Conrail Museum Planned for Shippensburg, Pennsylvania

SHIPPENSBURG, PA - The Conrail Historical Society (The CRHS) is proud to announce its acquisition of a new piece of railroad equipment for use as a Conrail museum.

An 86-foot-long Conrail boxcar has been graciously donated to The CRHS by CSX Transportation. The X67 class boxcar, formerly Conrail No. 295633, was built in 1970 for the transportation of automobile parts between assembly plants. The car will eventually be stripped and repainted in authentic Conrail colors, while the interior of the car will be transformed into a 10,467 cubic foot climate-controlled Conrail Museum & Archive that will be accessible to families and researchers alike.

Nearly 75 percent of the funding for this $134,000 project is being provided by a $100,000 tourism grant from the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau (CVVB), while the remaining $34,000 is being covered by a combination of direct CRHS funding and in-kind donations from local contractors for material and labor.

“The Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau has played a crucial role in making The CRHS’s long-term museum goal a reality,” says Jim Stanton, Vice President of The Conrail Historical Society. “Our museum will grow regional tourism, and we wouldn’t be able to undertake this project without their generous assistance.”

The new Conrail Museum & Archive boxcar will be placed near the Cumberland Valley Railroad Museum (CVRM), which is housed in a restored Penn Central boxcar at the Shippensburg trailhead of the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail. In 2019, The CRHS provided a former Pennsylvania Railroad signal from its collection for restoration, display, and operation at the CVRM. The CRHS’s resulting partnership with the CVRM and the Cumberland Valley Rails-to-Trails Council (CVRTC) has led to this exciting expansion of the site.
The CRHS’s boxcar is being temporarily stored on the local Pennsylvania & Southern Railway in nearby Chambersburg, Pennsylvania until preparations are made at the trailhead to accommodate it. Once a piece of track has been laid in Shippensburg, the boxcar will travel by road for the last 11 miles of its journey. This will be the largest railroad boxcar ever transported by road, and it should be quite a spectacle as it navigates the streets of Shippensburg.

The Conrail Museum & Archive will display the history of the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail), which was a federally-created railroad that rescued the northeast’s financially troubled rail system in 1976. From then until it was acquired by CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern in 1999, Conrail’s success was one of the most significant developments in the American railroad industry. The CRHS was founded in 1995 to take custody of important Conrail artifacts, documents, and history to ensure their preservation.

The Cumberland Valley Rail Trail, where the museum will be located, was originally owned and operated by Conrail as its Shippensburg Secondary from 1976 to 1995, when Conrail donated the 11-mile right-of-way from Shippensburg to Newville to the CVRTC.

“The new Conrail Museum & Archive will be a great asset to Shippensburg, and we are extremely appreciative of the local support we’re receiving,” said CRHS President Rudy Garbely. “We can’t wait to build further strategic partnerships with the community as we take one of our largest steps forward in the preservation of Conrail history. We are especially grateful for the donation from CSX Transportation and the grant from the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau that make this whole project possible.”

It is anticipated that the Conrail Museum & Archive will open to the public in the summer of 2021. To learn more about the boxcar or to donate to The CRHS for future projects like this one, please visit www.TheCRHS.org/museum.

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The Conrail Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that preserves the history of the Consolidated Rail Corporation through education and publication, recognizing the creation of Conrail as one of the most significant developments in the American railroad industry. The Society’s robust membership magazine and extensive archival and artifact collections are complemented by several restored pieces of railroad equipment. Support and consultation regarding Conrail operations and equipment are provided to railroad museums, model manufacturers, and researchers. For further information on The Conrail Historical Society, or to join, please visit www.TheCRHS.org.