

THE TRACK AHEAD...

TRACK FOR THE RAIL CAR PROTECTION BUILDING

The rail car protection building has been erected. Now funds are needed to build tracks approaching it and inside it. After the track is built, the rolling stock will be repositioned to interpret the collection more completely for visitors.

Your help is needed!

Contributions may be sent to:

RCT&HS

PO Box 15143

Reading, PA 19612-5143

Or contact us at museum@readingrailroad.org

2020 RCT&HS Board of Directors:

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Tom Brown, first vice president

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ANNUAL REPORT

2020



The new rail car protection building
at the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum

The mission of the Reading Company Technical and Historical Society is to document, collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret equipment, artifacts, archives, and history related to the Reading Railroad, its predecessors, successors and subsidiaries and the communities it served for the education, safety awareness, and enjoyment of its members and the public.

The Reading Railroad Heritage Museum

500 S. Third St.

Hamburg, PA 19526

www.readingrailroad.org



The Reading Railroad Heritage Museum, a nationally recognized resource, is the educational and interpretive center for the extensive collections of the Reading Company Technical and Historical Society. Displays, video, hands-on experiences, and events illustrate the impact of the Reading Railroad on southeastern Pennsylvania and beyond from its beginning in 1833 until the end of its era in 1976. The Museum is operated entirely by the RCT&HS, an all-volunteer non-profit corporation, whose efforts have assembled the collections and built the museum.

Museum visitors can go outdoors to see over 70 pieces of historic Reading Railroad locomotives, freight and passenger cars, one of the largest collections in the U.S. pertaining to a single railroad. The exhibit building features tools, machines, documents, uniforms, and many other items used by Reading Railroad workers. Model trains and a re-created station agent's office are popular attractions. Exhibits on a variety of railroad subjects change seasonally. A 15-minute video, "The Reading Railroad Shaped Communities", is shown in the Museum theater. Books, clothing, model trains, children's toys, and treasures for rail enthusiasts of all ages are available at the Museum store. The Museum is open Saturdays from 10 AM to 4 PM and Sundays from noon to 4 PM. Weekday tours for school and community groups are available by appointment. Researchers may study by appointment in the extensive archive of Reading Railroad maps, photos, and documents.



The RCT&HS by the numbers

Membership 2020:

Individual: 510	Family: 106
Contributing: 99	Sustaining: 83
Corporate: 13	Full-time Student: 6
Total memberships: 817	

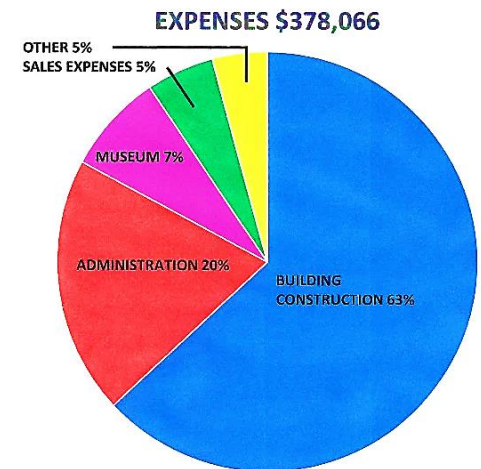
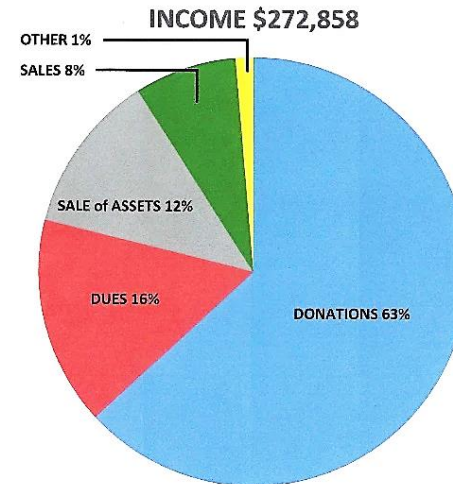
All members received 12 monthly newsletters, *The Crusader*.

Service:

During 2020, although the Museum was closed, 60 volunteers gave at least 9,000 hours of service.

Visitors: 189 visitors came before the Museum closed on March 15, 2021.

Finance: Donations exceeding membership dues were received from 332 individuals, families, and businesses.



During 2020, this picture shows **the Modular**

Committee making lemonade from the Corona virus lemons, as they were able to use the exhibit area of the



closed Reading Railroad Heritage Museum as a workspace. Shown in the foreground are recently planted trees which will eventually extend further around the curve in the East Penn Yard. In the background on the left are the "tools" of the trade: everything from glue and paint to various containers of ballast and foliage. On the right, is our electrician checking the track and using a locomotive to ascertain that all of the track will be live. Then the area will undergo a transformation by adding various trees, bushes, and grass.

Karen Confer, modular committee chair

The **Museum Building Committee** worked to prepare a section of the



building at the south end of the property for use as an artifact storage room. The room will have heat and air conditioning, making it appropriate for storage of sensitive artifacts. The committee also worked to prepare the modular work room for heating, air conditioning, and new lighting.

2020 – what a year!! The Reading Railroad Heritage Museum closed to comply with quarantine regulations on March 15. Both membership and Executive Board meetings moved to ZOOM. However, the volunteers continued to work and much was accomplished to advance the preservation of collections and progress of the Museum.

The **Artifacts** and **Archives** departments continued to accept and organize donations. Researchers utilized the extensive collections of the RCT&HS for their work. **Sales** of publications and rail-related products in the Museum store and at train shows usually contribute to the income of the RCT&HS but were limited to on-line sales only during 2020. The **Motive Power and Rolling Equipment** committee continued their restoration of Blueliner #9113. Baggage car #9051 was repainted to its Golden Spike Centennial paint scheme. Battery boxes of locomotive GP #5513 were rebuilt and extensive metal replacement and rust repair continued. Volunteers addressed power issues and performed window and roof repairs on Business car #15. In March, the RCT&HS received former Reading locomotive SW1200 #2719, donated by Omni-TRAX from the Stockton Terminal & Eastern Railroad.

A new **Museum exhibit**, "The Unseen Engineers of the Reading Railroad", opened in March, showcasing 30 reproductions of vintage maps and drawings of stations and structures drafted by the innovative architects and planners of the Reading Railroad, some acquired from the Smithsonian. Photos and models are also displayed. Because of the closure, the exhibit has been extended through October, 2021. The exhibit sponsor is Masano Architects Group, Inc.

The annual **Reading Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet VIII** was held as a virtual event. We had 156 registrations with 80 joining us online. We were again aligned with the Anthracite Railroads Historical Society. Participants were from all over the country – California to Florida to Minnesota – and at least one from England!! Clinics were held Friday evening and all day Saturday and were well received. We had 4 great virtual layout tours on Sunday. Everyone enjoyed the virtual weekend. Later, special RDG-designed thumb drives with recordings of most clinics and tours were sold.

Railcar Protection Building Construction



Construction of the new Railcar Protection Building began in October and was completed in December, 2020. The pole building is 72 feet wide and 150 feet long. It will span four tracks. The new structure will protect from the weather a portion of the RCT&HS' collection of irreplaceable history.

The area was leveled and approved storm water controls were placed ten years ago. Soil test drillings in early 2020 revealed the need for a helical pile foundation system. The building contract was \$270,000. Soil testing, geotechnical services, silt control, electrical costs, permits, insurance, and a more expensive foundation caused the total building cost to grow to \$362,000. RCT&HS funds designated for the building had been growing and when the building was complete no mortgage was needed. No private foundation or government grants were received.

