



CINDERS



April 1990

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Volume 51 Newsletter of the Number 4

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

National Railway Historical Society Inc.

Post Office Box 7302

Philadelphia, Pa. 19101

SEPTA'S WORST ACCIDENT CLAIMS FOUR LIVES IN SUBWAY

by Frank Tatnall

The most calamitous accident in SEPTA's 22-year history last month claimed four lives and sent 170 other passengers to nearby hospitals. At 8:21 AM on Wednesday, March 7, a six-car Market-Frankford train bound for 69th Street Terminal had just pulled out of 30th Street station when it derailed at a crossover switch in the dimly-lit subway tunnel. The fourth car was split open as it slammed into five steel support columns, and the two cars behind it careened off the track. The train was made up of stainless steel cars 769-770-817-818-726-725.

All four of those who died were riding in the doomed fourth car, as were many of the injured. A massive rescue effort was quickly mobilized, with police and firefighters, medical and emergency personnel racing to the scene just west of Amtrak's 30th Street Station. But it took more than four hours to extricate the last of the trapped passengers from the mangled wreckage. The subway-elevated line was shut down between the 15th and 52nd Street stations as SEPTA mobilized a fleet of more than 100 buses to shuttle el riders around the gap, first via Chestnut Street and then along Market Street.

National Transportation Safety Board specialists were flown in to take charge of the investigation. When they released the train on Thursday afternoon the first three cars, which did not derail, were run to 69th Street shop while the heavily-damaged fourth car, #818, was hauled out to the 44th Street portal where it was hoisted by crane onto a flatbed truck. The last two cars were towed to 69th Street. Mayor Goode visited the scene shortly after the accident and Governor Casey appeared the next day.

Rebuilding of the track and signal equipment continued through the weekend and regular service over the entire line resumed at 5 AM on Monday, March 12, nearly five days after the derailment. The damaged crossover at the point of derailment was restored a week later. (Subway-surface trolleys, operating on adjacent tracks, were back in service on Friday the 9th.)

SEPTA workers and NTSB officials soon identified the probable cause of the accident. A traction motor on the leading truck of the third car appeared to have broken loose from its mounting, dragged along the ties for more than 1,000 feet and then struck a mechanism which instantly opened the crossover switch beneath the train, hurling the following car sideways into the steel columns. Each car is equipped with four 100-hp motors, two of them suspended lengthwise from each truck. Much attention was focused on the vertical support bolt which secures one end of the motor to the truck frame, and which is held in place by a locking nut and cotter pin. It was speculated that in the case of the bolt on car #817, the cotter pin had been displaced, the nut had worked loose and the motor had dropped onto a safety bar which in turn was broken by the 400-pound motor.

The tragedy brought the glare of publicity to SEPTA's maintenance practices and to the aging fleet of 248 Market-Frankford cars, all of them delivered by Budd to the Philadelphia Transportation Company in 1960-61. But SEPTA General Manager Louis J. Gambaccini refused to blame the crash on the age of the equipment, or on SEPTA's poor financial condition which has prevented it from ordering new cars. He said that the cars should be replaced but if they are properly maintained there is "no safety requirement or urgency" to do so. He added that the cars are routinely inspected for defects and that many have been overhauled within the last five years. "It's an extraordinary thing, clearly the worst (accident) in the history of SEPTA. We hope and believe that it's a unique thing." Referring to the Market-Frankford Line, Gambaccini concluded that "we believe it's safe." The line carries about 180,000 riders on a normal weekday.

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MEETINGS: 7:30 PM, third Friday of each month (except second Friday in December) at Down Town Club, 11th Floor, Public Ledger Building, 6th Street below Chestnut, Philadelphia, PA. Dinner at Club 6 PM (\$18 per person).

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$22.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$11.00 per person per year. Membership applications should be forwarded to: Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Membership in the parent Society is a requirement to hold Chapter membership.

ADDRESS CHANGES should be sent to the Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. Please include new phone number.

CINDERS is published 11 times a year by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc. Correspondence regarding Cinders should be directed to the President at P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302.

EXCHANGE COPIES SHOULD BE SENT TO: R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353.

OUR MEETING:

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 20, 1990

The Down Town Club, 11th Floor, Public Ledger Building
6th Street below Chestnut, Philadelphia, PA
Dinner at 6:00 PM (\$18 per person); Meeting at 7:30 PM
Parking in Philadelphia Life Garage, 7th & Ranstead Streets,
\$3 per vehicle; garage closes at 10 PM.

Our April, 1990 meeting will feature three professional rail films sure to please our members. We will view ALL ABOARD AMERICA, a contemporary Amtrak travel film, with Auto Train service among the highlights. THE MAGIC OF MODEL RAILROADING is a delightfully zany trip into the realm of model railroading, furnished by Kalmbach Publishing Co. Through special arrangement with CSX Transportation, we will view PIGGYBACK, a 1984 production covering inspection of trailers for loading onto flatcars as well as three different methods of loading piggyback trains.

Our usual sit-down dinner will be served at the Down Town Club, 11th Floor, Public Ledger Building, at \$18 per person, at 6 PM. DINNER RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 17, 1990 to President Tatnall at 215-828-0706. Please note this strict reservation deadline. Please specify if fish dinner desired. Nearly 35 members enjoyed dinner last month, including a number of husbands and wives-- why not join them?

Future meeting programs are as follows:

- MAY 18, 1990 - Chapter Member Russ Jackson's films from the 1988 Electric Railroaders' Association European tour.
- JUNE 8, 1990 - CSX training films on locomotive engineers, etc. (NOTE EARLY MEETING DATE DUE TO NRHS CONVENTION)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

You are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting and Election of Officers for Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc., will take place at our regular monthly meeting, Friday, April 20, 1990, beginning at 7:30 PM. Nominations for the positions of president, senior vice president, vice president and treasurer, secretary and national director will be taken from the floor.

SHEILA A. DORR
Secretary

SEPTA'S WORST ACCIDENT CLAIMS FOUR LIVES IN SUBWAY (Continued from Page 1)

Preliminary inspection revealed that 27 out of 76 motors examined were improperly secured, leading NTSB officials to recommend that SEPTA withdraw all cars from service until the necessary inspections and repairs could be completed. SEPTA did not go to this extreme but did launch a round-the-clock drive to inspect all motors in the fleet, discovering in the process that 438 of 788 motor mounts required adjustment. Records also indicated several past incidents in which the supports had failed, though safety brackets had usually prevented the motors from falling to the tracks.

Something else SEPTA did not need was a report that the 40-year-old motorman of the ill-fated train had tested positive for cocaine during the mandatory post-accident drug test administered to the crew. There was no evidence, SEPTA said, that the operator was actually impaired, or that his condition contributed to the accident.

When full service resumed on March 12, only 132 cars had been inspected and were available for service in 22 six-car trains. This forced SEPTA to run all rush-hour trains as locals, eliminating the normal skip-stop operation. By the next morning, sufficient cars were available to restore the regular "A" and "B" rush-hour service. While some riders expressed reservations concerning their safety, most were happy to be back on board. "It was one accident," a commuter told the *Inquirer*, "and it doesn't bother me a bit to be riding the el. I think, overall, SEPTA has a good track record." An added complication on Monday was the midday suicide of a 37-year-old man who jumped in front of a westbound train at 60th Street station in West Philadelphia. Service between 52nd and 69th Streets was disrupted for an hour.

The number of deaths and injuries in the subway derailment also centered attention on SEPTA's costly problem with claims. Last year SEPTA paid out \$46.2 million in claims--17 percent of its farebox revenues--even though State law limits its liability to \$250,000 for any individual claim and \$1 million for one accident. In view of the severity of this occurrence, that limitation may again be challenged in the courts.

PIONEER III FAREWELL SET FOR JUNE 3

In addition to the Blueliners, another notable class of MU cars will vanish from SEPTA rails this year. The Pioneer III cars, the first postwar stainless steel electric commuter cars, were delivered by the Budd Company to the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1958, entering revenue service on July 7 of that year.



Only six of these unique cars were built, and five remain today on the Railroad Division roster as #244-248. SEPTA classes them as "Silverliner I" but they are quite different from the later series of Silverliners in that the Pioneers have diamond pantographs, standard couplers, an unusual interior and virtually no common parts with the other classes. And, unlike the newer cars, the Pioneers will not be equipped with automatic train control equipment and therefore must be retired when ATC becomes mandatory on July 1.

To recognize the passing of the Pioneers, Philadelphia Chapter has scheduled a farewell excursion on Sunday, June 3. While the itinerary has not been finalized as of this writing, it is expected that the special four-car train will depart from the Lower Level of 30th Street Station at 10:30 AM, returning about 5 PM. Tickets are priced at \$30 per person and may be ordered by mail from: Philadelphia Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

APRIL 29 EXCURSIONS TO COMMEMORATE BRILLS ON P&W

It is a season of "farewells" for SEPTA's historic railcars. Not to be overlooked is the landmark Brill-built equipment on SEPTA's Norristown High Speed Line, the former Philadelphia & Western, which many traction enthusiasts refer to as a true "operating museum."



To mark the imminent loss of the few remaining Brills on SEPTA--and the last in service on any American transit system--Philadelphia Chapter and Buckingham Valley Trolley Association are joining forces on Sunday, April 29, to operate what could be the last public excursions with these cars. The morning trip will utilize car #162 dating from 1927, the last active survivor of 11 "Strafford" 60-series cars delivered to P&W between 1924 and 1929 and rebuilt from center to end-door cars in 1931-1935. The 162 will depart from 69th Street Terminal at 10 AM enroute to Norristown and return. Numerous photo stops and meets have been scheduled.

In the afternoon, a two-car train of legendary Bullets is to leave 69th Street at 1:30 PM, again with many photo stops on the itinerary. Delivered from Brill's Philadelphia plant in 1931, the ten Bullets with their aerodynamic aluminum bodies and lightweight design represented a revolutionary advance for the ailing transit industry. The cars began regular service on November 15, 1931, coinciding with the opening of a new P&W terminal in Norristown. In 1933 car 203 was destroyed by fire and was replaced with a new steel-bodied 203. By April 1990 five Bullets had been retired and two others set aside, leaving only #205, 206 and 209 still in operation.

With seven ex-Chicago carsets now in service and 26 new Asea-designed, AC-motored cars on order, SEPTA is pushing hard to retire the last of the old Brills at the earliest date possible. Numerous plans have been considered for short-term replacements, even to the point of proposing the conversion of Market-Frankford wide-gauge cars for use on the standard-gauge Norristown Line.

At presstime, the morning portion of the excursion, using "Strafford" car #162, was sold out, and a limited number of seats remained on the afternoon trip with the two Bullet cars. Members are urged to act quickly in ordering tickets for the afternoon trip, at \$18 per person. Orders should be addressed to the event chairman, George Metz, 130 Springton Lake Road, Media, PA 19063, making checks payable to "Philadelphia Chapter NRHS" and enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

D&H KEEPS RUNNING BUT ROAD'S FUTURE STILL CLOUDY

In our last episode (March Cinders) Trustee Francis P. Dicello of the bankrupt Delaware & Hudson Railway had announced that he would resume independent operation of the road for 30 days, effective February 28. Dicello said that he would continue to seek a buyer for the 1,700-mile railroad, in spite of the collapse of an earlier offer from Canadian Pacific. If these efforts failed, he said that liquidation of the property would be the next step.

The revived operation was financed with half a million dollars in aid from the States of New York and Pennsylvania, Canadian National, CP Rail, Norfolk Southern and shippers General Electric and International Paper. Locomotives were leased from CSX, NS and previous operator New York, Susquehanna & Western, and D&H's own operable power was pressed into service. Among the trains rolling again were north-south merchandisers RPPY and PYRP, which pass through Philadelphia via Conrail trackage rights. Initially these trains were often very short because not all traffic returned following the D&H's suspension of through service in February. One RPPY was observed entering Philadelphia March 13 with three CSX GP40's and 12 cars!

On March 12 CP Rail resubmitted its offer to purchase the D&H for \$35 million, but again the offer was contingent on receiving trackage rights over Conrail between Harrisburg, PA and Hagerstown, MD in order to connect with Norfolk Southern. Conrail continued to assert that it would withhold these rights--notwithstanding intense pressure from politicians in New York and Pennsylvania--without a substantial "quid pro quo" from CP.

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PHILADELPHIA



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

March was nearly over before the Federal Railroad Administration granted the request of SEPTA and other northeastern commuter authorities to defer the April 1 deadline for installing automatic train control. The three-month postponement to July 1 will allow time to complete the installation of ATC on the entire Silverliner II, III and IV fleet. By late March, 40 percent of the cars had received ATC (41 married pairs and 55 singles), while the push-pulls were already equipped. If the postponement had not been granted, SEPTA would have been forced to confine non-equipped cars to its own lines such as R3 Media-Elwyn, and place ATC cars on the control ends of all trains using AMTRAK rails.

The R5 service extension to Parkesburg is set to begin April 2, with new timetables showing five weekday trips to the Chester County community 44.2 miles from Suburban Station. SEPTA crews have qualified as far west as Lancaster, though it is planned to turn back the deadheading trains at the hand-operated "Leaman" crossover near Paradise, 13 miles beyond Parkesburg. For the time being AMTRAK's "Park" tower will remain closed, preventing the use of that interlocking to reverse the SEPTA trains at Parkesburg. While Downingtown, the previous end of service, is located in fare zone 5, Parkesburg riders will pay higher zone 6 fares reflecting the additional 11.8-mile run. These fares are still lower than existing Amtrak fares and TrailPasses will be available. The extended trains will also stop at Coatesville, where a new station and parking lot are planned east of the present Amtrak station.



SEPTA is preparing a proposal to lease or otherwise acquire an additional 35 push-pull cars and seven electric locomotives, doubling its fleet of non-MU equipment. The board will consider placing this in the 1991 capital budget.....At the end of March Morrison-Knudsen had delivered to SEPTA all but seven of the 58 Silverliner II and III cars overhauled at the Hornell (NY) shop.....The Federal government will supply a total of \$17 million for construction of a new Temple University station on SEPTA's Mainline in North Philadelphia, according to an announcement from Congressman William H. Gray of Philadelphia.....The April 1 Route R3 timetable will actually be two timetables, one for the West Trenton side and one for the Media-Elwyn side. Like R5, the length of Route R3 created a timetable with hard-to-read small print, making the split a logical one.

SEPTA on March 13 sent six Blue liners to dead storage at Frazer yard, the first step in the phaseout of the remaining Blues. Cars 9104, 9110, 9114, 9120, 9123 and 9128 were moved to Frazer behind an AEM-7, and car 9125 is being converted to a rider car for wire train use, leaving only 14 active Blues in the fleet. At presstime, SEPTA projected Friday, March 30, as the last day of revenue service for the Blues. One set may be held for emergencies.....A 33-year-old Montgomery County man hung himself at Oreland station February 28 in full view of two women waiting for a SEPTA train. Shouting to the women "call an ambulance!", the man tied a noose around his neck, fastened the other end of the rope to a newly-constructed pedestrian bridge and leaped into space. Firefighters removed his body, which was suspended about 20 feet in the air between the catenary wires of the double-track SEPTA Mainline.....GP9 #91 (ex-Conrail 7028) has been freshly painted in a dark blue scheme at Frazer shop, where it serves as switcher.

SEPTA last month proposed a 50-mile-long commuter rail line utilizing CONRAIL's Trenton Cut-Off freight route between Morrisville, Buck County, and Downingtown, Chester County. Eugene Skoropowski, assistant general manager for planning, said that the line would serve many employment centers across the Philadelphia suburban area, including Oxford Valley, Fort Washington, Plymouth Meeting, King of Prussia and Exton. It would also connect with six of SEPTA's existing commuter rail lines which fan out into the northern and western suburbs, and assist in the effort to reduce the growing automobile congestion in these areas. Sixty percent of all Delaware Valley commuters travel between suburbs, not from or to Philadelphia, Skoropowski said. But General Manager Louis Gambaccini warned that SEPTA has no money to fund new programs such as this, and is struggling just to maintain its existing network. The Trenton Cut-Off, formally the Morrisville Line, is a busy double-track freight route between Norristown and Morrisville, but is used only by local freights between Norristown and Thorndale, near Downingtown. Conrail has not publicly commented on the SEPTA proposal.

The Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority last month unveiled a scale model of the proposed \$500-million convention center to be built in center city Philadelphia. Included in the plan is the historic Reading Terminal trainshed, which is to become a 55,000-square-foot grand hall and entrance to the center. Meanwhile, City and State officials said that they were postponing the \$32.2-million purchase of the trainshed from the Reading Company (see March Cinders) because tests showed that all toxic PCB chemicals had not yet been removed from the old track area.....The Inquirer in its March 8 "Neighbors" section published an article on the restoration of several rail stations in Bucks and Montgomery Counties under SEPTA's Lease & Maintain program. Specifically shown were the 1873-vintage North Wales station, now housing a deli-style restaurant called Gourmet Junction; Gwynedd Valley, where the developer of Culinary Crossing restored the building; and Jenkintown station where the Stazi Milano Italian restaurant has become a local attraction.

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 4)

With SEPTA in financial turmoil and pressing for a new fare increase, Governor Casey announced on March 24 that he would seek an additional \$56-million appropriation for SEPTA in Fiscal Year 1991 beginning this July 1. Added to the \$168 million already budgeted by the State, this would bring SEPTA's total appropriation to \$224 million, \$31 million higher than in the current fiscal year. However, the Legislature must approve the Governor's proposal, which is by no means certain. In any case, it will not replace the fare increase which is targeted for April 29 (see March Cinders). The added money would be used for vehicle overhauls (\$35 million), Frankford elevated reconstruction (\$13 million) and track and structures repair (\$8 million). The funds for vehicle overhaul, in particular, may have been spurred by the tragic March 7 derailment in the Market Street subway, the cause of which is believed to be a loose traction motor on one of the 30-year-old cars. General Manager Gambaccini said the \$56 million grant would "stabilize" SEPTA operations for a year and eliminate any need for service cuts.



The Governor's action came after he had refused to support efforts by Philadelphia legislators to authorize an 0.5 or one percent regional sales tax, the proceeds of which would be dedicated to funding SEPTA. "I'm not going to sign any tax legislation this year at all," Casey said, leaving unsaid the fact that this is an election year in Pennsylvania. As others have done, the Governor also pointed the finger at the Federal government, which in its FY 1991 budget has proposed the elimination of operating subsidies for SEPTA and other transit authorities in spite of the fact that \$6.9 billion is held in the transit trust fund. That fund has accumulated from the one cent of Federal gasoline tax earmarked for mass transit assistance.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Samuel K. Skinner last month revealed the Administration's long-awaited national transportation policy. The 129-page document identifies many problems in America's transportation infrastructure, but emphasizes that the Federal government cannot solve them. Instead, the report states, a large share of the burden for improving the nation's highway, air and mass transit systems should be assumed by state and local governments, but says little about how to finance these improvements. User fees and private investment are indicated as two possible sources of funding, particularly in the case of airports and highways. Brian Clymer, a Delaware Countian and former vice chairman of the SEPTA board who now serves as Federal Urban Mass Transportation administrator, spoke in Philadelphia March 9 on the newly-issued policy. Clymer maintained that Uncle Sam "is not backing away from its responsibilities in transportation," then proceeded to enumerate the goals of the policy such as fostering a sound financial base for vital transport functions, reducing regulation, insuring public safety and protecting the environment. He did say that monies held in Federal trust funds for highways, aviation and mass transit should be spent, and the highway and urban mass transit programs must be reauthorized when they expire in the near future. A total of \$23.7 billion is now held in all three trust funds, the result of efforts to keep the Federal deficit in check, and according to State Transportation Secretary Howard Yerusolim \$1.2 billion of that amount should be allocated to Pennsylvania. The State's share of transit funds comes to at least \$303 million, Yerusolim said.

Congressman William H. Gray last month introduced Federal legislation which would force Pennsylvania to establish a dedicated source of funding for SEPTA and other transit systems. Co-sponsored by two other Philadelphia Congressmen and Representative Curt Weldon of Delaware County, the bill proposes the withholding of 25 percent of the State's Federal highway appropriations if this is not done by 1991. Gray pointed out that Pennsylvania is the only state with major mass transit systems that does not provide a steady source of funding for those systems. PennDOT Secretary Yerusolim immediately expressed his opposition to the Gray bill, declaring that it is the Federal government which is shirking its transit responsibilities. He pointed out that the State has increased its aid to SEPTA by 32 percent over the past four years while Washington now proposes cutting its assistance in FY 1991 to only \$8 million.

Ten days before the March 7 subway accident (see Page 1), SEPTA suffered another subterranean tragedy. On February 26 a signal maintainer was killed near the Wyoming station of the Broad Street subway as he worked alone checking a malfunctioning signal. The employee was struck by a northbound train whose operator had not been warned of maintenance work in the area.....On the morning of February 23 the Broad Street Line suffered a major signal failure between Erie and Snyder Avenues. For about an hour 60 shuttle buses were pressed into service while crews worked to repair a transformer which had caught fire the night before. Train service resumed about 7 AM but an hour later the signals went out again, and it was back to the shuttle buses. Repairs to the transformer were finally completed at 9:15 AM and trains started running again.....SEPTA is ready to break ground on the \$4.5-million renovation of the Susquehanna-Dauphin station on the Broad Street Line.

SEPTA's staff is working on a proposal by the Transit First Committee to divert the Route 23 trolleys off Germantown Avenue between Wayne Junction and 13th Street. New track would be constructed on Windrim Avenue between Germantown and Wayne Avenues, then the former Route 53 tracks would be reopened on Clarissa Street, 18th Street and Pulaski Avenue to Erie. Cars would operate via existing Route 56 Erie Avenue trackage to Old York Road (southbound) and northbound via 13th Street onto Erie. All Route 23 and 56 cars connecting with the Broad Street subway at Erie Avenue would then be operated in an east-west direction instead of Route 23 running on diagonal Germantown Avenue track at that point. The Transit First Committee is an independent group which seeks ways to improve the movement of transit vehicles in multi-use street environments.

J. Clayton Undercofler III of Chester County was unanimously re-elected in February to a third term as chairman of the SEPTA board. Judith E. Harris of Philadelphia was unanimously re-elected vice chairman, in a show of unity which has prevailed on the board since Lewis F. Gould, Jr. resigned as chairman more than two years ago.....Gould's old nemesis, former General Manager William G. Stead, said last month that he will step down as general manager of SAN FRANCISCO MUNICIPAL RAILWAY to return to his family's farm near Chambers-

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 5)

burg, PA. Stead was the focus of controversy when he served as SEPTA's GM for five weeks in late 1987, engaging in a public power struggle with Gould before resigning to return to his former post as head of Muni..... Chapter Member Ron DeGraw, until recently chief officer of SEPTA's Suburban Division, has been promoted to deputy assistant general manager for planning, development & real estate at center city headquarters..... SEPTA now has a total of 13 assistant general managers, one each in charge of the four operating divisions (see March Cinders) and the others in staff positions. The Operations Support Division is still without an AGM.

SEPTA's new fare increase proposal was the subject of public hearings in the four suburban counties on March 29-30 and in Philadelphia April 2. The board is to vote on the package at a special meeting April 18, although Bucks County Board Member Andrew Warren said last month that he would vote against it unless the State and Federal governments increased their financial support for SEPTA. Public opposition to the increase also promises to be stronger than in the case of the last fare boost, which became effective in stages between April 1989 and January 1990.....Delaware Valley Rail Passenger reports that the average rail commuter will pay 11.3 percent more under the current proposal while average transit fares will increase only five percent..... A regional economic study to demonstrate the importance of mass transit in this area was suggested last year by SEPTA and widely supported by elected officials. But the Federal government in the form of UMTA has now refused to pay the \$200,000 cost of the study due to "severe financial constraints."

SEPTA's Woodland shop in Southwest Philadelphia had an eclectic assortment of vehicles resting on its outside storage tracks last month. Visible from 49th Street were Kawasaki-built light rail cars, PCC's (including two equipped as work cars), Bullet car bodies off their trucks and Market-Frankford subway cars. Woodland is the heavy-repair center for SEPTA's transit equipment.....One pair of ex-Chicago cars is still operating on the Norristown High Speed Line in its 1976 Chicago paint scheme. There's no word on when cars 484-485 will be repainted into SEPTA red, white and blue.....SEPTA's public information phone number is now 215-580-7800.....SEPTA is offering a \$1,000 college scholarship to the sons and daughters of SEPTA employees, to be followed by a paid internship working for SEPTA.....A parachute carrying a shoebox-size weather device fell from the sky on March 19, draping itself over Route 34 trolley wires at 55th Street & Baltimore Avenue in West Philadelphia. Some local residents feared it was a bomb and called police.



AMTRAK's new Form 3 Northeast Corridor timetable, effective from April 1 to October 27, includes not only the mainline train schedules but also those of the Harrisburg and Atlantic City services. The separate folders for those lines have been eliminated. As mentioned in Cinders last month, Amtrak has reinstated direct Harrisburg-New York service with trains 640-641, renamed from Valley Forge to Keystone State Express, operating through the New York-Pittsburgh subway at

"Zoo" interlocking. New train 600 replaces #640 for passengers going into 30th Street Station, and train #621 has been added from 30th Street to Harrisburg. The 8:45 PM daily departure of #621 fills the need for mid-evening service to the State capital, the old schedule providing no weekday departure after the Valley Forge at 6:45 PM. Atlantic City service has also seen some rearrangement to increase convenience and ridership, chief among the changes being the extension of trains #663-664 to serve Richmond, VA instead of originating/terminating in Washington.

American European Express announced last month that it would introduce its luxury overnight service May 1 between New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. Operating on the rear of AMTRAK's Broadway Limited, trains #40-41, AEE will run westbound Thursdays and Sundays and eastbound Tuesdays and Fridays. Philadelphia-Chicago fares start at \$443 per person, including sleeping compartment and "five-star" meal service. AEE began a daily Washington-Chicago service last November, using trains 29-30 Capitol Limited.....AMTRAK Express, Amtrak's package freight business, brought in \$40 million in revenue last year, and expects to triple that volume in the next three years (Traffic World).....AMTRAK has joined the Prodigy personal computer network, providing a wide variety of rail passenger information to nearly 200,000 subscribers.....AMTRAK and GTE Railfone have arranged for American Express business travelers to make a free five-minute telephone call on board a Metroliner, by using promotional coupons (AMTRAK Newsbreak).

AMTRAK will take steps to further restrict smoking in its trains and stations, but has resisted a total ban on smoking as now required on domestic airline flights. All no-reservation trains of three or fewer cars will be designated as no-smoking, as will coach sections of Superliner cars and all areas except lounges and private rooms on longer reservations-required trains. Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey, who sponsored the recently-enacted Federal law which banned smoking on airplanes, said that Amtrak's new rules are "another victory for health and common sense...Non-smokers should not be forced to breathe other people's smoke."

AMTRAK felt the effects of the nationwide strike of 6,300 Greyhound bus drivers, which began March 2. On the first day of the strike, a Friday, Amtrak agreed to accept Greyhound tickets between certain points, but that arrangement lasted only one day because Greyhound could not afford to pay the difference between the bus and rail fares. The strike, which was marked by picket-line violence in Philadelphia and elsewhere, continued through the end of the month although Greyhound claimed that by using replacement drivers and returning union members it was operating 42 percent of its normal service.

AMTRAK's New York-Pittsburgh Pennsylvanian will be ten years old this month and PennDOT, which partially subsidizes the train, plans a special on-board celebration April 27.....A fine piece on 30th Street Station appeared in the March issue of Philadelphia Magazine. Author Jodi Melbin says that the station, after its \$75-million renovation, "will still be what it was meant to be: a railroad station, destination anywhere".....The General Services Administration has awarded AMTRAK exclusive rights to Federal government

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and military travel between 11 U.S. city pairs, including New York-Washington and Philadelphia-Atlantic City. The one-year contract will generate more than \$10 million in revenues (Newsbreak).....Work on rebuilding the Girard-Belmont Avenue bridge over AMTRAK's Harrisburg mainline in West Philadelphia continues at a glacial pace. Amtrak will realign some of its tracks as part of the project.

While President Bush's FY 1991 Federal budget recommends elimination of all funding for AMTRAK (see February Cinders), it includes \$9.7 million for research and development of 300-mph magnetic levitation trains. It also proposes a new fee against the railroads to cover the costs of rail safety programs. This "user fee" is expected to raise \$20 million a year.....The U.S. Transportation Department and its 10,800 employees would move into a huge new office building to be erected above AMTRAK's mainline north of Washington Union Station, under a plan developed by the General Services Administration. To be completed by 1996, the building would be one of a series of private and government developments in the area of the highly-successful Union Station restoration (20th Century Railroad Club Fast Mail).

AMTRAK will begin a special drive to add more users to the fiber optic cable system it owns along its right-of-way between New York and Washington. The system is operated by MCI Communications under a 20-year agreement signed in 1984, and produced revenues of about \$10 million in 1989 (Mohawk & Hudson Chapter Call Board).AMTRAK train 20, the Crescent, had a real problem south of Baltimore on March 10. First the air compressor on E60 #605 shut down and the train was halted. MARC AEM-7 #4903 was summoned from Baltimore to couple onto the train, but this unit was inadequate to handle the heavy train and MARC GP39 diesel #75 was placed on the point at Baltimore. This odd combination powered the train all the way to Philadelphia where the train arrived at 1:30 PM and all three units were cut off. E60 #607 coupled on for the rest of the run to New York.

Friends of the Railroad Museum have launched a drive to raise \$15,000 to help save ex-Pennsy E44 electric #4465 (AMTRAK #502), which Amtrak has agreed to donate to the museum at Strasburg. But money must be raised to remove the PCB chemicals from the unit's transformer and prepare 502 for display. Contributions may be sent to "Save the E44," P. O. Box 125, Strasburg, PA 17579, making checks payable to "Friends of the Railroad Museum".....A youth fleeing AMTRAK police at Wissinoming station in northeast Philadelphia was struck and killed by train #148 the evening of March 24. The train was traveling at 100 mph.

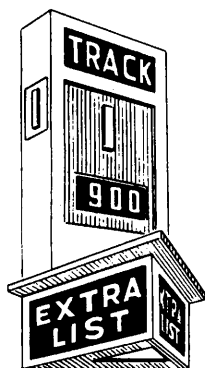
CONRAIL last month issued its 1989 annual report, showing net income for the year at \$148 million compared with \$306 million for 1988. The drop was mainly due to a special charge of \$234 million against operations to cover non-union employee reductions, an increase in casualty reserves and other one-time costs. Conrail said that its average employment was 31,574 and it operated 13,100 route miles, 2,360 locomotives and 70,700 freight cars.....More than 650 management employees signed up for CONRAIL's special retirement program which was announced in December.....CONRAIL spun off its trucking subsidiary Pennsylvania Truck Lines last month to a management group. Renamed PTL Transportation Services, the company is the nation's largest operator of intermodal terminals. It was originally purchased by the Pennsylvania Railroad in the 1930's and is now based in Wynnewood.



CONRAIL will invest \$8 million to expand its busy intermodal terminal in Harrisburg. The railroad last year handled more than one million revenue trailers and containers, making it the nation's largest intermodal carrier.....CONRAIL last month opened its new Harrisburg Division office building in suburban Harrisburg. By June, eight dispatchers headquartered there will oversee the entire division, from Reading to near Johnstown and from Potomac Yard and Hagerstown to Buffalo.....Philadelphia Division plans to relocate its offices this year from the 32nd Street building in Philadelphia to Mount Laurel, NJ.....CONRAIL's 50 new General Electric C40-8 locomotives will be numbered 6050-6099. Deliveries begin this month.....CONRAIL has changed the name of "CP-Ernie" interlocking, at the former Earnest yard near Norristown, to "CP-King," controlled by the Philadelphia Division dispatcher. The Norristown running track, connecting "CP-King" with "Ford" interlocking at Norristown, is now the Morrisville connecting track and is signaled in both directions. This is the route of most east-west freight trains to and from Morrisville.

CONRAIL has substantially improved its ex-Pennsy Phoenixville industrial track between Oaks and Phoenixville, including a new connection to a mainline spur at Oaks, in order to speed service to customers at Devault, PA. This apparently signals the end of a previous plan to rebuild the ex-Reading Kimberton industrial track through Phoenixville to handle the same traffic, a move resisted by borough officials.....Michigan's "Artrain," a five-car rolling art gallery, is scheduled to visit Scranton in September, routed via CONRAIL.....Ex-CONRAIL RS3M #9931, which became WEST JERSEY RAILROAD #7802, was spotted moving westward in a CONRAIL train March 23, freshly painted in yellow.....Repairs on a driving axle of K4s #1361 are proceeding at Altoona, and the Railroaders Museum has purchased three ex-Pennsy P70 coaches from the Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society. But neither these cars nor Horseshoe Curve Chapter's ex-Lackawanna coaches meet the AMTRAK mechanical standards adopted by CONRAIL, so if the 1361 operates this season it will likely be back on the NITTANY & BALD EAGLE.

NJ TRANSIT has increased its Atlantic City service effective April 1, with 11 trains now operating weekdays in each direction between Lindenwold and the casino resort. Added trains are running weekends, too, and schedules have been made more convenient for casino employees, in an effort to boost the anemic ridership of 500 weekday and 800 weekend passengers. The reduced one-way fare of \$3 to and from Lindenwold will continue. It is believed that the existing fleet of four push-pull trainsets is handling all service.....NJT now expects delivery of the first of its 15 ALP-44 electric locomotives this month. NJT is investigating the "cross-border" leasing of the Swedish-built units to a private company outside the U.S. as a cost-reduction measure (NJ Transit Inside Track).....Governor Florio has nominated Thomas Downs as New Jersey transportation commissioner and NJT chairman.



APRIL 7-8, 1990: Annual railroadians and train show at Cherry Hill Armory, off Racetrack Circle (Route 70), Cherry Hill, NJ, sponsored by West Jersey Chapter NRHS. Hours: 10 AM-5 PM Saturday, 11 AM-5 PM Sunday. Antique toy train sales, model railroad displays and railroadians will be featured at South Jersey's largest train show. Donation: \$2 adults, children under 12 free. Tables \$30 each for two days. For further information, write: Herman Lotstein, 21-7 Potters Place, Holland, PA 18966 (telephone 215-968-7630).

APRIL 8: "Spring Sell & Swap '90" railroadians show and sale at Boy's & Girl's Club of Union, 1050 Jeanette Avenue, Union, NJ (one mile west of Garden State Parkway at U. S. 22 interchange), sponsored by Tri-State Chapter NRHS. Hours: 10 AM-3 PM. Admission: \$3 adults, children and seniors \$2, family maximum \$7. For information, write: Tri-State Railway Historical Society, P. O. Box 1217, Morristown, NJ 07962.

APRIL 22: Fifth annual Harrisburg Train Show at Zembo Temple, 3rd & Division Streets, Harrisburg, PA, sponsored by Harrisburg Chapter NRHS. Over 11,000 square feet of railroadians and model railroad items for sale, and multiple-gauge test track will be available. Admission: \$2 adults, \$1 children under 12, families \$5. Tables: \$15 for first, \$10 each additional. For further information, write: Harrisburg Chapter NRHS, 1110 Green Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102 (telephone 717-787-9730 between 8 AM and 4:30 PM Monday-Friday).

APRIL 29: Spring excursions with last survivors of Brill cars on SEPTA Norristown High Speed Line, sponsored by Philadelphia Chapter NRHS in cooperation with Buckingham Valley Trolley Association. Morning trip with 1929-vintage Strafford car #162 is SOLD OUT. Afternoon trip with 1931 Bullet cars (two have been requested) leaves 69th Street Terminal at 1:30 PM. Fare for afternoon trip: \$18 per person. Order tickets from: George Metz, 130 Springton Lake Road, Media, PA 19063, making checks payable to "Philadelphia Chapter NRHS" and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

MAY 19: Four-state rail tour from Lancaster and Harrisburg, PA to Luray, VA and return via Amtrak, Conrail and Norfolk Southern, sponsored by Lancaster Chapter NRHS. Special Amtrak train leaves Lancaster 6:30 AM, Harrisburg 7:05 AM, arriving Luray 1 PM. Returning, leaves Luray 6 PM, arriving Harrisburg 11:45 PM, Lancaster 12:30 AM. Fare includes bus tour of Luray Caverns and New Market Battlefield. Fare: \$89 per person, (box lunch \$6 additional). Order tickets from: Lancaster Chapter NRHS, 72 Stuart Run Road, Quarryville, PA 17566, making checks payable to "Lancaster Chapter NRHS" and enclosing large, stamped, self-addressed envelope.

MAY 26-28: National convention of Electric Railroaders' Association in Pittsburgh, PA. Activities include river cruise, visit to Arden Trolley Museum, excursion with Port Authority Transit LRV and PCC cars. Convention headquarters will be at Sheraton Station Square Hotel near former Pittsburgh & Lake Erie station. For information, write: ERA, Trip & Convention Committee, P. O. Box 6588, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163-6022, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

JUNE 2-3: Rail excursion from Brownville Jct., ME to McAdam and St. Andrews, New Brunswick and return via the Canadian Atlantic Railway, sponsored by 470 Railroad Club. Overnight in the CP Hotel Algonquin. Fare: \$225 per person includes excursion, two lunches, one breakfast, one dinner, hotel and transfer. For further information, write: 470 Railroad Club, 391 Cottage Road, South Portland, ME 04106, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

JUNE 3: "Farewell to the Pioneers" SEPTA excursion using last of 1958 Budd-built Pioneer III MU cars, sponsored by Philadelphia Chapter NRHS. Cars will be retired July 1. Special train leaves 30th Street (Lower Level) at 10:30 AM, but itinerary has not been finalized. Fare: \$30 per person. 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.

JUNE 9: Rail excursion from Portland, ME to Gorham, NH and return, via St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad, sponsored by 470 Railroad Club. Fare: \$50 per person. Information and tickets from: 470 Railroad Club, as shown on June 2-3 trip above.

JUNE 10: Rail excursion from South Paris, ME to Groveton, NH and return, via St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (former Grand Trunk), sponsored by 470 Railroad Club. Fare: \$50 per person. For information contact 470 Railroad Club at address shown in June 2-3 notice above.

JUNE 14-17: Annual NRHS convention at St. Louis, MO, sponsored by St. Louis Chapter. Four mainline steam locomotives will be featured, including Union Pacific 844, Frisco 1522 and Cotton Belt 819. Norfolk & Western steam to power special train sponsored by Roanoke Chapter to the convention. Three mainline specials will be operated, in addition to seminars, workshops and the annual banquet. Registration material was to be mailed to all members during March. Convention information will be issued by St. Louis Chapter NRHS, 1135 Colonnade Center, Suite 321, Des Peres, MO 63131 (telephone 314-965-2120 evenings for recorded information). Inbound special information may be obtained from Roanoke Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 13222, Roanoke, VA 24032.

JUNE 18-28: "Colorado Rails" tour from St. Louis, MO to Denver, CO immediately following NRHS convention, sponsored by Overland Chapter NRHS. Tour includes trips on four Colorado tourist railroads as well as the newly-opened Grand Canyon Railway. Fares range from \$1,245 per person. Deposit of \$200 per person will hold reservations until April 18, 1990 when the balance is due. For reservations and information, contact: Overland Chapter NRHS, 1412 12th Street, Moline, IL 61265 (telephone 309-764-1834).

THROUGH FREIGHT SERVICE - NORTHBOUND

TRAIN Frequency	WPHA-31 Daily	BACA Daily	BAPI Ex SU-MO	BAPI SU	ESEN Daily	ESPI Ex SU	PYEN Daily	PYSE Daily	TV-25 Ex SU
POCOMOKE, MD.....Lv	0300	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
HARRINGTON, DE.....Ar	0800	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
HARRINGTON.....Lv	2000	1900	.....	.....	.....
DOVER.....Lv	2100	|	.....	.....	.....
PORTER.....Lv	2300	|	.....	.....	.....
NEWARK.....Lv	0030	2300	.....	.....	.....
POTOMAC YARD, VA.....Lv			2030	0230	.....
BENNING, DC.....Lv			2145	0315	.....
BALTIMORE, MD.....Ar			2315*	|	.....
BALTIMORE.....Lv	0015	2300	2200	|	|	0300	|	2200
PERRYVILLE.....Ps	0125	0015	2315	0045	2345	0430	via	2300
COLUMBIA, PA.....Ps		0330	0200	0300	0200	0730	CSXT	0055
HARRISBURG.....Ar			0300	|	|	|	|	0200
ENOLA.....Ar	0615*	0500	0430	0320*	1000	|	.....
EDGE MOOR, DE.....Ar	0330	to	.....	.....	to	.....	.....	.....
PHILADELPHIA (Park Jct).....Ps		Conway	.....	.....	Conway	.....	1015	.....
PHILADELPHIA (Zoo).....Ps	0615	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	to	.....
								Selkirk	

KEY TO TERMINAL ABBREVIATIONS:

- AL - Allentown
- BA - Baltimore
- CA - Camden
- CG - Corning, NY
- EN - Enola
- ES - Eastern Shore
- LD - Linden, NJ
- ML - Metuchen/Linden, NJ
- MO - Morrisville
- OI - Oak Island (Newark, NJ)
- PG - South Philadelphia
- PI - Pittsburgh (Conway)
- PY - Potomac Yard, VA
- RO - Roanoke, VA
- SE - Selkirk, NY
- SR - Southern Railway
- TV - TrailVan (piggyback)

Ar - Arrive

Lv - Leave

Ps - Pass

* - Crew change

NOTE 1 - Operates to South Philadelphia,
then leaves South Philadelphia
0845, passing Zoo 0930

NOTE 2 - Works at Allentown TrailVan
Terminal, does not run via
Allentown Yard



Amtrak has placed a bid on six GO Transit F40PH locomotives, which are being offered for sale as the Toronto commuter carrier standardizes its motive power fleet with GMD F59PH units. The F40's being sought do not have dynamic brakes, so it's really not clear what modifications would be made if Amtrak is declared the successful bidder.

The new Material Handling Cars (MHC's) are coming on line from Thrall Car's Chicago Heights, IL plant. Numbered 1500-1569, they have trucks similar to the new Horizon fleet cars, built-in end lights and a different door opening arrangement. As the new cars are delivered, marginal baggage cars are being stored, with the 1300-series short baggage cars (ex-Army) among the first. Only 14 of the 1350's remain in service.

Also stored recently are all of the former C&NW gallery cars in Amtrak's 9600-series. The final use of this equipment was on March 8.

The Capitoliner conversion program at Wilmington shop will be completed with the 23rd and final car (9652). The line may then be set up to perform Amfleet wreck repairs. The prototype Capitoliner cafe conversion, meanwhile, is being advanced on a time-available basis. Car #9800 is reportedly going to have a conference area in the cab end of the car, but it's not clear if the other end will have coach or parlor chairs.

Logic suggests that any Superliner order placed will see such equipment filling out western trains with additional sleepers and then perhaps re-equipping the Auto Train. The cars freed up from the Auto Train could then be available to equip a third Cardinal trainset to provide daily frequency on this route.

The dust has pretty much settled on VIA Rail Canada's operations now. Two months have passed since the January 15 cutbacks and here's what we've noted. The transcontinental Canadian operates with only six passenger cars in the winter season. The all-Budd consist is made up of a baggage, coach, Skyline (dome-diner-lounge), two Manor-series sleepers and a Park-Series dome-sleeper-observation. A third Manor-series car was added effective March 1. Every trip from Vancouver includes on the head end behind the baggage four cars for the Jasper-Prince Rupert Skeena. This consist is made up of a baggage-dorm, Budd coach, Skyline dome and an "E" class sleeper.

In Atlantic Canada, meanwhile, the Chaleur to the Gaspé peninsula has only four cars -- baggage, coach, cafe-lounge and a Chateau-series sleeper. Both the Ocean and Atlantic between Montreal and Halifax still have a Park-series dome-observation on the rear.

In commuter rail news, NJ Transit's 50 new coaches will not be received from Bombardier for a number of months, after the 51 coaches for Boston's MBTA. Numbers of NJT's new cars, which will be of three types, are: Control coaches 5000-5008, toilet-equipped coaches 5200-5205 and coaches 5500-5534. The NJT and MBTA orders are the only ones presently on Bombardier's books, but possibly Amtrak or another commuter authority or two could place an order before year's end.

A Carnegie Mellon University study reported in the New York Times suggested potential "Maglev" high-speed routes as: Boston-Buffalo-Chicago, Boston-Washington, Philadelphia-Cleveland (via Harrisburg - Pittsburgh), Quebec-Toledo (via Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto-Detroit), San Diego-Los Angeles-San Francisco, Los Angeles-Las Vegas, Jacksonville-Orlando-Miami, and Orlando-Tampa.

Looking back at the "Good Old Days", I thought I'd mention the Reading's Pullman parlor cars which came in early 1927, along with cafe cars 1186-1189, coaches 1525-1549 and combines 589-593. The parlors were similar to cars delivered for Pennsy service at the same time. Reading's cars bore the names of women authors and historical figures: Abigail Adams, Clara Barton, Jane Austen (*), Louisa Alcott and Molly Pitcher(*). Two cars (*) went to the New York Central in 1942 (converted to coaches) with the other three going to the Pere Marquette in 1945 when that road took over its parlor operation from Pullman. In the late 1930's these cars could be found on the Scranton Flyer, Harrisburg Special, Queen of the Valley and a Philadelphia-Jersey City round trip. The fifth car was a backup, but was assigned during the summer months to a Jersey City-Bay Head run.

ON THE SCENE (Continued from Page 11)

The Wall Street Special, obviously, carried the parlor-lounge Wall Street, rebuilt in 1930 from an earlier sleeper. It had 14 parlor chairs, a drawing room, buffet and lounge. Replaced about 1939 by a Blue Comet-type observation, the car went to the New Haven and wound up its career as a tavern-lounge.

Finally, two 1927 standard parlors, Harriet and Miriam, operated on the Black Diamond between Philadelphia and Buffalo. In 1939, the car was cut back to run only as far as Wilkes-Barre (one car only) and then discontinued completely. The Harriet went to the Lehigh Valley in 1940 and was assigned to the Asa Packer. The Miriam stayed with Pullman and went to the Pere Marquette in 1945.

Reading operated six Philadelphia-Jersey City round trips with dining-club cars and the streamlined Crusader added two more. The Wall Street Special left Reading Terminal at 8 AM with an observation as well, and the 9 AM trip had the unique parlor-coach 699. The only Camden-Atlantic City train to carry a lounge car was the Boardwalk Flyer, leaving Atlantic City at 8:10 AM and Camden from the 4:00 PM ferry.

Down at Atlantic City, one could see the Blue Comet from Jersey City arrive at 2 PM and leave again at 4:35 (5:30 PM on Sunday) with a Reading cafe car often as not, and an observation. The Pennsy was not to be outdone, though, with the Flying Spray out of New York at 6:10 PM Fridays and the Sea Clipper at 1:05 PM Saturdays, returning at 4:30 PM Sunday out of Atlantic City. These trains had a parlor and dining car, with lesser trains carrying only a buffet-parlor.

Back on the Reading, the Black Diamond connection left Reading Terminal at 8:30 AM with a parlor to Wilkes-Barre, and the Scranton Flyer carried a diner-club to Allentown and a parlor to Scranton, leaving Reading Terminal at 5:40 PM.

D&H KEEPS RUNNING BUT ROAD'S FUTURE STILL CLOUDY (Continued from Page 2)

Later it was reported that the two roads had discussed the granting of certain rights for Conrail to reach industries in southern Ontario and Quebec, but these talks failed to produce an agreement. Both Conrail and CP are interested in increasing their cross-border presence to handle anticipated traffic from the recently-approved U.S.-Canada "free trade" treaty.

Meanwhile, the press reported that Conrail and Guilford Transportation were negotiating a new east-west routing via Ayer, MA, which if consummated could remove a major part of the "bridge" business formerly handled via Mechanicville, NY and the D&H. The Journal of Commerce said that this arrangement could cost D&H up to \$13 million of its \$80 million in annual revenues. It was Guilford that placed the D&H in Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings in June 1988, but has since filed a plan in Federal court seeking to regain control of the railroad.

Thus, in late March the future course of the struggling D&H was still to be determined.

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