Hudson River Valley Institute
Walkway Over the Hudson Oral Histories
Bernard Rudberg

Date: Thursday, July 31st 2008
Length: Approximately 1 hour 23 minutes

Camera Man: Whenever you're ready.

Interviewer (Paul Contarino): Could you please state your name and spell it for the camera?

Bernard Rudberg: My name is Bernard Rudberg. I retired from IBM Engineering 16 years ago. I got into trying to restore the train station, the old depot in Hopewell Junction. So you know since they were going to restore the train station, we decided, I-we ought to know what it should look like. So I started digging in to the history of the local railroads and out of that I wound up writing a book about it.

Interviewer: What inspired you to write the book?

Rudberg: Well what happened was that I discovered that the headquarters building of the railroad that ran across Dutchess County was in Mattawan which is now part of the City of Beacon. A couple of years ago, there was a construction crew renovating the building. They were putting in a tanning salon and a few other things, apartments and they discovered the original record books of the railroad up in the loft of the building. Well the construction guys were smart enough to know what they had. So they donated those books to the Beacon Historical Society which just happened to be right across the street and that's where I found the books. There were 48 volumes of the original books, 11-by-17 ledger books handwritten on onion skin paper and there were 700-pages in each of the 48 volumes for a total of over 30,000-pages of everything that happened to the railroad from 1879 until 1904. You know whose pig got run over, they had to pay for and the washroom sink is clogged up again and everything that happened to the railroad over that 25-year span. So I put together a book called *Twenty-Five Years on the ND&C* based on those record books and that covered the period of time when the big bridge in Poughkeepsie was built which had a rather drastic effect on the railroad. That's the point here today. We're talking about the big bridge in Poughkeepsie; what happened to that local railroad as a result of the construction of that bridge. If you have any questions, you know?

Interviewer 2: One thing I took from your book was that you see a lot of the personality of the-[cut off by Rudberg]

Rudberg: Yes.

Interviewer 2: People coming through-[cut off by Rudberg]

Rudberg: Yes.

Interviewer 2: Can you speak to some of the anecdotes and the way in which you see these personalities, and what life was like?

Rudberg: By the time, I spent almost a year reading all 30,000-pages of those original records and you know by the time I got to the end of it, I felt like these people were old friends of mine. You know Charles Kimball the supervisor, General Schultz was one of the owners, George Brown, you know the- and when you're looking at the handwritten versions of these you can tell that almost what was happening by the way it was written. You know it was written in big script with an underline, you know he was ticked off about something that day and frustrated or whatever, how to run a railroad on how to survive competing with the New York Central over a period of time and how to make a small railroad business run. There were lots of things that happened that railroad started from Dutchess Junction which is just south of Beacon along the Hudson River. That's where Pete Seger lives nowadays if you know Pete Seger.

Anyway, they started from that point and built a railroad diagonally across Dutchess County up through Brinkerhoff, Fishkill, Brinkerhoff, Hopewell Junction up through Millbrook and Pine Plains to Millerton and that 58 miles of track entirely within Dutchess County. Well it started out as the Dutchess and Columbia County Railroad named for the two counties it was supposed to go through and the thing is George Brown, leased the whole operation before it was finished building. The first revenue run in 1869, the name on the coaches was Boston, Hartford and Erie; he leased the whole thing to the Boston Hartford and Erie. The Boston Hartford and Erie was a big railroad coming from Boston across Connecticut into New York State and their intentions were to build a deep water port on Dennings Point. If you're familiar with Dennings Point, just south of Beacon, they had all kinds of grand plans, they had built a trestle across from the mainland over to the tip of Jennings Point-Dennings Point and the problem was this was in 1869. In 1870, they went bankrupt and it never got completed. So they had started building tracks from Hopewell Junction across towards Stormville and Connecticut, but they never got completed. So when it went bankrupt, George Brown heard about it and about 2 o'clock in the morning, he and one of the engineers went down to the roundhouse at Dutchess Junction, fired up the old steam engine Washington and went up along the line and posted guards at each of the stations along the line. He got to Hopewell Junction and they pulled up some of the rails that connected to the BH&E equipment that was out east of Hopewell which trapped their equipment out there. He basically took back the railroad and it now went back to being the Dutchess and Columbia. They had some borrowed equipment and they went back in business. Well George Brown had much bigger ideas about what he wanted to do so by 1872. This was only two years later he had this grand scheme and he formed what was known as the New York, Boston and Northern Railroad. The idea was to string together a whole series of small railroads with some connecting links and make a line from New York City up into the northern part of New York State to compete with the New York Central along the Hudson River. Well that lasted only two or three months and he expanded it and it became the New York, Boston, and Montreal and that was in 1873 and with the same intention he was going to go up through Rutland, Vermont to reach Montreal. This was a grand scheme, they had construction going, they had bought the right of way, they were building a lot of construction. In the financial Panic of 1873, they went bankrupt so the New York, Boston, and Montreal was never completed. If you know where to look, around places like Clove Valley, you can find stonework , where the bridges were being built across, there's old pieces of the right away out their in the woods that have just been laying there since 1873, over a 130 years-never was completed. So anyway, when that went bankrupt in 1873, George Brown pulled his horns in and it became the Dutchess and Columbia again in Dutchess County of course. That only lasted another year until 1874 when the Dutchess and Columbia went bankrupt. [Laughs] Times were tough back then, [clears throat].

Anyway, the-in 1874, it went into receivership so it was under directorship of the local courts. In 1877, it operated three years under receivership and in 1877 it was reorganized as the Newburgh, Dutchess, and Connecticut. So you can see he pulled his horns in, he wasn't going to go all the way to Montreal, he was just going to from Newburgh to Connecticut, across Dutchess County. I guess he learned his lesson but apparently, the name Newburgh on there you say, well how does a railroad get to Newburgh? Well at Dutchess Junction, they had built a ferry service to haul train cars across the river. So the other end of the railroad was actually a barge ride to Newburgh. They had barges with railroad tracks on the deck and they would just roll the cars out on the barge, anchor them down, run them across the river with a steamboat called the Fanny Garner and this was in 1872-'73-'74 along in that timeframe. When it started and by 1878-79, along in that timeframe, that was a goal in business, hauling tons and tons of Pennsylvania Coal, mainly coal across the river and then distributing it all through New England and Duchess County of course but the problem with that was the length of time it took to get a train across the river. You had to roll the cars on, you couldn't roll the whole train on to the barge, you rolled a few cars on, open it up, run a few more cars on the track next to it and it was rather labor intensive, slow operation to get a train to cross the river. It took a couple of hours to get a train across the river. In addition to that, the problem was in the winter, when the river froze up, you couldn't get them across at all. Just when you needed the coal in the wintertime, you couldn't get it across the river. So people started looking at this it and saying, "well we need a bridge," so it was during that timeframe that they started planning and building the big bridge in Poughkeepsie.

Meanwhile, the ND&C was hauling all this stuff, mainly coal and passengers of course, but by the time the bridge was built, the big bridge in Poughkeepsie in 1888, the New York and New England Railroad had been formed. Now this was pieces of the old Boston, Hartford and Erie that had been reorganized and they were still trying to get to the Hudson River for that deep port. They decided to build one instead of buying Dennings Point, they built Fishkill Landing and that was in 1881 when the tracks came across from Connecticut [clears throat] and to get to the Hudson River from Hopewell Junction, they leased [clears throat] the rights to run on the ND&C tracks from Hopewell Junction down to Beacon which- well at that time was called Mattawan. The thing-that now you had two railroads, the ND&C and the New York and New England running trains, freight and passenger in both directions, on one single track which was a nightmare for the people trying to keep track of it and keep it from running into each other. Of course they did run into each other on occasions but you know some of the-some of the effects of that you know, I've seen pictures of some of the wrecks that they had during that period of time and there was always contention between the two railroads but they had to live together because they both had to use the same set of tracks.

So in 1881, they built much bigger facilities for traveling across the river. Now the original one down at Dutchess Junction was the Fanny Garner and you know I've got pictures of that and later on, the new one that was built was Fishkill Landing, and this Fishkill Landing facility was much bigger. It had a lot more room in the yard for freight cars and it also had two ferry docks for ferrying cars across the river and the main ferry that ran across the river at Fishkill Landing was called the William T. Hart. Now the William T. Hart was actually named for one of the original, the original-I guess he was the president of the New York and New England Railroad but anyway at the time it went into the service across the river, it was the second largest ferry boat in the world. It was over 300 feet long and it had two completely independent steam engines, one on the right side, one on the left so that they can reverse one of

them and turn it around on its own length so it was the latest and greatest in 1881 when it went into service. They could take [clears throat] 27 cars at a time across the river, so you know it was still pretty slow because you had to load all the cars on. This was in 1881 now we're still getting closer and closer to the building of the big bridge in Poughkeepsie.

Now the ND&C Railroad was still running, hauling coal and the New York and New England was also hauling coal. At that point, you know it's in the 1880s, coal was the big thing. Everybody ran on coal. Nobody had an oil burner cause they hadn't dug oil out of Pennsylvania yet at that point, at least not enough it to do any good. So there were- and also some of the coal came across from Pennsylvania through the canals, through Roundout and Kingston and barges through the canal and from there it came down the river to Dutchess Junction and they would load it on the train cars and distribute it. It still depended on the river and when it iced over, you know you got a problem.

So the, I guess-when they finally did build the big railroad bridge, it opened, the first train across it was in December of 1888. The problem was there weren't any tracks on the western end of the bridge, tracks didn't go anywhere. So the train ran over to Highland and came back again, that was as far as it could go. It took a good six months after the bridge was built before they had tracks that ran from Highland on down to what they called Orange Junction which later became Maybrook. Okay, now we've got this big bridge and you've got tracks going down to Orange Junction and Orange Junction connected to the railroads on the other side of the river, on the west side of the river. Well [clears throat] the thing that happened then, was that you could run a train across that bridge even when there was ice on the river, you didn't have to worry about barges. So there was still competition though because the ND&C Railroad wanted to stay in business and they were hauling coal. So they still kept using their barge traffic as long as they could and that lasted until 1904 and the-you know, Fishkill Landing Ferry service finally ended in 1904 when the New Haven Railroad bought it out and closed out the ferry service and ran all their freight service across the bridge in Poughkeepsie.

Well meanwhile, the railroad that owned the bridge included some of the local railroads around Poughkeepsie area, okay. There was a group there that was formed in 1899, formed the Central New England Railroad. Well the Central New England Railroad was actually funded by New Haven Railroad money and it operated like it was a division of the New Haven Railroad. So they you know-it wasn't until 1927, that it was finally absorbed formally into the New Haven Railroad, so the Central New England Railroad or the New Haven actually behind it all, wanted to buy the big bridge. Well the people who owned it decided that they didn't want to sell unless they took all the other railroads and things that went with it in a packaged deal. The New Heaven Railroad didn't want all these small railroads, all they wanted was the big bridge for their freight traffic. So when the CNE finally took over, one of the things that happened then was almost immediately after the CNE took over, the first thing they did was to start dismantling all the little small railroads which included the ND&C and the Rhinebeck and Connecticut that ran across the northern part of Dutchess County, from Rhinebeck to Millerton [clears throat]. Anyway, the CNE didn't really want all these little small lines then it started a program of abandonment.

So the town of Dutchess Junction which I showed you a picture of a while ago; that was the first to go in 1907. They closed down the operation of their locomotive repair shops, the roundhouse and all that sort of thing and sold all that stuff for scrap value or you know salvage value. So if you go down to Dutchess Junction today, there's nothing left but a few bricks. So this was the town of Dutchess Junction, along the river, no longer exists because the big bridge

in Poughkeepsie was built. That was in 1907 that they sold most of the equipment that had been down there that belong to the ND&C Railroad but they still kept the station there and the track still connected [clears throat] and that lasted until 1916 [clears throat]. The-in 1916, they finally closed down the line and the station at Dutchess Junction and they tore out the bridge over Fishkill Creek and tore out the tracks and they were sold for the scrap value in 1916 to support efforts in World War I. So now there were tracks from Beacon to Hopewell Junction and on up through Millbrook were still in place and-but the CNE didn't want them and they built up all their freight traffic across the big bridge. Meanwhile, they were tearing out all the little lines. Well the line from Millerton to Pine Plains and down through by 1938, they had torn out all those tracks and in 1938 most of those tracks, rails, were sold for scrap to Japan, well you know what Japan did with them in 1941. So probably there are pieces of Dutchess County laying at the bottom of Pearl Harbor. That was Dutchess County's contribution to the war effort. That was pretty much the end of what had been the ND&C.

Now there's a piece of that track from Hopewell Junction down to Beacon is still in place and it belonged to New Haven Railroad, then a few-some years later, when you got into the 1970s, you know it was glommed into the Penn Central and the Penn Central inherited the big railroad bridge in Poughkeepsie. So then later on, that became Conrail, and then in 1974 the bridge caught fire and stopped all the traffic. So meanwhile, you know the major locomotives and things that ran across that bridge that belonged to New Haven Railroad were a type called the New Haven L-1 Class they were 2-10-10-2 to Santa Fe type of locomotives. They were fairly low speed but you know-but they had enough horsepower to drag half the world along with them. You know they were made for freight service, low speed freight service and there were a number of them who were based in the Maybrook Yard and also at Hopewell Junction and they traveled back and forth across that bridge in Poughkeepsie on a regular basis every day. There's a picture I have, this picture I got this picture from Bill (Kimbach??), the (Kimbach??) family had three generations who worked for the railroad a lot of-I'm not sure exactly how they acquired this picture but it shows one of those L1 locomotives and a line of freight cars going across the bridge. During the life of the bridge, when it was first built, it had two sets of stringers across. In other words, it was a dual kind of a bridge and it had two tracks on the top. Well when these heavier 2-10-10-2 locomotives came along in 1918, the locomotives were so much heavier and the freights were getting bigger and heavier that they discovered that the bridge was beginning to tilt when it went across and they said, "this is not a good idea." So they strengthened the bridge during the timeframe from about 1907-1910. They put a third set of steel all through the center of the bridge. If you look at old pictures of the bridge, you can see the early pictures that were two sets of steel and later pictures, there were three sets of steel into the bridge. The tracks on the top were converted to what they call well the different –they were moved to the point where they were in the center rather than on two tracks on the sides okay, they were called a gauntlet and they moved the tracks into the center. Then the problem then was only one train at a time could use the bridge. Well that wasn't too big a problem because they put signal towers on the ends and controlled the traffic, but with the weight in the center of the bridge, then it wouldn't tilt side to side anymore and remained that way until 1960 or '61, I think when they singled tracked it all the way through. The bridge has a long history of all sorts of things.

I've talked to some of the people who worked on the railroads. One of the fellows was an engineer and he said he used to run across the bridge quite often and one particular fireman-this is on a diesel engine even though they still had firemen on diesel engines because they had to

have two people. He said this fireman was totally afraid of heights, he wouldn't- he didn't like that bridge so every time they got to that bridge he would hide underneath the consul until they got across the other side of the bridge. He wouldn't even look out the windows.[laughs] So when it's 212 feet from the tracks down to the water, so it's a spectacular view from up there on the bridge. One of the older stories I've heard is about one of these 2-10-10-2 locomotives, had a problem on the bridge. One of the tires on the drive wheel you know steam locomotives had steel tires on their drive wheels that could come off for maintenance. Well one of those tires came off and was clanging around on the rods and stopped the train in the middle of the bridge. So now what do you do? You've got this locomotive and a bunch of freight cars out there on the bridge, you know and this is in winter weather, how do you get a tire back onto [laughs] a locomotive out in the middle of the bridge? Well, the maintenance crews did it, they brought the equipment out there and jacked it up and heated you know the tire to expand it, put it back on and did the whole job out there 200 and some feet over the river and said of course one of the things that they discovered, that some of the guys had hip-flasks in their pockets [laughs] while they were doing the job otherwise they wouldn't have walked out on the bridge. There are things like that that-you-know you really wonder- you know about the people who did that sort of thing and what kind of a life it was. I've talked to some of the people who used to run across that bridge, Tony Marano who was one of the members of the Maybrook Museum today. You know if you go over there, you can find Tony usually on weekends. He's quite an interesting character to talk to. He'll talk to you all day about riding that caboose and all the things that happened you know in riding that caboose and the things that were happening.

A lot of times there would be problems with the wheels on freight cars and you would have sparks, and that type of thing. So fires were a regular problem on that bridge. They happened periodically and there were water lines and sand barrels all across the bridge and when they noticed a problem a fire of some sort and they also had patrols walking across the bridge to you know to make sure that there weren't anything burning out there. Well a number of those fires were put out by the local train crews-Tony talks about putting in money to replace the shoes that got ruined when he was out there trying to put out a fire on the bridge and that type of thing. The sand barrels and all and there was a watchmen crew and they had the regular watchman you know with the key that turns in the watchman's lock out there on the bridge, so they would know he was out there patrolling back and forth on the bridge particularly during World War II when it was pretty, you know important for hauling a lot of military stuff. Well-so it was a known fact that the bridge was very prone to having small fires.

When Conrail operated the bridge and the amount of traffic across that bridge was slowly dwindling down and the Maybrook Yard over in Maybrook was slowly getting smaller and smaller of volumes of traffic. Conrail decided that you know, basically they didn't need that bridge, they didn't- you know [cuts off] there's also sorts of you know, conspiracy theories about what happened to the bridge but basically they –they didn't fill up the sand barrels anymore and they let the water pipes on the bridge freeze. So they broke and so they were no longer unusable and then they got rid of all the bridge patrols. So it was just a matter of time before the next time the bridge caught fire, it was going to go; that happened in May of 1974. I was working in IBM that day and they passed the word over the pa system don't try to go north on Route 9 through Poughkeepsie because parts of the bridge are falling on Route 9. I've seen pictures of the traffic being diverted through the center of Poughkeepsie to get around the problem. So after the bridge burned you know, there were all kinds of stories of we're going to fix it right away but nobody ever did, Conrail didn't want it, nobody else had the money to fix it. So it sat there for thirty

years. So what the effect was, the bridge stopped all that traffic that was going across there and Hopewell Junction was no longer needed because there were no longer any freight service going through there except local stuff and a few local customers like (Gwenlyn???) Gas and you know lumber companies. Things like that weren't enough to justify the cost of maintaining the line from Poughkeepsie out to Hopewell.

So in 1982, they decided that was the end of it and the last run with a diesel engine from Poughkeepsie out to Hopewell Junction. In 1983 they tore up that section of track out to Hopewell Junction. Meanwhile, the county was interested in it. The county, Dutchess County was thinking about building county route 11 a north-south route to connect southern Dutchess with northern Dutchess. Well they bought the right of way from Hopewell Junction up to Poughkeepsie. The county bought it and the problem, I'm not sure exactly why, maybe it wasn't wide enough or whatever, it turns out that they never did build county route 11. So the next thing they did was, they changed it and made it a utility corridor and that old right of way now from Poughkeepsie out to Hopewell Junction, they buried water lines under it and now their in the process of paving it over to make it a hiking and bicycling trail so-and parts of it have already been paved and parts of it are going to be for horses-you know crushed stone for horses with extra big parking spaces for horse trailers and things. So what used to be the, you know the battleground for climbing the hills with these old L1- steam engines, is now a hiking and bicycling trail. The section from Lake (Orton???) Road in Hopewell Junction has been opened since last year. I've hiked that [clear throat] and it gets daily use there's somebody out there everyday you know women jogging along pushing their baby carriages and you know roller bladers and bicyclers and you know it's a regular thing. So it's basically a Dutchess County park that's about a 100 feet wide and twelve miles long. So, have you people thought of any questions you want to talk about now?

Interviewer 2: Yeah I've come up with-thanks for the history. You've given some great stuff that we haven't heard before.

Rudberg: Well if I think of more there will be more probably [laughs].

Interviewer 2: Here's a couple of things, a couple of questions that struck me as I was listening to you. You spoke about Brown and his idea of you know creating –

Rudberg: The New York Boston and Montreal?

Interviewer 2: Back in 1873, now I know that there was already some false starts on building the bridge [cut off by Rudberg]

Rudberg: Yes

Interviewer 2: How was Brown coming to terms or dealing with the possibility that the big bridge might come up, was that something that might have been perhaps going to be a detriment to his ultimate plans?

Rudberg: Well he was optimistic enough to think the barges could still supply enough-because in addition to the coal traffic across the bridge, he also had freight service you know like what

would now be UPS or something like that, American Express kind of thing and they had regular boat service steamboat service up and down the Hudson River that also stopped at Dutchess Junction so that was part of their plan of Dutchess Junction. Ultimately there wasn't enough of that to justify the-you know a railroad and then when the New Haven Railroad as the name the CNE, Central New England Railroad sponsored by paid for by the New Haven Railroad bought it out and closed it down. So you know it was a matter of economics, you know he was optimistic in thinking he could keep-still stay in business and then G Hunter Brown also was-as part of the same Brown family. This was part of the Brown Banking family so they had mill-at least millions of dollars in the banking center in New York City. So George Brown was- well he was the young- well one of the boys of the family and he wasn't in very good health and he moved to Millbrook for his health. There wasn't any railroad in Millbrook at the time. So this is around the time of the Civil War and he well said, "yeah I would like to be able to commute to the office in New York." So that's one of the reasons why the railroad was built in Millbrook because George Brown lived there in Millbrook. Later on G Hunter Brown, which was also part of the family, became president of the ND&C-in 1895 I think. He took over-the younger Brown and he was president of it until time it was absorbed into the Central New England in 1904.

Interviewer 2: Is there any evidence that the Brown family perhaps resisted the idea of building of the bridge?

Rudberg: Well I'm not sure, I never saw any evidence that they actually resisted it; they were just competing with it. Basically, because they had a barge in service and a lot of coal coming across that river and they were up and running way before the bridge was built. So they you know, they were in business and running and thought they could survive even if the bridge was built and the main reason that the bridge-the main financial and impetus behind building the bridge was the people of Poughkeepsie. There was contention between Newburgh and Poughkeepsie at that point in time to be king of the freight service on the Hudson River and Poughkeepsie won out.

Interviewer 2: You kind of just answered my next question; I was going to ask you to speak to why Poughkeepsie and Highland were selected?

Rudberg: I think part of the reason was because of the topography of the land, okay. In Newburgh it's fairly low and they would have to come down the hill to the river and up the river on the other side. Now in Poughkeepsie, there's a very convenient cliff on the west side and Poughkeepsie is fairly high up on the east bank so they just built a bridge across the top. So the old steam engines wouldn't have to go all the way down and across the bridge and back up the other side.

Interviewer 2: In regards to the ferry service, about how many cars of the freight cars could actually be fit onto one of these ferries?

Rudberg: The one I was talking about, the William T. Hart that was-at time was the second largest ferry boat in the world and it held 27 freight cars on each run. It could also take passenger cars but passenger cars were longer so they couldn't take quite as many passenger cars.

Interviewer 2: About how many trains- or how many cars would a-a train on the-waiting to go across? How many would encompass-

Rudberg: Well, it depends on what timeframe you're talking about. The early ones when the engines weren't all that powerful, you might have 20-25 cars on train but by the time the big bridge was in operation up into the 1970s, you-you had a 120-125 car freight trains a mile long. So depending on the timeframe and how big a locomotive you had to pull it.

Interviewer 2: In regards to Dutchess Junction, about how big was the town?

Rudberg: Well there was-in addition to the railroad headquarters there; there was also some brickyards there. There were- there's a big excavations in the hillside where they were getting the clay to make bricks. As a matter of fact, there were some interaction between them because the railroads hauled the bricks and the brick companies owed the railroad money and at one point in time the-the roundhouse at Dutchess Junction, the railroad roundhouse, had a big steel smokestack which of course steel corroded very quickly and they had a problem with this and it finally fell down in a storm. So they said, "well we got to build something a little more substantial." So they decided to build a brick chimney for it instead and of course the brickyard was right on the other side of the fence and the brick company owed them money. So they said well okay, you can pass off in bricks to build our new-build a new chimney for a roundhouse. So there was that kind of operation and there were tenement houses up alongside of the hill for all the workers in the railroads, for the brickyards and for the ferry service. So it was a substantial little town. If you go down there today, you know the only thing you can find down there, is maybe a couple pieces of concrete foundation and some bricks, everything is gone. The ferry docks are all gone. There's nothing left there.

Interviewer 2: That brings up another question I wanted to ask you about Dutchess Junction; that is in terms of workers themselves, now I know that you have read all of the handwritten accounts, probably got a good sense of who these people were, could you tell me what life might have been like for a worker on the railroads at Dutchess Junction?

Rudberg: Well okay, the workers who actually worked on the track gangs, the people who lived in the tenements, you know the average guy who might have worked in a roundhouse or something you know he would work for a relatively little amount of pay. Almost nothing to what we know today. A guy who was a supervisor of these guys would make like $45 dollars a month and you know of course the track gang would make $25-$30 dollars a month maybe and they were doing about a dollar and what the big snowstorm of 1888, the big blizzard of '88, the famous one; well it took them 17 days to clear the tracks from Old Hopewell up through to Millerton. They hired outside help to do the shoveling and in some cases in like in (Windchill Cut??) by Millerton. They had to shovel the snow six levels up to get it out of the cut. So they had hundreds of guys working and they hired them for a dollar a day and then they supplied them with a shovel and you know and a pair of gloves and that sort of thing. A dollar a day then was good wages in those days, you know and so for a month-and you worked six days a week for a month, you know you might work 24-25 days for a dollar a day. Some of the track gang guys who were experienced in putting track together and that sort of thing made a dollar and a quarter

maybe a day but then back at that point, you know a dollar and a quarter would buy quite a bit. So that was a living wage back in those days, and you know that was fairly common and there were occasional strikes when you know the New York Central track gangs were paying 10 cents a day more than the ND&C, people would leave and the ND&C would jack up their prices a little bit you know up there wages. So-similar to what's happening today, just on a different monetary scale.

Interviewer 2: Is there any evidence of any worker unrest or perhaps worker violence that might have taken place?

Rudberg: Not on the ND&C, they were all fairly copasetic except that when things got tight and the railroad didn't come though with the payroll on time. They would just quit and go away. [Laughs] So you know- that's- there's no real evidence of violence the only fatalities were occasional accidents, you know-back in those days before there was such a thing as an air brakes on a train, the way you stopped a train was cranking the hand wheels and the locomotives would have brakes, okay. Here you have this long line of freight cars back there and there was a hand crank wheel on each of the freight cars and there were trainmen, brakemen who used to walk on the catwalks on top of the freight cars and when they had to stop, they would crank the brakes on this one, jump to the next car and crank the brakes on that one. Now that was a very dangerous job in the winter time, a little ice on top of those cars. So there was quite a few fatalities and that sort of thing and I don't know if you ever noticed pictures of old railroads there would be a frame across the top of the railroad with a bunch of ropes hanging down. They called it a tell-tale. They would have one of those before you got to a tunnel or a bridge as a warning to these guys who were up on top of the freight cars. If he was up there cranking away on one of these hand wheels and he got slapped with a rope, he knows he better duck, cause he's going to go under a bridge and if he didn't duck [phfft] that was the end of him. [Laughs] So that was you know not a very safe job but you could make a dollar a day doing it.

Interviewer 2: That's where we get the term a toll-tell sign, huh?

Rudberg: Yeah, something like that I guess [Laughs] anyway-

Interviewer 2: Again about these workers, were these transitional people? Were these career guys who stayed there?

Rudberg: Most of them were career guys unless they decided that 10 cents a day more for the other railroad. They would still live in the same house and just work for the other railroad. So-the New York Central up along the Hudson River connected at Dutchess Junction with the ND&C. So it was fairly convenient you know just depending on which side of tracks they walked to when they went to work in the mornings.

Interviewer: How did the bridge affect Maybrook's economic development cause I know- [cut off by Rudberg].

Rudberg: Maybrook didn't exist before the bridge, it became Orange Junction where the railroads came together and then they started to build a yard there and the town grew up around

it. So basically, Maybrook exits as a town because there was a thing such as a bridge. If that bridge hadn't been there it probably wouldn't have been a Town of Maybrook.

Interviewer: How was Maybrook affected after the bridge fire?

Rudberg: Well the big yard in Maybrook, employed at its peak somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,500 people and now it's a truck terminal. So those 1,500 people had to go somewhere. When the fire happened the work crews were down to a much smaller number than the 1,500 but they were basically out of business at that point. So economically, Maybrook was in pretty bad shape, but now Yellow Freight, the big Yellow Freight trucks that you see on the highways, they have a big truck terminal on what used to be the Maybrook Rail Yard. There's one single track going through now and all the rest of the tracks are gone.

Interviewer 2: The building of the bridge and its subsequent closing at Dutchess Junction, did that affect maybe the prices? The amount of commodities that were coming in, specifically things like coal, milk some of the issues that you addressed specifically in your book?

Rudberg: Well obviously, the railroad hauled a lot of milk that was one of the major products. Every little town seemed-like had a little creamery you know for processing milk. Dutchess County was a big dairy processing outfit, like for example, Borden's built a rather large milk processing plant in Hopewell Junction. It opened in the spring of 1901 and that-they had ice that they salvaged from the ponds. So the ice that was used at the one in Hopewell Junction came from a pond in Billings and the railroad hauled the ice to Hopewell Junction. They had 900 tons of ice which they used to keep the milk cool and the railroad had all along its railroad's path had stops where they would pick up these 10 gallon milk cans and haul them to the processing plants. There was one in Hopewell Junction, there was one in LaGrange, and there was one in Millbrook and you know, every little town had a milk processing plant. The one in Hopewell Junction had six railroad cars that were dedicated to hauling the milk from that plant to New York City. Well they didn't go all the way to New York City; they went down to connect to the New York Central Railroad, okay. The ND&C railroad hauled them from Hopewell Junction down to Dutchess Junction and then from there, they would go down to the city with ice in the summertime. Of course they had the opposite problem in the winter when it was cold the milk would freeze and then had to try keep it warm, to keep it from freezing. There was something in range of 500 cases of court bottles in each freight car and there were six of those cars that-there were shuttled back and forth from Hopewell Junction to New York City just for that one plant. So you know it was a big operation, but then in the 1920s, when truck traffic became so much more prevalent then, you didn't have to build your creameries along the railroad anymore. Trucks could go from the farm to wherever the creamery was and most of the railroad-built creameries were out of business and the one in Hopewell Junction is long gone.

Interviewer 2: Could speak to how weather affected railroads in particular, the bridge and how did they maintain the bridge during times of snow? or during-how did severe rains perhaps affect bridge traffic?

Rudberg: Well rain wasn't such a big problem except it made the rails slippery. On the locomotives, they had sanders to put sand on the rails so to get a little more traction in the rain,

but you know weather was always a problem. I mentioned before the big blizzard of 1888; it took them 17 days to open up the line from Dutchess Junction to Millerton. There were snowplows, big v-type snowplows that they would put in front of the locomotive and sometimes. When the snow was deep they'd have two locomotives pushing a plow through-on the lines to blast the snow off to the sides. The New York Central even had a big fancy new invention which was a rotary type thing which was a humongous snow blower that the New York Central used. The ND&C couldn't afford one of those, they just had a regular v- plow and when they got too deep to where they couldn't push through it anymore. They'd hire a bunch of guys to come out and start shoveling and one of the things they would do was they would have these open cars and they would shovel the snow into the (gandules???) cars and ship it somewhere south, let it melt, either that or if- the only way to get it out of the (gandules???) was to shovel it out again, you didn't want to that. So they'd just ship it somewhere south and let it melt.

Interviewer 2: Did people actually get up on the bridge and shovel snow?

Rudberg: Well, actually the way the bridge is built, it didn't accumulate much snow because there were openings between these ties and rails. So you know it never accumulated much on the bridge. Off the bridge is where it would pile up, particularly the cuts. Up towards-between Pine Plains and Millerton there was a place called (Windchill???) Mountain, where the cut was-I don't know how many feet deep it was but you know that particular cut was where they took all the shoveling time in the big blizzard of '88. There was another case on the Harlem line which wasn't part of the ND&C but the Harlem line where there was a cut that had blown, drifted full of snow and they tried to push through it with three locomotives and a plow. Well when they hit it, the plow stopped and the three locomotives didn't. A couple of guys were killed you know and the crew members were mangled, and steam, you know a big mess. So you know that could be a problem and that big [clears throat] blizzard of 1888, it was interesting, you know the day before the blizzard, it had been so dry that there were grass fires along the edges of the road. When there was a grass fire in Fishkill that almost burnt the Van Wyck House in Fishkill. There were six grass fires in Fishkill, the day before the blizzard.

Interviewer 2: Speaking of the blizzard, I believe the bridge was in its final stages of completion in that winter time. Have you heard anything about how the blizzard might have effected construction or can you even speak to the construction of the bridge?

Rudberg: Well you now the bridge was completed late in 1888 and the blizzard was in March of '88 so it was like-you know a few months before the bridge was completed, but the bridge was in fairly good, you know, pretty much completed-almost completed at the time. My understanding was that for those few days of the blizzard, they just stopped worked. I don't know what else they could do, you know.

Interviewer 2: Could you speak to the construction of the bridge, just briefly?

Rudberg: Well construction of the bridge I think, Carleton Mabee's book is what really explains it in great detail with a lot of pictures and I contributed to some of that book as well. But the planning on it had started back in the 1870s-early 1870s and they had started work on it and the original company that worked on it, had been some fatalities, a lot of problems, financial

problems and they finally gave up on it. A few years later, another company formed and reformed and started and finally finished the project. So there was a period of years in the middle where it was partly built and nothing was done, it kind of laid there. There was enough of a financial incentive because of the problem of the river freezing over and- how do you get coal over across the river. People in Poughkeepsie said wait a minute; "we're getting cold of here, we need coal for our heaters," and you know so there was enough of a financial incentive to complete the project. So another company started it up and finally finished it in 1888. The first train across was in December, the last day of December 1888.

Interviewer: What part of the book did you contribute to or help to write or assist in?

Rudberg: Well I had already published the previous book on the ND&C and Carleton had seen parts of it. We had been to other meetings and things and the part that I contributed was-was mainly in the sources of laborers that were used for the bridge. They would go down to New York City on the streets of the tenement sections of New York City and recruit Italians right off the boat and of course a lot of the construction workers on the bridge were actually from the tenement areas of Manhattan. They'd bring them up here you know, house them for a particular time you know, they would you know work for whatever time it was. I had already found that out because some of those Italian workers were used on the ND&C, they were immigrants who were looking for a job and you know I contributed that piece of it to the bridge.

Interviewer: Did a lot of Italians work at the Maybrook Switching Yard?

Rudberg: Most of the people who I met over there, it seems like a pretty significant fraction-a high fraction of the people in Maybrook were Italian. Tony Marano for example, Sam Christiano, these were and a lot of the railroad workers were Italian because, I think mainly because the Italian families were coming across-immigrating to the United States at that period of time and the railroads were looking for workers and they were looking for jobs and it just was a natural fit, I guess.

Interviewer 2: Have you found much evidence of the Italians staying in the area after they arrived or started working?

Rudberg: Well yeah, if you look at the names in the phonebook in Maybrook, you know it seems like half of them are Italian. Tony Marano for example, he's still there after he's retried and now he's volunteer at the Maybrook Railroad Museum. You see him there very weekend.

Interviewer: When was the Maybrook Railroad Museum started?

Rudberg: When-well I'm not sure when the museum was actually started, but I got the impression that when the big bridge burned and some of these people who had worked for the railroad and the traffic, the train traffic through town, slowly it was winding down to nothing. They decided well, you know we've got to try to save some of this. So they started collecting some of this stuff and some of the people who had worked there and they talked the town people into letting them have a room in the Maybrook library. So one room of the Maybrook library is

now the Maybrook Railroad Museum and the people who operate it, volunteers, are all almost former Maybrook Rail Yard employees or New Haven Railroad employees.

Interviewer: So its mission pretty much has been to preserve everything about Maybrook and the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge?

Rudberg: Well their primary mission is the Maybrook Yard but the yard itself is actually, it exists because of the big bridge, okay. So there's a definite connection there. So there's a lot of pictures in the museum of the railroad bridge itself. So that's pretty much you know-I don't know what you would call it but they go together; the Maybrook and the big bridge.

Interviewer 2: One question I have, I've heard about, I've heard that there's-was a dramatic reduction in train traffic towards going into the 1960s-1970s.

Rudberg: That's right.

Interviewer 2: Could you speak to that? What was the cause of this decline?

Rudberg: Well okay. Most of the railroads in the northeast were having that kind of problem okay. The biggest problem was the competition from highway trucks. So the total amount of freight that was moved by rail was decreasing and also the railroads that were still surviving wanted to cut costs as much as possible. Now when it got to the 1970s, when Conrail had the Maybrook Yard and the Poughkeepsie Bridge, they also had the Selkirk Yard and the big bridge in Albany. There were several small railroads, the Erie and a couple of others that connected to Maybrook and they were not necessarily the best connections for western freight. So things were slowly winding down but most of the traffic on Conrail was slowly migrating to Selkirk and the big bridge in Albany. So in the 1970s-early 1970s timeframe, you know Conrail didn't really want the big bridge here in Poughkeepsie. They wanted-you know they owned the rails on the one up in Albany but all the freight coming into Maybrook was coming in on competing railroads. So Conrail wanted to consolidate as much as possible, their big freight line from Chicago to Albany. So Maybrook was competing with Albany's main freight service. So slowly they were working things around to the point where Maybrook was beginning to fade and they-as I said before, they basically ignored the bridge in Poughkeepsie until it caught fire.

Interviewer 2: At the bridge's peak, about how many trains would go over a day?

Rudberg: Well it depends on what timeframe you're talking about. During World War II, there was a lot of military traffic. So you know there were times when you would have a train across that bridge you know every hour, 24 hours a day. Then toward the end, it was two or three trains a day toward the end. When it finally burned, there were only two or three trains a day at that point.

Interviewer: Could you talk a little about the Central New England Railway tours you give?

Rudberg: Central New England Railway was a consolidation of a bunch of smaller pieces that was formed in 1899. It actually ran from Hartford, Connecticut across Connecticut to-and the

state line by Millerton and into New York State and then the Rhinebeck and Connecticut ran from Millerton over to Rhinebeck and Rhinecliff and there were- there was the ND&C that ran down to Dutchess Junction. There were also two other railroads from Pine Plains, there was the Poughkeepsie and Eastern and [clears throat] the Poughkeepsie and Connecticut. What happened was at-when the big bridge was built, the company that built the bridge, their intention was to buy the railroad from Poughkeepsie over to the state line in Millerton which was the P&E what had been in business since 1872 or so and they-when they got to Poughkeepsie and finished the big bridge, the P&E decided they weren't going to sell, they wouldn't sell them the tracks. So the bridge company decided, well we've got to get to Connecticut, so they built another line and parallel from Poughkeepsie to Pine Plains that was the P&C. So those two lines were competing from Poughkeepsie up to Pine Plains and they crossed-they actually crossed in a couple of places at Salt Point and farther north and they ran within a few feet of each other into Pine Plains. Those railroads all belonged to the Central New England because the New Haven Railroad was the money behind the Central New England and they bought up all of these small railroads. So by the time they bought it all up, the north-south railroads in Dutchess County along the Hudson River and Harlem line were New York Central; that everything that ran east and west across the other way all belonged to the Central New England or the New Haven. So by the time they consolidated everything, there were only two railroads in Dutchess County.

Interviewer 2: The final question from me, can you speak to some of the lighter anecdotes and [Rudberg laughs] funny stories you came across?

Rudberg: Well there's quite a few of those, for example in the ND&C books, one of the things that I ran across was a shipment of bottles of beer that landed in Hopewell Junction and they looked in there and the bottles were half empty and the corks were put back in the bottles [laughs] as far as I know they never figured out what happened to that but there's a pretty good guess what happened there. They had a problem with pilfering, so there was a notice pulled out that any cases or cartons that had shoes in them, pairs of shoes, had to be double banded so nobody could steal the shoes out of them. Local farmers would complain about the railroad crews would stop along the line and steal their apples, or their produce, you know that kind of thing.

One particular one I remember, in Fishkill, there was a shipment of a rather large bag of smoked meat that landed at the station in Fishkill to be delivered to Mattawan. The station agent took one sniff and said, [mm-mm] he didn't want that bag of meat in his shop because it was in July and it was getting pretty ripe. So he put it on the next train going to Mattawan. Well it got to the station in Mattawan and the guy down there didn't want it any more than the other guy did so he said well we've got to get rid of this bag of meat. So they got a local delivery guy with a horse and wagon, this is in 1896 in July hot weather, they put this meat in the back of the wagon and I can just see this guy with a close pin on his nose clip clopping down Main Street in Beacon-which is now Beacon. He was going to the butcher shop where this meat was supposed to go. Well he gets to the butcher shop and the butcher says, "un-un I'm not going to let that bag of meat in my shop, not the way that smells the Board of Health would close me down." So here's this guy sitting out there with this smelly bag of meat in the back of his wagon, trying to figure out what to do. So he gets this bright idea, he just goes down the rest of Main Street and he dumped the bag off at a lard rendering plant down there and drove off. Well in the record books of the railroad now, they were starting to get letters. The meat company says, "where's

the money for the meat," the railroad says, "hey who's going to pay for the shipping here?" okay and the butcher is saying, "wait a minute I didn't get my order of meat," you know, and they never did find the guy with the wagon. So that was the end of the story. This guy just went off into the weeds and disappeared, they never saw him again. [Laughs] So that kind of thing was fairly common.

They always had problems with you know the wrong kind of words written on the outhouse walls sort of thing, on the insides of the wall that was common back in those days too. They had gum vending machines in the stations and people were forever breaking into the gum vending machines and taking the coins out of them. You know times haven't changed all that much it's just the technology was a little different. There was a guy named Ed Ross, who lived in Hopewell Junction who wrote-or who did a bunch of cartoons about railroads. He was a good artist and you know he had one picture of the railroad trains stopped, freight trains stopped and the crew in the creek, swimming in the creek. You can always tell spring when [laughs] the train is late because the crew is in the creek swimming, you know that type of thing so. In one case, down at Dutchess Junction, there was this businessman in his fan-nice suit sitting on the bench waiting for his train to go to Millbrook. There were a couple of the local railroad guys from the ND&C who were just horsing around and it had rained I guess and they were throwing mud at each other and a big splatter of mud got all over this guy's suit, you know [laughs]. He put in a bill to the company you know and the two guys who were horsing around got fired of course and they had to pay for the guy's suit, you know it's-that sort of things fairly common. You find these things all scattered through the books. So you know life wasn't that much different in those days. It's just you know the technology was a little different and that's about it, but people were the same.

Interviewer: What do you find the most interesting about the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge?

Rudberg: Poughkeepsie Rail-the view from up on top. I've been up there like three or four times and you walk out on that bridge and you look north and you can see Hyde Park, you look south you can see way down to (Dens Kenver??) Point, and on a beautiful day you know and these huge humongous ships are sailing under you, that's the best thing. It's really a tremendous view from up there if- you know when-next year when they get that thing up there, I'm going to be the first one up there to walk across it again. I've got some pictures I've taken from the couple times I've been up there, and there's beautiful views up there. The way they've had it previously is the walkway out there is a metal grill work that you can see through. I got one picture that I've taken of looking straight down, you can see the toes of my shoes looking through the grill work in the river 200 feet down below [laughs] so but it's you know a spectacular walk mainly [cuts off].

Interviewer: Do you think once the bridge is opened, there will be a better appreciation for the bridge, everything that went into it, the construction?

Rudberg: Well it depends on whether the people who walk on the bridge actually understand it, you know. If the history of the bridge or the you know– is available to these people like for example, plaques on the bridge or something like that to explain it or photographs, or pictures or whatever. If there's a book available like Carleton's, maybe or how many other books maybe

written about the bridge that would be a, you know. [Cuts off] If people understand the bridge, then I'm sure there's going to be a lot of appreciation for it.

Interviewer: Do you-once the walkway is open, do you think it will be positive, negative, to the Hudson Valley?

Rudberg: I think it will be a big tourist draw because I-I'm one of the organizers of the Central New England Railway Historical Tours we do every year and we have from 100 to 110 people on two buses and these people come from all over the place, from California, North Carolina, Florida, one fellow even files in from Germany every year just to go on these tours of the-and this past April, the tour started with the walk on that bridge and this was you know the high point and people are really raving what the view is from up on that bridge. So I can understand where it's going to be a big tourist draw, once the word gets out.

Interviewer: I had talked to you about-yesterday about this one person who is like in the process of writing about the-

Rudberg: Yeah, there's another fellow I know Pete Brill. He's working on a book that basically is a documentation of all the connecting railroad lines that came into the Maybrook Yard from the west, the Erie and all those lines that way and their connections to the big bridge. I've reviewed his manuscript and he's slowly adding and working to it. He's at a point now, where he's negotiating with a publisher to get it published. So that book may be out in the next year or two.

Interviewer: And then you also helped with the publication of the Maybrook Switching Terminal.

Rudberg: Oh yeah, Marc Newman's book yes. Marc Newman's book on the Maybrook Yard was being done by the Purple Mountain Press and my previous books have been published by Purple Mountain. So Ray, who was the publisher, called me up and said, "would you like to take a look at this manuscript and see what you can do?" So he sent me a copy of Marc Newman's manuscript and I went through it and made quite a few corrections from a railroad point of view. Marc Newman is a history professor and I was looking at it from the railroad point of view and doing technical corrections on railroad type stuff. It was on a tight schedule so you know I didn't have time to do all that much with it. I would think that it could stand to be redone in a second volume and updated but-it s a lot of good pictures, you have excellent pictures in there, a lot of good pictures of what happened in the railroad yard, the tools that were used by the railroaders and the pictures of buildings that used to be there and that type of thing. So it's a good book from that point of view but since he was into it more from the history aspect, I tried to inject some of the railroad into it and you know it could still use some more work.

Interviewer: I was going to ask these questions a little bit earlier but, just to find a little about you. How long have you actually been in the Hudson River Valley?

Rudberg: I moved here in 1964, so I've been here 44 years as my IBM job. I worked for IBM in New Jersey, in Atlantic City there. The air traffic control system in Atlantic City, was

developed by the FAA Federal Air Traffic Control and it's the computer system that's now installed on airports all over the country and in- when that was winding down, I transferred to Poughkeepsie and I wrote instruction manuals to teach the field engineering guys how to troubleshoot and repair mainframe computers. I did that for a number of years. I've retired from IBM engineering; in 1991 so for the last 16 coming up on 17 years I've been free to pursue my interests in railroads [laughs].

Interviewer: So where were you born and raised?

Rudberg: Actually my family is from a Swedish background, I'm first generation on this side of the river [laughs] on this side of the Atlantic. My great-grandfather, worked for the Swedish railroads and he was the station master in a little town called (Pool???) Circle which is where the railroad tracks cross the Artic Circle in the northern part of Sweden in Lapland. At one time he was the conductor on the lines that runs north up through the (iron mining???) district through Narvick, Norway. My grandfather-his son, my grandfather was foreman of the railroad station in a town called Booden(??). He died in 1922, and my grandmother brought the family over to the United States and a few years later you know I came along. I was actually born in New Jersey. So I grew up in a Swedish family, you know. I had to learn English in a hurry when I started school because the whole family all spoke Swedish and when I started school the teacher was Italian, she didn't know what I was talking about. So I had to sort out the words and you know by the time I got through the first grade, I was fairly proficient in English. [Laughs]

Interviewer: What school did you go to in New Jersey?

Rudberg: Well it was called Sharpe School the grade school, the first school and then we moved to another farm father south in Franklinville and then I went to high school down there and from high school I went into navy electronics, but by the time I finished high school I was repairing radio and TV sets on the sideline and so I got into navy electronics. I went to E.T. schools and spent my four years of navy time-you know I spent four years in the navy and never set foot on a ship. I got to fly every place I had to go; mostly on California and across the Pacific Islands, but my job code was the ground end of aircraft communications so that-you know, I would fly from air station to air station, you know exotic places like (Quadralene???). I spent a year and a half on Guam; to Japan and Hawaii and then I spent a year and a half in California, in the desert in California. A strange place for a navy base out, in desert-49 feet below sea level but it was a training base but you know that was my background and that education in electronics is what got me into IBM engineering.

Interviewer: So what interests you the most about the Hudson Valley?

Rudberg: Hudson Valley?-well from the first place, it's a beautiful spot okay. There's a lot of nice scenery around here and you know and my job was here so I could commute back and forth to work with no problem at all. In an hour, I can be in the Catskills or I can go to Connecticut or south to New York City if you need to go to a show or something. It's kind of a central location where you can do most of the things you want to do. My son brags about being in California so from where he lives, he can go up skiing on the mountains or out to the beach on the same day; [slight laugh] similar to that here but there's not quite much of a difference in altitude here.

There's a lot of things to do around here, you know Rhinebeck Aerodrome, there's a lot of railroad history around the area. I was particularly interested in railroad histories, so that's really how I really got into it.

Interviewer: And that's how you ended up-with the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, is when-? [Cut off by Rudberg]

Rudberg: Well, yeah because I started out-I'm president of a group that's trying to restore the Hopewell Junction Depot and Hopewell Junction was the base for a number of locomotives. The climb up the hill, going east bound toward Danbury was a pretty steep climb for the old steam engines. So they would come across the big bridge in Poughkeepsie go out to Hopewell Junction, they would stop there , they would put another engine on the back called a pusher and give them a boost and they would push them up over the hill to Danbury. They wouldn't only go to Danbury, the pusher would go up as far you know, just up to the mountain past Poughquag and then the pusher would drop off and come back to Hopewell and wait for the next east bound freight train. So those locomotives were based and serviced in the yard in Hopewell Junction. So that was the main reason for Hopewell Junction and I hap- when I moved up here that's where we bought our house and said, "hmmmm this is interesting." So we're still actively working to rebuild that train station. It's on the old Maybrook Line right away which the county bought and it's been designated as the trailhead for the Hopewell end for the county rail trail. So we're slowly rebuilding it to the point where we can try to make a small museum and education a facility out of it, you know for the rail trail, for the Town of East Fishkill.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Rudberg: I can't think much of anything else; you got any more questions you'd want to throw at me?

Interviewer 2: I think-I'm certainly good.

Rudberg: If you want to branch out into some of the other parts of railroads around the county, you know I could always come back for another secession sometime. Well I know you're concentrating on the bridge at this point.

Interviewer 2: It's interesting how are information is laid out; we may very well contact you for a few follow-ups.

Rudberg: Okay, I'll leave these pictures with you.

Interviewer 2: Great.

Rudberg: So you can use them for whatever.

[End of Interview]

Transcribed by Paul Contarino