

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CINDERS

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER



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CINDERS GOES TO EUROPE-IV

Ed. Note: Below - Dick Lane's impressions of Vienna, a traction-fan's paradise.

"What is the first thing which comes to your mind when you hear or read the name 'Vienna'?" Any number of associations, no doubt, depending on your knowledge of this famous city - either from your history books, or from reading NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, or perhaps you've actually been there, or you know someone who has. Vienna, or Wien (pronounced "Veen"), as the local German speaking citizens call their city, is indeed many things to many people the world over. First and foremost, it is the home of "Wine, Women and Song," the Strauss waltzes, and the seat of the former Habsburg monarchy which once ruled over a vast region in feudal pomp and splendor. It is still a world center of music, art, and culture. Vienna is also a major industrial center, and because of her geographic location, she remains the great Political, Commercial and Cultural crossroads of central Europe, where for centuries people of many nations and races have intermingled and contributed something of their particular background to this great melting pot.

"Those of our readers who attended the January chapter meeting had a glimpse of a very particular aspect of Vienna as recorded on color film by Messrs. Engman and Flanagan. Vienna is today the home of the world's largest tramway system. Variety is the only word which can describe the assortment of motor cars and trailers, single and double truck, ancient and modern, in all nearly 2600 vehicles which service fifty trunk routes - not counting the separate designations for evening and Sunday operations. Included in this vast fleet of European built equipment is a handful of American built cars which have served the Viennese public longer than they did the patrons of

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DOMINION DEMISE

A dream, over a hundred years old, may end all too soon if the ICC adopts the examiner's report in Finance Docket No. 23492, the abandonment of the Washington and Old Dominion.

Early in 1847 the city of Alexandria, Va., faced with the prospect of economic ruin at the hands of the growing port of Baltimore, chartered the Alexandria and Harper's Ferry Railroad to link the Virginia seaport. By March, 1966 economic need and public convenience no longer justified these dreams.

True the W&OD handled almost 9000 cars in 1964, annual loss exceeded \$50,000, carloading continued to drop and the future showed little room for reversal. Beside, the C&O owner of the former interurban, had agreed to sell the right of way to the state highway department for several times the original purchase price.

In its hayday, the steam road turned electric provided a vital transportation link between Washington and the northwestern Virginia suburbs, but by 1935, the Great Falls division had disappeared and all passenger service ended in 1941. The wires came down in 1942, although an electric motor was still switching the Rosslyn Yards in 1944.

The war did little to alter the W&OD, and the emergency passenger service went in 1951 with the loss of the mail contract. In 1962, three miles of the Rosslyn Branch disappeared under the spreading tide of concrete, but the \$900,000 went to buy West Virginia coal lands and to build a new shop at Alexandria.

Current operations consist of two trains five days a week. The rented C&O, Alco 1000 hp. switches are used to work west from the interchange at Potomac Yard. From Purcellville the second crew works east until Sterling or Herndon where it exchanges cars with the Alexandria crew. Because of a weakened bridge over Goose Creek, the Purcellville crew is assigned the two GE 660 hp. units. The last of the Baldwin 675 hp. switchers is out of service.

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CINDERS GOES TO EUROPE-IV (Cont'd.)

New York's Third Avenue Transit System. About thirty of these cars are still operating on two routes. Vienna is today like Philadelphia was in the late thirties and early forties. You can't go far without encountering a tram line.

"The city transit map shows many radial routes converging on the Ringstrasse, the circular boulevard and a major tram thoroughfare, which encloses the medieval part of the city. There are also outer belt routes like concentric rings which intersect with and feed the radial lines. The trams are painted bright red and white, Austria's national colors, and do much to enhance the pleasing appearance of well kept public buildings and historic landmarks. The trams are also to be found in the narrow streets of the older commercial and residential areas and on well maintained PRW in the outlying districts. Vienna's major parks, the Prater, Stadtpark, and Wienerwald, or Vienna Woods, can all be reached by tram. In the Prater is a scaled down, steam powered, passenger carrying railroad, appropriately named "Lilliputbahn." Also in the Prater is the famous Riesenrad, the great ferris wheel which served as a prop for the film, "The Third Man."

"In addition the surface tramways there are two rapid transit systems, neither one is very large or very rapid, but the transit minded Wiener Stadtwerke, City Corporation, have work now in progress to integrate and expand the two systems. (See NRHS BULLETIN, Third Quarter, 1963). Right now several short stretches of subway are being built to carry surface tram routes under congested areas. To relieve the street congestion at one location on the Ring where six of the radial routes terminate, a two level, off-street loop was built, providing escalators from the lower level and covered platforms for passengers transferring to the Ring lines. An underground parking garage is also provided, and the whole area is tastefully landscaped with lawns, shrubs, and flower beds. These are the little touches which brighten the monotony of daily commuting.

"There is even an old style interurban which originates in a small town about twenty miles south Vienna on PRW, some of it beside a major four lane highway, and then comes into the city over the local tramways terminating at the Ring right across from the State Opera. The PRW portion of the Wiener Lokalbahn is being completely rebuilt as plans call for this line to be integrated with the rapid transit network, eliminating the laborious street running.

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CAMDEN PROGRESS

Chapter member Tim Bruno recently visited to construction site of the South Jersey High Speed line. Here are his observations.

"At Camden, only a few storage cars remain around the old Camden Enginehouse which is now out of service. "Center" controls only the backing passenger movements out of Broadway for Millville, the trains to Moorestown and Pemberton, and the Pavonia yard movements going south. Controlled are approximately five signals and as many turnouts.

"The southbound track has been removed from Cuthbert to West Haddonfield while the northbound track has been removed from Collingswood to West Haddonfield. Nothing remains now except the sheds or stations, all rail and ties having been removed; ballast being non-existent to begin with. The rest of the rail is out of service and should be removed shortly.

"Vernon" interlocking no longer exists as it is just one straight through track although the towerman still controls crossing gates and makes Haddonfield station announcements via loudspeaker hookup. The southbound Pennsy track from "Jersey" to "Vernon" is out of service and removed on the Haddonfield end. From "Vernon" east, single track operation exists to "Kirk" just east of Kirkwood with the second track up or ready to come up. The northbound track is used as far as Woodcrest from Haddonfield while from Woodcrest to Kirk, the southbound track and roadbed are utilized. At "Kirk" a 45 mph turnout allows movement from the single track back to double track which then extends to Absecon.

"The Pitman station was just torn down, while Clayton and Woodstown are to receive the same treatment, agency service having been discontinued at all three. The first two points will receive sheds as the NJPUC requires shelters at passenger stops. Paulsboro and Gibbstown freight stations have been closed and consolidated into one agency in a new Paulsboro yard office.

"Down in Millville, "Swift" tower has been knocked down and the lone turnout which it controlled, replaced by a spring switch. South of Millville, "Wood" and "Manumuskin" block limit stations have been removed as one block is now in effect covering all track south of the Millville station. From Dorchester to Leesburg, the track is out of service leaving the Leesburg agency without train service.

"The Budd RDC's are no longer used for week-end service. The cars failed to trip signal circuits on lightly used rail over the weekends and hence will run only during the weekdays. Two car coach trains are now used for the week-end schedules".

CINDERS, published monthly, does not necessarily reflect the position of the editor, the Chapter, or the National Society.

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SHORT LINE NEWS

The PRR is leasing G5 #5741 to the Strasburg Rail Road along with two historic PRR steel cars including #1651, the road's first steel coach. The 4-6-0 will be overhauled by the short line.

Also arriving are four additional B&M wooden coaches and a PRR 600 hp EMD diesel switcher.

The May 7th trip of the Old Dominion Chapter to the Cass Scenic will feature shays #5 and #7 pulling the special train. Normal operation is for the shays to push the train up the mountain. During the trip the Cass backshop will be open.

Details on the Graham County Railroad's steam operation are available. Shay #1925 will handle the passenger train over a nine mile round trip which will start from a new terminal being constructed at Bear Creek. The new depot will be patterned after the SRS station at Scottsboro, Ala. Also planned is a NKP dining car for refreshments and a display of locomotives and passenger cars.

The recently abandoned East Carolina Ry. is still for sale. The 29 mile line can be had for \$143,000.

Colorado's Great Western sold 2-8-0 #75 to the Intermountain Chapter. The 1907 Baldwin was given a one year extension on its flue time and is currently being used in filming a motion picture.

The NYC and the Alleghany Corporation have intervened in the N&W's application to purchase the Fairport, Painesville, and Eastern.

The Feather River Railway will cease operations Oct. 1, 1966 as a result of a lump sum payment to the Georgia-Pacific Corp. by the State of California. The payment exceeded \$1.3 million.

CINDERS GOES TO EUROPE-IV (Cont'd.)

"One cannot visit Vienna without being exposed to the Osterreichische Bundesbahnen, Federal Railways, whose operations include main line electrification and a surprising amount of steam power in local freight service. From Vienna's two major stations go trains to all parts of Europe. The Westbahnhof is just an intermediate stop for the world's most famous international train, the Orient Express. From the Sudbahnhof go trains to Italy, Yugoslavia, and the sunny Mediterranean, and also to the East: Prague, Warsaw, and Moscow. There is much more to Vienna than just "Wine, Women and Song."

DOMINION DEMISE (Cont'd.)

The abandonment met with strong opposition and the protestant's suggestions included steam tourist operation as well as the use of the Rosslyn Branch profits to rehabilitate the line. The strongest protest, however, is being made by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission who wants to preserve the right of way for a planned rapid transit system.

RICHMOND - '66

Advance Notice for the 1966 NRHS National Convention has been made available. The following activities are included in the six-day affair:

Wednesday evening, Aug. 3 -- Tour RF&P's ultra-modern locomotive and car repair shops at Bryan Park.

Thursday, Sept. 1 -- Pre-convention trip on SRS freight-only branch to West Point, Va., diesel-powered with NRHS-owned cars.

Friday, Sept. 2 -- Chartered bus trip to Cass Scenic RR, Double-headed Shays, 11% grades, switchbacks!

Saturday, Sept. 3 -- C&O trip to Fort Eustis, Va., where special train will be operated over the 20-mile U. S. Army Military Railway using double-headed 2-8-0's.

Saturday evening, Sept. 3 -- Convention banquet at the Hotel John Marshall. Speaker: W. Graham Claytor, Jr., VP, SRS; Sound, steam movies, in color, presented by E. Carrington Eddy, famous rail photographer.

Sunday, Sept. 4 -- Trip over C&O freight-only line up the James River Valley along James River & Kanawha Canal. Diesels, open cars. Possible steam show at E. J. Lavino Co., Reusens, Va.

Monday, Sept. 5 -- Steam-powered trip over SRS freight-only branch to Keysville, Va., using Tennessee Valley Museum's 2-8-2, #4501. Trip will return no later than 4:30 p.m., in time for all western, northern and southern departures.