

CINDERS

MAY

2000



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Volume 61

Newsletter of the

Number 5

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

National Railway Historical Society Inc.

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MEETINGS: 7:30 PM, third Friday of each month (except second Friday in December), at Eakins Lounge, Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Dinner (optional) at 6:15 PM (\$19.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$31.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$16.00 per person per year. Membership applications should be forwarded to: Membership Chair, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Membership in the parent National Railway Historical Society is required to hold Chapter-only membership.

ADDRESS CHANGES should be sent to the Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER so our Membership List is complete.

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

MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 19, 2000

Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University,
 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA (three blocks south of
 Market East Station)

Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$19.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM
 Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9th Street above Locust
 (\$5.00 after 6 PM), or Parkway Garage, also 9th above Locust
 \$5.75 after 6 PM), Downtown Garage, Walnut Street east of
 10th (\$4.00 after 6 PM)

Our May 19, 2000 meeting will feature Chapter Member Paul Kutta, who will present a narrated slide program on contemporary railroading in Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona from a 1999 trip he took through this area. With a lot of changes taking place in the rail scene in this part of the west, this should prove an interesting program with a slant toward current events.

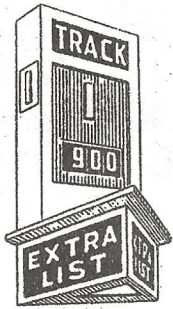
The evening begins with our usual sit-down dinner in the Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University, beginning at 6:15 PM, at a cost of \$19.00 per person. DINNER RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY, AND MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 16, 2000 to Dinner Chairman Bill Gardiner at 215-632-7016. This is a STRICT deadline, and you MUST specify when ordering if you desire a fish dinner. Please call BILL GARDINER with your reservation. No-shows will be responsible for payment for meals ordered.

March 12 SEPTA "Yellowbird" Trip Report

A total of 112 revenue passengers participated in Philadelphia Chapter's March 12 "Last Flight of the Yellowbird" excursion on SEPTA's Regional Rail lines. SEPTA provided a four-car train consisting of St. Louis Car-built Silverliner III "Airport" cars 236-239 (although not in that order), which had been completely cleaned, inside and out, providing a really pleasant environment for the riders. While the weather throughout the day was cloudy and dark, it remained basically rain-free.

Departing 30th Street Station, the train traveled non-stop to West Trenton, NJ, where photographers not only photographed the special, but also a regular R3 train and an eastbound CSX steel slab train. Returning from West Trenton, a second photo stop was made at Neshaminy Falls. Following a lunch break at 30th Street, a non-stop run to Thorndale provided a photo meet with Amtrak Train 650, with GE P42 #110 providing a whistle salute as it passed our special. Our train then ran non-stop to 30th Street, pausing for a refreshment and comfort stop. Then it was off for a speedy run on the Media Line, with photo stops at Wallingford and Elwyn completing an operationally-perfect trip.

Chapter Members Vince Jakubowski and John Ciavatta served as Engineer and Conductor on the trip. SEPTA Transportation Supervisor Homer Dotson was extremely cooperative and enthusiastic in seeing that everyone on board had an excellent outing. We thank SEPTA's Railroad Division staff for their efforts in providing a fine trip for us.



THROUGH MAY 5, 2000: "Art on the Line Comes Inside," railroad art show at Main Line Art Center, Old Buck Road & Lancaster Avenue, Haverford, PA. Open Monday-Thursday 10 AM-8 PM, Friday 10-4, Saturday 10-1. Admission free. For information, telephone 610-525-0272.

MAY 10-13: 17th annual conference and expo on high-speed ground transportation with the theme, "Building Success to Expand Mobility," at Marriott Hotel, 12th & Market Sts., Philadelphia, sponsored by High Speed Ground Transportation Association. Guest speakers include George D. Warrington, President of Amtrak; PennDOT Secretary Bradley Mallory; NJ DOT Commissioner James Weinstein; former New Jersey Governor James Florio; and U. S. DOT Deputy Secretary Mortimer L. Downey. Numerous panel discussions, tours of Amtrak facilities, receptions and a trade show will be featured. Events are open to non-HSGTA members. For information, telephone HSGTA at 202-789-8107.

MAY 13: Spring Amtrak excursion from Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia to Old Saybrook and Mystic, CT and return, sponsored by Washington, DC Chapter NRHS. Special train leaves Washington Union Station at 7 AM, Philadelphia 8:50, arriving Old Saybrook 1 PM, Mystic 1:37 PM. Trains returns to Philadelphia at 9:25 PM. Fares: Coach \$109 adults, \$89 children (2-12), first class \$249 in Pullman Dover Harbor. Fares include rail ticket on Valley Railroad direct from Old Saybrook and Connecticut River cruise, or admission to historic Mystic Seaport. Order tickets from: Washington DC Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 151, Alexandria, VA 22313-0151, for pickup at trainside. For information, telephone 703-273-8440 (E-mail: info@dcnrhs.org).

MAY 13: Spring Ramble sponsored by Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, with visits to Reading Company Technical & Historical Society equipment display at Leesport, PA; National Watch & Clock Museum at Columbia, PA; Masonic Home Railroad Club at Elizabethtown, PA and excursion over Middletown & Hummelstown Railroad. Lunch at Akron, PA and dinner on M&H are included. Fares: \$75 for FRM members, \$85 for non-members. Charter bus leaves museum grounds, Strasburg, at 8 AM, returning at 8:15 PM. Order tickets from: Friends of the Railroad Museum, P.O. Box 125, Strasburg, PA 17579-0125. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (E-mail: frm@redrose.net).

MAY 16: "The Impact of Rail Transportation in Lower Merion," presentation hosted by Lower Merion Centennial Celebration and Lower Merion High School, at Baldwin School, Morris Road & Montgomery Avenue, Bryn Mawr, beginning at 7:30 PM. Presenters include noted Railroad Historian Ted Xaras, Robert L. Penrose of PRR Technical & Historical Society and others.

MAY 21: Trolley tour of historic areas of Chestnut Hill and Germantown, 1-4 PM, using SEPTA PCC car on Route 23, sponsored by Chestnut Hill Community Association, Foundation for Architecture and Philadelphia's Historic Northwest Coalition. Walking tours and light refreshments will be included. Participants will meet at Chestnut Hill trolley loop, Germantown Avenue & Bethlehem Pike. Fare: \$18 per person. Pre-registration is required by telephoning 215-569-3187, extension 10.

MAY 24-30: Chesapeake Bay-Bermuda cruise adventure aboard luxury vessel Crown Dynasty, sponsored by Lancaster Chapter NRHS. Cruise departs from Port of Baltimore

on Wednesday afternoon, May 24. Features include optional tour of Bermuda and railroad presentations at sea. Special NRHS cruise prices range from \$744 to \$1,094 per person. Deposit required. For information and trip brochure, write: Lancaster Chapter NRHS, 72 Stuart Run Road, Quarryville, PA 17566-9522 (telephone 717-786-4932 or 717-299-6405).

MAY 27: "Good Spring Ramble" using ex-Reading Budd RDC cars will operate over Reading & Northern's former Reading Company trackage from Port Clinton to Good Spring, PA and return, sponsored by Jersey Central Chapter NRHS. Train leaves Port Clinton at 9 AM, with food available on board. Fare: \$35 per person. Order tickets from: Jersey Central Railway Historical Society, P. O. Box 700, Clark, NJ 07066-0700, making checks payable to "JCRHS" and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For information, telephone 908-233-3603.

JUNE 3: Special train using restored ex-Reading FP7 locomotives over SEPTA lines, sponsored by Philadelphia Chapter NRHS to celebrate 50th anniversary of units' delivery in 1950. FP7's #902-903, owned respectively by Lancaster and Philadelphia Chapters, will power push-pull coaches in first use of these locomotives on SEPTA's Railroad Division since 1981. Photo and lunch stops will be included. Train leaves 30th Street Station Upper Level 8:30 AM, returning shortly after 5:00 PM. Fares: \$45 adults, \$35 children (12 and under). Trip flyer will be found in this issue, or order tickets from: Ticket Agent, Philadelphia Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302, making checks payable to "Philadelphia Chapter NRHS" and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. Tickets will also be available at the May 19 Philadelphia Chapter meeting. (NOTE: *Passengers from the Lancaster area can use special Lancaster Chapter, NRHS chartered bus from Lancaster and Christiana to Philadelphia at additional cost of \$20 per person. For information on chartered bus, call Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769.*)

JUNE 3-4: "Pennsy Days 2000" at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, sponsored by Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society, Friends of the Railroad Museum and Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission. Two-day event will feature numerous displays and presentations, celebrating the heritage of the PRR. Regular museum admissions apply. For information, telephone 727-687-8628 (E-mail: frm@redrose.net).

JUNE 17: "Molly Maguires" special train from Port Clinton to Mahanoy City, PA and return, operated over Reading & Northern Railroad, sponsored by Schuylkill County Program, using RBM&N Budd RDC's. For complete information, contact Schuylkill County Visitors Bureau, 91 S. Progress Ave., Pottsville, PA 17901-3087.

JUNE 17-18: Railfan weekend at Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, Cumberland, MD, including round-trip excursions to Frostburg behind Baldwin 2-8-0 #734, photo runbys and night photo sessions. Tickets are \$100 per person, which include two box lunches and buffet dinner. For information, telephone WMSR at 800-TRAIN-50 (E-mail: trainmaster@wmsr.com).

JUNE 18: Mini-trips on Reading & Northern Railroad, sponsored by Tamaqua Historical Society as part of Tamaqua Summer Festival. For complete information, contact Tamaqua Historical Society, 118 West Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA 18252-1917.

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EL SIMON

ON THE SCENE

Amtrak's service expansion program has begun with a modest start in the Chicago area. On April 15, the **Lake Country Limited** was inaugurated between Chicago and Janesville, WI. This is one of what might be termed the "E" trains added to support Vice President Ed Ellis' express business. As with all such trains, there will be few amenities and the emphasis will be on RoadRailers and boxcars. In this instance, one or two Horizon fleet coaches with no food service will provide the passenger accommodation (remember, there is no food service on the paralleling Chicago-Milwaukee trains).

Another "E" train may commence service on May 21 under a new name. What had been introduced as the **Manhattan Limited** may arrive with a different name. Originally set to run between New York and Chicago, the train will apparently start as a Philadelphia-Chicago service. One factor in this decision is the temporary shortage of electric locomotives (the eastbound train to New York would depart Philadelphia in the heart of the morning rush hour). Amtrak's first choice for a name was apparently not available, thus a somewhat lesser name may be chosen. While it was believed that this train would offer sleeping car service, no evidence has surfaced of plans to resurrect any additional Heritage fleet 10-6's to service. The trains will carry numbers 45 and 46.

Another name change for an upcoming "E" train involves the new service to Monterrey, Mexico. The announced name of **Aztec Eagle** is apparently already in use by Union Pacific, and so the San Antonio-Monterrey service may begin life as the **Monterrey Eagle**. This will most likely again be a limited-service coach train intended to handle auto parts from Detroit. Regrettably, there is only bus service beyond Monterrey to Mexico City, where the huge Buena Vista Terminal lies fenced off and unused. A test train has already operated over this route and one possible hurdle will be involved trans-border congestion at Laredo. Since the train will connect with the **Texas Eagle** at San Antonio, the new train could use either single-level (Horizon) or Superliner cars.

During May, the **Texas Eagle** will move from four-days a week to daily operation, with one train per week continuing to operate beyond San Antonio as a through train to Los Angeles.

One train promising more amenities will be an off-shoot of the **Crescent**, operating from Meridian, MS to Fort Worth, TX via Jackson, MS and Shreveport, LA. Amtrak has advertised for six entry-level assistant conductor positions to be based at Meridian, an indication that plans are indeed moving forward. Two Amcoach II's, the lounge and a sleeper will make up the train, coming down from New York as a part of the **Crescent**. Between Meridian and New Orleans, the **Crescent's** dining car will provide lounge service.

To free up two sets of equipment, Amtrak will simply not add cars for summer travel this year. The result will be a lot fewer seats and lesser opportunities for travel at reduced rates. The problem is that approval has not been forthcoming for any wreck

repairs for several years, so that close to 50 Superliners are now out of service, as well as at least ten Amfleet II cars. That's a lot of capacity off the active roster, and several of the worst examples probably are beyond salvage and repair, anyway.

In some motive power items, two FL9's (#485-486) have been restored to service at Albany and remain in work train service along the Shore Line east of New Haven. The three cab-baggage units converted for the Boston-Portland (ME) service are being held at Albany. They are in the current "Northeast Direct" type livery. Units 90213, 90214 and 90220 were released on March 14.

Fifty F40's have been earmarked for reassignment to Amtrak Intercity. Nine reportedly will come from the Northeast Corridor, freed up by electrification, while 41 will come from storage at Beech Grove. Of necessity, at least some of these will need to be overhauled to make them fit for return to continued service.

E60 #606 has suffered an MA failure (fire?) and will not be returned to passenger service. It could, however, find its way into work train service to replace stored #620.

In equipment news, the tenth Amlounge II rebuilt with an enclosed smoking room and named is **28019-Charlotte Club**. For the record, the cars rebuilt and named to date are

28000-Miami Club
28001-Atlanta Club
28005-Chicago Club
28007-New York Club
28008-Pittsburgh Club
28012-Meridian Club
28018-Jacksonville Club
28019-Charlotte Club
28022-South Bend Club
28024-Philadelphia Club

Five other cars (28004, 28011, 28013, 28013, 28020) have been repainted but not rebuilt, leaving ten others which are in the old striping and will likely be the next candidates for rebuilding.

All "video coaches" have been decommissioned and the service eliminated, except for cars 25029 and 25044, assigned to **Carolina Club** service on Trains 79/80-**Carolinian**.

The sole "automat" car, #8601, was replaced on the **Pere Marquette** by a regular café car on March 1.

More Capstone Amfleet I refurbishings were completed during the last month, as follows:

82049 (ex-21626, 3/27/2000)
82050 (ex-21627, 3/30/2000)
82051 (ex-21628, 4/05/2000)
82052 (ex-21629, 4/07/2000)
81506 (ex-44720, 4/11/2000)
85500 (ex-48157, 4/17/2000)

(Continued on Page 4)

ON THE SCENE (Continued from Page 3)

The first five cars above are coaches, the 81506 is a Business Class coach and the 85500 is the first café car outshopped in the Capstone program.

The test program to commission and place in service the **Acela Express** and HHL locomotives continues. Depending on the results of testing and FRA evaluation, it's possible that some of the Express trainsets or the HHL locomotives may see revenue service this summer.

In time, passengers will enjoy the benefits provided by the new trainsets, including the restoration of First Class service east of New York to Boston. Also, cars freed up from Metroliner Service will permit some flexibility in scheduling maintenance and special moves. The same, of course, applies to an even greater degree with locomotives.

Meanwhile, there are numerous opportunities to photograph the **Acela Express** trainsets testing up and down the Corridor. Production of the carshells have apparently been completed, providing Bombardier the opportunity to shift its factory capacity to the huge New York City subway car order.

Plans apparently call for reassigning Horizon and Amfleet cars from San Diego service to Amtrak Intercity as they are replaced by new Surfliner cars. The first of these new cars, coach 6400, has arrived and is undergoing testing at Pueblo, CO. At least 40 of the former cars will be made available, enough to equip the new "E" trains, but this will take time and is on the presumption that the carbuilder can deliver the new cars on a timely basis.

California's new budget, too, continues that state's strong commitment to intercity rail service. Since 1990, Amtrak and California have jointly invested over \$1.2 billion in this program which has resulted in a 38% increase in service since 1995 alone. The new plan includes some \$700 million in additional funding for further improvements.

Amtrak's Website has been named as one of the 100 most popular "bookmarks" on the Internet by **Hotlinks**. Currently, 15% of all Amtrak tickets are booked on-line. Eventually, Amtrak plans to offer hotel, car rental and airline reservations, and now offers special fares with a discount of up to 70% on a menu which changes each Monday.

The new president of Amtrak Intercity, Edward V. Walker, has announced a reorganization of his SBU into two regions, each headed by a vice president. Al Edelston will be vice president, Eastern Region, at Jacksonville, FL, and will be responsible for all trains east of Chicago except the local regional trains. Don Sommers will be vice president, Western Region, based in Chicago, responsible for Intercity's western trains, the Chicago terminal services and its regional trains.

Amtrak and Hertz have added additional rental car locations in the Northeast at Albany, New York, Boston (South Station and Back Bay), making 31 locations nationwide, with more to come.

In some commuter rail items, Virginia Railway Express has only four "Boise Budd" cars in service - cafes V500-V503. Disposition of the other 27 cars shows eight cars leased to the State

of Vermont, four cars stored on Metro North, and 14 cars leased to Caltrans. One car, V320, is stored with wreck damage. Also, Boise Budd cab car 1403 was wrecked at Back Bay station in Boston in 1987 while owned by MBTA and never was conveyed to VRE.

The new bi-level cars for MARC and VRE are as follows: VRE has received four cab cars and nine trailer coaches. MARC has ten cab coaches (7845-7854), seven trailer coaches with lavatories (7890-7896), 26 trailer coaches with no lavatories (7800-7825) and seven trailers with snack bars (7870-7876), for a total of 50 cars.

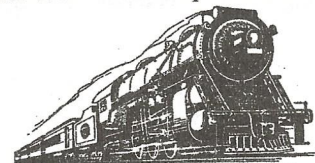
The Central Railroad of New Jersey's most famous train, of course, was the **Blue Comet**, operating between Jersey City and Atlantic City via Winslow Junction. From Winslow, the tracks of the former Reading's Atlantic City Railroad (later PRSL) were used to reach the shore.

Originally, matched sets of equipment in Packard Blue were assigned and two round-trips were operated, providing morning and afternoon service in both directions. Early in the train's history, even a third trip ran in the summer on Friday and Sunday. Only the morning train to Atlantic City and the late afternoon train returning regularly carried a dining car, except during the worst of the Depression in 1933-1934. After April 1933 the "other" train operated only on certain days, generally weekends.

For the summer of 1936, the train leaving Jersey City at 5:36 PM Fridays carried a dining car (but the car did not return Sunday). The following two summers saw a diner on both the Friday evening train and a second Sunday evening return trip from Atlantic City. This marked the last operation of two **Blue Comets**. In its final seasons, the equipment was gradually repainted to dark green and a Reading Company steel café car replaced the wreck-damaged steel-sheathed CNJ car. One of the three observation cars had never been air-conditioned, while the 1179 was assigned to Reading's **Wall Street Special** between 1939 and the introduction of the "stream-styled" train in 1948.

The Reading, meanwhile, had reduced its first class service between Philadelphia and Jersey City to "chair car" status in the depths of the Depression but the traditional name was restored on April 29, 1934. At that time, two Pullman-operated cars left Philadelphia's Reading Terminal at 8 AM and 9 AM, returning from Jersey City at 3:12 PM (Saturday only) 5:12 PM and 6:12 PM (except Saturday). There was no service on Sundays until August 13, 1934 when a car left Reading Terminal at 10 AM and returned at 3:12 PM. Soon after, however, on September 30, 1934, one Monday-Saturday trip was discontinued, leaving the 8 AM trip and 5:12 PM return (plus the Sunday train).

In April, 1935, a second car returned, leaving Philadelphia Monday through Saturday at 9 AM, departing Jersey City at 8:12 PM (Monday-Friday) and 9:12 PM (Sunday). This arrangement lasted some 16 months until September 27, 1936, when it was back to one car, now operating except Sundays from Reading Terminal at 9 AM, returning from Jersey City at 5:12 PM. This service prevailed until the end of Pullman parlor service on the route.



PHILADELPHIA



EXPRESS

FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

As a test, on March 28-29 SEPTA operated a six-car push-pull set powered by AEM-7 #2307 as R2 Warminster trains 6246-6215, and on March 29-30 as R3 West Trenton trains 6378-6321. The plan is to add one or more such trains to the Reading-side later this season.....SEPTA will reissue certain of its Regional Rail public timetables effective June 4, and others in August. The R2 Marcus Hook-Wilmington-Newark folder was reissued effective April 2 to coincide with the closure of the southbound lanes on I-95 between the Pennsylvania state line and Wilmington. Three additional northbound and southbound trains now serve Newark, and will serve the new Fairplay at Churchmans Crossing station when it opens in June.

SEPTA has purchased former LONG ISLAND Alco FA "power pak" #615. The unit, which LIRR used as a cab control car, retains its original carbody but no longer has a prime mover. SEPTA plans to use it in a work train which spreads a special gel on railheads during the fall slippery rail season. The 615 was built as Spokane, Portland & Seattle #864 in 1949.....On March 28 SEPTA operated an unusual five-car lash-up of St. Louis "yellowbird" cars between Warminster and Elwyn: 236-235-233-232-238. The 236 and 238, along with 237 and 239, were also used on Philadelphia Chapter's March 12 yellowbird special.....The proposed Paoli Transportation Center, which SEPTA wants to build a short distance west of the existing Paoli station, will not become a reality for at least another four years, the *Daily Local News* reports. The \$34-million project is contingent upon completion of a massive environmental cleanup on the site of the old Paoli carshop and yard.

SEPTA plans to construct partial high-level platforms at the restored Chester, Strafford and Radnor stations, and at the former Baldwin station in Eddystone, Delaware County, which is to be reopened by next year.....SEPTA is proposing to abandon the little-used North Philadelphia station on the R8 Chestnut Hill West Line.....The upgraded and respaced signal system on the R3 Neshaminy Line between Jenkintown and Neshaminy should be completed in June.....The initial contract for upgrading the track and signals on the Mainline between Wayne Junction and Glenside should go out to bid this month.....SEPTA is contemplating the construction of parking garages at the busy Jenkintown and Glenside stations.....Have you seen the classy new tile mosaic installed in the SEPTA concourse at 30th Street Station?

The first Silverliners to be dressed in the new red, white and blue stripes were General Electric married pair 437-438, placed in service late in April. Work is proceeding rapidly to stripe the balance of the fleet.....SEPTA held a television briefing at Market East Station April 24 to formally introduce its new Bombardier push-pull coaches. Nine of the coaches are in service while delivery of the tenth and last car is awaited. SEPTA is studying the possibility of using the high-level center doors for general passenger loading and unloading at center city stations, rather than restricting them to disabled passengers only, as at present.....The Dock Street Brew Pub has opened in the Reading Terminal headhouse, behind the existing Hard Rock Café. And across the street at 12th & Market the Loews Philadelphia Hotel opened last month in the former PSFS Building. Expected to profit from its location near the Convention Center, the hotel preserves much of the exterior of the landmark Art Deco-style building, which was completed in 1932.....Community groups in Manayunk are opposing a plan to put large "Manayunk" signs on SEPTA's ex-Penny viaduct, now under reconstruction.

General Manager John K. Leary surprised many observers last month by announcing that SEPTA management now favors modified commuter rail as the preferred mode for the proposed Schuylkill Valley Metro. Previously, it was believed that SEPTA was strongly backing construction of a separate 62-mile light-rail system between Philadelphia and Reading. Instead, the "Alternative 6" MetroRail plan would involve operation over NORFOLK SOUTHERN's mainline between Bridgeport and Wyomissing, just west of Reading. Projected to cost up to \$1.6 billion, the plan reportedly has won at least grudging acceptance from NS, contingent upon the financing of certain additional trackage on the line. Off-the-shelf commuter rail cars similar to METRO-NORTH's MU fleet but modified to operate at lower cost—possibly with just one crew member—could result in more frequent service than would be possible with existing equipment. An NS spokesman said that his railroad may find this alternative "perfectly acceptable," because it was a major change from last year when there was a feeling "that SEPTA had this grand idea (for light rail) and they just expected Norfolk Southern to move out of the way."

Apparently, SEPTA managers and board members became convinced that SEPTA would be unable to design efficient light-rail cars for use in such a lengthy corridor. Citing problems with custom-designed cars such as the infamous Route 100 fleet and the defect-plagued Market-Frankford M4's, Leary conceded that SEPTA has a "fatally-flawed" record of designing its own equipment. "We can go to the moon but we can't design a new subway car that works," Leary told the *Inquirer*. He also stressed the need to get moving with the project instead of spending years on equipment design, because many other cities are competing for available Federal dollars. The decision also pleased the Delaware Valley Association of Rail Passengers, which long has spearheaded the campaign for a commuter rail type of operation.

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 5)

The announcement, in fact, came just before the start of a series of public meetings on the project, held in Reading, King of Prussia and Philadelphia.

At this point, it appears the new service would be introduced in stages, the first to be an electrified operation between Philadelphia and King of Prussia, using the existing center city tunnel, the R6 Norristown Line via East Falls, a segment of NORFOLK SOUTHERN's ex-Reading main to Port Kennedy and a new spur into the King of Prussia Mall (in lieu of the proposed extension of the Route 100 to Port Kennedy). Later, an electrified service would operate via the ex-Pennsy Ivy Ridge Line through Bala Cynwyd and a new connection to the Norristown Line just west of Manayunk, thence over the NS mainline to Reading and Wyomissing (with a possible diversion through the center of Phoenixville). The SEPTA board is expected to consider the MetroRail plan at its May meeting.



SEPTA TRANSIT

This month, SEPTA will present its \$778.6-million operating budget and \$485-million capital budget for Fiscal Year 2001, beginning this July 1. Public hearings on the operating budget will be held May 15-19, with the Philadelphia sessions on the 19th at 11 AM and 5 PM in the SEPTA board room at 1234 Market Street. The capital budget hearing on May 22 will also be held in the SEPTA board room at 11 AM and 5 PM. The operating plan represents only a 1.75-percent increase over the current fiscal year budget, while the capital budget is 18 percent higher than this year's. The operating plan contemplates no increase in fares while maintaining the present levels of service. Passenger revenue is projected to increase by \$3.2 million or one percent over the FY 2000 budget. Total operating revenues are anticipated at \$380.8 million, with Federal, State and local subsidies totaling \$397.8 million.

Problems with the 220 new M4 Market-Frankford cars continue. Seats are coming apart due to inadequate construction, with new seats being installed on site by carbuilder Adtranz at its expense at the rate of five married pairs per week. The faulty door operating systems will be replaced in a \$6-million project with costs to be shared by Adtranz and SEPTA. The low-bid supplier of the original, poorly-designed systems is currently in financial trouble. Adtranz, now a unit of DaimlerChrysler, expects to lose more than \$100 million on the once-coveted M4 contract, according to SEPTA officials.....SEPTA plans to install a new radio system in its entire bus fleet by mid-2002, with 100 buses to be equipped with an experimental satellite-based automatic vehicle locator (AVL) system.....The controversial communications-based train control (CBTC) system to be installed by Adtranz in the subway-surface tunnel—part of the settlement for late delivery of the M4 cars—is still at least two years away.

For the first time, SEPTA's Year 2001 Annual Service Plan includes the Suburban and Railroad Divisions in addition to City Transit Division. This is because the SEPTA board last year adopted service standards for those two divisions to complement City Transit guidelines. A series of five public meetings was held in April to gain input on the new plan.....Most of SEPTA's

fareboxes, turnstiles and token vending machines will accept the new Sacajawea golden dollar coin. But with memories of the ill-fated Susan B. Anthony dollars still alive, SEPTA and the U.S. Mint are planning a joint promotion to encourage use of the new coin. This will include free distribution of 1,000 new coins at each of six SEPTA stations on May 3, three in the morning rush and three in the afternoon.....SEPTA still has not come forward with a contract for those 12 articulated trolleys to be acquired as part of the Girard Avenue Light Rail project. Reportedly, one alternative is to rebuild several retired PCC cars.

SEPTA has issued an inventory and report on its escalator operations, following the court judgment in the case of a six-year-old boy whose foot was torn off by a defective escalator (see January, February *Cinders*). City Transit alone has 28 escalators, many of them not working and at least one of them dating back to 1958. This year, four are to be replaced and two new ones added, and next year six are to be replaced including two 1961-vintage units at 30th Street Station. A blue-ribbon panel hired by SEPTA is expected soon to issue its report on the mishandling by SEPTA of the court case involving the young boy.....SEPTA will install video surveillance cameras in many of the new 7100-series articulated buses. Earlier tests showed the cameras effective in deterring crime (DVARP).

The Inquirer on March 30 reported that SEPTA had experienced a big ridership gain as the result of the sharp rise in gasoline prices. SEPTA said that part of a recent two-percent increase in ridership is due to commuters abandoning their automobiles, but it is impossible to accurately estimate the impact on transit of the average 60-cents-per-gallon increase in fuel costs since last year. SEPTA even plans to place bumper stickers on some of its buses to spell out the message of leaving the car at home. On the other side of the coin, SEPTA is fortunate to have locked in a price of 52 cents per gallon for diesel fuel on a futures contract. SEPTA uses 14 million gallons of fuel a year.....A freak April snowstorm on Sunday the 9th, which dumped up to five inches of wet snow on the region, had no appreciable effect on SEPTA operations.....Well-known Trolley Enthusiast Joseph Alfonsi, Sr. died March 24 at his Overbrook home at the age of 85. Alfonsi, who had worked as a track supervisor for PTC and SEPTA for more than 40 years, was a founding member of the Buckingham Valley Trolley Association.



CSX NS OTHER ROADS

In a bow to Gilbert & Sullivan, Traffic World Magazine used the headline "A Short, Sharp Chop" to describe the sacking last month of three top CSX officials. On April 11 CSX announced that CSX Transportation President Ronald Conway, 56, was stepping down, together with two of his protégés, Senior VP Operations Gary Spiegel, 49, and Senior VP for Merchandise Service John Sammon, 49, all of them recruited from CONRAIL less than two years ago. While some analysts expressed surprise at their firing, one former CSX official was quoted in *Traffic World* as saying, "It appears that the old CSX culture just rejected the Conrail presence and was resistant to change and new ideas." CSX named three of its own to assume some of the duties of those departed. Paul R. Goodwin was promoted from executive VP to vice chairman, heading the effort to cut costs and improve the

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company's poor financial performance. P. Michael Giftos, formerly CSXT's senior VP & general counsel, took over as executive VP in charge of the railroad's merchandise, coal and auto marketing and sales, while CSXT Executive VP Michael J. Ward is now responsible for rail operations and network performance. Ward will assist Chairman and CEO John Snow in the crucial task of unsnarling CSX's yards and terminals and recapturing lost business.

Notwithstanding their disfavor with shippers and shareholders, CSX and NORFOLK SOUTHERN have issued "happy-face" annual reports for 1999. CSX's black-and-white report carries the following legend on the cover: "Strength: A powerful rail network—dedicated people—valuable customers." In his opening message, Chairman Snow declares that CSX "must regain shipper confidence by improving service and rooting out imbedded costs in our rail network." He also points to his "new management team" including Ron Conway as president of CSXT. To help sooth irritated shareholders, CSX again held its elaborate annual meeting and house party at the CSX-owned Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, WV, on April 27.

The cover of the full-color NS annual report shows a group of smiling employees above the slogan "Committed to Customer Service." Chairman & CEO David R. Goode is quoted inside as saying that NS "is again on a sure and steady course to improve customer service and realize the benefits of our expanded rail system." The report indicates the impact which the deterioration of service has had on NS's bottom line. Operating income plunged from \$630 million in 1998 to \$239 million last year, while operating revenues rose from \$4.2 billion to \$5.2 billion in the same period. Hitting close to home, CEO Goode's total compensation dropped from \$4.4 million in 1998 to just under \$2 million in 1999, while Vice Chairman & Chief Operating Officer Stephen Tobias took a cut from \$1.6 million to \$983,000. None of the 348 NS officials entitled to annual incentive bonuses received them in 1999.

CSX Chairman John Snow, 60, who wielded the axe on Conway, said that he personally would take charge of the railroad's faltering operations. Snow has been under extreme pressure to get CSX back on track since its takeover last June of a major part of CONRAIL operations. "I will run the railroad until it is fixed," Snow said, promising that he will right the ship by the end of this year. While NORFOLK SOUTHERN also has suffered through a painful takeover period—the common stock of both companies dropping more than 50-percent in value—NS recently has shown signs of recovery with all of its operating indicators improving. NS stock has also begun a rebound from a 12-month low, while CSX stock remains mired at around \$22.

CSX reported net income on its rail operations of \$339 million in 1999 versus \$428 million the previous year, even though revenues increased from \$5 billion to 5.6 billion in the same period. To add insult to injury, the Federal Railroad Administration in March reported that it conducted a safety audit of 4,000 miles of CSX track this winter, which revealed many serious defects. The railroad had reported a 60-percent increase in track-caused derailments over the past five years, but Snow said that a major repair program was underway and that he would head an internal review of the road's maintenance and improvement programs.

Mayor Paula Brown of Darby Borough is at it again (see March, April *Cinders*). On April 9, for the third time in two months, she parked her automobile across the CSX mainline at 6th & Main Streets in Darby, this time to protest malfunctioning crossing gates. Her earlier protests were inspired by a derailment in neighboring Yeadon and a stalled train blocking street crossings. But on April 20 an angry Federal judge hauled Mayor Brown before him on contempt of court charges for violating his February 22 order against any further interference with CSX rail operations. Judge James McGirr Kelly finally released her after she agreed not to do it again and the borough posted a \$5,000 bond against future violations. A CSX spokesman denied Brown's charges that its trains and tracks are unsafe, but she in turn threatened to file a complaint with the FRA. Earlier, CSX had issued orders to its crews not to stop trains in the area, in order to avoid blocked crossings.....A CSX freight train enroute from South Philadelphia to Lansdale derailed five cars April 10 on the Stony Creek branch near Norristown, including one tank car containing hazardous chemicals. Twenty residents of a nearby condominium complex were evacuated.....CSX handled the 56-car Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Red Unit circus train from Philadelphia to New York on April 24 behind GE AC unit #627.

To help combat crew shortages in its Northern Region, which includes former CONRAIL territory, NORFOLK SOUTHERN is offering special bonuses to train and engine personnel from other regions who agree to a temporary work transfer. Employees willing to accept such duty will receive a wage bonus of \$2,500 per month and a daily meal allowance of \$35 (Dave Mears).....The CONRAIL Shared Assets Area in New Jersey has received three cabooses painted in NORFOLK SOUTHERN red and one in CSX gray. They retain the familiar CR wheel-on-rail logo and lettering (*Railpace*).....Two women and two children were killed April 20 in a tragic grade crossing accident in Sinking Spring, PA, on NORFOLK SOUTHERN's Harrisburg Line west of Reading. According to newspaper reports, the driver and her two-year-old child, accompanied by a friend and another child, were being pursued by the driver's 22-year-old ex-boyfriend in a second car when she was forced to stop at a grade crossing because the gates were down. The pursuer then rammed her car from behind, shoving it into the path of a 74-car eastbound NS freight train which smashed the car and dragged it for more than 50 yards. The boyfriend was arrested and is being held without bail in Berks County Prison.

UNION PACIFIC plans to operate its train of Armour-yellow office cars to Philadelphia for the Republican National Convention at the end of July. Most likely powered by UP's restored trio of E9 diesel locomotives, the train is expected to travel over CSX lines from Chicago via Baltimore. To cover all bases, the train then will head for the Democratic convention in Los Angeles.....In an important precedent for the railroad industry, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled last month that railroads cannot be held liable for accidents at highway grade crossings when the warning signs are paid for with Federal funds. The case stemmed from a lawsuit filed against NORFOLK SOUTHERN by the widow of a truck driver struck and killed by a train in Tennessee. The Supreme Court, in overturning a lower court decision awarding the widow \$431,000 in damages, said that a 1970 Federal law that provided funds for warning signs preempted the suit, which was brought under state law.

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AMTRAK has installed a new interlocking named "Ruthby" at milepost 36.5 on its Washington mainline north of Newark, DE. It allows trains to diverge to and from a new track "A" which will serve the soon-to-be-opened Fairplay at Churchmans Crossing commuter station. Track "A" formerly ended at "Davis" interlocking, MP 38.4.....AMTRAK has completed work on the new platforms at Wilmington station, reopening track 3 for normal service through the station.....AMTRAK now allows any Corridor train consisting of AEM-7 locomotives and Amfleet equipment to operate at maximum track speed west of New York and south of Philadelphia. Previously, only Metroliner-designated trains could run faster than 110 mph.....AMTRAK'S new senior budget director is Rob DuBow, who resigned in March as budget director for the City of Philadelphia. His departure, along with a deputy, leaves Mayor Street woefully short in the department which formulates the City's \$2.7-billion annual budget.

Lancaster Chapter NRHS has decided to donate the original Pennsy GG1, #4800, to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg. The historic locomotive has long been stored at the museum.....The State has awarded a \$600,000 grant to complete the restoration of ex-Pennsy K4 steam locomotive #1361. Restoration work on the locomotive is underway at the Steamtown shop in Scranton, and is already about 60-percent complete (Dave Mears).....Steamtown planned to operate four special trains with AMTRAK F40's and Amfleet cars over the weekend of April 28-29, to celebrate National Park Week. Two of the trips were to run to Mount Pocono and return and two over CANADIAN PACIFIC to Binghamton, NY and return. The Park Service did not release this schedule in time for inclusion in last month's "Extra List".

Now that the old Budd railcar plant on Red Lion Road in Northeast Philadelphia has been demolished, plans are proceeding to build a golf course on the 214-acre site.....*Railway Age* Magazine presented its "Railroaders of the Century" award to the Railroad Worker, at a ceremony March 21 in Chicago. The plaque was formally accepted by William Withuhn, transportation curator at the Smithsonian Institution, on behalf of the millions of rail workers past and present. It will go on a two-year tour of U.S. railroad museums.....Wabash National Corp. announced last month that it has manufactured its 10,000th RoadRailer unit, part of a 200-unit order for AMTRAK. NORFOLK SOUTHERN and several other railroads and truck lines also operate the highway-rail RoadRailers (Dave Mears).

Chapter Officers Re-Elected for 2000-2001

All incumbent officers of Philadelphia Chapter were re-elected at the April Chapter meeting for the 2000-2001 year. They are: Douglas W. Watts, president; Leslie J. Dean, senior vice president; Charles E. Van Reed, vice president & treasurer; Marie K. Eastwood, secretary; Frank G. Tatnall, national director.

EXTRA LIST (Continued from Page 2)

JUNE 18: "Day Cape Codder" excursion from Boston's South Station at 8 AM, via MBTA's new Old Colony Railroad to the land of sand dunes and salty air. Return about 8:30 PM. Fare: \$65 per person. Order tickets from: Mystic Valley Railway Society, P. O. Box 365486, Hyde Park, MA 02136-0009. For information, telephone 617-361-4445.

JUNE 24: "Make-Your-Own-Sundae Dessert Train" on Reading & Northern Railroad, sponsored by Reading Company Technical & Historical Society. Train departs Temple (PA) station 6:30 PM for ride to Hamburg and return, with stop at Leesport, where you can make your own ice cream sundae. Fares: Adult \$11.00, children 4-12, \$6.00, family \$32.00 (two adults and two children). Order tickets from: RCT&HS Passenger Operations, P.O. Box 15143, Reading, PA 19612-5143, making checks payable to RCT&HS and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For information, telephone Jay Zimmerman at 717-336-4168.

JUNE 24-25: "Sea Train Excursion" at the Earle (NJ) Naval Weapons Station, sponsored by United Railroad Historical Society. Passengers will ride in 1950's-era coaches behind U.S. Navy locomotives over government railroad from Earle Station to Leonardo pier near Sandy Hook, leaving at 9 AM each day. Fares: \$35 adults, \$25 children. Order tickets from: URHS, 112 Hill Top Lane, Neshanic Station, NJ 08853-4148, specifying preferred date and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For information, telephone 732-671-9644 between 7 and 9:30 PM. Directions to Naval Weapons Station at Earle will be provided with tickets.

JUNE 25: 22nd annual Canal Festival at Hugh Moore Park, Easton, PA, 11 AM-6 PM, sponsored by National Canal Museum. Featured attractions include boat rides on restored section of Lehigh Canal, regional arts and crafts, musical entertainment, living history encampment and food of all kinds. Admission: \$7 per car for on-site parking. For information, telephone 610-559-6613.

JULY 11-16: "New Haven Rails 2000" NRHS national convention at Stamford, CT, sponsored by Western Connecticut Chapter. Official registration booklet and order form was mailed last month to all pre-registered members. Convention features several excursions, museum visits, tours, night photo session, "YouthRail", and the annual banquet. Headquarters hotel is the Stamford Marriott. For tickets and further information, write: New Haven Rails 2000, P. O. Box 1188, Southport, CT 06490-1188.

Pioneer Railcorp. to Continue *The Short Line*

Pioneer Railcorp., the 15-railroad shortline conglomerate operating 440 miles of track in nine states, has announced that it has acquired the publishing rights, trade name and other assets of *The Short Line*, 25-year-old publication about shortline and industrial roads.

Acquired from *The Short Line* Founder and Publisher Garreth M. McDonald, who will continue as a contributing columnist, Pioneer Railroad Services will publish *TSL* beginning with the May-June, 2000 issue. The March-April issue will be the last published by McDonald.

Shortline enthusiasts will welcome the news that this publication will continue to serve their needs.

50th Anniversary Special Reading Company FP7's 902-903

Saturday, June 3, 2000



ELECTRO-MOTIVE



Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS cordially invites you to participate in and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of former Reading Company FP7's #902 and 903 on a special excursion operating on Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's former Reading Company lines on Saturday, June 3, 2000. The 902 and 903, respectively owned by Lancaster and Philadelphia Chapters, made their first revenue trips on the Reading on June 2, 1950, and this event will be commemorated by their return to mainline duty following many years of hard restoration work by NRHS personnel.

This special excursion train, consisting of the two FP7's, one SEPTA RL1 diesel (for head-end power) and five Bombardier push-pull coaches, will leave 30th Street Station's Upper Level at 8:30 AM, EDT, and is expected to return about 5:30 PM. The trip will cover the former Reading Lansdale, Norristown and West Trenton branches, with photo stops being made as operating conditions permit. A lunch stop will be made during the day. Seats are limited, and tickets are priced as follows:

Adults: \$45.00 Children (12 and under): \$35.00

PLEASE NOTE: SEPTA commuter rail equipment is not normally restroom equipped, but we will have one or two toilets on these cars for a personal emergency situation; conserve accordingly! Order tickets using the coupon below. A chartered bus will operate from Lancaster and Christiana, PA by Lancaster Chapter NRHS to Philadelphia for this trip, at additional cost of \$20. per person. For information on the trip and chartered bus, phone 215-947-5769 evenings between 7 and 10 PM. Join us as we celebrate the Golden Anniversary of for Reading FP7's 902 and 903.

------(Clip and Mail)-----

Ticket Agent
Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS
P. O. Box 7302
Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

_____ ADULT TICKETS
@ \$45.00 each - \$ _____

_____ CHILD TICKETS
@ \$35.00 each- \$ _____

TOTAL AMT. ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please send me tickets for the Reading FP7 902-903 50th Anniversary excursion on Saturday, June 3, 2000 over SEPTA Regional Rail Lines as shown at the right of this order form. I have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope for mailing of my tickets.

Name _____ Telephone _____ - _____ - _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____ - _____

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