



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Clark Harder and I am the Chair of the National Marketing Committee at National Railroad Memorial, Inc. (NRMI), based in Durand, Michigan. The National railroad Memorial, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation organized as a 501 (C) (3). Our mission is to honor the men and women of the railroad industry by educating the public as to the importance of their roles in our nation's past, present and future.

NRMI plans to honor these individuals by building the National Railroad Memorial as the center-piece of Diamond District Park in Durand. The memorial will include an archive of photographic, written, and oral histories, which will be called the Wyllie Project. Durand is a great place for the memorial, because Durand wouldn't even exist without the railroad. Unlike Detroit or Chicago, its core identity is shaped around the railroad. It represents hundreds of small towns across America whose fates were shaped by the rails.

Durand became a hub of freight and passenger traffic for Michigan starting in the late 1800's, and by the early 1900's, Grand Trunk Western Company alone ran 14 passenger trains daily, 40 or more freight trains, and four mixed trains with both passengers and freight. Durand had the largest roundhouse East of the Mississippi River for servicing steam locomotives when built by 1909, the largest operation on the GTW line West of Montreal, Canada, 40 stalls forming a 360° roundhouse, along with the massive Grand Trunk Union Depot, three stories high and 80 yards long.

Although these statistics are impressive, the true story is in the family made up of the men and women of the railroad industry, who spent their working lives or even gave their lives to the operation of the railroad. These people helped build this nation and continue to keep it moving. They deserve a place that will honor their past, celebrate their present, and inspire the workers of the future. Durand is a natural home for these stories.

In order to achieve this plan, we will need help. We would be grateful if you helped in sponsoring the construction of the National Railroad Memorial. We are offering various levels of sponsorship options to accommodate the capacities of all those with a stake in the railroading industry. If this project has piqued your interest, please take a look at the accompanying sponsorship packet for further details.

I would like to thank you for your time to read this letter. I hope you will join us in telling the stories of the men and women of the railroading industry. And if you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Cordially,

Clark Harder, Chair of the National Marketing Committee
National Railroad Memorial Inc.

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THE NATIONAL RAILROAD MEMORIAL

National Railroad Memorial, Inc. (NRMI), is based in Durand, Michigan. The National railroad Memorial, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation organized as a 501 (C) (3). Our mission is to honor the men and women of the railroad industry by educating the public as to the importance of their roles in our nation's past, present and future. We will do so by building a National Railroad Memorial in Durand, MI.

National Railroad Memorial will be constructed in the Diamond District Park in Durand. The center-piece is an intersection of tracks, a crossing of the tracks that represents the ability to go in all cardinal directions. In the past, Durand had a double diamond, two sets of tracks crossing each way. When they were replaced in front of the depot, our organization got one of the two diamonds to form the bases of the proposed center-piece memorial, in addition to 13 sculptures representing the 13 unions.

As part of that memorial, we are creating an archive of memories: photographic, written and oral history of the individual men and women, who played a role in our railroading heritage across the nation and the railroad families that love and continue to honor them. We will call this collection, the Wyllie Project.



THE DURAND STORY

Transportation touches every part of our lives. To understand the present and future of transportation, we need to learn from the past – not just the immediate past of recent years, but a look back at a transportation system that's further along its lifecycle of invention, growth, and maturity: the railroad.

Durand is a great place to do that, because Durand wouldn't even exist without the railroad. It became a hub of freight and passenger traffic for Michigan starting in the late 1800's, when two great rail lines crossed in a muddy corner of Shiawassee County. In this respect, Durand represents hundreds of small towns across America whose fates were shaped by the rails.

These lines became the site of a fascinating and complex power struggle between William Vanderbilt, of the New York Central and Michigan Central, and Sir Henry Tyler, president of the Grand Trunk. The competing titans built two separate routes from Canada to Chicago, the Grand Trunk through Durand and the Michigan Central through Detroit. Without their dispute, Grand Trunk would not have invested in Durand and the city would not exist today.

By the early 1900's, the numbers were impressive: Grand Trunk Western alone ran 14 passenger trains daily, 40 or more freight trains, and four mixed trains with both passengers and freight. Crews based in Durand ran daily trains to Detroit, Chicago, Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Port Huron and Bay City. Durand had the largest roundhouse East of the Mississippi River for servicing steam locomotives, the largest operation on the GTW line West of Montreal, Canada, 40 stalls forming a 360° roundhouse, along with the massive Grand Trunk Union Depot, three stories high and 80 yards long.

These statistics are impressive, but the true story is in the family made up of the men and women of the railroad industry, who spent their working lives or even gave their lives to the operation of the railroad. Durand is a natural home for these stories and a place for honor and remembrance.

For example, there is the story of Sheldon Seeburger, who worked as a trackman and foreman in Maintenance of Way. When he was a young man, his dad was a track foreman who drove a Fairmont speeder. Although it had an engine, he complained about the weather and the bugs. Sheldon got a used Model T windshield and rooftop and proceeded to modify the speeder using some of Henry Ford's best car parts.

Other track foreman and rail workers kept Sheldon busy modifying their speeders. Sheldon's most important renovation was for Herman Varblow, a supervisor in Maintenance of Way and one of his big bosses. Afterwards, when Sheldon asked permission to marry his daughter Helen, Herman said yes. Fairmont later produced an enclosed speeder but Sheldon never got any credit from them. However, he and Helen were married for sixty-eight years. NRMI board member Jan Brownson is their granddaughter.

There's also the tragic story of the Knights Templar train wreck. On Tuesday, June 5, 1923 at about 9:30am, the Knights Templar special train from Grand Rapids to Flint left the track about a mile west of Durand, completely wrecking the engine and three coaches, killing four persons and injuring thirty others. The train carried delegations of Knights Templar from Muskegon, Grand Rapids, Ionia and St. Johns

Mr. Parker and Mr. Persall were two of those killed. The two men, close friends, left Durand Monday night for Grand Rapids, apparently in good spirits. Their wives did not go with them but, as had been planned, were at the depot awaiting the arrival of the train, expecting to go to Flint for the day, when the news of the accident was brought to them. It was later determined that the cause of the accident was the failure of the Railroad Company to keep its roadbed in safe condition. The State Journal reported, "The large number of broken, defective and rail-cut ties, together with low joints, loose spikes, braced rails, poor ballast and generally bad track conditions in the vicinity of the accident will not permit of the safe operation of high speed trains."



The engine, GTW Engine #5030, was repaired and put back into service. Through the years, engineers and crew assigned to the engine felt it was cursed, and no one wanted to operate it. The engine was eventually donated to the City of Jackson where it serves a stationary memorial.

On a lighter note, there's the story of Walter Simeon Boutin (known as "Boots" Boutin), born in Alpena in 1900. He wanted to be a railroad man while his best friend wanted to work on ships. Both realized their dreams. Boots started out at age 17 and worked his way up to engineer. He retired in 1965 after a long and respected career based in Durand. Mr. Boutin had a strong relationship with his crews, and even after he retired to Florida, the men who worked with him would visit. Boutin's daughter, Barbara Thomas, remembers her father as being very serious about his work, the safety of his crew and being as good as he could. He never talked much about the change from steam to diesel except to say that with diesel, he went to work clean and came home clean. But there was a story he wasn't telling.

After he retired, Owen Rood, the local Durand Express newspaper owner, published a story about the only blemish on Boots' record as an Engineer. Mr. Rood wrote in the paper that Boots Boutin had taken a "new" diesel engine out for a ride and decided to see what the engine could do. He took a curve too fast and flipped the engine over on its side. The crew righted the engine and repaired any damage – and NO ONE including his family knew about this incident until Mr. Rood teased him about it in the hometown paper.



WHY BUILD THE MEMORIAL?

HONORING THE RAILROAD FAMILY

- To honor the railroad men and women for their service to our country and for their role in building our nation.
- To remember and tell the stories of the men and women of the railroad and their families who love them.
- To build a beautiful park where those that benefit from the hard work of the railroad men and women can fittingly commemorate them. It is worth noting that the railroads in our history brought our country together physically and were monumental in building and preserving our precious natural parks.

PRESERVING THE RAILROAD HERITAGE

- To remind and educate people and future generations about the role of the railroads in our nation's past, present, and future.
- To focus the community, nation, and state on a remarkable railroad heritage and legacy.

BENEFITTING THE COMMUNITY

- To convert unusable space into a beautiful productive space, both socially and economically, for the benefit of the community at large.
- To create green space, for recreational, educational, and creative use to celebrate the railroad family for years to come.
- To celebrate Durand's role in the railroad industry, as it would not have existed without the industry.



SPONSORSHIP LEVELS AND BENEFITS

STOCK CERTIFICATE, CLASS III \$10 - \$499 DONATION

- \$10/share ceremonial stock certificate

STOCK CERTIFICATE, CLASS II\$500 - \$999 DONATION

- \$10/share ceremonial stock certificate
- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication

STOCK CERTIFICATE, CLASS I \$1,000 - \$2,500 DONATION

- \$20/share ceremonial stock certificate
- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication
- Name plate recognition on wrought-iron fence post surrounding and in the park

WELCOMING CENTER SPONSOR \$5,000 DONATION

- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication
- Recognition on the welcoming center wall

STATION SPONSOR..... \$10,000 DONATION

- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication
- Recognition at one of the stations on the memorial trails that represent the different rail unions.

SCULPTURE SPONSOR..... \$25,000 DONATION

- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication
- Recognition at one of the planned park sculptures. Contact NRMI for more information.

DOUBLE-DIAMOND SPONSOR \$50,000 DONATION

- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication
- Recognition in a key part of the park near the Double Diamond, such as a plaque on the granite wall or walkways, bricks and plaques in prominent locations at the National Railroad Memorial central location. Contact NRMI for more information.

PERFORMING STAGE SPONSOR\$100,000 DONATION

- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication
- Naming rights for the performing stage for a 3-year term
- Proceeds from this tier would partially cover maintenance expenses.

MEMORIAL SPONSOR\$250,000 DONATION

- Invitation to the ceremonial park opening and dedication
- Naming rights for the welcoming center for a 5-year term
- Proceeds from this tier would partially cover maintenance expenses.

Note: In-kind proposals, such as volunteer work and materials, are accepted, contingent on approval by the National Railroad Memorial, Inc. board. If you have questions about your sponsorship, please contact the National Railroad Memorial, Inc. at 989-249-3603 or railroadmemorial@gmail.com



SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION

Submit this form to the address below.

DATE: _____

CONTACT NAME: _____

COMPANY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ **CITY:** _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____

TELEPHONE: _____ **FAX:** _____

EMAIL: _____

Please check the box corresponding to your level of interest:

- ☐ **STOCK CERTIFICATE, CLASS III..... \$10 - \$499 DONATION**
- ☐ **STOCK CERTIFICATE, CLASS II.....\$500 - \$999 DONATION**
- ☐ **STOCK CERTIFICATE, CLASS I..... \$1,000 - \$2,500 DONATION**
- ☐ **WELCOMING CENTER SPONSOR \$5,000 DONATION**
- ☐ **STATION SPONSOR \$10,000 DONATION**
- ☐ **SCULPTURE SPONSOR \$25,000 DONATION**
- ☐ **DOUBLE-DIAMOND SPONSOR..... \$50,000 DONATION**
- ☐ **PERFORMING STAGE SPONSOR\$100,000 DONATION**
- ☐ **MEMORIAL SPONSOR.....\$250,000 DONATION**
- ☐ **OTHER\$ _____ DONATION**

Indicate any in-kind sponsorship levels. Acceptable proposals include volunteer work and materials. In-kind proposals must be approved by the National Railroad Memorial, Inc. board.

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