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Leslie Ross photos:

**Image Library Acquisition**

EBay - whatever the opinions eBay has a bearing on a lot our interaction with history. It has been a well known fact that in survivors of a deceased railfan often have not been given adequate guidance as to how to treat the collection. I personally came across this issue more than 20 years ago when I had some dealings with Eleanor Kern widow of Fred Kern a well known railfan in the Philadelphia area. It had been a year since his passing and I didn't know how to talk to her and neither one of us had an idea as to value of the 616 negatives. The ARHS had very little money at that

time and the negatives were grouped by railroad. She was still upset and it took many calls to finally get to see the collection (and parts were already missing). Eventually we had enough money to buy the CNJ and DL&W negatives. I arrange for a friend to fund the acquisition of the



LV group. The Reading was simply too large for the funds which were available at the time. These were 100% diesel with the majority being 3/4 roster views. Fred had sold all of his steam negatives off years earlier. I was told the Reading group eventually went to Martin Zak and just this year some of these negatives have been appearing on eBay.

Since then we have been given a couple of photo collections and have purchased others. Still others have been thrown away by the survivors or with the rising popularity of eBay they have been sold piecemeal on that site. George Votava and Wayne Brumbaugh are two in particular that I am familiar with.

At the end of 2008 some other quality negatives and slides from the local area started appearing in the listings of eBay. On behalf of the ARHS I bid on some of these and won a few. Some others were won by other society members who fortunately are willing to share with the society what they won. Unfortunately many winners simply will not answer any inquiry.

About 6 weeks ago I decided to put on my editors hat and write to the seller, Randall Ross asking if he would consider letting me scan some of the negatives for the ARHS before they were listed on eBay. He agreed to this proposition. I had explained that I felt that the pictures were taken by someone willing to put in the extra effort to capture something from a different perspective and that I would use them to tell a story about his dad, Leslie Ross. As with many collection we have come upon recently the documentation as to when and where for the photos was missing so some investigation work was required.

Top: Westbound passenger train at Wisahickon?

Middle: West bound near Shawmont station

Bottom: Eastbound near Shawmont

### the photographer **Leslie Ross**

Lived in the Roxborough section of Philadelphia and seemed to equally take photos of both railroads and trolleys in the Philadelphia and eastern Pennsylvania environs. His good friend was Frank Watson another Philadelphia area railfan. The two of them wound up marrying sisters from the Wilkes-Barre area which resulted in Les and Frank making several trips to that city. Apparently these trips



often involved the LVT as far as Allentown thence by CNJ or LV passenger train for the rest of the journey. Les wanted to be one of the initial subscribers to the formation of the Strasburg RR as a tourist line but just missed the cut-off for the first 100 people. Instead he became one of principals and active volunteer of the Wanamaker Kempton and Southern RR in 1963 and helped establish a museum on the WK&S in 1965.

His Philadelphia railroad photography often seemed to focus on the tracks of the Reading but not the usual places such as Reading Terminal. Instead he recorded various locations along the Norristown (PG&N) line, Newtown Jct., west bank freight line and various locations on the Newtown br. being some notable locations. The photos you see on these pages are but a few examples of Leslie Ross's photography. Through the cooperation of his son Randall and the generosity of society member Charles Anderson there will be a multiple page photo spread in an upcoming issue of FD&S.



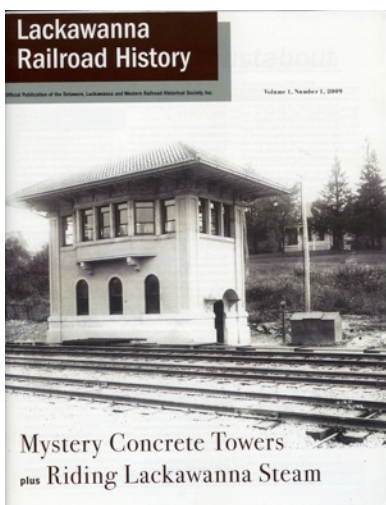
Top: Boarded up NK tower stands at the Newtown Branch crossing of the West Trenton branch at Bethayres, Pa  
 Middle: Pacific #178 passes Mainline Jct. tower at Norristown, Pa. with an eastbound train.  
 Left: Freight on the Newtown branch passing George School station.



### Where is it?

Mikado #1751 pulling a long line of coaches. Is this a special train? The signal looks new or freshly painted black. Non-electrified double track with power lines to the left. Anyone know the location? Could it be somewhere on the New York Short Line?

C. A. Anderson collection



### New Historical Society

The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Historical Society has issued their first magazine in May 2009. It is a nicely done publication with an interesting then and now about the DL&W's concrete towers. More people doing research to bring more information to light is always a good thing and their newsletter which accompanies this issue states that they wish to work together with other organizations and the ARHS is mentioned. I hope that to be the case also as there are several possible projects in the works that can be made better with additional input and information.

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Annual dues are \$25.00