B&O RAILROAD MUSEUM ANNOUNCES THE GRAND OPENING OF THE
LUTHER G. SMITH PLAZA

On July 19, 2012, the B&O Railroad Museum, Baltimore, MD, will officially open its new Luther G. Smith Plaza to the public in a ceremony starting at 10:30 a.m. The Plaza is located outdoors at the Museum, between the Baldwin Roundhouse and the North Car Shop, the very birthplace of American railroading.

The Plaza commemorates the centennial of the Brotherhood’s Relief & Compensation Fund (BR&CF), which was founded by Luther G. Smith, a locomotive engineer with the Pennsylvania Railroad. The Plaza was created to honor and recognize the accomplishments of L. G. Smith, and contains a life-size bronze sculpture of him surrounded by bluestone capped seat walls, traditional benches and a variety of flowers, plants and trees.

The BR&CF has profoundly impacted railroaders and their families across North America since its founding in 1912. The BR&CF was created as a benevolent society to provide benefits to its members, or their widows and orphans. In an unforgiving industry, an honest mistake by a railroader while performing his duties would often result in the railroad’s assessing a suspension, or in some cases, permanent discharge. L. G. Smith did not oppose the railroad’s disciplinary practices; however, he did not see the logic in the families of railroaders having to suffer due to the hardship of losing an income that was vital to the family’s survival.

The Plaza was funded by the North American Railway Foundation (NARF), a non-profit operating foundation that was created by the BR&CF in 1996. The Museum has received support from NARF for a variety of projects regarding the preservation and legacy of American railroading.

The Plaza enhances the central outdoor area next to the starting point of the Museum’s train ride. It will serve as a gathering area for school groups, visitors watching the train come and go, and for visitors seeking a place to relax and reflect on their experiences at the Museum. It was designed with colors and materials that complement and enhance all that the Museum, has to offer. On your next visit to the Museum, we invite you to enjoy our newest addition.
About the B&O Railroad Museum:
The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of American railroading and its impact on American society, culture, and economy. The Museum is home to the oldest, most important and comprehensive collection of American railroad artifacts in the world including an unparalleled roster of 19th and 20th century railroad equipment. The 40-acre historic site is regarded as the birthplace of American railroading and includes the 1851 Mt. Clare Station, the 1884 Baldwin Roundhouse, and first mile of commercial railroad track in America. For further information on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum, please call 410-752-2490 or visit www.borail.org.

About the Brotherhood’s Relief & Compensation Fund (BR&CF):
The Brotherhood’s Relief and Compensation Fund (BR&CF) is a non-profit organization founded in 1912. Its purpose is to provide benefits to its members who are disciplined and suspended or discharged, provided all conditions and terms of the BR&CF Constitution are satisfied. The BR&CF has over 22,000 members in the United States and Canada and is headquartered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. For further information on the BR&CF, please call 717-657-1890 or visit www.brcf.org.

About the North American Railway Foundation:
The North American Railway Foundation (NARF) is a nonprofit, private operating foundation which was founded by the Brotherhood’s Relief and Compensation Fund (BR&CF) in 1996. Its purpose is to explore, nurture and support railway safety, efficiency and technology and to educate about and preserve the history of railroads in the United States and Canada. To achieve these goals, the foundation provides direct funding and support for nonprofit projects that exemplify its purpose. For further information on NARF, please call 717-232-8696 or visit www.narfoundation.org.