

THE TRACK AHEAD...

2024 PROJECTS

Education: Prepare and install interpretive and interactive exhibit materials for display in the Switch Tower building.

Community Engagement:

- Implement the recommendations of the Marketing Task Force to improve the visibility of the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum both in southeastern Pennsylvania and on-line.
- Continue to raise funds for the completion of the new children's activity area.

Preservation: Continue to prepare track and freight cars to be used to display a Reading Railroad freight train for the education of visitors.

Your help is needed!

Funds are needed to continue track work, prepare exhibits in the new switch tower building, and for re-surfacing and installing activity centers in the children's activity area .

Contributions may be sent to:

RCT&HS

PO Box 15143

Reading, PA 19612-5143

Or contact us at museum@readingrailroad.org

2023 RCT&HS Board of Directors:

Duane Engle, president

Tom Brown, first vice president

Robert Biamonte, second vice president

Frank Scalise, secretary

James Adams, treasurer

Donald Crabtree, director

Stephen Gilbert, director

Michael Huber, director

Dale Woodland, director



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



Members of the modular committee display their award for "Best of Show – Layout" at the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show in Springfield, MA.

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, 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 2023:

Individual: 488

Family: 98

Contributing: 89

Sustaining: 81

Corporate: 18

Full-time Student: 11

Total memberships: 785 Of these, 68 were new members.

All members received 12 monthly newsletters, *The Crusader*, and 2 issues of *The Beeline*.

Service: More than 80 volunteers gave at least 9,000 hours of service.

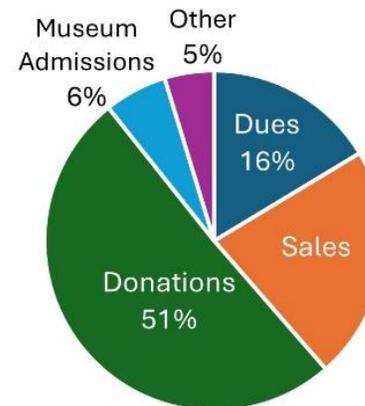
Visitors:

2387 persons visited the Museum in 2023.

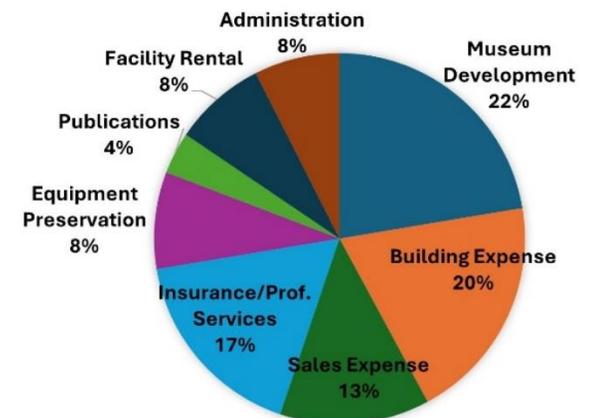
In addition, visitors at the RCT&HS modular display: 2 Timonium Train meets 9,300; Reading Days at the RR Museum of PA (a 10-day event) 4,300; Pennsylvania Christmas Show (a 5-day event) +/- 30,000; Amherst Railway Society Hobby Show 20,500.

Finance: Donations exceeding membership dues were received from 382 individuals, families, and businesses.

INCOME \$245,724



EXPENSES \$244,660



In 2023, the **Modular Committee** attended the Great Scale Model Train Show in February and October, "Reading Days" at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania for two weeks (June/July), and the Pennsylvania Christmas and Gift Show in Harrisburg, PA in December. Our biggest and most exciting breakthrough was being invited to the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show in Springfield, Massachusetts. The entire inventory at 18' x 160' was on view for the attendees, thanks to our dedicated and loyal crew members. To our amazement, we were awarded "Best of Show - Layout" for our efforts. We were also especially thrilled when we heard a group of railfans excitedly identify their railfan spot on Derry Road. When not attending shows, we continue to maintain and upgrade the entire layout, especially the signal system, Digitrax components, and are always repairing the scenery which takes a beating during our travels. New modules are under discussion.

Karen Confer, chair

Our second "LEGO Train Days" were well-received in July. Three extensive and unique displays featured custom-designed Reading Railroad operating



Dale Woodland, chair



Museum Operations:

The museum exhibit for 2023: "Competition and Cooperation: The Reading and the Pennsylvania Railroads" explored the

rivalries, connections, and differences between the two railroads using locomotives and rolling stock models, maps, and advertisements.

Group tours were hosted for seniors, school children, historical societies, teachers and Boy Scouts.

The annual Christmas Toy Train layouts were featured in December and January. Dale Woodland also presented Reading Railroad history programs at group gatherings.



LEGO trains and both historic and modern LEGO models.

The **Archives** committee continued to sort and organize drawings, photos, and correspondence records. We scanned an additional 1,112 mechanical drawings for a total scanned so far of 9,191 drawings digitized. To better protect and organize our drawings, we developed a technique to make custom-sized archival boxes. The Archives continued to respond to requests for information, answering inquiries almost daily.

Rick Bates, chair

The **Track and Grounds Committee** spent much of 2023 working around the new Rail Car Protection Building, shifting tracks to gain access to "trapped" equipment and raising the tracks in the building to prepare for the concrete flooring work in the doorways. Grounds upkeep and improvement continued.

Duane Engle, chair

Office Car #15 Committee completed many small projects that add up to good progress. The car impresses all who tour the interior.

Kevin Painter, chair

The **Sales Committee** attended 9 off-site shows during 2023. They were staffed with the help of 18 Society members throughout the year. The Museum store was also open throughout the museum operating season and sales were very good.

Duane Engle, chair



Those who attended the annual **Anthracite Railroads Modelers Meet** in September enjoyed a great event, great clinics and tours, plus the use of the entire Reading Railroad Heritage Museum. The ARMM XI in 2023 continued the winning format for the event with clinics Friday and

Saturday, raffles, vendors, great model displays, fun, food (we reinstated a hoagie dinner!) and great friendships! These have always been the MEET event goals and they were met again.

Barry Hensel, chair

The **Budget and Finance Committee** conducted quarterly audits of the Society's books. The records were found to be in order. During February 2023, the committee also conducted an inventory of the merchandise that the Society sells in the museum gift shop, on-line, and at various train meets and events. Values of the merchandise were calculated based on purchase prices and the inventory counts of the multiple inventory categories.

Tom Brown, chair

Treasurer Transition Committee: Our Treasurer, Jim Adams, who served in that capacity for 35 years, announced his retirement, effective February 29, 2024. The Treasurer's duties, which had become quite expansive over the years, were divided among three positions: Treasurer (an Executive Board position), Accounting Manager (non-Board), and Office/Administrative Manager (non-Board). We advertised the positions to the Society's members and to the public and various business entities. We were able to fill all three positions thereby enabling the Society to continue its operations and activities.

Tom Brown, chair

The **Building Committee** continued to develop the switch tower building. Work included insulation, electrical service and wiring, drywall, paint, HVAC, and foundation and fixtures for the replica switch tower. The model board and tower mechanism from the Reading's Race St. tower were relocated to the building. Visitor access to the building was improved.

Electrical power to the rail yard was installed to aid in restoration and to assist with outdoor exhibits.

Sidewalk and security lighting were completed in the Rail Car Protection Building. The museum building received restroom renovation and lighting maintenance.



Don Crabtree, chair

Motive Power and Rolling Equipment: Cab restoration on locomotive #5513 continued. Locomotive #3412 received rejuvenated batteries. Its auxiliary power unit was made available for heating engine oil and water and for electrical power. Research and training on using new painting products was conducted. A climate-controlled storage room for the products was prepared. A used sand blaster is being restored.

Mike Huber and Paul Payne