

CINDEERS

DECEMBER 2001



IN THIS ISSUE

Philadelphia Chapter News.....	1, 2
ON THE SCENE, by Elbert W. Simon, Jr.....	3
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS, by Frank Tatnall.....	5
Extra List.....	7

Volume 62

Newsletter of the

Number 11

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

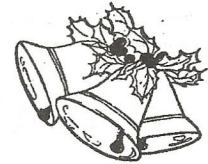
National Railway Historical Society

Post Office Box 7302

Philadelphia, PA 19101



Happy Holidays



President's Message

The holidays will soon be here and we will all be making plans to share this special time with family and friends. After the events of September 11, 2001, we should all take time to reflect on the real meaning of this season.

As we look forward to 2002, let us take time to ponder how we can help in the preservation of rail history in the coming year. We have a strong, knowledgeable group of members, and one way to enhance the effort is to volunteer to assist in one of many ways: train shows, working on the FP7's, joining a chapter committee, providing a program for a chapter meeting.

Too, after the World Trade Center and Pentagon events, I urge every member to accept and understand that we now live in a time of heightened security, and we need to demonstrate appropriate demeanor when anywhere near rail properties. We must be cognizant of the need for railroad police to do their job in insuring that the rails are safe for passengers and freight alike.

The officers of Philadelphia Chapter join me in extending to you and your families every wish for a safe and joyous Holiday Season. We also thank all those who helped make 2001 a success for our chapter and look forward with enthusiasm and confidence as we witness and preserve rail history in 2002.

DAVID KOPENA
President

MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 14, 2001

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

Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM
Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9th Street above Locust
(\$6.00 after 6 PM), or Parkway garage, also 9th above Locust
(\$5.75 after 6 PM), Downtown Garage, Walnut Street each of
10th (\$4.00 after 6 PM)

Our December 14, 2001 meeting will feature an excellent slide program from the NRHS Film Library. The 140-slide program is entitled **New England Rails**, and contains many outstanding vintage views of passenger and freight railroading in New England dating back to the 1940's and 1950's. This slide program has been previewed and is well worth seeing. Don't miss it!

The evening will begin with our usual sit-down dinner in the Faculty Club, 2nd Floor, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University, beginning at 6:15 PM, at a cost of \$20.00 per person (please note price adjustment from last year). **DINNER RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY AND MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 11, 2001** 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!**

Looking forward, our meeting on Friday, January 18, 2002 will feature our annual Railroadiana Auction, and the February 15, 2002 meeting the annual Ray Muller Slide Contest. Mark your calendar for these future events, and don't miss seeing an excellent slide program of vintage New England railroading December 14!

**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, INC.**
Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

Founded 1936, Incorporated 1973 as a 501c3 non-profit corporation

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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: \$35.00 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 and E-Mail address so our Membership List is complete. We will notify the NRHS National Headquarters of the change.

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

Historic "Strasburg Special" Huge Success

On a beautiful late summer Saturday, September 8, Lancaster and Philadelphia Chapters' FP7's 902 and 903 teamed up to lead **The Strasburg Special** on a historic trip from Philadelphia's 30th Street Station to Strasburg. This marked the first time a mainline passenger train had operated directly into Strasburg over the Strasburg Rail Road. There have been previous excursions to Strasburg, but they always involved a change of trains at the interchange at Leaman Place, PA.

The special train consisted of FP7's 902 and 903, SEPTA RL1 diesel 60 (for head-end power only), and SEPTA Bombardier push-pull coaches 2520, 2410, 2559, 2510 and 2408. The train was operated as a SEPTA train, and Chapter Members Frank Lancaster and John Ciavatta served as engineer and conductor, respectively. Also on board was SEPTA Transportation Manager Andy Andrijiwskyj, who went to great lengths to provide the 311 paying passengers on board an enjoyable day. Andrijiwskyj, a former Reading Railroad employee, was also the transportation manager on board the SEPTA trip on June 3, 2000 which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Electro-Motive-built cab units.

The train was delayed in arriving at 30th Street Station to take on passengers because the SEPTA RL1 was overheating and the head-end power shutting down. A call was made to Wayne Electric Car Shop to send RL1 61 to 30th Street in case the 60 had to be swapped out, but the decision was made to leave the 60 in the train, and the 61 arrived at Powelton yard just as our special was departing, almost one hour late. The head-end power functioned for the remainder of the trip, with only a couple of minor shutdown periods on the return trip in the evening. SEPTA has scheduled head-end power overhauls for both units in the near future.

After leaving 30th Street Station, the FP7's performed flawlessly all day, and a quick run was made along Amtrak's Harrisburg Line to Paoli for a suburban passenger pickup. The train then headed west through the scenic Chester and Lancaster County countryside, with numerous photographers noted along the route recording the special on film.

A passenger pickup was scheduled at Christiana, where a local town observance was being held to commemorate an antislavery uprising that occurred in 1851. Nearly 40 passengers entrained at Christiana to take the round-trip from there to Strasburg and return. One passenger from Washington, DC who rode from Philadelphia actually detrained at Christiana to participate in the town event, which included a parade and speeches, followed by a joint ministry and reconciliation dinner on Sunday.

Because of the late departure from Philadelphia, the Special encountered some further delay on arrival at Leaman Place, because of regular Amtrak and Strasburg trains. The FP7's were run around the train at Leaman Place so that they would be on the front of the Special as it made its grand entrance into East Strasburg. A photo stop was made at Groff's Grove on the Strasburg to allow the regular steam train to pass in each direction, and passengers were able to record the action on film.

On arrival at Strasburg, the passengers were offered a whole host of activities to keep them well occupied during the four-hour layover. Because the train arrived nearly two hours late, a decision was made that the return trip would also depart two hours later, providing the full visitation time originally scheduled. Some passengers stayed on the Strasburg Rail Road property, eating lunch, visiting the gift shop, or even riding the regular Strasburg steam train. Others visited the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, across Route 741 from the Strasburg Rail Road.

A shuttle bus was provided to get passengers to the historic Strasburg Inn, downtown Strasburg, the Toy Train Museum, as well as the train's layover point at Groff's, where photo opportunities were plentiful. The bus operation was coordinated and arranged by Lancaster Chapter Member Tom Shenk, and was a bit hit with the passengers. Philadelphia Chapter extends its thanks to Tom for his excellent efforts.

(Continued on Page 7)



Happy Thanksgiving! As Amtrak approached another Thanksgiving season, two major developments threatened to make life very interesting for Amtrak observers.

First, as required by law, the Amtrak Reform Council officially stated its conclusion that Amtrak would not achieve self-sufficiency by 2002. This was really a "no-brainer" on its face, but now considerable attention will have to be diverted to planning for a "dissolution" of its passenger service. Of course, the simple course would be to recognize that financial self-sufficiency is an illusion and then get on with whatever corrective action all parties can agree on.

Also, the consortium building the Acela Express trainsets filed suit for alleged damages it claims Amtrak's actions caused, promptly followed by Amtrak's expression of disagreement. Actually, a legal proceeding would serve to resolve many rumors that have swirled around these trains.

As Amtrak was gearing up for Thanksgiving, several new features were noted this year. Most trains, with the exception of the clockers and Keystone trains, were all-reserved. There were fewer extra trains scheduled, although more Acela Express trains were planned. Full fares were to be charged every day of the Thanksgiving period. Extra trains with Amfleet equipment were given 1000-series numbers and those with borrowed commuter equipment were given 3000-series numbers. An extra Horizon-fleet equipped train was scheduled to make 5-1/2 round-trips between Portland and Seattle during the Thanksgiving period.

Downeaster service between Boston and Portland, ME will begin December 15, scheduled to operate with two trainsets, each of which will be made up of a GE P40, three former Metroliner Service coaches, a split club and a cab-baggage (ex-F40) control unit. Four round-trips will be scheduled each day, and trains will be numbered between 680 and 687.

Food service will be catered by the New England Food Service Company of Maynard, MA. They intend to freshly prepare the selections each day, with an upscale menu to include box lunches you can take with you. The club section will offer Coastal Club service, including a complimentary newspaper and non-alcoholic beverage.

Bicycles and skis can be carried by advance reservation, and three stations won't be used daily at the start: Old Orchard Beach, ME (summer only); Saco, ME (open next spring) and Durham-UNH (Friday-Sunday), the latter being the stop providing service to the University of New Hampshire.

Perhaps the easiest way to transfer to and from Corridor trains to **Downeaster** trains would be to take MBTA's Orange Line subway from North Station and Back Bay via Washington Street and downtown Boston.

Amtrak issued a new National Timetable dated October 30, incorporating many changes made over the period since the previous system timetable was issued.

Amtrak has taken considerable steps to heighten security, including an increased police presence. Employees are being urged to look for people in areas not normally accessible to "guests". They are to alert police immediately whenever suspicious behavior is observed. Railfans can at times be considered as suspicious if an employee chooses. As we stated here last month, don't risk being hassled by an employee who is only trying to observe Amtrak's policies. Use good judgment. I've decided not to be "on the scene" this year, relying instead on reliable official information sources.

NJ Transit has agreed to take over clocker service within five years. Transit will increase payments to Amtrak for honoring commuter tickets on these trains. New Jersey will also purchase an additional rush-hour slot at New York's Penn Station. Moreover, the state will contribute funds to refurbish assigned cars and locomotives, as well as jointly funding with Amtrak a \$35-million program to improve track, signals and safety the part of the Corridor NJ Transit uses.

In response to a request from Congress for how it might use funding for additional equipment, Amtrak indicated a need for \$140 million to purchase 16 Superliners and 38 Viewliners. The Viewliners would consist of 20 more sleepers (additional capacity) and 18 diners (to replace 60 percent of the existing fleet). Additional capacity would be provided on certain trains which sell out relatively early and could thus generate additional ridership and revenue.

Of course, all the above may well turn out to be academic, and it is presumed that Amtrak would also repair the large backlog of wreck-damage cars littering Beech Grove.

While Viewliner diners may be a while off, Amtrak's Heritage diner fleet should stabilize soon at 26 cars, at least until the next derailment. There will be 11 rebuilt cars (with rarely-used lunch counters) numbered 8504, 8505, 8507, 8510, 8515, 8527, 8551 and 8552. Three additional former buffet cars have been or soon will be rebuilt, emerging as diners 8530-8532. Seven additional cars will be completed as "in-kind" cars, being

(Continued on Page 4)

ON THE SCENE (Continued from Page 3)

refurbished in the same configuration as present: 8502, 8509, 8512, 8524, 8550, 8553 and 8559. Eight cars continue in service in the old three-stripe paint scheme: 8501, 8511, 8514, 8519, 8521, 8528, 8554 and 8558, with 8501, 8521 and 8558 having a grey rather than a tan interior. This leaves two Heritage diners which are likely retirement candidates: 8513 and 8556, both wreck victims. Viewliner diner 8400, currently stored, is expected to be returned to service with upgrades.

Prototype Viewliner sleeper 2301 has been released from Beech Grove, upgraded to production standards and renumbered and named: 62091-Eastern View. The last 10-6 Heritage sleepers released from Three Rivers service have been moved to Beech Grove for storage: 2450 (October 5) and 2440, 2446, 2466 (October 10).

Bear (DE) has turned out the first four Capstone coaches in perhaps a year, with 82077 (ex-21000, 10-01); 82078 (ex-21017, 10-16-01); 82079 (ex-21250, 10-25-01) and 82080 (ex-21237, 11-05-01). Car 21072 is also in the shop, expected to come out as 82081.

At the end of October, Alstom delivered Surfliner café car 6351, which joined five cars delivered earlier. At the same time, six Amtrak California sister cars were released: cab coaches 6961-6963 and coaches 6462-6463.

Several clocker coaches have been sent to Beech Grove for minor work, among them 7609, 7613 and 7617. The three Heritage lounge cars released from Adirondack service were stored at Bear in October (3111, 3126 and 3127). The latest Midwest Amcafe to enter Bear for conversion to an Amdinette is 20003.

In motive power items, the latest AEM-7's to enter the remanufacturing program are the 904 (October 1), 914 (October 11) and 934 (October 11).

General Electric has completed delivery of the latest order of P42's, ending with unit 207. To avoid duplicating numbers of existing stored F40's, three of these units (203, 206 and 207) are now X-203, etc. Long-stored RTG II turbo trainsets with similar numbers are likewise identified with a leading "X".

The era of the Amtrak F40 continues to spiral downward. The 268 brought the last F40-powered **Maple Leaf** into Albany-Rensselaer on November 5, one of ten units still active in the Northeast. The 265 was on Train 13 November 7 between Springfield and New Haven. The 10 active NEC F40's are 244, 265, 268, 271, 280, 288, 291, 301, 316 and 413, subject to change! Four of them are on work trains. F40's 226 and 278 are being modified for MBTA service.

Three F40's (231, 400 and 411) were in Chicago, facing an uncertain future, while four others, in Surfliner livery, are still on the west coast (381 and 415 on the San Joaquins and 383 and 399 on Cascades).

New Acela Express club service menus took effect in October. Three entrees are still available, but the dinners are more elaborate.

Erie Business Car Now on Display at Steamtown; Partnership Responsible

A very special and unique element of America's railroad history has been placed on display at Steamtown in Scranton. Through a partnership with the Lackawanna Heritage Valley, a \$20,000 grant was provided to Steamtown to rehabilitate and place on display Erie business car #3.

Built by Pullman in 1923, #3 was originally owned by the Nickel Plate Road as its #28, and later sold to the Erie as #3. The car underwent a major renovation, including air-conditioning, in 1938. One of five Erie business cars, the 3 was assigned to the Eastern District Vice President/General Manager at Jersey City.

Steamtown Acting Superintendent Kip Hagen describes the addition of Erie 3 to Steamtown's collection of permanent exhibits as "...a catalyst in bringing the story of American railroading history to life. They (business cars) were the ultimate in luxury business travel and represented an important piece of American history that must be shared with the visiting public. (Steamtown) is grateful to the Lackawanna Heritage Valley for providing much-needed financial assistance to complete this project." Equipped with a spacious office/lounge area, four passenger rooms, a dining area, crew quarters, a galley and ample comfort facilities, the car could sleep nine passengers in comfort and accommodate any variety of business needs.

Steamtown's partnership with the Lackawanna Heritage Valley extends far beyond this most recent endeavor and has been a significant source of support for other major educational and interpretive projects. Last year, LHV obligated \$100,000 toward the estimated \$227,500 costs associated with the restoration of Baldwin Locomotive Works 0-6-0 #26. The sum of \$60,000 has been released thus far, and upon release of the remaining \$40,000, the project will enter its final phase.

Built by Baldwin Locomotive Works in March 1929, #6 arrived in Scranton in 1990. After nearly a decade of service as the primary motive power source for the popular "yard shuttle", the 0-6-0 was removed from service during 2000 and moved into Steamtown's restoration shop for extensive overhaul. The 26 is expected to be fully operational in time for the 2003 excursion season.

Amtrak employs contract switching locomotives at several locations, with a recent listing including Albuquerque, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, Kansas City, New Orleans, Emeryville and San Antonio.

Trinity Railway Express in Texas has extended its service from Dallas all the way to Fort Worth, with 15 trains running through and 12 short-turns to the Centerport DFW Airport station.

Although it was beyond the scope of the article in the most recent *National Railway Bulletin*, the Bellefonte Central used to handle impressive passenger trains every two years when Pitt played Penn State at State College. The 1964 train, which may have been the last, was pulled by four E8's (5809, 5712, 5714, 5703) and was made up of 15 coaches, diners 4478, 4486, 4487 and 4491, bar cars 1116 and 1125, a total of 21 cars. Must have been quite a sight coming around the horseshoe curve at Waddle.

PHILADELPHIA



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



SEPTA TRANSIT

commuter parking until such time as another eatery may open in the building.

In spite of the terrorist attack against the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, Willard Rouse's Liberty Property Trust is going ahead with plans to build a 52-story skyscraper at 17th & Arch Streets in center city. According to a report in the November 8 edition of the *Inquirer*, Liberty is refining the design of the new building to beef up safety features, such as widening fire escape stairways and moving water pipes supplying the sprinkler system to inside the protected core of the structure. The present building on the southwest corner of 17th & Arch is soon to be demolished. It houses the Defender Association, which will move its lawyers and staff to the long-vacant Packard Building on South 15th Street. Rouse's project, to be named One Pennsylvania Plaza, will include a second, smaller building and a public area with a new entrance to Suburban Station.

The departure of SEPTA General Manager John K. Leary, Jr. early next year (see November *Cinders*) casts a shadow over the \$1.6-billion Schuylkill Valley Metro proposal. Leary was the most ardent backer of the controversial project, which was submitted to the Federal Transit Administration for approval in October. PennDOT has been dragging its feet on MetroRail, as SEPTA has dubbed the proposal for a 62-mile commuter line between center city Philadelphia and Reading. The *Inquirer*, a strong proponent of MetroRail, ran an editorial on October 15 urging Governor Schweiker to show his concern for urban congestion "by flashing Harrisburg's green light" for the project.

As reported last month, a bill before Congress would provide \$71 billion to upgrade railroad infrastructure for high-speed passenger service. Entitled the Rail Infrastructure Development & Expansion Act for the 21st Century (RIDE-21), the bill would make half of the funding available to freight railroads to help rebuild their track for passenger trains. This, said the head of the American Public Transportation Association, could also directly benefit many commuter railroads in urban areas.....Another bill introduced in the Senate, known as RAIL-21, would authorize \$35 billion in loans and guarantees for both passenger and freight rail systems. Unlike RIDE-21, the Senate measure would include AMTRAK among the recipients (*Traffic World*).....The Stazi Milano restaurant in Jenkintown has closed, leaving the many parking spaces reserved for diners unused. DVARP is urging SEPTA to release these spaces for

The SEPTA board's effort to replace General Manager Jack Leary has drawn a good deal of attention in the press. Initially, Board Chairman Pasquale Deon, Sr. appeared to favor choosing from two internal candidates, Treasurer Faye Moore or Assistant General Manager Pat Nowakowski. He appointed a search committee composed of five board members, which last month decided instead to conduct a nationwide search for a new GM. But the committee said it would handle the search itself, rather than hiring an outside "headhunter" firm. Leary, who is paid \$205,000 a year, now plans to remain on the job until February 1, 2002, when his five-year contract expires. Leary, 58, announced his departure in October.

An *Inquirer* editorial published November 12 urged SEPTA to hire a successor to Leary "who has national standing and the experience to oversee projects." The newspaper credited Leary with doing a good job "because he was a skilled, nationally respected transit professional. He has kept SEPTA on track, spending hundreds of millions a year renovating the nation's fifth-largest transit system." But the editorial expressed concern over a possible return of the rancorous political climate that infused the SEPTA board in past years. "SEPTA was a mess in the years before Mr. Leary and (his predecessor) Louis Gambaccini," the editorial declared. Now, one board member charges that the panel again has become "very political," and "involved even more than usual in every SEPTA contract detail (while) trying to micromanage the agency."

Four employees of a former SEPTA paratransit contractor have been charged with defrauding SEPTA of more than \$700,000 by billing the Authority for services that were never provided. The *Inquirer* reported last month that the Montgomery County district attorney said that the four, who worked for King Paratransit Service, forged the signatures of disabled riders and billed for "ghost rides" never given.....The first group of 200 new Flyer-built low-floor buses have been placed in service. They are numbered in SEPTA's 5400 series.....Subway-surface trolleys were diverted to the 40th & Market subway station during the four weekends in late October and November to allow renewal of overhead wires.....SEPTA's police force now numbers 265 officers.

(Continued on Page 6)

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 5)



AMTRAK

As mentioned above, AMTRAK is hoping to gain some much-needed funding from the RAIL-21 bill now being considered in the U.S. Senate. This bill, introduced by Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina, would provide \$35 billion in direct loans and loan guarantees to passenger and freight railroads. It would be in addition to the \$1.77 billion contained in the Rail Security Act of 2001, which is to go directly to Amtrak for safety and security improvements.

Senator Hollings and many of his colleagues also believe that the present law requiring AMTRAK to become operationally self-sufficient by the end of next year is unrealistic and should be repealed. Allan Rutter, the new Federal Railroad Administrator, has indicated that the Bush Administration favors maintaining the status quo of Amtrak through Fiscal Year 2003, which begins next October 1, in order to allow debate on the future of intercity rail passenger service. The Amtrak Reform Council, meanwhile, has decided that Amtrak cannot meet its existing goal of self-sufficiency and should prepare a plan for liquidation.

AMTRAK's ridership remains strong in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks and the American Airlines crash November 12 in New York City. Overall Amtrak ridership in October was about three percent higher than the level of October 2000, in spite of the downturn in travel and the economy, Trains.com reports. And the Thanksgiving travel period promised to be a big one for AMTRAK as it added thousands of seats to its regular trains and required reservations on normally non-reserved trains in the Northeast Corridor. In response to the ongoing anthrax scare, AMTRAK last month began precautionary testing of employees who work at mail and express facilities in New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

AMTRAK dedicated one of its new P42 diesel locomotives to former Board Chairman Tommy Thompson, who also served as governor of Wisconsin and is now President Bush's secretary of health & human services. In a November 1 ceremony at Washington Union Station, locomotive #182 was officially named the Governor Tommy G. Thompson. This is believed to be the first Amtrak locomotive to be named for an individual, although a few passenger cars have borne such names (Trains). The new Newark International Airport station on AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor opened on October 21. The station connects with the monorail system serving the airport terminals. Initially, 36 Amtrak and 124 NJ TRANSIT trains are scheduled to stop there on weekdays (Jersey Central Chapter). AMTRAK has added a new speech-recognition system to its 800-USA-RAIL toll-free number for callers seeking train status reports. Callers may speak the train number and station instead of punching them in on the telephone (Weekly Rail Recap).

**Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS
ANNUAL RAILRODIANA AUCTION
Friday, January 18, 2002**



CSX NS OTHER ROADS

CSX reported net income of \$100 million in the third quarter, compared with \$59 million a year ago. Revenues of \$2.02 billion compared with \$2.04 billion in the third quarter last year. Meanwhile, NORFOLK SOUTHERN reported third quarter net income of \$79 million, compared with \$99 million in the third quarter 2000 (which included a \$46-million gain from the sale of timber properties). Revenues of \$1.51 billion this year compared with \$1.54 billion in the third quarter of 2000. NS's operating ratio was 83.8 percent (Weekly Rail Recap).

A \$40,000 grant from the State will help pay for brush and tree clearing to improve spectator visibility at NS's Horseshoe Curve near Altoona. Local people are trying to raise the other \$10,000 needed (Harrisburg Chapter). In Birdsboro, PA, NS is rebuilding about 1.5 miles of the former Reading Wilmington & Northern branch in order to reach a stone quarry south of town (Harrisburg Chapter). CSX is reorganizing its Merchandise Group away from the traditional commodity-based approach, says William J. Flynn, senior VP for merchandise. His group accounts for about half of FSX's more than \$7 billion in annual revenues (Trains). CONRAIL plans to close "NK" tower on the Lehigh Line in Newark, NJ, transferring control of the interlocking to its dispatching center at Mount Laurel, NJ (Railpace).

NJ TRANSIT and AMTRAK are negotiating the takeover by NJT of the historic Philadelphia-New York "Clocker" service, effective in 2006. It's not certain, however, that NJT would retain the same number of trains from and to Philadelphia, rather than originating some of them at its new yard in Morrisville (DVARP). NJ TRANSIT train #4614 struck and killed a woman in Berlin, NJ on October, 23, after she drove around the lowered crossing gates. The train was enroute from Atlantic City to Philadelphia. A new law allowing casinos to be built in New York State is causing near-panic among Atlantic City casino operators, who count New York residents as among their most loyal customers. Already, the Inquirer reports, the proposed \$1.5-billion MGM Mirage Casino in the Marina District has been put on hold. It was the prospect of this mammoth development that caused the State to spend \$330 million for a new tunnel, whose freeway crosses NJT's mainline directly in front of the Atlantic City rail station. Those 33 new 4,000-hp diesel locomotives ordered from Alstom for NJT service (see October Cinders) will be assembled at Alstom's Hornell (NY) plant (Jersey Central Chapter).

It now looks like the proposed P&W hiking-biking trail in Radnor Township will actually be built. The local press reports that a NIMBY suit against the project has been dismissed by a U. S. circuit court, and PennDOT will soon move into the final design stage for the 2.2-mile trail. The trail, to be built on the abandoned Philadelphia & Western Strafford branch right-of-way, has been on the drawing board since 1994. MARC has announced that it will begin a new passenger rail service between Frederick, MD and Washington on December 17. The project involved rebuilding 14 miles of CSX's former Baltimore & Ohio trackage into Frederick,

(Continued on Page 8)

Strasburg Special (Continued from Page 2)

Promptly at 5:30 PM, the Special, with RL1 60 on the head end and the 902 and 903 pushing, departed Strasburg for Leaman Place and the return trip to Philadelphia. At Leaman Place, the train reversed direction, with the 902 and 903 leading and the RL1 on the rear as it ran down the Amtrak Harrisburg Line. Passenger discharge stops were made at Christiana and Paoli, and the train arrived back at 30th Street just about two hours late.

The entire FP7 restoration crew, headed by Cindy and Nelson Bowers, kept the units performing well all day. The transition on the units, which was balky on the June, 2000 trip, performed to perfection following calibration earlier in the year.

Larry Eastwood served as train manager for the trip, with Marie Eastwood handling last-minute on-board ticket sales. Wayne Bode, Dave Kopena, Pete Senin, Doug Volk and Jerry Wilson served as car hosts from Philadelphia Chapter, and Rebekah Bowers, John Brown, Jim Lyle, Joe Rider and Dave Taylor served as car hosts from Lancaster Chapter. Lancaster Chapter also had their sales table on board the train.

The excursion received full support from SEPTA, Amtrak and the Strasburg. James C. Llewellyn III, Director, Finance & Administration at SEPTA, handled detailed arrangements for the trip, and Ed Murphy and Jim Kirk insured that the motive power and equipment details were attended to. Strasburg President Linn Moedinger was of assistance to us, and Strasburg Conductor Dale Secker rode the trip from Philadelphia and then took charge once the train was interchanged to the Strasburg at Leaman Place. Chapter Publicity Chair Bill Faltermayer made contacts to assist in publicizing the trip, as did Equipment Chair Bob Morris.

Numerous other people were instrumental in the success of the September 8th excursion. In reviewing the operation of the trip, many have noted that the trip, operated just three days before the tragic events of September 11, would have become a rather somber operation had it been scheduled on any day later than it was.

The Chapter expresses its appreciation to those who worked to make the trip the huge success it was, as well as to those who supported the outing through their ticket purchases.



DECEMBER 8: NJ Transit "Santa Claus Train" sponsored by Jersey Central Chapter NRHS departs Westfield, NJ at 9:45 AM and 1:45 PM for one-hour and 45-minute round-trip to High Bridge, NJ. Santa Claus will be on board and each child will receive a coloring book, crayons and candy cane. Riders will have a chance to win an HO-gauge trainset. Order tickets from: Jersey Central Railway Historical Society, 60 Cheswick Court, Bedminster, NJ 07921. For information, telephone 908-781-1896 (website: www.jcrhs.com).

DECEMBER 8: "Santa Train" on NJ Transit, operating round-trip between Netcong and Hackettstown, NJ, sponsored by Tri-State Chapter NRHS. Train departs Netcong and Hackettstown at approximately 9:30 and 11:45 AM. Another train will leave Netcong for Dover, NJ at approximately 2 PM, making round-trip Netcong-Dover-Netcong-Dover. Fares: \$9 adults, \$7 children. Order tickets from: Tri-State Railway Historical Society, P. O. Box 6076, Bridgewater, NJ 08807-0076, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope and specifying train and boarding location. For information, telephone 973-656-0707 (website: www.tri-state-rail-history.org/santa).

JANUARY 12-13, 2002: Open house at Cheltenham Hills Model Railroad Club (former Reading Ogontz station), 8000 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA, 12 Noon-4 PM. Donations accepted. Event will be repeated January 19-20. For information, telephone 215-635-9747.

Over Thanksgiving WAR TRAVEL GETS FIRST PLACE ON The Reading



Please remember that if you're planning a trip this week, you may have to stand. Your train may be late or so crowded you cannot get on. Customary extra holiday sections of trains will not be operated. It's almost certain that your Thanksgiving trip won't be as comfortable as it used to be, or as we should like it to be.

Remember that in addition to greatly increased travel, due to war industry, troop movements and furloughs, we are also carrying additional traffic that formerly moved over the highways.

If you **must** travel over the Thanksgiving Holiday, we will bend every effort to take care of you. But our War job comes first—over Thanksgiving and always—and nothing must interfere with it. So we ask you to understand and to cooperate with us. *Don't travel unless your trip is really necessary.*

Reading Railway System

11-23-42 LRT A.L.S.

(---from a Reading Railroad flyer dated Nov. 23, 1942)

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 6)

and should relieve crowding at Point of Rocks, MD and other stations (*Weekly Rail Recap*).....Correcting a statement here last month, MARC has ordered six new HHP-8 electric locomotives (4910-4915), of which #4911 was the first delivered.....The FRA is considering a new rule requiring railroads to install reflective strips on the sides of all railcars, in order to help reduce night-time grade crossing accidents (*Trains*).....NEW HOPE & IVYLAND has received a \$300,000 grant from PennDOT for bridge and track repairs. PENN EASTERN, which operates several branchlines in southeastern Pennsylvania (including the Perkiomen branch), also was awarded \$300,000 (DVARP).

As *Cinders* was being put to be on Sunday evening, November 25, information was received of delays of two hours or more on Amtrak trains operating between New York and Boston because of a CSX freight derailment at Oak Point Yard in the Bronx. Seven cars of a CSX freight derailed, some holding trash containers, and one catenary pole was struck, causing wires to dip and forcing the use of CSX diesels to tow Amtrak trains through the area. Amtrak's ridership on this heaviest travel day of the year was reportedly running about 20 percent above last year's Thanksgiving weekend. Trains between New York and Washington also incurred shorter delays (Walter Zullig).

My best holiday wishes to all Cinders readers!

Polar Express Rolls into Steamtown

Word from Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton tells us that holiday favorite, **The Polar Express**, will once again this year come to life on December 7-9 and December 13-15, 2001.

Amid the clanging of bells and the sounding of vintage train whistles, passengers on board this special holiday tour will travel through Steamtown's own winter wonderland while feasting on cookies, sipping hot cocoa and hearing the classic tale narrated by Santa's helpers. Santa and his elves will also be there to insure that each child receives a very special momento of this delightful evening visit to the North Pole.

The schedule for **The Polar Express** is 5:00, 6:30 and 8:00 PM each evening Friday, December 7 through Sunday, December 9 and Thursday, December 13 through Saturday, December 15. Tickets are available at \$8.00 per person (age 1 and above), and all children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Due to high demand and limited seating, reservations are strongly recommended and may be obtained by contacting Steamtown at 1-570-340-5203 or 1-888-693-9391. No exchanges or refunds will be honored except in the event of program cancellation due to inclement weather.

Steamtown advises that the popular children's picture book, **The Polar Express**, will be available for purchase in the Steamtown Museum Shop throughout the event.

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