

The MEMORIAL



On Labor Day, September 4, 2000 the Galesburg Railroad Museum dedicated a memorial to all railroad workers killed in the line of duty. The ceremony started at 3:30 p.m. in Colton Park and was attended by over 200 people.

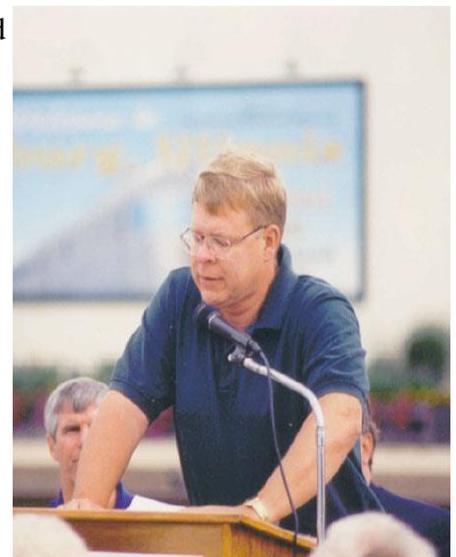
Doug Traff, a 4th generation railroader, designed and helped finance the monument. The concrete base that rises three feet above ground level was constructed and donated by Lufkin Construction Co. Sitting on top of the concrete base is a six feet, six inches tall black granite obelisk. The stone was given to the museum at cost by Lucky and Sons Monuments.

Invocation given by Rev. Constant R. Johnson:

Our Heavenly Father, we come before you as people to whom the railroad is a part of daily life. We watch the commerce of the world parade before us as we wait at crossings. We boast to people who live elsewhere that we have passenger service, six trains a day each day. We remember the great adventure of spanning our country with rails, across prairies, rivers and mountains from sea to shining sea. We recall that the people who built came across the seas and worked with great peril. Most of all today we think of those known to us, fathers, grandfathers, brothers and others felled by the dangers of their work. Their devotion lives on. Comfort those with memories of loss. Let us remember that we are all travelling through, bound for an eternal destination. Protect all who work today. We thank you that your love enfolds us in life or death, in all circumstances of life. Help us to live in gratitude for the good gifts we enjoy today. Amen.

Speech given by Doug Traff:

"Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Galesburg Railroad Museum's monument dedication. (My name is Doug Traff.) I am a locomotive engineer for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway here in Galesburg. In addition, I serve on the board of representatives for the Galesburg Railroad Museum. And I have taught the history of railroading at



Carl Sandburg College for the past 4 years.

As a 4th generation railroader, my heritage is rich from the prosperous growth from within the railroad industry. Over the past century and a half the railroad has helped shape and build Galesburg into what it has become today. However, along with prosperity have come many tragic losses resulting from railroad fatalities. These fatalities have occurred in every facet of the railroading industry. They include both labor and management.

The idea for this monument originated one day while I was grieving the recent loss of both my parents. While I miss them tremendously, I began thinking about the fact that while I had been blessed with their presence throughout their natural lives, there were those less fortunate. My thoughts turned to a couple of friends who had lost their fathers in a train accident nearly 40 years ago.

After thinking of those less fortunate, my feelings of grief soon changed to a feeling of compassion. This led to the idea of creating a monument that would symbolize the memory of our lost comrades and show community support to the families of those lost in the line of duty. After approaching the museum board members, they soon accepted the idea and it has grown into the reality that we present here today.

It was decided to omit individual names from the monument, because all of the information is not available. With plans for a new building, it is my hope that we will acquire the necessary resources.

I would like to thank the City of Galesburg, the BNSF Foundation, and the Galesburg Railroad Museum for their cooperation and support in making this dream a reality.

I would like to thank Lufkin Construction, Lackey Monuments and MSI for their work and generosity in constructing this monument. I would like to thank Carl Sandburg College for initiating my interest in railroad history by giving me the opportunity to teach. A special thanks goes to Jim Clayton for picking up when I ran low of steam.

Mostly, I would like to thank my family for their support and inspiration throughout this project.

On behalf of everyone involved, I would like to thank you for attending this dedication today.

THANK YOU !!!!"