



# CINDERS

Summer 1983



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Newsletter of the

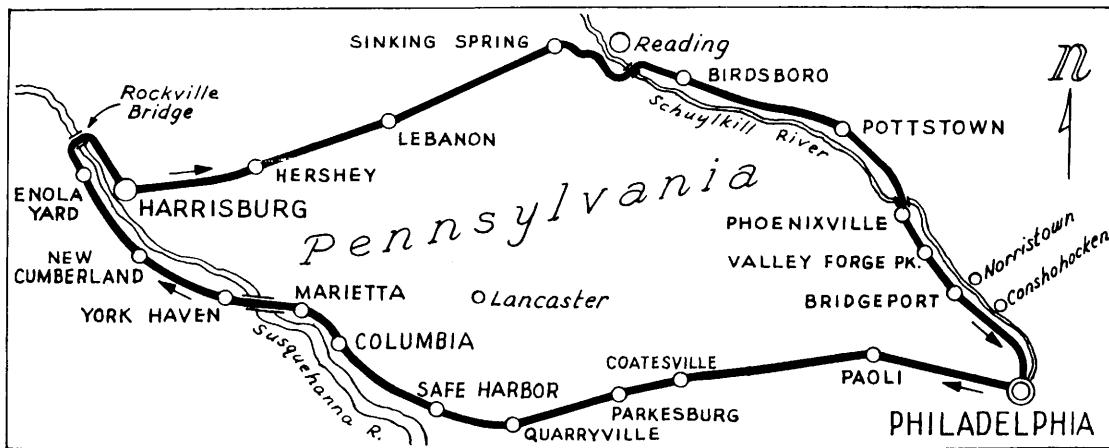
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

National Railway Historical Society Inc.

Post Office Box 7302

Philadelphia, Pa. 19101

## Chapter's October 2 Special to Follow Unique Route



The Susquehanna & Reading Special, Philadelphia Chapter's major excursion for 1983, continues a tradition of "off the beaten track" rail tours sponsored by the Chapter over the past four decades.

Scheduled to leave Amtrak's 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, at 10 AM on Sunday, October 2, the Amfleet-equipped Special will operate to and from Harrisburg via a circuitous route through Lancaster, Lebanon and Berks Counties. Included are nearly 200 miles of former Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading Company lines now owned by Conrail and devoted exclusively to freight traffic.

Westbound, the train will make a passenger stop at Paoli (10:35 AM), after which it will follow Amtrak's mainline to Parkesburg and the "low grade" freight route via Columbia to Conrail's huge Enola yard across the Susquehanna River from Harrisburg. A 50-minute stop will be made at Harrisburg's Amtrak station. Returning, the Special will operate via the ex-Reading Lebanon Valley branch, Reading Belt and mainline to Philadelphia, with arrival at 30th Street carded for 6:30 PM. Convenient Amtrak and SEPTA train connections will be available both in the morning and afternoon.

Notable landmarks along the way will include the towering viaduct at Safe Harbor overlooking the Susquehanna, the Shocks Mill bridge (rebuilt following the Hurricane Agnes flood in 1972), Enola yard, the world-famous Rockville stone-arch bridge west of Harrisburg, the historic passenger station near the State Capitol, and two 19th Century tunnels along the Reading-Philadelphia mainline.

The train will feature a pair of Amtrak F40PH diesel locomotives, Budd-built Amfleet coaches and two Amcafe cars operated by Amtrak, which will dispense sandwiches, snacks and beverages throughout the trip. With the exception of the on-board Amtrak crew, the entire train will be staffed by NRHS volunteers.

Fares for this exceptional rail ramble are only \$35 for adults and \$25 for children between five and 11 years old (there is no charge for younger children who do not occupy a separate seat). All seats on the train are reserved and groups wishing to sit together should place their orders at one time. Tickets may be secured by sending a check or money order payable to "Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS" at the following address:

P. O. Box 7302  
Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

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Amtrak's *California Zephyr* made its last trip via the old Union Pacific route through Wyoming July 15 and commenced its run via the Rio Grande, whose line near Thistle, UT has been relocated around the flood site.

New HEP cars released from Beech Grove since our last report are Slumbercoach 2097 (May 20), dome coaches 9406 (June 3) and 9400 (June 23) and sleeper 2467 (June 28). Reports have it that seven additional diners are to be rebuilt as Heritage cars to permit additional food service when necessary (as on Florida trains) while still providing an adequate shop margin. Apparently the cars involved will be 8380, 8381, 8383, 8384, 8026, 8027 and ex-Rio Grande 1115, which will become 8521, 8522, 8524, 8525, 8529, 8531 and 8530, respectively. Additionally, five dome-coaches have received new "Heritage" numbers: cars 9407-9411 are ex-9477, 9486, 9465, 9471 and 9475.

Budd has completed delivery of the 150-car order of Amfleet II equipment. As of May 22, Amtrak had not received coaches 25122-25124 and lounges 28023-28024, and these were delivered in mid-June.

Plans for the Auto-Ferry service are moving along with one set of equipment set to go into service at the time change in October, and a second set in the Spring. Cars already at Beech Grove were augmented by others selected from various storage sites and auto carriers have been purchased from Auto-Train and Evans Products.

The four EMD SW8's acquired from Conrail in exchange for two E8's are to be renumbered 747-750 (after Amtrak's SW1's). Their statistics are:

747	ex-CR 8623	B/N 16325	2-1953	ex-NYC 8623
748	ex-CR 8625	B/N 16327	2-1953	ex-NYC 8625
749	ex-CR 8681	B/N 14492	9-1951	ex-LV 267
750	ex-CR 8689	B/N 16972	12-1952	ex-LV 275

In Canada, VIA issued a new schedule on May 28, making a number of changes. In their corridor, one Toronto-Windsor trip was cut back to Toronto-London and others retimed by up to an hour. The usual summer trains between Winnipeg-Farlane and White River-Sudbury are back. In the Maritimes, trains 617 and 618 between Moncton and Campbellton have been retimed, with 617 leaving over eight hours earlier. The *Saint Laurent* between Montreal and Mont Joli has been dropped, but a new through train to Gaspé is back and carries the old name *Chaleur*, used on previous through services.

Only four VIA trains still have a chef to cook food on board. The *Canadian* has an ex-CN diner and the *Skyline* dome while the *Ocean* has an ex-CN diner as well. The former CP diners are expected to replace these cars in the near future, however. Cafe-lounges run on the Edmonton-Prince Rupert *Skeena* and Winnipeg-Churchill *Hudson Bay*, used by substantial numbers of tour parties. All trains use the picture menus with two entrees for breakfast, lunch and dinner (which change on each day of the transcontinental trip).

As of the schedule change, the eastbound *Ocean* leaves Montreal almost two hours earlier since the *Chaleur* leaves at 11 PM. Six of the *Ocean*'s 15 cars are dropped at Moncton and return on that day's train, saving a day's set of equipment over running all of the consist to Halifax.

During the recent week I spent in Canada, I was able to observe numerous VIA and suburban operations. I had planned to be in the "corridor" on a holiday weekend to see VIA trains with their largest consists, and I was not to be disappointed, with several Rapidos going to 14 cars and three units between Montreal and Toronto.

The flagship *Canadian* runs 17 cars between Toronto and Calgary, and is expanded to 20 cars to Vancouver, which must present an impressive train going through the Rockies. Next longest train is the *Ocean* between Montreal and Moncton, diagrammed at 15 cars (I noted an extra sleeper at times). A real surprise was the overnight train from Cochrane, which arrived at Montreal with one F unit and ten cars (yes, it was late!). The overnight *Cavalier* was assigned two sleepers to Toronto, and operated extra cars quite often.

VIA has rationalized its fleet of conventional cars to reflect its current requirements and plans to reduce it some more. Most cars built before 1953-54 should be gone by this fall, for example. On a personal note, I do not care for the LRC's, and I was sorry to note a number of enroute failures and delays. I really feel VIA is the big loser, since I get the impression the Canadian Government has given VIA no alternative to the LRC.

(Continued on Page 3)

## ON THE SCENE (Continued from Page 2)

Ontario Northland's *Northlander* still offers traditional dining service with traditional menus (unlike VIA's "picture" versions). The selections are greater, with (for example) four dinner entrees. These three-unit former European TEE sets consist of a 54-seat coach, 18-passenger coach-diner and 42-passenger compartment style coach-cab.

In commuter operations north of the border, in spite of CTCUM's takeover of the Montreal service out of both Windsor and Central stations, signs of the change have been rather limited. On the CP side, five 800-series commuter coaches have been repainted two-tone blue and white, and will enter service when enough additional cars have been done to equip a trainset. The nine gallery cars have all been repainted, with blue striping replacing the former CP red. Two FP7's (1303, 1305) have been repainted, with the 1301 and 1304 in the shops, and 4040, 4070 and 4072 still running in CP red. Leased CP RS10 #8577 was a pleasant variation. The 4040 has no steam generator, and thus must operate with one of the two self-contained gallery trainsets.

The Mount Royal electric operation of the CN remains unchanged, with everything still painted in the CN black and grey. Even 11 streamlined coaches purchased from VIA have been repainted this way, de-air conditioned with new sliding windows and suburban interiors. Two of the four locomotive-hauled trainsets had 11 cars and drew the earliest class of box cab electrics, the 6710-6711 and 6713-6714. For the record, the motive power is as follows: 6710-6713 (General Electric, June-July, 1914); 6714 (GE/Canadian GE, November, 1917); 6715 (Canadian GE, November, 1916); 6716-6717 (English Electric, 1924); 6722-6724 (English Electric, 1926); and 6725-6727 (General Electric, July 1950). I did not see the 6715-6717 in operation, however.

Bids have been requested by Metro-North for 54 M-4 cars for the New Haven Line. Thirty-two cars will be formed in sixteen married pairs, while 22 will be trailers — the first non-powered MU's built since Long Island's 2800's of almost 30 years ago. Metro-North has proposed to purchase 12 dual-powered 2300-hp units (six Poughkeepsie, four Danbury, two spares) and to completely rebuild five Budd RDC's for continued service. The 18 Poughkeepsie cars will be replaced by an add-on order for 19 Bombardier cars, similar to the new Comet II cars in New Jersey. It's believed these will be made up of four control cars and 15 coaches. An earlier add-on order is now being delivered and control cars observed are 5175-5176 and coaches 5990-5993.

CP Rail sold Budd RDC's 9054, 9056, 9060 and 9068 to Boston's MBTA, but the purpose is not clear as for active service, or rebuilding as HEP coaches, for example.

The Georgia Railroad's mixed trains have made their last runs, and the last few days found standard coaches 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 from the Chessie Safety Special and four coaches from the Kentucky Railroad Museum (Clinchfield 101, 103, L&N 2554 and 2572) added to accommodate riders.

NJ Transit on June 16 replaced four trainsets of old MU's operating out of Hoboken with new Comet II coaches (three powered by F40PH's and one U34CH). Twenty-four cars were transferred, and the locomotives were freed up by the receipt of four F7's on lease from C&NW (two more are expected). For the record, the coaches are 5620, 5622-29, 5631-35, 5637-38, 5640, 5646, 5663, 5666 and control cars 5140, 5144, 5145 and 5147. Three other Comet II coaches were transferred earlier to Hoboken to replace three cars wrecked by vandalism, these cars being 5621, 5645 and 5675. A number of the old former Lackawanna MU's were placed in storage, but reports suggest that some cars may be sold for continued service (Montreal?) after their replacement by Arrow III's.

The four MBTA F3u's rebuilt with steam generators are being converted this summer to HEP since steam-heated cars are gone from the "Hub".

In New York again, present plans call for M3 MU's 8000-8059 to go to Metro-North, then the next 80 to the Long Island (9773-9852?), then 8060-8141 to Metro-North, and finally 9853-9945(?) to Long Island — a total of 315 Budd-built cars.

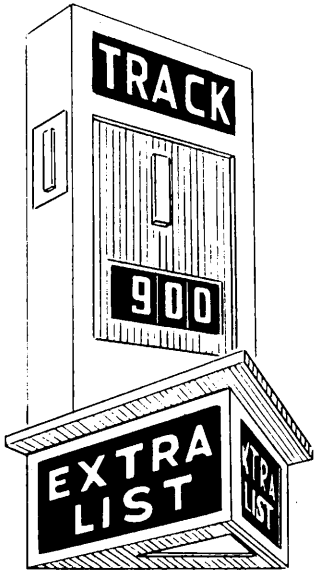
PATH's continuing program to name its cars after area trains is virtually complete with 11 cars to go, including two cars out of service. These are the newer PA series cars; none of the earlier K-class cars has yet been named.

Toronto Transit Commission has 173 PCC cars remaining, all rebuilds. Seventy-nine are 4300's from 1947-48, 45 are 4400's (1949) and 49 4500's (1951). Only 81 of these cars are needed for service or the required shop margin, and TTC has just advertised for bids for either 81 more single cars or 60 articulated cars to finish the job of replacing the PCC's in Toronto. TTC's rapid transit network is not being expanded, but bids are to be sought for 26 cars to provide additional capacity, with options to purchase further cars to replace all or a portion of the earliest Gloucester cars built in England.

San Diego has expanded the hours of operation of its light rail line to 1 AM.

Boston's MBTA has asked for bids on 100 articulated streetcars to complete replacement of its PCC's.

Digging into our historical file, we find some Reading Company dates of interest — the first trips of their four streamliners, as follows: *Crusader* (December 13, 1937), *Wall Street* (March 1, 1948), *Schuylkill* (November 14, 1948), and *King Coal* (September 25, 1949). Reading actually participated in earlier streamlined train operation, since the B&O's *Royal Blue* entered service June 24, 1935 with pioneer EMC box cab #50 or streamlined steam power. We'll mention more on Reading's "class" trains in a future column, since many of our younger readers remember the line only as a commuter operation.



SEPTEMBER 2-5, 1983: "Little Red Caboose" Centennial Celebration at Oneonta, NY, honoring 100th anniversary of the founding of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen in Oneonta. Two passenger excursions will be operated each day via Delaware & Hudson to Cobleskill, NY and return, using Delaware Otsego dome cars, sponsored by Leatherstocking Chapter, NRHS, P. O. Box 681, Oneonta, NY 13820. Fare: \$10 per person. Other activities include D&H equipment displays, shop tour, toy train collectors show and sale, fireworks and parade.

SEPTEMBER 10-11: Flying Yankee two-day rail excursion from Boston, MA to Bangor, ME and return via Boston & Maine and Maine Central Railroads, sponsored by Massachusetts Bay Division, RRE. Leave North Station, Boston, 8 AM September 10. Routing includes MEC "Back Road" via Lewiston, ME on northbound trip and "Lower Road" via Augusta, ME on return. Equipment will consist of MBTA F40 locomotives and air-conditioned commuter coaches. Fare: \$169 per person including overnight lodging in Bangor (double occupancy) and box lunches both days. After September 1 ticket price increases to \$189. For single hotel room add \$20. Order tickets from: Mass Bay RRE, P. O. Box 208, East Walpole, MA 02032, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

SEPTEMBER 24: Queen City Limited rail excursion from Baltimore to Cumberland, MD and return via Chessie System, sponsored by Baltimore Chapter, NRHS, P. O. Box 10233, Baltimore, MD 21234. Train leaves Baltimore (Camden Station) 8 AM and operates via Washington, DC, returning to Baltimore at 9 PM. Fares: \$35 adults, \$30 children, first class \$65. Open-sided coach will be included in the consist. Make checks payable to: Baltimore Chapter, NRHS, and enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope.

SEPTEMBER 25: West Virginian rail excursion from Baltimore, MD to Harpers Ferry/Martinsburg, WV and return, sponsored by Baltimore Chapter, NRHS, P. O. Box 10233, Baltimore, MD 21234. Train leaves Baltimore (Camden Station) 8:30 AM and operates via Chessie System's Old Main Line between Relay and Point of Rocks, MD, returning to Baltimore at 7 PM. Fares: \$30 adults, \$26 children, first class \$55. Open-sided coach will be included in the consist. Make checks payable to: "Baltimore Chapter, NRHS" and enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope.

SEPTEMBER 25: Railroadiana and Model Railroad Show and Sale, sponsored by Lehigh Valley Chapter, NRHS, at Dieruff Senior High School, Irving Street, Allentown, PA, 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission: \$2 adults, \$3 for entire family. Tables are \$12 each. For information, contact: Paul Kuehner, P. O. Box 300, Laury's Station, PA 18059 (telephone 215-799-2530).

SEPTEMBER 29: Steam-powered ferry run from Jim Thorpe to Reading, PA via Conrail, using ex-Canadian Pacific 4-6-0 #972, and ex-Reading coaches, sponsored by Historical Society of Berks County, 940 Centre Avenue, Reading, PA 19601. Train leaves Jim Thorpe 9 AM, arrives Reading about 2:30 PM. Fare: \$25 per person, plus \$8 for optional bus connection. Make checks payable to "Historical Society of Berks County" and enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope.

SEPTEMBER 30: Steam-powered trip from Reading to Pottsville, PA and return via Conrail, using 4-6-0 #972 and ex-Reading coaches. Leave Reading 6:30 PM, return 10:30 PM. Private trip--not open to public.

OCTOBER 1: Public trip Reading to Pottsville and return using steam locomotive #972 and ex-Reading coaches, sponsored by Historical Society of Berks County. Train leaves Reading (Municipal Stadium) 10 AM, returns about 4:30 PM. Fare: \$35 per person. Order tickets from Historical Society of Berks County at address shown above.

OCTOBER 2: Susquehanna & Reading Special from Philadelphia to Harrisburg and return sponsored by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, featuring nearly 200 miles of Conrail freight-only trackage (see story Page 1 this issue). Train will consist of Amtrak F40 diesel locomotives and Amfleet equipment, including two Amcafe cars serving light meals and refreshments. Fares: \$35 adults, \$25 children (5-11 years). Train leaves Philadelphia (30th Street Station) 10 AM, returns 6:30 PM. Order tickets from: Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302, making checks payable to "Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS" and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

OCTOBER 2, 9: Steam excursions from Reading to Philadelphia (West Falls) and return via Conrail, using engine #972 and ex-Reading coaches, sponsored by Historical Society of Berks County. Train leaves Reading (Municipal Stadium) 10 AM, arrives Valley Forge Park 11:15 AM, West Falls 12:45 PM, returning to Reading about 3:30 PM. Fare: \$35 per person. Order tickets from Historical Society of Berks County at address shown above.

OCTOBER 2-10: "Colorado Rails" fall foliage trip from Chicago to Colorado and return, featuring Amtrak's California Zephyr, excursions on Cumbres & Toltec and Durango & Silverton narrow gauge lines as well as steam excursion behind restored Union Pacific 4-6-6-4 #3985. Tour sponsored by Overland Chapter, NRHS. All-inclusive fares begin at \$875 per person in coach. For information and reservations, contact" Richard M. Billings, president, Overland Chapter, NRHS, 1412 12th Street, Moline, IL 61265 (telephone 309-764-1834).

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## EXTRA LIST (Continued from Page 4)

OCTOBER 7, 8: Steam excursions from Reading to Bethlehem, PA and return via Conrail using engine #972 and ex-Reading coaches, sponsored by Historical Society of Berks County. Train leaves Reading (Municipal Stadium) 6:30 PM Friday, 10 AM Saturday, returning about 10:30 PM and 3:30 PM. Fare: \$35 per person. Order tickets from Historical Society of Berks County at address shown on previous listing on page 4.

OCTOBER 8: Mobile railfair and excursion on New York, Susquehanna & Western, Binghamton to Norwich, NY and return, sponsored by Susquehanna Valley Chapter, NRHS. Train leaves Binghamton 8:30 AM, returns about 6 PM. For information, write: Dennis Gohl, Susquehanna Valley Chapter, NRHS, Box 2415, Binghamton, NY 13902.

OCTOBER 8: Diesel-powered excursion on Gettysburg Railroad from Gettysburg to Mt. Holly Springs, PA and return, sponsored by Hawk Mountain Chapter, NRHS, 918 Mohr St., Allentown, PA 18102. Train leaves Gettysburg 10 AM powered by RS3 locomotive #56. Fare: \$8 per person.

OCTOBER 10: Ferry run from Reading to Jim Thorpe, PA via Conrail, using 4-6-0 #972, and ex-Reading coaches, sponsored by Historical Society of Berks County. Train leaves Reading (Franklin Street) 9 AM, arrives Jim Thorpe about 2:30 PM. Fare: \$25 per person, plus \$8 for optional bus transportation. Order tickets from Historical Society of Berks County at address shown on page 4.

OCTOBER 16: Autumn Strafford Car Trip will be operated on Norristown high-speed line of SEPTA, leaving 69th Street Terminal at 1 PM, returning about 5 PM. Fare: \$10. Order tickets from: Michael J. Corcoran, 3614 Berry Avenue, Drexel Hill, PA 19026 (telephone 215-623-2936).

OCTOBER 22: Strasburg Special Amtrak excursion from Washington, DC to Leaman Place, PA and return, including trip on steam-powered Strasburg Rail Road, sponsored by Washington, DC Chapter, NRHS. Train will consist of F40 locomotives and Amfleet equipment. Leaves Washington (Union Station) 7:45 AM, Baltimore 8:40 AM, arriving Leaman Place 11:25 AM. Returning, train leaves Leaman Place 6 PM, arrives Baltimore 8:50 PM, Washington 9:45 PM. Trip will operate via Philadelphia in both directions. Fares: \$47 adults, \$43 children (5-11 years). Order tickets from: Strasburg Special, P. O. Box 456, Laurel, MD 20707, making checks payable to "Strasburg Special" and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

OCTOBER 22, 23: "Farewell to Vermont" steam-powered excursions from Bellows Falls to Rutland, VT and return via Green Mountain Railroad, sponsored by Steamtown, U.S.A. Trips are advertised as last excursions from Steamtown before museum moves to Scranton, PA prior to the 1984 season. Ex-Canadian Pacific 4-6-2 #1246 will be featured. Train leaves Steamtown's Riverside station 9 AM each day, returning about 5 PM. Fares: \$29.95 adults, \$16.95 children. Order tickets from: Steamtown Foundation, P. O. Box 71, Bellows Falls, VT 05101, making checks payable to "Steamtown Foundation."

OCTOBER 23: Rail excursion from Lancaster and Harrisburg, PA to Front Royal, VA and return via Amtrak, Conrail, Chessie System and Norfolk & Western, sponsored by Lancaster Chapter, NRHS, 342 Fritz Avenue, Quarryville, PA 17566. Amtrak F40 locomotives and Amfleet equipment will be used and nearly 150 miles of freight-only trackage covered. Train leaves Lancaster 6:30 AM, Harrisburg 7:08 AM, returns to Harrisburg 10:20 PM, Lancaster 11:08 PM. Fares: \$45 adults, \$43 children. Make checks payable to "Lancaster Chapter, NRHS" and enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope with ticket order.

## MARYLAND MIDLAND OFFERS SUMMER RAIL EXCURSIONS

The Maryland Midland Railway has begun regular passenger excursions on its 17-mile line between Walkersville and Taneytown, MD. All trains depart from the Walkersville station off Maryland Route 194.

Featuring Whitcomb and Alco-built diesel locomotives, a former Auto-Train dome coach and open gondola, the MM excursions operate on the following schedule:

Leave Walkersville for Woodsboro (ten-mile round trip)  
Sundays through October 30 - 2 PM  
Wednesdays through August 31 - 1 PM

Leave Walkersville for Taneytown (34-mile round trip)  
Saturdays through October 29 - 1 PM  
September 5 and October 10 - 1 PM

Fares for the Woodsboro trips are \$5 adults and \$3 children. For the Taneytown trips the fares are \$10 adults and \$6 children. Further information may be obtained by telephoning (301) 898-3211.

Maryland Midland operates on a portion of the former Pennsylvania Railroad Frederick branch, which was originally opened for service in 1872. At present, the MM is basically a freight-hauling line, interchanging with the Chessie System's ex-Western Maryland mainline at Keymar, MD. The State of Maryland recently renewed its financial support of the MM, and the shortline is now engaged in discussions which could lead to a takeover of freight operations on the Chessie between Highfield and Westminster, MD.

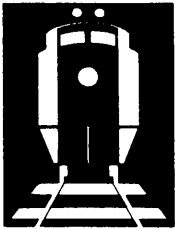
Philadelphia Chapter last May sponsored one of the first fantrips on the MM, and the railroad later in the year announced that it would enter the excursion market on a regular basis. Driving time from the Philadelphia area to Walkersville is about 3-1/2 hours for the 150-mile trip via Lancaster and York.

# PHILADELPHIA



## FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA's commuter rail system creaked into operation on Sunday, July 3, following settlement of the marathon 108-day strike which began last March 15. The resumption of service was--not surprisingly--an exercise in frustration for many of the riders who ventured back onto the rails during the first two weeks of July. Frequent delays were caused by faulty switches, signals, cars and overhead wire, principally on the former Reading lines.



One of the worst days, however, was Friday, July 15, when a series of equipment failures on the Penn Center side led to a horrendous rush-hour tieup at 30th Street Station. That same afternoon, passengers on the Media line suffered additional delays because of a downed wire at Fernwood, which resulted in single-track operation through the weekend. By late July the Penn Center lines seemed to be running well but problems continued to plague the Reading side, due partly to major track projects near Glenside, on the Chestnut Hill East line and between Wayne Junction and Reading Terminal.

During the first weeks of operation ridership was extremely light as many former rail commuters continued to ride the transit lines, car and vanpools to which they had become accustomed during the long strike. Though patronage gradually increased as train service improved, SEPTA said in early August that weekday ridership had "stabilized" at about two-thirds of pre-strike levels. Even the March figure of 38,000 round-trips per day was off substantially from the mid-1982 level of around 42,000 daily customers. Thus, SEPTA has its work cut out in its proposed marketing campaign to lure back at least 50,000 riders through better, more frequent service at lower fares. Without that volume of traffic, the future of the system appears bleak in spite of the reduced labor costs which SEPTA has achieved in its new contracts with 13 commuter rail unions (see story elsewhere this issue).

Post-strike notes: Long-time commuters were shocked to find that SEPTA had painted the gloomy concourse and waiting room at Reading Terminal.....At least ten old MU cars have been seen in service on the West Trenton and Fox Chase lines, presumably because of a shortage of operable Silverliners.....The Chestnut Hill East reconstruction is going gangbusters, with new ties and welded rail ready for installation along the 5.7-mile route. Station and platform repairs are also on the docket.....SEPTA is once again aligning all cars on the Reading side so that the pantograph end faces downtown.....Large new SEPTA logos are being applied to all Silverliner IV's.....New SEPTA uniforms have been issued to train personnel.

SEPTA has finally made the Newtown shuttle bus official by issuing a bus timetable effective June 6. Buses have been substituting for RDC's since last winter because of engine failures on the railcars. SEPTA made it clear that the buses will continue running until the 15.2-mile branch is electrified, despite pressure from Bucks County officials to resume rail service immediately. On July 11 SEPTA held a public hearing at Newtown to discuss the \$17 million electrification project, which contemplates through service between Reading Terminal and Newtown via Fox Chase. The former proposal to build a connection to the West Trenton line at "Ayres" interlocking has been dropped.

SEPTA has scheduled a pre-bid conference for August 24 on the proposed sale of its RDC's. Bids are due September 9 and at least one railroad is known to be interested. A total of 21 RDC's are in storage on the Newtown line and at the Naval Base in South Philadelphia, but SEPTA owns only four of them (#9163-9166). The others are owned by the City of Philadelphia and PennDOT.

SEPTA took its first step to improve commuter rail service by increasing the number of off-peak and weekend trains on the Marcus Hook and Media lines, effective August 14. New timetables were issued, though the Marcus Hook schedule carried a January 1, 1983 date (when service was cut back from Wilmington). Shuttle bus service is still being operated between Swarthmore station and Media-Elwyn-West Chester due to the ongoing \$1.25-million reconstruction of the Crum Creek bridge just west of Swarthmore. Rail service is expected to resume over the bridge on October 2, when the timetable will again be reissued. All other Regional High Speed Division timetables will be reissued October 30, most of them for the first time since October 1982.

In an apparent compromise with the City, SEPTA has agreed to begin running free shuttle train service through the new center city commuter tunnel beginning in January 1984. Regular service through the \$325-million tunnel will begin in July. Even though construction of the tunnel itself and the Market East station is due to be completed by January, SEPTA says that support facilities such as a new MU yard at Wayne Junction will not be ready by then. In addition, SEPTA General Manager David L. Gunn told the *Daily News*, "it'll take us two to three months to train and qualify our crews in the tunnel after it is physically complete." Because of planned run-through operations, Gunn explained that crews now qualified on the ex-Pennsy lines will roll out of the tunnel and suddenly find themselves "in Reading land, which they've never seen before."

(Continued on Page 7)

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 6)

A diesel-powered test run was made over the Airport High-Speed Line in May. Track and overhead construction is virtually complete from the airport to the AMTRAK connection at 58th Street, but much work remains to be done along the Northeast Corridor right-of-way between 45th and 58th Streets.....SEPTA managed to get the Reading Terminal concourse shored up in time for the resumption of train service (see June Cinders), but some questions remain about the structural stability of the building. For a time, bumper blocks were installed to prevent trains from getting too close to the end of track, which is directly above a supporting wall that was found to have cracks in it last spring.

Work continues on realigning the train platforms in Suburban Station, to provide for four run-through tracks in the center, two stub-end tracks on the north side and two on the south side.....SEPTA is pressing ahead with plans to build a connection between the Chestnut Hill West and Norristown lines at 20th Street in North Philadelphia, in order to route the Hill trains away from AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor. This, of course, would cause the loss of convenient connections at North Philadelphia station to and from New York.....SEPTA and NJ TRANSIT are promoting a Philadelphia-New York fare of only \$9.90 one-way, far less than AMTRAK's \$18.50 ticket. An across-the-platform change of trains must be made at Trenton.....SEPTA has leased its ornate Strafford station to Wawa Dairy Farms for use as a convenience store. This is part of a program to lease commuter stations to outside firms who will rehabilitate them and provide waiting room facilities.

Reading Company is trying hard to sell its proposal for a huge new downtown convention center to be bounded by Market, 11th, 13th and Race Streets. The Market East site, which will include the Reading Terminal trainshed and headhouse, is competing with another proposal to build the center in the Franklin Town area on Vine Street. Reading has prepared an interesting brochure to boost its proposal, and has been handing them out by the thousands on downtown street corners....."Station Square" is the name of a proposed 11-story office complex to be built near SEPTA's Fort Washington rail station in Montgomery County.

SEPTA is asking the Federal government for \$2.1 million to help improve 13 of its commuter rail stations. They are Cornwells Heights and Levittown in Bucks County; Daylesford and West Chester in Chester County; Morton, Secane and Swarthmore in Delaware County; Ambler and Melrose Park in Montgomery County; North Broad Street, Overbrook, Temple U and Wayne Junction in Philadelphia.....Diaz Construction Company, the SEPTA contractor which was rebuilding the Bethlehem branch, has gone bankrupt, reports Delaware Valley Rail Passenger. As a result, work was halted with the outbound track at Glenside station still out of service. Diaz was in the news two months ago when 12 of its employees were arrested as illegal aliens from Mexico. The 12 were to be deported.

**NJ TRANSIT** The end is near for NJ TRANSIT's famed GGI electrics, only six of which are still in active service between South Amboy and Penn Station, New York. They no longer operate on weekends and, with increasing frequency, one or two borrowed AMTRAK E60's are being seen on weekday runs. The word is that NJT will acquire the following head-end-power E60's from Amtrak: 958-963, 967, 971-973. The first of these units will be in regular service by September 1, and the last G's should disappear shortly thereafter.....After several weeks in Wilmington shops to repair a leaking transformer, tuscan red GGI #4877 returned to active service on July 25. It is not known whether NJT plans any sort of final ceremony for #4877, or what her ultimate disposition will be.

The first two of NJ TRANSIT's rebuilt Arrow II MU's were due back from Morrison-Knudsen's Boise (ID) shop by mid-August. They are married pair #1288-1289 (ex-588-589).....The ten RDC's stored in Atlantic City were moved to Elizabethport (NJ) in June, though in one respect the former PRSL passenger service lives on. PATCO's summer timetable effective May 21 still shows "Seashore Train" connections at Lindenwold, with an asterisk that denotes "temporary bus service." The bus trips are still designated with the old NJT train numbers (West Jersey Chapter Crew Caller).

NJ TRANSIT will spend \$1.3 million during this fiscal year on promotion to make up an estimated 4.1 percent loss in ridership which resulted from the 34-day commuter rail strike that ended in April. About 65,000 people now ride NJT trains, according to a count taken in mid-May. NJT's board, however, voted this month to increase rail and bus fares statewide by an average of eight percent, effective September 1.....NJ TRANSIT has purchased 16 stations along the Northeast Corridor from AMTRAK for \$400,000. These include all active stations except Newark and Trenton. New structures will be built at Princeton Junction, Elizabeth and North Elizabeth, and all stations will get high-level platforms (Jersey Central Chapter).....NJ TRANSIT is rebuilding ex-Blue Comet observation car #1178 into a head-end power inspection car (Jersey Central Chapter).

SEPTA ran into a buzzsaw of opposition at the first of three public hearings on its proposal to convert trolley routes 6, 50 and 60 to bus operation. Held August 4 at SEPTA's downtown headquarters, the hearing brought out objections from the City's Department of Public Property and the Clean Air Council, as well as from a number of riders, rail organizations and trolley enthusiasts. SEPTA's plan calls for the permanent use of buses on Route 50-4th & 5th Streets and Route 60-Allegheny Avenue, which have been operated with buses for several years due to insufficient cars as well as various bridge and street projects. The substitution of buses on Route 6-Ogontz Avenue is also proposed because a new Broad & Olney transit terminal, which SEPTA plans to begin building next year, contains no provisions for surface rail operations.

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 7)



In challenging a SEPTA questionnaire which purported to show that most present riders prefer buses, several critics charged that the survey was invalid because it asked passengers to choose between a poorly-maintained 35-year-old trolley and a modern, air-conditioned bus. SEPTA Board Member Judith Harris asked one Route 6 rider, who had spoken in favor of buses, what she would say if given the choice between a bus and a new air-conditioned trolley like those operating in West Philadelphia. "I would prefer the trolley," answered the rider. According to a Daily News report, the City's representative pointed out that ridership had increased 42 percent on certain subway-surface lines since introduction of the new Kawasaki-built trolleys, while no ridership gains of that magnitude have resulted when trolley routes were converted to buses.

In response to SEPTA's testimony that the 30-year cost of running a streetcar is about \$1 million versus \$461,000 for a bus, the City spokesman said that these statistics are faulty because a trolley can carry 33 percent more people than a bus and that trolleys cost about 20 percent less per vehicle to operate. SEPTA had presented its position in a 25-minute slide show which dramatized the deteriorated condition of the three lines and the high cost (\$94 million) of upgrading them with new trolleys, new track and new methods of traffic separation.

The following week, the Inquirer editorialized that "when legitimate concerns about the need to foster energy conservation and reduce air pollution are taken into account, trolleys don't stack up all that poorly against buses. There has been undue haste in the past, both in the City and in the suburbs, in abandoning trolley lines. Repetition of those mistakes must be avoided." It is unlikely that any decision on the future of the three endangered lines, or of the rest of the North Philadelphia trolley system, will be made until the issuance of a report later this year by a Green administration task force which is studying the possible upgrading of these rail routes.

Coincidentally, on the same day that reports of the trolley abandonment hearings appeared in the local press, another SEPTA-related story carried this headline: "Bus breakdowns cut service on eight routes." It seems that the prolonged hot weather had been too much for a large number of SEPTA's General Motors-built RTS buses, which were delivered just three years ago. A total of 84 out of 195 RTS's assigned to Callowhill and Allegheny depots were out of service for air conditioning failures, SEPTA admitted, creating serious delays for passengers on at least eight lines. SEPTA also revealed that it has filed suit against the manufacturer of these "Advanced Design" buses, which have sealed windows and are thus dependent upon air conditioning.

SEPTA has begun another track renewal project on the Norristown High Speed Line, this time on the out-bound track between Conshohocken Road and Hughes Park. New ballast, ties and welded rail will be installed as cars headed for Norristown are switched to the opposite track by means of a new crossover at Conshohocken Road... On August 8 SEPTA's Sharon Hill trolleys began turning back at Baltimore Pike while trackwork and street repairs are carried out. Buses will be substituted on the outer end of the line for about five weeks... SEPTA's Route 36 line on Island Avenue south of Elmwood Avenue was shut down in May to permit the rebuilding of the roadway and construction of a new bridge over the Airport High Speed Line. Ultimately, the track will be relaid to a new Eastwick loop.

Another major track project this summer is going forward on three of SEPTA's other subway-surface routes. Route 11 is temporarily cut back to Island Avenue while track is rebuilt on Main Street and Woodland Avenue, while trackwork is also proceeding on Route 34-Baltimore Avenue and on Route 13 to Yeadon. Cars are being turned at 40th Street and at Mount Moriah loop respectively, with buses operating beyond... Work at Callowhill depot was completed in late June, allowing transfer of the Route 10 Kawasaki cars from Elmwood depot. Before that time, all Route 10 cars had operated out of Elmwood via the diversion track on 38th and 40th Streets.

Twelve Kawasakis were out of service in July for repairs caused by various collisions and traffic mishaps. Included was #9008 which was broadsided by a tractor-trailer at 36th & Market in June... Construction of the new 5th Street bridge over AMTRAK's mainline is now complete, including rails for the Route 50 trolleys which may never need them (see above). Work is also well advanced on the Wayne Avenue bridge over the Chestnut Hill West branch. Route 53 cars should be using the new bridge by this fall... SEPTA is posting brand new maps of its high-speed rail lines dated July 1983... The City is offering its soon-to-be-retired Broad Street subway cars for sale. As noted elsewhere in this issue, Seashore Trolley Museum will acquire an ex-Bridge Line car and is raising funds to move the car to Maine.

SEPTA has backed off on its well-publicized plan to restructure Bus Route A--the result of heavy political and neighborhood opposition. State Senator Joseph Rocks of Roxborough told the SEPTA board that it "would lose a very strong ally (in Harrisburg) if it continued this style of arrogance"... SEPTA hopes to take delivery next spring on the first of its order for 50 articulated buses... SEPTA is using two portable power stations to help keep its Red Arrow lines running, while it renews six obsolete substations over the next few years. At present the mobile units are in use at Pine Ridge and Drexel Hill Junction. Replacement substations will be built at 69th Street and Clifton, the existing stations at Pine Ridge, Aronimink, Villanova and Beechwood overhauled and a new facility added at Collingdale.

The SEPTA board last month approved a proposed \$397 million budget for Fiscal Year 1984 which began July 1. It calls for no fare increases--in fact, the cost of tokens has dropped from 71.4 cents each to 70 cents when purchased in lots of ten. In addition, substantial reductions in regional rail fares are also proposed for this fiscal year. However, a dark cloud in the form of a subsidy dispute with PennDOT still hangs over SEPTA. In July the SEPTA board authorized the diversion of \$15 million from restricted accounts to its

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## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 8)

operating fund and SEPTA Treasurer George Miller said, "We're not crying wolf...We're talking about the very survival of SEPTA." He predicted that SEPTA's unfunded deficit could reach \$28 million by June 1984 unless more money is received from the State. Legislation has been introduced in Harrisburg to double the State's capital spending and provide \$152.4 million for SEPTA improvements in the next year.

SEPTA is asking for about \$80 million in capital funding from the Federal government under Section 9 of the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982, to be financed from one cent of the five-cent increase in gasoline taxes. In the fiscal year just past, SEPTA applied for Section 9 funds for the purchase of 50 articulated buses, track improvements and subway-elevated structural rehabilitation.....SEPTA is also seeking Federal money to begin a management intern program designed to "orientate" and train minorities and females in SEPTA operations so that they will qualify for management positions.



AMTRAK is well along on its West Philadelphia rebuilding project, which will result in a six-track mainline between "Arsenal" and a new "54th Street" interlocking (see May Cinders). Ballast is being distributed, catenary poles relocated and a new retaining wall built near "Arsenal"....."Holly" interlocking near Claymont, DE was placed in service last spring. It is remotely controlled from "Bell" tower.....A power surge on June 12 damaged 18 Metroliners at Harrisburg, resulting in the use of AEM-7 locomotives and Heritage coaches on Trains 600-617 for about a week. On August 4 and 5, AEM-7 #908 hauled six Metroliners on those same trains after a heat-related failure.

On several weekends in July and August AMTRAK replaced the mainline bridge over Wayne Avenue in Wayne. Four new prestressed concrete slabs were installed while east and westbound traffic continued to operate on two of the four tracks.....New AMTRAK logos are starting to appear on overhead bridges in the Philadelphia area. ....That decrepit overpass at Paoli station is being replaced with a new bridge.....Service was disrupted on the Northeast Corridor July 6 when a dump truck going through an underpass at Stanton, DE, knocked the AMTRAK bridge out of alignment.

AMTRAK will spend \$25 million of Federal jobs funding this summer to install 50 miles of welded rail and 150,000 concrete ties along the Northeast Corridor. Other projects include \$4 million for fencing, \$5 million for bridge rebuilding and \$4.3 million for undercutting. Altogether, Amtrak will receive \$80 million from the jobs bill which was enacted last winter (Modern Railroads).....AMTRAK extended its popular "All Aboard America" excursion fares through this summer but the fare for travel wholly within the Eastern, Central or Western regions of the U.S. has been increased from \$125 to \$175. Travel is limited to 30 days and must be completed by September 30.....AMTRAK fare increases of slightly under three percent on the average took effect June 1, but did not affect the "All Aboard America" fares (Rail Travel News).

Congress has passed a compromise 1984 funding bill for the Department of Transportation which President Reagan has said he will sign. The \$10.9-billion bill includes \$716.4 million for AMTRAK, \$100 million for Northeast Corridor improvements and \$400 million for new rail transit systems in cities such as Los Angeles....AMTRAK has instituted a new policy of providing supervision on all long-distance trains. Initially a team of 18 management-level train managers and 147 chiefs of on-board service will be deployed throughout the system, in order that each train will have someone aboard with the authority to deal with any problems that may arise (RRE Journal).....AMTRAK reports that last year it received requests to haul private rail cars on 342 trips, a 41 percent increase over 1981.....AMTRAK has signed an agreement to share Trans World Airlines' automated reservation system, permitting airline offices and travel agents to make instantaneous train reservations for their customers.....SW1 #735 has been repainted in AMTRAK colors, the first switcher assigned to Philadelphia's Race Street terminal to shed its Penn Central black image.

The controversial proposal to begin high-speed AMTRAK service to Atlantic City by 1985 has run into hot water (see June Cinders). New Jersey DOT's plan, filed in June, would provide five express round-trips a day between Philadelphia and Atlantic City and one between New York and Atlantic City, with only one intermediate stop at Lindenwold. The State estimated the project's cost at \$40 million for track upgrading and \$12 million for a new terminal in Atlantic City. Heated opposition, however, has developed in many South Jersey communities along the former PRSL mainline, mainly over the issues of safety and the absence of local service. The charge that the trains would benefit only high-rolling gamblers headed for the shore resort's casinos has had a noticeable impact, as have the bus industry's lobbying efforts. Congress approved an appropriation of \$30 million for the project which requires the State to come up with \$21 million in matching funds, a feature which Governor Kean believes will sound its death knell. The governor has been under direct pressure from South Jersey politicians and voters, led by a group calling itself "RAGE" (Residents Against the Gamblers' Express), to either kill the project or modify it to provide service to their localities.

Meanwhile, the principal sponsor of the Atlantic City project, Congressman James Florio of Camden, is having a spat with fellow Congressman Lawrence Coughlin of suburban Philadelphia. Coughlin had earlier tried to increase New Jersey's share of the cost, and Florio retaliated by introducing a bill to eliminate certain Philadelphia-Harrisburg trains. The House Commerce Committee, however, has taken no action on Florio's measure (Rail Travel News).....In a related matter, Delaware Valley Rail Passenger reports that the Atlantic City Railway has gone out of business, closing its office in Hammonton, NJ and laying off its employees. ACRR has been trying for years to promote a plan to operate passenger service in South Jersey, including the through service from Philadelphia or New York.

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 9)



CONRAIL has reported net income of \$97.2 million on revenues of \$778.4 million for the second quarter of 1983, the highest quarterly net income since the railroad began operations in 1976. For the first six months of 1983, Conrail reported net income of \$109.9 million--also a record--on revenues of \$1.5 billion.....Santa Fe Industries, the parent company of Santa Fe Railway, announced last month that it will conduct an "in-depth" study of CONRAIL with a view towards possible purchase. Such a combination would create the nation's first transcontinental railroad. To date, the only group to make a firm offer for Conrail is the Railway Labor Executives' Association, acting on behalf of 40,000 unionized CR employees. In June the unions filed what they said is a \$2 billion plan to acquire the railroad, but many in the financial community and in Washington have expressed doubts about the viability of labor's proposal.

CONRAIL has renumbered those two E8 passenger locomotives which it acquired recently from AMTRAK. Now on hand in Altoona, Amtrak #498 and 499 have become CR #4020 and 4021. Conrail's other E8, #4022, is ex-Erie Lackawanna #833.....CONRAIL handled the Michigan Art Train from Detroit to Bethlehem and return in mid-June. ....CONRAIL has installed new blue and white signs outside its corporate headquarters, the Six Penn Center building in downtown Philadelphia.....CONRAIL will number its 60 new General Electric B36-7 locomotives in the 5000-5059 series, and its 40 new EMD SD50's in the 6700-6739 series. The high-horsepower units are scheduled for delivery late this year (Extra 2200 South).....June 25, 1983 marked the 50th anniversary of the startup of Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines (West Jersey Chapter Crew Caller).

Shortline Notes: The MARYLAND & PENNSYLVANIA has ceased operations between York and Red Lion, PA, the last active segment of its original line. The financially troubled Ma & Pa still runs the ex-Pennsy branch between York and Hanover.....The new PANTHER VALLEY RAILROAD has taken over the former Jersey Central Nesquehoning branch out of Jim Thorpe, PA, and will operate with ex-CONRAIL U30B #2882 painted in Nickel Plate-style black with yellow stripes.....OCTORARO RAILWAY has won contracts from PennDOT to operate three ex-Reading branches under the name of ANTHRACITE RAILWAY. Formerly operated by CONRAIL under State subsidy, the lines extend from Emmaus Junction to East Greenville, Pottstown to Boyertown and Topton to Kutztown. As operations began earlier this month, leased DELAWARE & HUDSON RS3 #4118 was in use on the Perkiomen line and ex-Octoraro 65-ton GE #9 was on hand at Boyertown.....Reports are heard that the D&H RS3 will be moved to Philadelphia when the PHILADELPHIA BELT LINE begins independent operations soon in the Richmond-Bridesburg area. CONRAIL, however, is still switching the track known as "Belt Line North".....SHORE FAST LINE was to begin operating to Winslow Junction, NJ in mid-August (see June Cinders).....SFL U30B #2880, still in full CONRAIL blue paint, has been operating this month on NEW HOPE & IVYLAND's weekend passenger excursions.....Ex-Pennsy 4-4-2 #7002 has begun mid-week runs on the STRASBURG.....Ex-Lukens Steel 45-ton GE locomotive #39 is stored on the OCTORARO RAILWAY at Avondale, PA.....Steam excursions were operated on the BRANDYWINE VALLEY RAILROAD in Coatesville June 16 using WILMINGTON & WESTERN's 0-6-OT #3, two ex-SEPTA MP54 MU cars and two W&W coaches.

George Hart has retired as director of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, and Acting Director William Withuhn has left for a position at the Smithsonian in Washington.....The acquisition of D&H by Guilford Transportation Industries has apparently been deferred until next month at the earliest. GTI, which already owned the MAINE CENTRAL, took over the BOSTON & MAINE on June 30 when a U. S. Appeals Court refused to intervene.

After months of negotiations and court battles, the Monroe County (PA) Railroad Authority signed a \$6.6-million agreement last month with CONRAIL to purchase 88 miles of the former Lackawanna mainline between Port Morris, NJ and Scranton, PA. The famed route has been little used in recent years and Conrail wanted to abandon it. Monroe County, however, believes that the line could create rail competition for Conrail in North Jersey and has asked for proposals from potential freight operators. The long-discussed possibility of running passenger trains from the New York area to Pocono Mountain resorts is also still alive, and Steamtown U.S.A. plans to run steam excursions on the north end of the line out of Scranton after it moves its operations from Vermont next year.

CSX CORP. has purchased 91 percent of the stock in Texas Gas Resources Corp., in a deal valued at more than \$1 billion. Texas Gas, in addition to its natural gas pipeline system, owns American Commercial Barge Lines, prompting court action by the Water Transport Association to halt the takeover. Earlier this month, however, two Supreme Court justices refused to block the purchase, making CSX the nation's largest intermodal operator with major holdings in railroads (CHESSIE and SEABOARD), a truck line and now pipeline and barge properties.....CSX last month announced plans to buy 51 new 3,500-hp SD50 "Super Series" diesel locomotives from General Motors, at a cost of \$47 million, in spite of the fact that more than 30 percent of its existing fleet is in storage. Seaboard will get 28 of the new computerized units and Chessie 23.

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#### OLD NUMBER ONE OPERATING AT B&O MUSEUM

Former Clinchfield 4-6-0 #1, built in 1882 by a predecessor of the Pennsylvania Railroad, will operate on short trips out of the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore, on the weekends of August 20-21 and September 17-18. The 101-year-old locomotive may be the oldest engine in active service in the U.S. It was donated to the museum by the Seaboard System Railroad which, like Chessie System, is a unit of CSX Corp.

The ancient steamer was recently restored to operating condition at Chessie's Riverside shops in Baltimore. It hauls a vintage open-window coach used on the famed Chessie Safety Express in 1980-81.

The fare for each excursion is \$2 per person. The locomotive will operate from 10:30 AM until 3:30 PM each day at the museum, which is located at 901 West Pratt Street near downtown Baltimore.

## Commuter Trains Roll After 108-Day Strike

SEPTA resumed commuter rail service in the Philadelphia area on Sunday, July 3, following settlement of the 108-day strike which began March 15. The end of the long dispute came on June 30 when the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, representing just 44 workers, finally signed a contract with SEPTA--the last of 13 unions to do so.

Most of the other 950 rail employees had remained off the job under a solidarity agreement among the unions, though as many as 200 of them returned to work in the final days before the June 30 agreement. All of the other unions had come to terms by June 2, leaving the signalmen alone on the picket lines as the seemingly interminable negotiations with SEPTA dragged on.

A Sunday and holiday schedule was operated with some difficulties on the first two days, but SEPTA offered free rides to everyone who ventured onto the trains. Tuesday, July 5 was the first full day of service, with all 554 trains scheduled to operate. Delays, however, were widespread throughout the week, caused mainly by signal failures on the ex-Reading lines, mechanical problems with several trains and power outages in the overhead wires. An engineer on a Trenton train July 5 suffered an apparent heart attack at Holmesburg but another engineer aboard the train brought it into Suburban Station with only a ten-minute delay. The major trouble spots were the Fox Chase line, which suffered repeated power failures, and the Swarthmore and Marcus Hook lines which were plagued by sagging catenary wires at Arsenal interlocking near 30th Street Station. The wires also fell twice between Jenkintown and Glenside, and train cancellations on several lines were caused by a shortage of operable cars.

The many years of deferred maintenance which afflict the commuter rail system were brought into focus by the long period of idleness. SEPTA estimates that nearly half a billion dollars must be spent on a badly-needed capital improvement program over the next few years just to keep the railroad running. But by mid-July SEPTA had managed to correct many of its short-term operating problems, and on-time performance had at least returned to pre-strike levels. That improvement seemed most apparent on the Penn Center side, while train operations remained erratic on several of the Reading Terminal lines.

Equally important to SEPTA is the public's response to the return of commuter rail service. During the first few days after the strike ended, ridership was predictably low--about 50 percent below the pre-strike level of 38,000 daily round-trip passengers. This was expected, of course, as many former patrons adopted a "wait-and-see" attitude as they continued to ride the subways, buses, trolleys and carpools which had carried them through the strike. With rail service gradually improving more and more of these commuters drifted back, but by early August the trains and parking lots were still noticeably uncrowded. On August 9 SEPTA reported that ridership had "stabilized" at about one-third below what it was last March.

SEPTA, however, has a strategy to lure back these lost riders and more, its objective being the 50,000 daily customers it says are needed to make the system viable. The plan includes additional trains--providing at least hourly service on each line--and a restructured flat-fare system highlighted by a uniform one-way ticket costing \$2 between any two stations on the Regional High Speed system (\$1.50 within the Terminal Zone). A monthly pass costing \$61 and a weekly pass for \$17--both including unlimited travel on SEPTA's transit lines--are also proposed, together with special family round-trip tickets, six-trip "promotional" tickets and off-peak weekly passes. A series of five public hearings has been scheduled to gauge the public's reaction to these fares, which will reduce the cost of train travel for most riders but create the risk of a deficit of up to \$11 million for fiscal year 1984 if patronage does not increase as much as SEPTA is forecasting. The hearings will take place in all five counties in the SEPTA region, with the Philadelphia session scheduled for 6 PM on Monday, August 29 at the Philadelphia Centre Hotel, 17th Street & JFK Blvd. Strong opposition from the City and some commuter groups has already been voiced.

In SEPTA's view, and that of many observers, the long strike may have been painful, but it produced labor agreements which will substantially cut the costs of operating commuter service in this area. In fiscal 1984, SEPTA is budgeting \$84 million to run the rail system under its new contracts--\$29 million less than what the same operation would have cost under the former Conrail contracts, SEPTA Treasurer George Miller told the press. In their newly-signed agreements, which run until June 30, 1986, the unions have accepted the elimination of more than 500 of the 1,500 jobs which existed prior to SEPTA's takeover on January 1 of this year, as well as major changes in work rules and reduced take-home pay for some workers. In addition, new employees will be paid the same as City Transit Division workers, rather than at the higher wage rates now received by most rail union members. The unions, however, did manage to negotiate a two percent annual wage increase over the next three years as well as improved fringe benefits, and retained most of their former seniority rules.

All things considered, SEPTA has achieved a solid base on which to plan for more and better commuter rail service. The major tasks now are to get on with the massive capital improvement program envisioned over the next several years and to recapture enough fare-paying passengers to support the rebuilt system.

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WATCH "REAL PEOPLE'S" AMTRAK TOUR ON NBC - CHANNEL 3

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 AND WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 AT 8 PM

## CHAPTER PROPOSAL AIRED AT RICHMOND MEETING

Philadelphia Chapter's proposal to have the national organization participate in the pricing of future NRHS conventions was discussed and acted upon at the directors' meeting in Richmond, VA on July 22.

Two resolutions offered by South Atlantic Regional Vice President Robert M. Bader were adopted by a majority vote of the directors present. The resolutions provided (1) that the regional vice president of the region in which the convention is to be held will be an ex-officio member of the sponsoring chapter's convention committee, and (2) that the manual of procedure governing convention arrangements will be revised and updated.



The aim of these resolutions--and of Philadelphia Chapter's earlier letter to National President V. Allan Vaughn--is to provide additional expertise and advice in the planning of convention events, in order to hold ticket prices and registration fees to their lowest possible level. National's involvement was sought as a result of the seemingly high scale of prices for the Richmond convention--high enough, it was felt, to discourage substantial numbers of members from attending. In addition, the long-standing arrangement by which the national shares in any profit--or loss--from each convention appears to give the Society as a whole a vested interest in its financial results. Bader's resolutions also provide that the regional vice president will make a preliminary report on convention planning at the fall directors' meeting prior to each convention.

The financial outcome of the Richmond convention will be disclosed at the directors' meeting scheduled for November 13, 1983 in Tampa, FL. There were about 625 persons registered for the convention.

In spite of unusually hot weather, all five convention trips operated as advertised, with ex-Norfolk & Western 4-8-4 #611 the star of the show on Thursday's trip to Balcony Falls, VA and Sunday's finale to Norfolk. Newly-rebuilt Pacific #750 and Southern's famed FP7 diesels were also prominently featured. An added attraction on July 19 was a staged night photo session at the unique three-level crossing in downtown Richmond. Railfan & Railroad Editor Jim Boyd, with the cooperation of the CSX and Norfolk Southern systems, arranged for Chessie freight units to be spotted on the top level, a newly-painted Seaboard System GP40 on the middle level, and the two Southern FP7 passenger units on the street level. A beautiful color photo enlargement was presented by Boyd to CSX Chairman Hays T. Watkins, following his speech at the annual banquet July 23 in the Hotel John Marshall, convention headquarters.

In other action at the directors' meeting, Pottstown Chapter was permitted to change its name to the Pottstown-Reading Chapter, and Greenville (SC) was admitted as the 134th chapter in the Society. National President Vaughn also announced that he would step down at the end of his present term, but would be a candidate for the now-vacant post of chairman of the board. He nominated Senior Vice President Nelson W. Bowers of Thorndale, PA to succeed him as president. It is understood that Eastern Region VP George Springer of West Jersey Chapter will run for the position of senior vice president. All of these changes will be voted on at the November directors' meeting in Tampa.

Philadelphia Chapter members noted in attendance at the five-day convention were: President Larry Eastwood, Secretary Marie Eastwood, Vice President Frank Tatnall, Director Jim Myers, Dick Avy, Dick Barben, Howard Bender, John Burke, Charlie Bustard, Ray Muller and Fred Weisenbach.

## STEAM TRIPS MARK READING COMPANY'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY



A series of steam-powered rambles will help celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Philadelphia & Reading Railway, predecessor of the Reading Company, in late September and early October. The special trains will consist of ex-Canadian Pacific Ten-Wheeler #972, owned by well-known Railfan George Hart, and several ex-Reading coaches.



All trips will be sponsored by the Historical Society of Berks County in cooperation with the Pottstown-Reading Chapter of NRHS, the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society and the Reading Society of Model Engineers.

Excursions will operate from Reading to Pottsville and return on September 30 and October 1, from Reading to Philadelphia (West Falls) and return on October 2 and 9, and from Reading to Bethlehem and return on October 7 and 8, all via former Reading lines now owned by Conrail. In addition, ferry trips have been scheduled from Jim Thorpe, PA, where the equipment is based, to Reading on September 29, and returning to Jim Thorpe on October 10. Fares are \$35 per person for each trip, except that the ferry runs will cost \$25 for a one-way ticket (see "Extra List" elsewhere in this issue for schedules).

Tickets may be ordered by mail from The Historical Society of Berks County, 940 Centre Avenue, Reading, PA 19601, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Make checks payable to "Historical Society of Berks County." It is a good idea to list several alternate dates on each ticket order.

### MUSEUM SEEKING FUNDS TO PRESERVE "BRIDGE LINE" SUBWAY CAR

Seashore Trolley Museum, Kennebunkport, ME, has launched a fund-raising drive to add one of Philadelphia's famed "Bridge Line" subway cars to its huge collection of electric rail equipment. Chapter Member R. T. Lane, Jr. is general manager of the museum.

Most of these 26 cars, built by J. G. Brill of Philadelphia, will be retired when the City's current order for 125 new Kawasaki cars is completed. The Brill cars, known to some as "Flash Gordons" because of their semi-streamlined Art Deco appearance, were built for the newly-opened "speed line" to Camden which ran on the Benjamin Franklin bridge, now part of PATCO's Lindenwold line. When PATCO began operation in 1969, all but four of the cars were assigned to the City's Broad Street subway, where they remain today as new equipment arrives.

The cost of moving the preserved car to Maine is expected to be high. Chapter members may therefore wish to make tax-deductible contributions to Seashore's "Bridge Car Fund." Address Seashore Trolley Museum, P. O. Box 220, Kennebunkport, ME 04046-0220.

### PENN'S LANDING TROLLEYS ARE NEW TOURIST ATTRACTION

Philadelphia has an unusual new attraction to offer tourists visiting its historical landmarks this summer: the Penn's Landing trolley line. Operated by members of the Buckingham Valley Trolley Association, the trolleys are running on Delaware Avenue Thursday through Sunday (and Labor Day) from 11 AM until dusk.

Former Red Arrow car #26 and Wilmington single-trucker #120 are currently providing all service, though BVRTA is working to restore two other double-end cars at its Pier 5 shop. Operations extend along the Delaware River waterfront between the Benjamin Franklin bridge and Catherine Street, but passengers must board the cars midway at Dock Street near the Port of History Museum. The fare is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children. For information, telephone 215-332-5396.

NRHS members are urged to take a ride on Philadelphia's newest streetcar line during the warm summer weather--the traditional season for trolley excursions. The cars, however, will continue to run on weekends through November.

### CHESSIE FREIGHT SCHEDULES REVISED; "ORANGE BLOSSOM" HALTED

With the temporary discontinuance of CSX's Florida-Wilmington (DE) piggyback train known as the Orange Blossom Special, the following changes should be made in Chessie System freight schedules as shown in February and May Cinders:

Change symbol of OBSN to CSTT (no change in schedule)

Change FLTT to operate Wilmington to Potomac Yard only, on same schedule as OBSS

It is expected that the Orange Blossom Special, which is designed primarily to haul trailers of Florida produce, will be reinstated during the fall growing season. The train is symbolized OBSN on Chessie.

### ADDENDUM TO SHORTLINE ROSTER

The following locomotives should be added to the roster of area shortline railroads which appeared in the June, 1983 issue of Cinders:

NUMBER	TYPE	MODEL/CLASS	POWER	BUILDER	YEAR	FORMER OWNER/NUMBER
<u>MORRISTOWN &amp; ERIE RAILWAY, MORRISTOWN, NJ</u>						
17	B-B	C430	D-Elec	Alco	1967	Conrail 2053
<u>UPPER MERION &amp; PLYMOUTH RAILROAD, WEST CONSHOHOCKEN, PA.</u>						
19	B-B	SW1	D-Elec	EMD	1942	Philadelphia, Bethlehem & New England 19

### ADVANCE NOTICE - SEPTEMBER MEETING

Friday, September 16 is the date of Philadelphia Chapter's first meeting of the 1983-84 season. As usual, we will meet for dinner at the Engineers' Club at 6 PM and the business meeting starts at 7:30.

The entertainment program will be a review in color slides of the 1983 NRHS National Convention in Richmond, VA, starring N&W J-Class #611.

Mark your calendars now for this meeting date and let a friend know, too. The regular meeting notice will appear in the September issue of Cinders.

CHAPTER'S OCTOBER 2 SPECIAL TO FOLLOW UNIQUE ROUTE *(Continued from Page 1)*

It is expected that the Susquehanna & Reading Special will draw rail enthusiasts and "mileage collectors" from many states, as well as appealing to the general public in the Philadelphia area. It is important that the excursion receive wide publicity throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania and South Jersey, and all Chapter members are urged to assist in this campaign. Those wishing a supply of flyers for distribution to offices, clubs, hobby shops, etc. should contact President Eastwood immediately.

Members are also reminded to order their own tickets as soon as possible. Unless otherwise specified, they will be seated in a section of the train reserved for Philadelphia Chapter and its guests.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope should accompany each ticket order. Further information may be obtained by calling President Eastwood at (215)947-5769 between 7 and 9 PM. Trip flyers have been mailed to all Chapter members and notices sent to many rail-oriented groups and publications, including neighboring NRHS chapters. Flyers are also available in a number of area Amtrak stations and the center city ticket office, 1708 JFK Boulevard.

## ANNUAL DINNER TRIP SET FOR FRIDAY, AUGUST 19

Philadelphia Chapter's annual summer dinner will take place Friday, August 19 at the Conestoga Mill Restaurant, County Line and Conestoga Road, Bryn Mawr, beginning at 6:30 PM. Cost of the dinner is \$11.50 per person and order forms have been mailed to all members.

The Conestoga Mill is located within three blocks of the Rosemont station on SEPTA's Norristown high-speed line, and about five blocks from Rosemont station on the Paoli commuter line.

Members and their families are urged to come out, enjoy a fine dinner and relax with fellow railfans on a quiet summer evening. Chapter officers promise that there will be no business meeting and minimal speeches to interfere with the good spirits of the gathering! Once again, Bill Wagner deserves a vote of thanks for his efforts in arranging the dinner.

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