

CINDERS

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 1954 - POST-CONVENTION ISSUE

THE 1954 CONVENTION

The 1954 convention in Washington was attended by a large number of Philadelphia Chapter members, all of whom had a fine time. Capital Transit Company, Southern Railway, Norfolk & Western Railway, Shenandoah Central Railroad, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and the operators of the Senate subway all exceeded themselves in making possible the railroading aspects of the convention, and the hotel managed somehow to accommodate everyone. We believe special thanks should be given Mr. Price, of the Shenandoah Central, for his ingenuity in scrounging together every bus within miles to accommodate the large number of narrow-gauge fans.

We understand that the number of registrations exceeded those at any previous convention. Glad to hear it.

For collectors of newspaper stories, there was an excellent article on the convention in the "Washington Post" of September 6. We found, however, one undoubtedly unintentional error of fact in the newspaper story -- the paper said the N&W supplied a Mountain and a Pacific to doublehead the train; actually, we had two Mountains.

CONVENTION SIDELIGHTS

Shed a tear for the Philadelphia Chapter member who arrived in Washington and then remembered he had left his convention tickets at home on his bureau . . . Sad commentary on the times: This was the third consecutive convention at which chartered busses had to be resorted to during the course of the proceedings . . . At Shenandoah we regretfully decided that in 100-degree heat there is no place as hot as an engine house . . . The invocation at the banquet . . . The Sunday steam trip came back 2 hours and 5 minutes late, but we made up 45 minutes of it on the Monday RDC trip . . . The air-conditioner in our hotel room was certainly welcome . . . The ballast cleaner at work on the B&O at Relay -- quite an awesome sight . . . Study in railfan psychology: As our chartered PCC swung around the White House, nobody looked at one of the country's major tourist attractions -- they all gazed through the hole in the floor and tried to estimate the amount of "give" the plow had. Of course, Ike was out of town anyhow . . . That breath taking monorail ride . . . The new train arrival and departure board at Washington Union Station, operated on the projector and screen principle . . . "Casey Jones", "The Wreck of Number 9", and "The Wreck of Old 97". Why do the best-known railroad songs deal with wrecks, the most un-typical happening on railroads? . . . Finally, our gratitude to the Washington Chapter for the hard work they put in to make a successful convention. All members of that chapter deserve every credit.

MEETING NEWS

The program for the September 16 meeting will consist of color films by West Jersey members Lee Avis and Ed Birch, featuring B&O and Western Maryland steam power in the Allegheny Mountains.

A diversified series of programs is planned for the coming winter. More details will be announced later here and in meeting announcements.

TRIP NEWS

Fliers will be sent out soon for the Reading-CNJ-Mount Hope Mineral-Wharton & Northern trip on October 10. There have been rumors that this trip would use steam power. This is not true. The Trip Committee would have liked steam power, but these days you just can't go anywhere in this area behind a steam engine. The old reliable diesels will be on hand.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Maryland & Pennsylvania (The Famous Ma and Pa) passenger service ended August 31. The mail contract expired on the same day, and the utility commissions of both states agreed to the discontinuance.

PTC has sold Willow Grove Park. The buyer plans to turn the area into a shopping center. In recent years, the park has shown a profit of about \$100,000 per year, and the ground is considered more valuable than that. This may be the end of the upper portion of Route 6.