

CINDERS

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 1955

MEETING NEWS

The January meeting featured movies by Walt Zackon, starring railroads in the Southern Appalachians.

In 1895, the first main-line electrification in the country was installed, on the B&O in Baltimore. Accordingly, the theme of the February 17 meeting will be "Sixty Years of Railroad Electrification in America". The speaker will be Mr. D. R. MacLeod, of the General Electric Company's Locomotive and Car Division, of Erie, Pa. Mr. MacLeod has worked for many years in the railroad electrification field, and his remarks will, we are sure, be of great interest to all.

A series of diversified programs of interest to all railfans is planned for later in the year. More announcements later.

TRIP NEWS

Both the chapter's January trips were highly successful, and were regarded by all as among the best we have ever operated. We understand the Reading Company was highly pleased at the successful dining car operation, and this may be a feature of future trips on the line.

More trips, both formal and informal, are planned for the spring and summer.

END OF AN ERA, MAYBE

The Reading has asked the Public Utilities Commission for permission to drop passenger service on the Perkiomen Branch, between Allentown and Perkiomen Junction. This is the last mixed train, so far as we know, in Pennsylvania, and undoubtedly the only one anywhere that carries regular commuters, since it provides a convenient connection into the city in the morning, and back in the afternoon. Should the Commission approve the request, we'll be sorry to see it go, especially in the view of past courtesies extended to railfans by Conductor Harry Johnson and his crew.

PASSENGER SERVICE RESTORED

The Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern, well-known Iowa interurban, advertised in the current Official Guide that, following a disastrous flood, one round-trip passenger train was reinstated on the line.

TWO STRIKES AVOIDED

Both Philadelphia Transportation Company and Red Arrow Lines missed going on strike at the last minute. PTC came first. The contract expired December 15 and both sides agreed to a 30-day "cooling-off" period extending to January 15. Agreement was reached at the last minute. One of the major issues was further conversion of two-man to one-man operation, and future conversions of this type are provided for in the contract. The company announced that in June Route 23 would be changed over to one-man operation, and Route 52, one of the lines scheduled for bus conversion, would be made two-man. This gave rise to speculation that Route 52 would remain rail for a considerable time longer.

Red Arrow involved a threatened strike by maintenance workers, but this also was settled.

ELECTRIC NEWS

We have five pieces of bad news from out of town:

1. Scranton Transit Company has quit rail operations, and is now all-bus.
2. In Baltimore, the Maryland PSC approved conversion to bus of Baltimore Transit's scenic Route 26 (Sparrows Point).
3. In Chicago, permission was granted to abandon CNS&M's Shore Line.
4. Sand Springs Railway, last interurban in the Southwest, has quit passenger service.
5. Atlantic City Transportation Co. has "temporarily" ended rail service below Douglas Avenue, and observers doubt whether it will come back.

PTC has put PCC cars on Route 41 (63rd Street).

FROM HERE AND THERE

On January 23, the reservation board at 30th Street Station went into service. (The Pennsy, by the way, would like everyone to call the place "Pennsylvania Station-30th Street" but we doubt if people will.)

PRR has taken up one track on the Delmarva Division south of New Castle, and also on most of the Northern Central and Cumberland Valley lines.

Virginian has abandoned passenger service between Roanoke, Va. and the West Virginia state line.