

NATIONAL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PHILADELPHIA

MEMBER

P. O. BOX

PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19107



"King Coal Special"

(Part II)

Sunday, May 6, 1973

STORY AND DETAILS
on Page 6

March, 1973

PRESIDENT: R. L. Eastwood, Jr., P. O. Box 289, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462
 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT: Frank G. Tatnall, Jr., 315 Jackson Road, Wayne, PA 19087
 2ND VICE-PRESIDENT: Carl F. Landeck, 315 Jackson Road, Wayne, PA 19087
 SECRETARY-CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Paul Kutta, 1359 Green Hill Ave, West Chester, PA 19380
 TREASURER: Earle P. Finkbiner, P. O. Box 65, Lumberton, NJ 08048
 EXCHANGE EDITOR: William P. MacIver, Jr., 200 E. Willow Grove Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19118 (PLEASE SEND ALL EXCHANGE COPIES TO THIS ADDRESS)
 PUBLICATION SALES: Harvey Seligsohn, 1220 Fanshawe St., Philadelphia, PA 19111

OUR MARCH MEETING: Will feature a NEW HOPE AND IVYLAND NIGHT. The boys from the NH&I are coming down to Philadelphia and will give a slide show on some of the inside workings on the NH&I, and well as to talk about the future of the railroad, and how we can help insure that future. We've got a vital interest in the NH&I, and seeing that it succeeds. So, come out and listen and watch what Trustee Ken Andrews (our former Chapter Treasurer) and his boys are going to try and do at New Hope. The date is Friday evening, March 16, 1973, and Dinner is at 6 p.m., in the Engineers' Club Dining Room, with the meeting upstairs at 8 p.m. The location is 1317 Spruce Street, downtown Philadelphia. Come out to our meeting, and BRING A FRIEND and introduce him (or her) to the NRHS.

1973 SLIDE CONTEST: Was a big success, and many interesting slides were viewed. We'd print the contest results here, but Frank Tatnall is away, and he has the list of winners - we will print that list and the winning subjects as well, in our April issue. Those who were not present missed a fine evening of slides.

APRIL MEETING DATE: PLEASE REMEMBER THAT OUR APRIL MEETING DATE IS FRIDAY, APRIL 13, INSTEAD OF FRIDAY, APRIL 20, WHICH IS GOOD FRIDAY. THIS IS A CHANGE FROM OUR PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED SCHEDULES.

CINDERS DEADLINE: The deadline for the April issue of CINDERS will be our meeting night, Friday March 16. Please have all material in our hands by that date.

NEW MEMBERS:

SCHULTE, Chris, 7914 Cedar Road, Elkins Park, PA 19117. Chris is 16, and is a school student.

Also, we're pleased to welcome back into the fold two members who dropped out for a year, Phil Mulligan, and Fred Maxson.

1976 CONVENTION MEETING: The off-again, on-again meeting concerning the 1976 Convention was postponed again. Hopefully, sometime during March or April we can get together with our good friends from West Jersey Chapter, and proceed with plans for the '76 Convention. Those concerned will be kept posted.

"ON THE SCENE"



with El Simon

.....AMTRAK had added 35 refurbished cars to our area alone by February 15, and another ten "new" cars were observed in Chicago. These have been the first cars done in 1973 with at least 350 more scheduled to be shopped by July 1. Needless to say, the trains this summer should be largely equipped with refurbished cars.....

AMTRAK's Mexican train consists initially of coach 4821 and diner-coach 8400, both AMTRAK cars. The latter car was ex-GN 1145, and as such, ran in our area last winter.The Florida trains are now equipped by at least 70% "Amtrakked" cars, and the Silver Meteor is usually all Amtrak cars excepting one diner and a baggage-dormitory car in the whole fleet.....Florida trains now feature distinctive menus more elaborate than the standard Amtrak types. In addition, the lunch and dinner menus on the Silver Meteor diner for sleeping car passengers features a more elaborate selection yet.....

JERSEY CENTRAL has thirteen ex-GN cars in service at this time on two trains. Most incongruous are several cars in the old GN livery and still lettered Empire Builder. If CNJ is anything today, an Empire Builder it isn't!!!!.....

PITTSBURGH & LAKE ERIE still keeps standard coach 445 at Pittsburgh for standby service. Its one commuter train normally has four ex-L&N streamlined coaches and a GP7.....Word from a friend is that the Texas Chief will soon serve Dallas via MISSOURI PACIFIC from Fort Worth and thence on to Houston via the SOUTHERN PACIFIC. By meeting time, we may know more on this.....

The Pittsburgh RDC's on the BALTIMORE AND OHIO now include several in Chessie System livery. Also, READING RDC 9154 has been noted with orange and black stripes on its ends.....

READING continues to slowly overhaul MU's and the most recent examples are 805, 821, 825, 826. The following RDG MU's appear to be out of service: 832, 774-891, 788, 789, and 9129. This totals six cars, and mostly represents collision and flood damage. Silverliners 9010 and 9016 have been reupholstered recently, and are much more comfortable than the previous seating.....

PENN CENTRAL, since November, has been installing new upholstery in its old MA9 (MP54) MU's at the rate of 6 cars per month.....

Three of PENN CENTRAL's streamlined MU's in the Philadelphia area are no longer in service. Silverliners 206, 210, and Pioneer III #299 are the cars.....

The AMTRAK passenger car fleet at December 31 stood at 1765 cars, including almost 500 leased from various railroads.....

PENN CENTRAL recently outshopped lounge car 7190, "Bronx County", This is the seventh former New Haven baggage-parlor to be rebuilt into a commuter lounge, but four were subsequently sold to AMTRAK.....

Parlor car service has been restored to AMTRAK's Chicago-Detroit service. Tavern-coaches had replaced sleeper-lounges on December 15, but they are now in this area, and the sleepers are on the Detroit trains again.....

The number of active PENN CENTRAL E7's has dropped to 28 units (26 A's, 2 B's) as the 4214, 4031, and 4111 have been recently noted on dead lines.....

AMTRAK sleeper 2253, erroneously named "Placid Range" when outshopped by Beech Grove in December, now has its correct name, "Star Range" again.

-EL SIMON.

[The following article is reprinted from RAILWAY AGE, February 12, 1973 issue]

Amtrak's French connection



RTG TRAINS for U.S. will be painted in Amtrak colors and modified to fit FRA standards; seating throughout will be that of this second-class coach.

By FRED N. HOUSER
Mechanical Editor

Lyon-Strasbourg, Lyon-Bordeaux, Chicago-St. Louis, Lyon-Nantes. Just what is "Chicago-St. Louis" doing in that string of French terminal cities? It's just that action taken recently by Amtrak justifiably puts the two American rail centers there.

Amtrak recently moved to acquire a pair of French five-car, turbine-powered trainsets expected to go into service in the Midwest later this year, probably in September. The trains, supplied by ANF-Frangeco, are to operate on the Milwaukee-Chicago-St. Louis route. At about the same time these so-called RTG trains (*rames a turbines a gaz*—or gas-turbine trainsets) start running over the Milwaukee and Illinois Central Gulf, the French National Railways will be putting the same 125-mph speedsters on three passenger routes radiating from Lyon.

Amtrak President Roger Lewis announced that the RTG lease will include an option to buy. The price would be \$2.3 million per train. At least four U.S. companies—Pullman-Standard, General Electric, Rohr Corp., and Fairchild—have been talking with ANF-Frangeco about licensing arrangements for building the French-designed turbos in the U.S. Amtrak is also acquiring four Turbo Trains designed by United Aircraft.

● Here and now. Lewis recently told Railway Age that he is "a here and now man" about Amtrak.

The "here and now" French trains being acquired by Amtrak actually represent the second generation of turbine-powered passenger equipment on SNCF (French National Railways). In 1970 SNCF put in service on its Paris-Cherbourg route ten trainsets of ETG equipment (*elements a turbine a gaz*—or gas-turbine units). This first-generation, ETG design incorporates one gas turbine and one diesel engine for propulsion.

The commercial success of this operation, combined with good performance of the equipment, motivated SNCF to expand its turbo service to other routes. By 1971 SNCF had 16 RTG trainsets on order and an option for an additional 16. It is two of the first order which will be leased to Amtrak.

Last week Railway Age interviewed George M. Beischer, Amtrak chief mechanical officer, about the status of RTG—Amtrak's new French connection. Said Beischer:

"SNCF currently has a three-car train which is being operated under test. Revenue service is scheduled in France at the end of spring or early summer. No specific date is yet set for delivery of the RTG trains to the U.S., but it is anticipated that this will occur during the summer. Revenue service possibly would begin here in late summer or early fall.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

The French connection

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

"It is considered that the French trains will be in service between Milwaukee-Chicago and Chicago-St. Louis. Just where the two United Aircraft turbos will fit into this is not known right now. They may duplicate part of the route and then go to other destinations; there has been nothing specific on their assignments by routes. We are working on all aspects of the operation such as clearances and operating restrictions with the specific railroads.

"We are presently working with FRA in resolving all requirements that the RTG trains must meet for service in this country and to obtain certification from FRA for their operation. We will have to make certain minor modifications to comply with 'safety-appliance' requirements. We, of course, will have the trains painted in our Amtrak colors."

● **Inside look.** Beischer went on to say: "Internally, the thinking now is that Amtrak will make its RTG a 'one-class' train, equivalent to the second-class configuration of SNCF. While some changes had been considered, it is now planned to maintain the meal-service arrangement which is basic to the French trains.

"We are currently negotiating for a maintenance site in Chicago and work has been done with regard to the basic layout of this shop. As soon as property acquisition is completed, we will proceed with construction of an entirely new facility specifically designed for maintenance of all the Turbo trains. Ellington-Miller, architects, are working with us on this. Whiting Corp. is working with them on facilities such as drop tables.

"This Chicago shop will be wholly Amtrak owned, operated and staffed. It would not be the first such operation for us since Amtrak recently took over the Fields Point facility of United Aircraft at Providence, R.I., which maintains the Turbo equipment in the

Northeast Corridor, and it is now Amtrak managed and all employees are Amtrak. We intend to build a new facility for the Northeast Corridor, possibly in the Boston area."

The new RTG is propelled by a pair of gas turbines driving through hydraulic transmissions to the truck under the lead end of each power car at the train's ends. Between the two power cars are three unpowered trailers. In addition to producing 2,280 hp for traction, a smaller turbine in each power car drives a 250-kw auxiliary generator which supplies electric power for all train services—lighting, heating and air-conditioning.

● **Next generation.** Already SNCF is looking to the next generation of turbine-powered passenger train. Presently under test is a five-car articulated train-set, the TGV (*turbines a gaz a vitesse*—or fast gas-turbine trains), involving turbo-electric power plants and delivering its power through all six traction-motor-equipped trucks under the train (RA, Aug. 14, 1972, p. 20). TGV, designed for 150-mph speeds, has already done considerably better than that during tests on SNCF's Landes line in western France.

The third-generation French turbo is completely articulated. The trains which Amtrak will acquire are of more conventional configuration with a pair of two-axle trucks under each car and standard couplers. The train is 423 feet long. The intermediate trailer cars are just over 84 feet long. The power cars are 86½ feet long. Seating capacity is 280, with space for an additional 24 passengers in the bar-grill in the center coach.

Each RTG power car has an operator's cab, engine room which can be bypassed by a side passageway, baggage compartment, 48-seat passenger compartment, toilet and vestibule. The first-class trailer car has twin passenger compartments, each with 30 seats, separated by a glass partition. Each compartment has ten double reclining chairs and ten single reclining chairs on the opposite side of the aisle. All seats have retracting tables in the armrests. Floors are carpeted.

The 80-passenger second-class trailer is divided into two compartments with double reclining seats on both sides of a center aisle. Passenger compartments are finished in the same manner as the first-class car. This scheme is carried through the 48-seat second-class compartments in each power car and in the 44-seat portion of the bar-grill trailer. The bar grill has seats for 24 at tables with provision for cafeteria-type service and a small food-preparation area.

The 1,140-hp Turmo III traction turbine in each power car drives both axles of the lead truck through a Voith hydraulic transmission and cardan shafts. This prime mover has a two-stage compressor, two-stage power turbine and two-stage free turbine. The smaller turbo-alternator unit is installed beside the traction turbine.

● **Suspension.** Trucks on power cars and trailers are of generally similar design. The roller-bearing journal boxes are carried under articulated arms secured to the truck frame and have a rubber-sandwich and coil-spring suspension over each box. The carbody suspension consists of a pair of long-travel rubber and coil-steel springs extending to the body side sills and providing vertical and lateral ride characteristics while also permitting truck rotation. Hydraulic shock absorbers are installed in parallel with these springs. The spring installation allows for eventual application of a hydraulically actuated "active" suspension which would tilt the carbody to counteract insufficient superelevation on curves.

The power trucks have tread braking. Trailers are fitted with a combination of tread and disc braking. The Voith transmission allows for hydrodynamic braking and this is supplemented by electromagnetic track brakes on the trucks of both the power cars and the trailers. ■

Amtrak



Transit News:

[EDITOR'S NOTE: "TRANSIT NOTES" is an experimental column of information dealing with basically rail transit and streetcar happenings, and has been written by El Simon for this issue of CINDERS with the hope that some Chapter member will volunteer to actively pursue and write this column on a monthly basis as a sister column to "ON THE SCENE", which is to deal with mainline railroad items. CINDERS' staff is anxiously awaiting the qualified individual to come forward and volunteer his services. We want to provide our members and those Chapters with whom we actively exchange newsletters with a well-rounded source of local news. Any member desiring to take over writing "TRANSIT NOTES" is asked to contact Paul Kutta, Frank Tatnall, or Larry Eastwood at their earliest convenience.]

.....SEPTA has outshopped air-electric car 2565 in a "psychedelic" scheme of orange, blue and white.....PATCO TRANSIT uses 70 of 75 cars on a regular weekday program. This requires eleven six-car and one four-car trains.....Boston's MBTA has repainted almost 50 PCC's in its new "Green Line" livery. Oldest car involved to date is the 3017. No Dallas cars have been repainted, but members of every other class have been. All but two of the cars repainted several years ago in grey are now green, incidentally. At least twelve of the East Boston line's original cars have been refurbished recently.....SHAKER HEIGHTS still uses 55 PCC cars and all but five (#51-55) have MU. A number of three-car trains are operated in rush hours and the 5:12 p.m. Van Aken train is a four-car set. The line is double track throughout and has block signals as well.....CLEVELAND TRANSIT SYSTEM's rapid transit line uses its "Airporter" cars exclusively on weekends in a single-car setup. Older cars operate on weekdays as well. Airporters 170-171 have been written off while 151-154 have been refurbished in CTS's new colors.....Pittsburgh's PAT uses 69 all-electric and 26 air-electric cars on its routes. Car 1613 (air-electric) is now repainted as the "Spirit of 1776". Car 1730's original psychedelic fluorescent paint job was deteriorating, so it was repainted during February 1973 in a slightly more restrained version. All all-electrics are now repainted and about 15 of these are in the various new schemes which combine white with red, yellow, or orange.....SAN FRANCISCO is to buy ten PCC's from TORONTO. They will be either ex-Birmingham Pullmans or ex-Kansas City cars. Either type will be a new type for the "Muni".....On the SIRT, new R44 type subway cars have started to arrive at St. George, and it is hoped to have all old SIRT subway cars withdrawn by April 1.....NYCTA plans to limit its old IND subway cars to routes G, GG, J, K, and LL after delivery of the R44's is complete. The eight-car "museum" train makes a round trip on Route 2B. 835 old IND cars will remain until 752 R46 cars arrive from Pullman-Standard in 1974-75.BOSTON has retired about 50 PCC's and now has just under 300 active cars.PATH will name each of its 298 cars after a local city and an interior plate will show the name and a brief history of the city. One PA-1 type car has been written off and my notes suggest it is either the 613 or 623. This occurred some time ago after a collision at Journal Square.....SEPTA's RED ARROW DIVISION still continues to work on the burned-out St. Louis car (16) with the aim of restoring it to service.....MBTA's sole line car has been repaired and re-entered service. Its place had been taken by a car borrowed from Seashore Trolley Museum after the MBTA car was involved in a collision on the Riverside line..

- EL SIMON.

SHAMOKIN EXCURSION TO BE REPEATED, SUNDAY, MAY 6, 1973 - TICKETS EXTREMELY LIMITED

PHILADELPHIA, PA., March 7, 1973.

The Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS will sponsor a repeat of 1972's highly successful "King Coal Special" rail excursion over the Reading Railroad between Reading, Pa., and Shamokin, Pa., and return, on Sunday, May 6, 1973.

This year's schedule will be adjusted to allow a longer layover in Shamokin, and permit time to tour the Glen Burn Coal Mine. The trip will depart Reading at 9:15 a.m., (tentative schedule), and arrive in Shamokin at 12 Noon. The return trip will depart Shamokin 3:30 p.m., and arrive back at Reading at 6:15 p.m. All times are tentative. No connecting train will be provided from Philadelphia, as was done last year, but the evening trip will arrive back in time to permit return on the evening Philadelphia train. Chapter members who desire to go on the trip should consult with the Trip Committee's Ticket Chairman, who will be designated at the March meeting, with regard to forming car pools if they cannot drive to Reading themselves.

It was with reluctance that your Chapter officers made the decision to not provide the Philadelphia connection. But, it was felt that it was necessary to provide the Mine Tour in order to make the trip attractive to the general public, who make up between 80 and 90% of our passengers.

Capacity on this excursion will be limited to approximately 275 passengers, as opposed to 350 on last year's trip. One of the coaches is in the Reading Shops for repair to the air-conditioning system, and the Reading cannot promise the availability of this car, due to a waiting period for parts to repair the system.

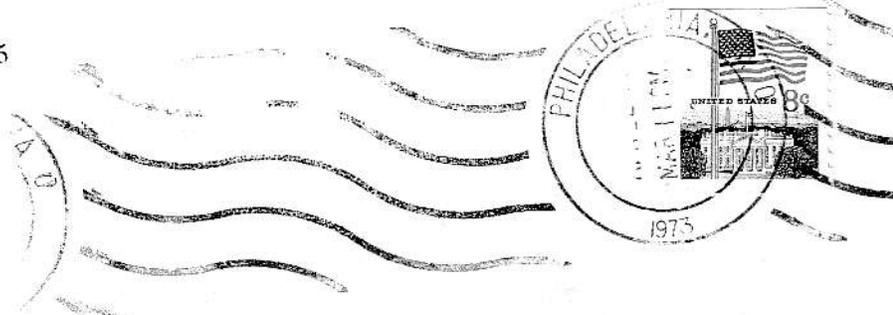
Prices for the trip will be adjusted only slightly over the 1972 prices. Adult tickets will be \$12.50 instead of \$12.00, and children's fares will remain at \$7.00.

Publicity will be appearing in the Reading newspapers very shortly, and in the national rail enthusiast publications as well. Chapter members can be guaranteed tickets up until about April 1, but after that date, it will be strictly first-come, first-served.

Volunteers are needed, as usual, for car host positions. I urge each of you to assist the Chapter in making this event a success for us. A similar excursion is being operated from Reading to Shamokin for a private group on Sunday, April 8. We feel we can successfully sell this trip. Those who did not get to go last year will now have their opportunity. Further details at the March meeting.

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

Post Office Box 41
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006



[REDACTED]
Apt. 22C, The Plaza
18th & The Parkway
Philadelphia, PA 19103