The B&O Railroad Museum, in partnership with the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, proudly announces the completion of restoration efforts on the Cumberland Valley Rail Road’s

Pioneer!

The Pioneer was built in 1851, by the Union Works in South Boston, Massachusetts, and purchased by the Cumberland Valley Rail Road (CVRR), a regional railroad serving Southern Pennsylvania and Western Maryland. Constructed of wrought and cast iron, with copper boiler tubes and a wooden cab, the 12-1/2 ton Pioneer was used to pull short passenger trains, consisting of one to three cars, between Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and Hagerstown, Maryland. It is known as a "2-2-2" type locomotive due to its two small wheels in front, two larger wheels driven by steam pistons for propulsion, and two small wheels at the back. Pioneer is also a "tank engine," meaning that it has no separate tender for fuel and water. Water to supply the boiler is carried in a tank at the rear, with space for the wood supply above.

During the Civil War, the CVRR was an important line carrying supplies and Union troops to southern Pennsylvania and western Maryland -- and into northern Virginia. In 1862, troops under Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart raided Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and burned the engine house that protected Pioneer and several other locomotives. Some of these were destroyed, but the Pioneer escaped major damage and continued to serve the railroad until retired due to its diminutive size in 1901.

In 1901 Pioneer began its second career as an operating relic, a career that lasted almost until its 100th birthday. Pioneer appeared at numerous historical commemorations, including the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904 at St. Louis, the Chicago World's Fair of 1933, and the Chicago Railroad Fair of 1948-49. In 1961, the Pennsylvania
Railroad, which had absorbed the CVRR many years before, donated Pioneer to the Smithsonian, where it was displayed in the Arts & Industries Building. In 1963, the little engine came to the National Museum of American History, in time for the museum's grand opening the following year.

In 2010, working extensively with curators and conservators of the National Museum of American History, the B&O Railroad Museum’s award winning restoration team began a yearlong project designed to stabilize and restore the locomotive to its appearance at the end of its operational life. Work included extensive repairs to flaking and damaged paint on the water tank, fenders, and wheels; removal of rust on exposed metal components; repair and replacement of missing and damaged metal components; and repainting that included meticulous hand painted detail, striping, and lettering.

The Pioneer is currently on loan to the B&O Railroad Museum and will be unveiled and featured in the B&O Museum’s newest exhibit “The War Came by Train” celebrating the role of the B&O Railroad in the American Civil War opening to the public on April 15, 2011.

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

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