

Trains and Troops
Strasburg, PA

On 2-3 November 2019, the Army Ground Forces Association (AGFA) supported the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum during the annual "Trains and Troops" event. This unique event chronicles the use of railroads throughout American military history from the Civil War to the present day.

The members of AGFA who participated in the event were Donna Cusano, Paul Cusano, Doug and Lynda Houck, Anne Lutkenhouse, Gary and Deanna Weaver, John Uhler, Shawn Welch and our guests Philippe Martin, Becky Webb and Joe Turi. The educational objective was to provide interpretation of the oft-forgotten and overlooked missions of the U.S. Army's Coast Artillery railway guns; railroad-based medical operations, general railroad support during the World War Two and World War One periods.

The Pennsylvania RR Museum features a breathtaking collection of excellently preserved locomotives and rolling stock within its main building. Interpreters for the Trains and Troops event set up exhibits directly in the museum proper, with the rail cars and engines as a historic back drop. The photo below shows many of our participating membership and friends on Saturday, 2 November. Member Gary Weaver provided WWII Coast Artillery Railway artillery interpretation on Saturday and Civil War era interpretation Sunday 3 November 2019.



Our location in the rear of the museum faces directly east to wide open farm fields. The morning sunlight is spectacular as 1LT Lutkenhouse and 2LT Cusano set up their medical displays on early Saturday morning.



1LT Becky Webb (left) joins 2LT Cusano, 1LT Lutkenhouse and a young lady who interprets a WWI period "Hello Girl" (telephone operator) in France 1918.



The table below shows some of the medical devices and materials on display.



Using two six-foot tables, "Hospital Train Car beds" were created to aid in the display and interpretation of much of the material.



The second "hospital train bed" is show below.



Rare and unique medical uniforms for Nurses and patients were displayed as shown below.



The set of photographs below addressed military railroad medical operations during WWII.



Another table exhibited medical tableware and various medicines. Additionally, a working EE-5 field telephone (left) was connected to the other telephones in the display to provide a working exhibit for the public.



The majority of the display was in place by 1000 on Saturday morning. In the photo below TSG Weaver prepares to show a visitor the M1910A1 Azimuth Instrument and 2LT Cusano obtains additional display items from the storage boxes.



The display below contains a number of photographs of railway artillery that was stationed at Fort Hancock, NJ with the 52nd Coast Artillery Regiment from 1920 to 1944. TSG Weaver stands next to the table enjoying the view of the Pennsylvania countryside.



The display below focuses on coast artillery projectiles and fuses. The trifold chart center right explains the four different types of artillery shells used in WWI and WWII - Armor Piercing, High Explosive point detonating, High Explosive base detonating and Shrapnel.



The board below was recently acquired by AGFA and is extremely rare. It was made in 1920 at Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia and all but the bottom three fuses are sectionalized to show their working components. The top three fuses are time fuses, the three long fuses in the middle are point detonating, the two small top fuses are base detonating, the two small bottom fuses are point detonating, and the bottom three large fuses are all base detonating fuses for heavy armor piercing projectiles. All were tested and perfected at the Sandy Hook Proving Ground between 1890 and 1919.



The display below shows from left to right a “wind component indicator”, trifolds on fire control process, and two EE-91 Coast Artillery telephones.



Below is an M1905 Deflection Board used through WWII to determine the amount of “offset” from the axis of the bore of the cannon to apply to the gunner’s telescopic sight - this is how the artillery would “lead” the target much like a duck hunter leads the bird when firing a shotgun.



Much of the Coast Artillery display is shown below to include a field desk of manuals and a BD-71 six line field telephone switch board.



In addition the field desk and the BD-71 switch board, the uniform on the left is a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) uniform from the 1930s and the uniform on the right is a Baseball Uniform as worn by the 245th Coast Artillery at Fort Hancock NJ from 1940 to 1945.



Below is another view off the Coast Artillery display with CPL Cusano observing the countryside looking through the M1910A1 Azimuth Instrument.



The photo below shows CPL Cusano's view - an antenna about 15 miles distant.



Another view of the display, with TSG Weaver having just finished speaking with visitors.



Below our guest Philippe Martin (French Infantry WWI) speaks with 1LT Lutkenhouse as 1LT Webb heads to interpret and TSG Weaver speaks with guests, far left.



AGFA member CPT(CH) John Uhler's Military Chaplaincy display was in the front (west) side of the museum. Below he sits with another Chaplain.



Much of CPT(CH) Uhler's display focuses on the chaplains of both the Army and the Navy. The field desk shown below contains many of the tools of a Chaplain's trade.



The displays below include "Chaplain Art" from the Army Heritage Center.



JCPT (CH) Uhler's display shows clearly the various ecclesiastical items including communion equipment as used during field services.



The Chaplaincy items shown below includes a Navy Church Pennant. This pennant would be flown from a ship when services were in progress.



Below is another section of the Chaplaincy display.



Exhibitor Christine Lurk provides context to her young visitors better understand how Americans at home helped the war effort against Japan and Germany in WWII.



The exhibit below covers WWI period units and their contribution to America's involvement in the war effort.



Below Rick Stauber sits next to his exhibit about WWII and Korean War Explosives Ordnance Disposal (EOD) activities. The patch on his shirt pocket was worn by EOD soldiers in WWII.



Rick had many very interesting displays to include this collection of training material that included artillery shells, land mines and detonators.



Rick's display included classic demolition materials to include a very rare "100 cap blasting machine" on the left in the photo. The reel of demolition wire is also very rare. Training blasting caps (all inert) are also shown on the table.



The historic documents below explain how the Army trained and prepared soldiers for the EOD mission in WWII.



Saturday night was the Museum's Swing Dance. In the photo below are a number of AGFA members (four on the left) and many of our friends.



Below CPT (Dr) Cusano and 2LT Cusano "cut the rug" along with many enthusiastic swing dancers.



In addition to many of the exhibitors, several local swing dance clubs were present at the dance.



The music was excellent and everyone had a great time.



Below 1LT Lutkenhouse, CPT (DR) Cusano and 2LT Cusano stand next to a large locomotive.



The dance provided time for us to walk through the museum and look at all the new displays. During the day we are heavily engaged by the public and lack the ability to get out and look at all the wonderful work the Rail Road Museum of PA has done.



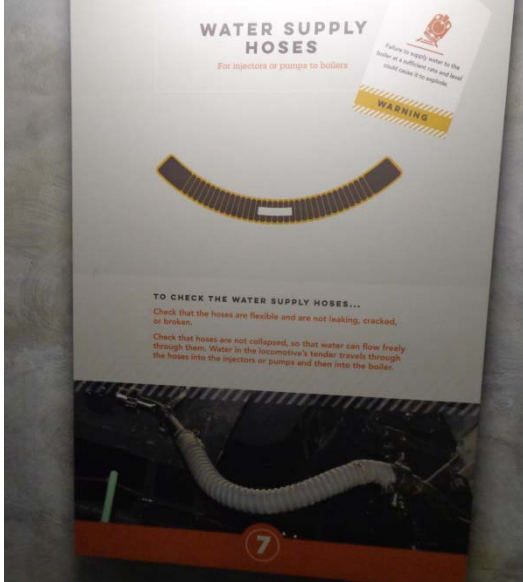
One of the best new displays is the “technical inspection” of a locomotive. Below 1LT Lutkenhouse and 2LT Cusano proceed underneath the locomotive to being the “inspection”.



The inspection area includes an excellent display of tools used by railroad personnel to maintain the locomotives and rolling stock.



There are over seven stations underneath the locomotive where you are able to conduct your own “inspection” of the locomotive as a railroad worker would have done. The inspections provide a chart explaining what you are looking for and then you can see the problem area immediately in the vicinity of the chart.



2LT Cusano is at one of the stations inspecting the locomotive looking for the “fault” that needs to be identified before it can be “fixed”.



One of the neatest displays is the Pullman "Lotos Club" car - a very rare glimpse into "High Society" of the 1870s to 1940s.



The tables are set inside the Lotos Club car as shown below.



In the center of the Lotos Club Car is a sleeping compartment of bunk beds.



Another view of the Lotos Club Car interior is shown below.



A railroad town "station street" is recreated inside the museum and is constantly changing. Below CPT (DR) and 2LT Cusano walk down the "Board Walk".



Below 2LT Cusano and 1LT Lutkenhouse chat in the doorway of the "railroad station" on the board walk.



An actual station bulletin board is shown below.



Another view - the Railroad Station's waiting room is shown below.



The Station Master's office is shown below to include various telegraph and telephone installations.



Another view of the interior of the station master's office.



Additional views of the Board Walk and “town street”.



The interior of an early 20th century General Store is faithfully recreated.



A “family tea” is recreated in one of the display areas along the main street.



A great view of the rear of the “Pennsylvania Special” car is shown below.



Two different "human powered" railroad track cars are shown below. These were often used in track inspections by teams of personnel who would find small faults and repair them before they required major work.



Another view of the interior of the museum, showing a large locomotive on the right and a passenger car on the left.



Sunday morning came early and below CPL Cusano prepares the displays for the day.



As the sun rises, 2LT Cusano and 1LT Lutkenhouse prepare the "Medical Car" for visitors.



Beginning around 1100 hours on Sunday, a Trombone Quartet provided entertainment for about two hours. They are truly outstanding.



The Sunday AGFA team is shown below including our guest CPT Joe Turi.



Below CPL Cusano and CPT Turi obtain lunch sandwiches from a vintage WWII "Marmite" which was the standard insulated container for food and medical materials.



A long view of the Coast Artillery Display is shown with CPL Cusano in the foreground.



Our friend Sharon Rea is actually sewing vintage clothing for various exhibitors during the event. She brings "history to life" during public events.



The exhibit below is of an Army Air Forces jeep along with a 250 pound bomb standing on its fins.



As the day came to an end, SSG Houck in WWI M1912 uniform stops by as 2LT Cusano begins disassembling and packing the medical displays.



Below LTC Welch and 1LT Lutkenhouse pose near one of the earlier locomotives that was located right next to the medical and coast artillery displays.



We look forward to returning to Strasburg for Troops and Trains in 2020 and we hope to see you there! For more information, visit AGFA Website <http://armygroundforces.org> and the Troops and Trains website at: <http://www.rrmuseumpa.org/>