwaukee Road is welcome to become a member. For more information, or to join, visit the organizations website at [mrha.com](http://mrha.com).



**Celebrate-a-Railroad** was envisioned by Ken Jaglinski, Harry Grieshaber, Bob Henderson, and Mike Carlson to **preserve America's rich railroad industry history**. The annual tradition launched at Trainfest 2015 in Milwaukee. Trainfest is America's Largest Operating Model Railroad Show and the C&NW was the first Railroad to be featured.

**Trainfest** is a public event attracting thousands of model train hobbyists and train enthusiasts. Trainfest is held annually the second weekend of November. The event is organized by the Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc. of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA). The WISE Division is non-profit organization. For more information, visit [www.trainfest.com](http://www.trainfest.com).



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### Celebrate-a-Railroad

Preserving our rich history  
2015 Chicago & North Western  
2016 Milwaukee Road  
2017 CN and Soo Line  
2018 BSNF and Great Northern

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