

INSIDE

Counsel / C3
Comics / C4
Classifieds / C5-10

The Times Leader

SECTION

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Viaduct, Steam Whistle Expo set

BELLAIRE -- The second annual Great Stone Viaduct Celebration will begin Saturday, Sept. 28, 9 a.m., at the Bellaire Public Library Community Room with a lineup of exhibits and history speakers. Later that afternoon, the Steam Whistle Expo will begin with a blast of steam whistles at the Belmont Community Health Center parking lot at the interior curve of the Great Stone Viaduct.

The library doors will open for a Meet and Greet at 9 a.m. and for registration. The community room will host exhibits including steam whistles, steam powered model engines, model steam locomotives and steamboats, all reminiscent of the industrial revolution of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Exhibits include steam whistles from factories, steam boats and steam locomotives. A "B & O Tumortop" four-chime whistle, along with three-whistle manifold that once sat atop a steamboat which plied the Ohio River, and a distinctive five-chime Erie Railroad Locomotive Whistle, are just some of those that will be displayed and sounded later that afternoon. Sid Heckman, a former steam railroad conductor in the Ohio Valley, will have the Imperial Glass Factory shift change whistle available for viewing and hearing for the first time since the factory closed. Imperial Glass had its factory a few hundred feet from where the whistles will be blown. Nickle Plate Railroad and Great Northern Railroad steam whistles will also be on display at the Community

Room. Barb Warzynski of Weirton will be on hand to discuss these and many other whistles from her collection. Paul Cramer of the GSV Society will also display small engines powered by steam, some which may have served as models replicated into much larger operating engines by their designers.

John Bowman of Wheeling, West Virginia, master craftsman of model steamboats and a true historian of steamboat building at Wheeling, will be sharing some of his creations. The "Eliza H" which was the steamboat that Jacob Heatherington used in his coal trade at Bellaire; the "Brown Dick", including the car float barge in tow, will demonstrate the manner in which the B & O Railroad interchanged freight and passengers between Bellaire and Benwood prior to the construction of the existing railroad bridge. The steamboat "Sidney", later renamed "Washington", also a steamer that visited Bellaire, will also be on display. Bowman, a historian on Ohio and Western River steamers, will be on hand to share information, explain model building, and autograph the books he has written which will be available for sale. Lawrence "Yogi" Wallace, long time Bellaire resident, will also exhibit some of the G Scale Model Railroad structures he has created over 40 years of modeling, and demonstrate modeling techniques which he has created and mastered. Ohio Valley residents will remember his many years of G Scale Model Railroad at the Oglebay

Mansion Museum, and later the Artisan's Center at the Nail City Brewery. His wealth of knowledge in both G Scale railroading and modeling will be shared along with static steam engine displays giving both the sight and sounds once heard throughout the Ohio Valley.

Speaking at this year's event will be two men well known to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad railfan community. John Teichmoeller comes to Bellaire from Ellicott City, Maryland, through which passes the original mainline of America's first railroad company. John is a modeler in his own right, but he also has taken great interest in the connections made at the water's edge between rails and marine transportation. He will speak at 9:30 a.m. on the rail-marine connections of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, both here at Bellaire and other locations, and the importance of those connections before technology was developed to span large rivers with bridges. James Dilts, of Baltimore, Maryland, will highlight the morning presentations as he discusses the great railroad architecture of North America, and the struggle to preserve it. Dilts, in addition to his historical work entitled "The Great Road: The Building of the Baltimore and Ohio, The Nation's First Railroad", has also authored works on the architecture of Baltimore City. He is currently working on a book which will spotlight the famous railroad architecture of North America.

Dilts also brings to Bellaire,

Ohio, his personal experiences as Co-Chair of the Thomas Viaduct Planning Committee. In 2010, the nation's oldest stone viaduct over the Patapsco River in Maryland celebrated its 175th anniversary. Dilts was instrumental in helping to plan the celebration and the preservation concept. He will tell us of the successes, the failures, and the overall achievements made in increasing public awareness of this great structure, and enlighten friends of the Great Stone Viaduct Society of how we may also plan and celebrate our own national treasure.

Other exhibitors will also be on hand, including the BHS Endowment Fund, the National Imperial Glass Collectors, and the GSV Society to offer information, books, and other items for sale to those attending the morning session. The morning session will be closed to the general public without registration made in advance or Saturday morning at the door. In the afternoon, the public will be invited to examine the exhibits for the cost of a donation to help defray expenses of the GSV Society. From noon to 1 p.m., the East of the River Shawnee Indian Tribe will perform an exhibition of drumming and native american ceremonial dances on the Belmont Community Health Center lawn. At 1 p.m., the steam whistle expo will begin at the Belmont Community Health Center in front of the viaduct arches. A Steam Whistle Car Show will be held in the front parking area, and more than two dozen crafters are anticipated to fill the parking lot behind

the health center.

Hank Marsilio, from Youngstown, an expert in steam engineering and whistle knowledge, will have his restored wood and coal fired 1910 Reeves steam engine fired up and connected to a massive steam whistle manifold upon which historical steam whistles from trains, ships and factories will be mounted and sounded off. The public is invited to bring in whistles from their collection and participate. Dana Dolfi of Pittsburgh will have his "Great American Horn Machine" available to play some patriotic songs throughout the day. After the steam whistle expo has concluded at 6 p.m., the Shadyside Community Band will entertain the crowd with a selection of music fit for the celebration of the Great Stone Viaduct and the sounds of steam. The steam whistle expo will continue from noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 29, along with the viewing of exhibits on display at the Bellaire Public Library, before the conclusion of the celebration.

Choice of seating will be where you park your lawn chairs at the Steam Whistle event, so don't forget to bring them! Also remember your camera!! It will be family friendly, so all are invited to join in the fun, as we "let off a little steam"!!! Tickets will be available both days for children and adults to blow the steam whistles, and these may be purchased at the event for "Twelve Toots for Ten Bucks" or in advance by contacting the GSV Society at info@greatstoneviaduct.org.

Family Network



Bellaire schools off to good start

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