



Switchlist

GULF MOBILE & OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Will it play in Peoria??? The GM&OHS says "yes" to this age old vaudevillian question when it comes to the **33rd Annual Meeting** of the Society being held on **October 15, 2005**. The weekend's festivities will be held at the newly refurbished **Pere Marquette Hotel** located in downtown Peoria, IL. at 501 Main Street, just two blocks from Interstate 74. Don't let the downtown location scare you! The hotel has its own free, attached parking garage for hotel guests and visitors to the show and banquet. We have also arranged for a reduced room rate for GM&OHS members. Just call hotel reservations at **309-637-6500** and mention the GM&OHS for your special rate. **Ken Donnelly** @ 815-791-0201 and **Dave Wagner** @ 773-581-4809 will be hosting the event. If you need help, give either one of them a call and they will be happy to answer your questions. Please see the accompanying flyers for additional details on the swap meet, dealer table reservations and the evening banquet. We hope to see you there!!!

Call for 2006 GM&OHS Board of Directors' nominations... If you have ever wanted to do more for the Society than just paying dues, now is your time to act! Nominations for the 2006 Board of Directors as well as all executive positions are now being accepted through August 10, 2005. There are several seats on the Board where the incumbents will not be running this year. If you wish to nominate yourself or another GM&OHS member for a position send the information to; Secretary, GM&OHS Nominations, P.O. Box 1085, Clinton, MS. 39060 or E-mail artrich999@aol.com.

In Memorium... The Society wishes to express our condolences to the family and friends of **Hugh Cook** of Meridian, MS. who passed away on October 28, 2004. Mr. Cook was an avid railfan and member of the Society having joined in 2001. **Ross Davidson** of Peoria, IL. passed away in mid-March of this year. Ross served as a member of the Board of Directors in the early 1990's and was our host for the 1993 Annual Meeting held in East Peoria.

Paul Stringham of Peoria, IL. passed away on March 28, 2005 at the age of 92. Paul, the son of a Peoria street car motorman, life long bachelor and historian in the central Illinois rail scene was a true photographic pioneer having taken his first pictures in the late 1920's. Traction, especially the Illinois Terminal, was his first love but he also photographed steam but had little use for diesels. Paul's picture appears in the first issue of Trains standing with a group of railfans in front of an interurban car. Paul also authored (or co-authored) books on the C&IM, ITC, TP&W and Peoria street cars as well as providing substantial assistance with the recently published C&A history. Many times I asked him about an obscure Illinois shortline and Paul would immediately tell me when and where it ran and what motive power it possessed. His research papers now reside at Bradley University in Peoria. Paul, a long time GM&OHS member will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him - R.R. Wallin



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Publications Committee Report by Ken Donnelly... Enclosed with this mailing is Issue 108-109, a 48 page double issue of the GM&OHS NEWS. We are pleased to inform you that the Society is now current with our NEWS publication schedule. Our thanks to the many authors who contributed articles and features for this magazine.

Your membership dues entitle you to a minimum of 80 pages of the NEWS per year. Issue 110 will contain at least 32 pages, if not more, of stories and information. We anticipate mailing this issue in late Autumn this year. In the meantime, you will receive a special mailing in early September which will give you additional details on the upcoming 33rd Annual Meeting being held in Peoria, IL. on the weekend of October 14-16, 2005.

Once again, if you have an interest in writing a story, please do not hesitate to contact **Ken Donnelly** @ 815-791-0201 or at P.O. Box 2457, Joliet, IL. 60434. He will work with you to make sure your story finds a spot in the pages of the NEWS.

GM&OHS website to be up and running again... The sudden disappearance of the GM&OHS website from the worldwide web was as much of a surprise to the BOD as it was to our members. We sincerely apologize for the interruption in service and assure you that measures are being taken to guarantee a more useful and visually appealing site for all to peruse. We have recently purchased software and will control our own destiny instead of relying on an individual for support. Check with your local GM&O chat groups when our new site is up and running. Thank you for your patience and understanding on this matter.

Modeling Committee report by the staff... There are approximately a dozen sets of Society car GM&OHS#27, the **Walthers** modern pulpwood car, still available. These are a sharp looking car which can be enhanced by the addition of a **Chooch Enterprises** pulpwood load made specifically for this model. A set of six different numbers is available for \$125.00 postage paid or you can order a set of three (either Magor or Thrall built cars) for \$65.00 postage paid.

GM&OHS#29, our **Con-Cor** 15 panel hopper car set lettered in the modern billboard scheme is still available however only six sets remain in stock as of this writing (6/4/05). A set of three cars is \$60.00 postage paid.

Enclosed with this mailing is a lime green order form for GM&OHS#30, our three box car set of predecessor road equipment. Specific details for each car are on the order form. We anticipate these cars to sell out quickly due to the unique nature of each model and the longevity that the prototypes enjoyed hauling freight throughout the GM&O system and beyond from the late 1940's through the mid 1960's.

All of the above HO scale models can be ordered through the Society at P.O. Box 1085, Clinton, MS. 39060 or call **Ken Donnelly** @ 815-791-0201 today and reserve a set or sets.



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In mid April, we received a pleasant surprise from the West Coast. **Craig Walker of Athearn** sent a pre-production example of a GM&O GP35 to the committee for comments and suggestions. Needless to say we were very excited to critique this "new" GP35 from Athearn and especially the fact that it wore GM&O black and white.

First the shell itself... You can put the "wide body" Athearn GP35's of the past out to pasture now. The shell being used is an improved version of the Rail Power Products GP35 of several years ago however the refinements now found on it are outstanding. Our sample was unpowered however Athearn did remember to provide Alco Type B road trucks that looked great and rolled quite well.

The painted and lettered body however did leave a bit to be desired with two major flaws; **A)** The panel and door on the rear of the cab are black and need to be painted white. In other words, the white stripe on the hood and cab side need to be continued onto the cab rear. **B)** The diagonal stripes on the rear of the long hood are nicely spaced but they do not wrap around the corner onto the carbody side. Both of these defects were quite noticeable and in fact if you check out the model on Athearn's web page, the stripe issue is quite evident even from a front 3/4 view.

Our only other minor complaints were the masking line was a little ragged between the black and white (this is typical on a pre-production sample, usually production run models are devoid of this issue) and also the handrails and grab irons should be a rich, bright Safety Yellow however they appear to be faded. This is of course due to the fact that the handrails are cast in color and it can not be controlled as a painted surface can.

We returned the sample to Craig in late April with our list of corrections. Hopefully Athearn will realize that if they fix these mistakes they have the potential for a very popular model with GM&O fans and GP35 buffs alike. Remember you can always buy extra units and then renumber them to have a quartet or quintet of the "black and whites" on your train. The model is due out in August from the manufacturer at a MSRP of \$87.98 for a powered version. Two different numbers will be offered initially. We hope that Athearn listens to our advice and at least corrects the two serious flaws noted above.

Other news is the introduction of the **Branchline Trains** 12-1 Pullman Sleeper lettered for the GM&O with Pullman names **Trinity** and **Orange State**. The good news about this model is that Branchline did their research this time (unlike their previous GM&O passenger car offerings) and the red and maroon are indeed red and maroon and not orange and scarlet. Our sample was of the **Orange State** and the paint match was near perfect with sharp graphics and correct placement of the dulux gold separation stripes. The overall look of the car is good when assembled. Kudos to Branchline on this model. Maybe they will consider redoing their coaches from last year using the correct color paint found on these Pullmans!