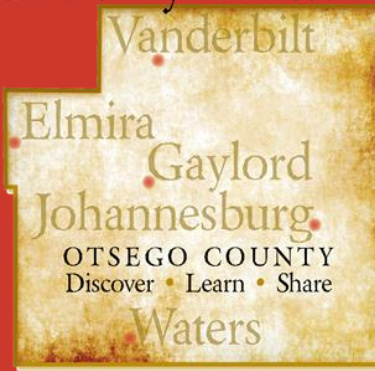


History Matters



Update # 7

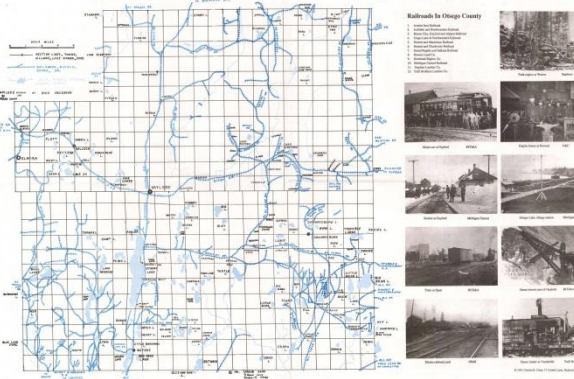
February 17, 2018

Railroads played a key role in the development of Otsego County. They connected us to the rest of the world. Three railroads provided passenger and freight service to our county: Jackson, Lansing & Saginaw (later Michigan Central then New York Central), Grand Rapids & Indiana (later Penn Central), and the Boyne City, Gaylord & Alpena. The first two began operating here in the early 1870s. The B.C.G.&A. ran here from 1905 until the 1930s.

There were also several temporary logging railroads that sprawled throughout Otsego County. They made it possible to reach rich holdings of valuable lumber that were located too far for river transportation. They also served the various lumber camps and created nearly 20 settlements that are now Ghost Towns.

Today, Lake State Railway provides freight service to Gaylord. Tracks from the other railroads have been removed.

Ghosts of the Past - Railroads in Otsego County



Discover ♦ Learn ♦ Share

1. The map shown to the left “Ghosts of the Past – Railroads of Otsego County” was produced by Charlie Conn (photo below) and Rick Packman in 1991. The map measures 18” x 18” and sells for \$5 at Museum. All proceeds go to the Otsego County Historical Society. Great reference.
2. **Discover** railroad artifacts, photos, documents, and other memorabilia at the Otsego County History Museum in downtown Gaylord which will be open on Saturdays beginning March 3.
3. [RRHX](#) is a great source for Michigan railroad history on the web.

Discover ♦ Learn ♦ Share

1. “In the Pines: An Atlas of Michigan Logging Railroads” by James S. Hunnum (2017) does a fantastic job of describing the abandoned railroads in the northern part of the Lower Peninsula. In addition to information about the major railways, each of the 27 counties has its own chapter of detailed maps and discussion. County Library has a copy.
2. Graydon M. Meints is the author of several excellent books including his newest “Railroads For Michigan”. It is well researched and gives an in-depth, broader perspective of our state’s railroad history. A must read for serious train buffs.
3. **Learn** more about our local railroad history by taking a look at the photos posted on the OCHS [web site](#).

Discover ♦ Learn ♦ Share

1. Charlie Conn (photo to the right) donated his vast collection of railroad photos to the Otsego County Museum in 2013. The three albums contain more than 200 black and white photos that have dates and location identified if known. Digital copies will be forthcoming says Charlie who now lives in South Carolina. This is a tremendous gift. We greatly appreciate Charlie’s willingness to **share** both his priceless photo collection and his knowledge of our local railroad history.
2. Gail White Elliott **shares** the history of railroads in her book “Otsego Lake Village”. See pages 68 -75 for photos, first person accounts, and other interesting details. This chapter contains 20 cited sources which attest to Gail’s diligent research.
3. Now it’s your turn. **Share** your Otsego County memories, experiences, and questions about trains, depots, station agents, abandoned spurs, water towers, etc.

