

MEMBERS

MAY 2016



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

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS WEBSITE ADDRESS: www.phillyNRHS.com

Amtrak “Farewell to the AEM-7” Trip Set for June 18

Meeting Cancellation Notice
In the event of an extreme weather or transportation emergency on a Philadelphia Chapter meeting date, Chapter officers will make a decision on whether to hold the meeting as scheduled. If in doubt, members should telephone 215-947-5769 after 12 Noon on the day of the meeting for a recorded advisory. Thank you.

Tickets Expected to Go on Sale May 2

Since 1980, Amtrak’s iconic AEM-7 electric locomotives have distinguished themselves carrying passengers between Washington, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Harrisburg and everywhere in between. Together with the introduction and growth of Acela Express, they have built on the legacies of the Pennsylvania and New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroads as the Northeast Corridor has expanded into the 21st Century as a first-class passenger railroad.

Now, after 37 years and over 220 million miles of service, they are being replaced by the new, advanced next-generation Siemens Cities Sprinter locomotives. It is time to give a proper sendoff to true workhorses of America’s Passenger Railroad. On Saturday, June 18, 2016, Amtrak will salute these remarkable machines with a special “Farewell to the AEM-7 Excursion”. Be sure to join Amtrak and be part of a celebration of railroad history.

The Trip – The special train will depart from Washington – Union Station, DC at 9:10 AM, and operate north on the Corridor, passing through Baltimore and Wilmington enroute to Philadelphia (there will be no intermediate passenger station stops – an en-route photo opportunity is planned). In Philadelphia, the train will be turned on the wye trackage near the Philadelphia Zoo, including the “New York & Pittsburgh Subway” and other connecting trackage in the Philadelphia terminal area not normally used by passenger trains.

Returning to Washington, passengers will have the opportunity to detrain for a brief walking tour of Amtrak’s Wilmington (DE) shop facility that was so integral to the successful service of the AEM-7’s and other electric locomotives dating back to the days of the legendary Pennsylvania Railroad. There will be photo opportunities with a variety of equipment during the stopover. At 3:45 PM, passengers will re-board the excursion train for the return trip south to Washington, DC. Arrival is scheduled for 5:40 PM.

Meeting Notice

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2016

Room 121, Randell Hall (access through Main Hall main entrance, 3141 Chestnut Street – just east of 32nd) Drexel University, (three blocks from Amtrak/SEPTA/NJ Transit 30th Street Station (*In the event meeting is relocated to another room, notice will be posted beside the grand staircase inside entrance to Main Hall*)). In addition to being easily accessible to all public transportation, there is generally plenty of parking on Chestnut Street right in front of Main Hall – pay at the kiosks.

MEETING START TIME: 7:00 PM

On Friday, May 20, our program will feature Amtrak Vice President-Operations Chris Jagodzinski, who will give a presentation covering **ACSES (Positive Train Control) on the Northeast Corridor**. Jagodzinski recently provided a similar program at Massachusetts Bay RRE’s annual banquet during April.

Chris, a native of the King of Prussia area, graduated from Northeastern University in Boston in 1991 with a degree in Transportation Logistics. Chris has a 27-year career with Amtrak, and had spent time with both New Jersey Transit Rail Operations and SEPTA’s Regional Rail Division prior to joining America’s Railroad. He lives in Haverford and often rides SEPTA. This presentation should be an informative and timely presentation for our members and guests.

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS
Board of Directors Meeting
Spring, 2016

Passenger Services Conference Room
Amtrak 30th Street Station
(If meeting is at alternate location, note
will be posted on Conference Room door)

Tuesday, May 10, 2016
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Members welcome and encouraged to attend

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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2016 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$18.00 per person, which covers only Philadelphia Chapter dues. (NRHS National membership dues for 2016 are \$50.00 per member, unchanged from 2015). NRHS chapters billed their members separately for 2016 Chapter dues, which was done in November, 2015. The donation requests for Philadelphia Railfriends were mailed in early November via separate mailing from November *Cinders*. Anyone interested in becoming a member of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS should forward remittance in the amount of \$18.00 to Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Please be sure to include name, valid mailing address, telephone number and E-mail address, as applicable. Remittance should be made payable to Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS.

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 ANY E-MAIL ADDRESS** so our records are complete.

Cinders is published 11 times a year by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc. Correspondence regarding *Cinders* should be directed to the Editor at P.O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **EXCHANGE newsletters should be sent to:** R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353, or by electronic mail to ayrestower@comcast.net.

If your *Cinders* Arrives in Bad Condition

If your *Cinders* arrives damaged or with pages missing, contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or ayrestower@comcast.net and a replacement copy will promptly be sent to you. The incidence of damage has been greatly reduced through the use of envelopes for mailing each issue, although there is an additional cost involved.

DONALD H. FLAYHART

March 20, 2016

Philadelphia Chapter is saddened to record the passing of longtime Philadelphia Chapter Member Donald H. Flayhart, of Apex, NC on March 20, 2016 at the age of 83. Don joined NRHS and our Chapter in 1949, having a remarkable 67 years of membership with our organization.

Don was a native of Baltimore, MD, and had longtime association with Baltimore Chapter, NRHS, the Baltimore Streetcar Museum and the Motor Bus Society. He was a veteran of the Korean Conflict, serving in the U. S. Army Transportation Corps. While a resident of the Philadelphia area, Don spent a 33-year career with the now-defunct Trans World Airlines. This transportation historian's interest covered several different modes.

Flayhart is survived by his wife of 49 years, Joanne, two daughters and four grandchildren.

A Memorial Service was held on April 4 at the Apex United Methodist Church. The family requested memorials be directed to the Baltimore Streetcar Museum, 1901 Falls Road, P. O. Box 4881, Baltimore, MD 21211.

Philadelphia Chapter extends its sincere condolences to the Flayhart family, who shared Don's friendship and knowledge with us for nearly seven decades.

ROY J. ZEIHNER

March 25, 2016

Philadelphia Chapter regrets to inform our membership of the passing of Philadelphia Railfriend Roy J. Zeiher, of Harleysville, PA and formerly of Souderton, on March 25, 2016 at the age of 90. Roy had joined Philadelphia Chapter in 1984, and had 30 years of membership with NRHS and our Chapter, becoming a Philadelphia Railfriend in 2014. Roy was often a fixture at NRHS Conventions.

Roy was born in Philadelphia, and had a long career as an engineer with Leeds & Northrup in North Wales. In addition to his active association as a rail historian with NRHS and the Anthracite Railroads Historical Society, he served on the Board of Trustees of Zwingli United Church of Christ in Souderton, where he had been a member since 1963. He also served on the Souderton Borough Council, the borough's planning commission and the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs. Zeiher held a private pilot's license, was active in Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, and enjoyed hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Roy is survived by his wife, Ruth, with whom he had 61 years of marriage, two children and two grandchildren.

A Memorial Service was to be held at 11 AM on Friday, May 6, 2016 at the Zwingli United Church of Christ, 350 Wile Avenue, Souderton, PA 18964.

Philadelphia Chapter, extends our condolences to the Zeiher family, and thanks them for having shared Roy's friendship with our Chapter for so many years.

“Palmetto” Slams into Track Machine, Killing 2; NTSB Probe Suggests Communication Failure

On the morning of Sunday, April 3, southbound Amtrak train #89 **Palmetto**, bound for Savannah, GA, collided with a backhoe machine working at milepost 15.7 near Highland Avenue station in Chester, PA. Two Amtrak maintenance-of-way workers on the machine were killed, and 37 passengers on the train suffered non-life-threatening injuries. The train was carrying 341 passengers and seven crew members. A few passengers managed to jump off the train but all of the others were safely evacuated, with many of them sheltered in a nearby church. At least 30 passengers (as well as the engineer) were taken to a hospital for treatment. The deceased workers were the 61-year-old backhoe operator and his 59-year-old supervisor. A fleet of SEPTA buses was sent to pick up the uninjured passengers, who were transported back to 30th Street Station or on to Wilmington station. One of them was former presidential candidate Steve Forbes, now the chairman of Forbes Media, who later gave a television interview on his experience as a passenger in the next-to-last car.

The accident, which happened at 7:50 AM on track #3, appears to have been caused by a lapse in communication between the track gang and the dispatching office in Wilmington. The train was traveling at a speed of 106 mph in a 110-mph zone, when the engineer saw the machine ahead and applied emergency braking five seconds before the collision. ACS-64 locomotive #627 had its front end smashed in by the impact, but remained upright with its lead truck derailed. The first coach reportedly filled with smoke and received considerable damage, including a gash in the west side of the car, but did not derail. The event data recorder, or “black box,” was recovered from the locomotive, as were the videos from the forward-facing and inward-facing cameras in the cab.

The newly-installed ACSES Positive Train Control system is designed to prevent such accidents, but only if the work zone location is manually entered into the system. The backhoe, though positioned on track #3, was actually moving ballast on adjacent track #2 which had been taken out of service. Another machine, a ballast cleaner, was occupying track 2. Whether four time also had been given to the work crew on track 3 has not been reported. The backhoe was not equipped with an electrical shunt which, if it had been in service, would have closed a track circuit and caused the approach and stop signals to be displayed for oncoming trains. But since track 2 was known to be shut down, some speculated in the press as to why all trains in the area had not been warned to reduce speed while passing the work zone.

The National Transportation Safety Board has taken charge of the investigation, but to date has released only a preliminary report which does not reach any conclusions. Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration also are participating in the investigation. Not counting trespasser deaths, this was the second fatal accident on the Northeast Corridor in the Philadelphia area in less than a year, the first being the wreck of eastbound train #188 at Frankford Junction on May 12, 2015, in which nine passengers were killed and many more injured. The investigation of that disaster is nearly completed and a final report is to be released later this month.

Immediately following the Chester accident, Amtrak suspended all Corridor service south of Philadelphia for several hours. Early afternoon train #195 was the first southbound train to get by the scene, arriving at Wilmington at 2:05 PM, one hour and ten minutes late. The first northbound was #88, which arrived at 30th Street Station at 1:40 PM, 25 minutes late. Train #91 **Silver Star** to Miami did operate but was nearly five hours late leaving Wilmington. Many other Amtrak trains were annulled and SEPTA’s Wilmington service was cancelled for the entire day. Southbound SEPTA train #205 was stopped at Crum Lynne station that morning when its crew received word of the blockage ahead. They were instructed to change ends and return to 30th Street, where bus service was to be provided.

Most through and local service was restored on Monday morning, with some delays, because all Amtrak and SEPTA trains during the rush hour were confined to tracks #1 and 2 in the five miles between “Baldwin” and “Hook” interlockings. By 9:30 AM, however, all four tracks were reopened, allowing southbound SEPTA trains to make their usual local stops to Wilmington. Before that, SEPTA trains to Wilmington and Newark had to run express from University City to Marcus Hook.

Union leaders criticized Amtrak for “systemic deficiencies in the safety culture” on the railroad, and a week after the accident the FRA ordered an immediate and thorough “safety stand-down” on Amtrak. All maintenance-of-way employees including supervisors were instructed to begin “a comprehensive review of basic and all pertinent safety rules and regulations.” This review would highlight the importance of rules governing communications between track gangs, foremen and dispatchers. The use of cell phones rather than radios also was questioned, since it was reported that a track foreman at the Chester work site had talked with a dispatcher on his cell phone rather than by radio, preventing the crew on train 89 from hearing the conversation and thus being aware of the track closure ahead.

The takeaway from what is already known from the investigation is this: If the existing FRA-mandated rules for maintenance work had been followed, the tragedy at Chester would not have happened. The NTSB will not issue a final report for several more months, at which time all the known facts will be made public.

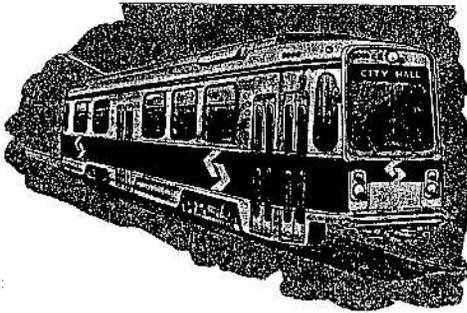
It’s eerie that nearly three decades earlier another Amtrak train derailed after striking maintenance equipment at almost the same location. Just after midnight on January 29, 1988 northbound train #66 **Night Owl** was switched onto an out-of-service track by the operator at “Hook” tower in Marcus Hook, and ran into a ballast regulator just north of Highland Avenue. Two AEM-7 locomotives were derailed along with two baggage cars, four coaches, an Amclub and three Heritage sleepers, but miraculously only 18 passengers and seven crew members (including the engineer) were injured. The operator responsible for the error fled the scene but turned himself in later.

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA TRANSIT



SEPTA is continuing its "Dude It's Rude" campaign to help improve the manners of its passengers. One of the latest posters reads "Dude It's Rude – Trolleys Aren't Diners"SEPTA is working on a plan to install a real time vehicle location system, which will allow the Control Center to pinpoint the location of every bus, trolley and train in operation at any given time.....All SEPTA buses now are equipped with security cameras, at least seven cameras in each vehicle. These can be used to record criminal activity and to defend SEPTA against false injury claims filed by people who were not even at the scene of an alleged incident. A total of 71 of SEPTA's 286 stations now are equipped with video surveillance cameras.....In recent weeks SEPTA has been broadcasting a security reminder over its station public address systems: "If you see something, say something!"

SEPTA is planning to extend bus Route 2 northward during peak hours from its present terminus at Hunting Park Avenue to Wayne Junction rail station. The one-mile extension will be via Clarissa Street.....Trolley Routes 10, 11, 13, 34 and 36 were diverted to the 40th Street subway station over the weekend of April 23-24 due to repair work in the trolley tunnel.....A stopped CSX freight train blocking the Main Street grade crossing in Darby delayed Route 11 trolley service for a time on Friday afternoon, April 15 Kawasaki car #101, which has been wrapped in red a la the Philadelphia & West Chester Traction Company for the past two years, is in for overhaul and will be de-wrapped. Car #122 apparently is still wearing its odd-looking full wrap with a logo reading "Towns Philadelphia Countryside".....A 21-year-old female student at Penn was struck and killed by an eastbound Market-Frankford train at the 40th Street subway station just before 7 AM on Monday, April 11. It was an apparent suicide. Shuttle buses were substituted for trains for the next two hours.

SEPTA has announced the long-awaited rollout date for its Key Card fare system. On Monday, June 13, riders on the Market-Frankford and Broad Street Lines will be able to purchase the new smart cards, which represent the future of fare collection in the Philadelphia area. Only 10,000 cards will be available in this first offering, but they will be accepted on the Market-Frankford, Broad Street and Norristown High Speed Lines as well as on all trolley and bus routes. Key cards may be obtained at six designated stations on the MFSE, six on the BSS and at SEPTA headquarters at 1234 Market Street. The cards, when tapped against fare validator pads at station turnstiles or on vehicles, act like debit cards by deducting the fare from a pre-loaded account or directly from the rider's bank account. Key is designed as an "open" system, which eventually will accept other bank cards as well as the SEPTA cards. It will replace the present TransPasses and tokens—SEPTA being the last major transit operator in the country accepting tokens or exact change. Once management evaluates this initial rollout, more Key cards will be offered and the old fare system gradually phased out. The next challenge will be to adopt the Key system to Regional Rail, possibly next year. Xerox Corp. is the contractor charged with developing Key.

Because of the introduction of Key Card, and the initial confusion it may cause, SEPTA has decided not to increase fares this year. SEPTA has a long-term plan to raise fares every three years and 2016 normally would be the year, but the increase has been postponed until next July.....SEPTA was among 13 transit agencies nationwide to be awarded the "gold standard" by the Transportation Security Administration for its work in improving security on its system.....SEPTA has received a \$2.6-million grant from the Federal Transit Administration to help acquire 25 electric buses, to be used on Routes 29 and 79 in South Philadelphia. These will not be trackless trolleys, but 40-foot zero-emission vehicles operating on high-capacity batteries. They will be built by the California firm Proterra, and will come with two charging stations. The grant will cover the additional \$100,000-per vehicle cost of an electric bus over a standard hybrid.



SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

Construction work on the new Crum Creek bridge at Swarthmore is moving along quickly. New piers and support beams already are in place beneath the existing trestle, which was built by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1895. Replacement of the 925-foot-long steel span, at a cost of \$90 million, is the most urgent project on the Media-Elwyn line, but three other bridges at Cobbs, Darby and Ridley Creeks also must be rebuilt or replaced. As recently as mid-March, an inspection of the Crum Creek bridge found cracks in the subgrade under track #1 and ballast was falling

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through. The track was taken out of service for three days until repairs could be made, delaying several trains due to the necessary single-track operation. Fortunately, AMTRAK no longer needs to operate heavy ballast trains over the bridge from the Glen Mills quarry. Rail service will be suspended south of Swarthmore this summer to allow work to proceed on the new bridge, with shuttle bus service to begin on a date to be announced.

SEPTA is seeking a new chief rail transportation officer to head the Railroad Division. He or she will replace RRD Chief Officer James Foley.....Regional Rail ridership has increased by more than 50 percent since 1998, from 24.8 million a year to 37.1 million, making the acquisition of new equipment a necessity.....In preparation for receiving 13 new electric locomotives from Siemens beginning next year, SEPTA borrowed AMTRAK ACS-64 unit #664 in March for testing with its own push-pull trains. Over a three-week period, the tests covered most of SEPTA's commuter routes, including Amtrak lines to Trenton and Thorndale, as documented in the May issue of *Railpace*. Three bids have been received for 45 multilevel passenger cars for Regional Rail and an order will be placed this year. This type of car is considered to be the best way to handle increasing passenger volume, because adding more single-level cars would require double stops at some stations due to their shorter platform lengths.

At his appearance before the April meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, General Manager Jeffrey Knueppel gave a report on SEPTA's ambitious "Building the Future" program. His PowerPoint presentation showed the wide-ranging series of projects to rebuild aging infrastructure and invest in new equipment, at a cost of nearly \$5 billion over several years. Much of the program is made possible by Act 89 passed by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 2013, which greatly increases capital funding for SEPTA and other transit systems in the State. Knueppel, now with more than 27 years of service at SEPTA, was named chief engineer in 1999 at the age of 36. He has since served in a number of other senior positions, including deputy general manager, before being appointed general manager in 2015 succeeding Joseph M. Casey.

Among Knueppel's more interesting comments was the fact that he is using the traditional design of the ex-Reading Bethayres station as a model for new stations on RRD, giving them an "historic feel." He also mentioned that in the upgrading of Wayne Junction station, he found that it was unnecessary to raise the original 1881 building to match the new high level platform. Because the peaked windows were located high on the walls, all that needed to be done was to raise the floor while leaving the building itself intact! He also said that the new 9th Street station in Lansdale is the first new station to be built on RRD in 20 years.

With regard to the Cynwyd line, Knueppel said that the new ground-level connection from AMTRAK should be completed by October, allowing the retirement of the long through-truss bridge now used only by outbound Cynwyd trains. He announced that the Warminster Line would be the first SEPTA line to operate under Positive Train Control rules, beginning Monday, April 18.

The FRA has given SEPTA permission to start PTC on all of its lines, and it must be compatible with AMTRAK's Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES). The cutover to PTC on the Warminster Line appeared to be successful, as there were no serious delays that day. Other news included settlement of SEPTA's lawsuit against Tullytown Borough for its assessment of what SEPTA called "exorbitant" fees in the rebuilding of Levittown station (see April *Cinders*).

New timetables for all Regional Rail lines were issued effective April 10. As mentioned here last month, West Trenton and Malvern trains are now paired on weekends. Another change involves afternoon trains #2760 and 9294 out of Newark which now run express from Chester to University City. Weekend Airport trains are operating alternately to/from Warminster and Chestnut Hill East.....Work has begun on rebuilding the busy Secane station on the Media-Elwyn line. The \$21.2-million project will include high level platforms, a new station building, pedestrian tunnel and expansion of the parking lot. Completion is set for the summer of 2017. A special weekend train schedule was operated for two weekends last month due to the construction. Secane station serves around 11,000 daily riders.

Regional Rail carried some heavy loads on Friday morning, April 8, with many riders coming to center city to witness the victory parade for Villanova University's championship basketball team. Ridership was especially heavy on the Paoli-Thorndale line, which passes through the Villanova campus. At least two extra trains were operated and one push-pull set was spotted in mid-morning service. Ridership on the Norristown High Speed Line, which also serves the university area, was heavier than normal in late afternoon.

SEPTA will soon equip all of its track workers with a new device to warn them of oncoming trains, according to a report on CBS Channel 3. The devices, called "ProTrackers," are worn on an armband, and were ordered well before the recent Amtrak accident which claimed the lives of two maintenance workers in Chester. Triggered by high-tech equipment on board each train, the devices will begin flashing and emit a beeping sound to alert SEPTA workers, even though they almost certainly would be aware of the approaching train through existing safety proceduresEchoing the national Operation Lifesaver campaign, SEPTA has issued a public warning to photographers—both amateur and professional—not to take pictures on railroad tracks. Railroad rights-of-way have become especially popular with youngsters who take so-called "selfie" photos. SEPTA's Safety Department issued the warning with the admonition, "if you take photos or shoot video on the tracks, that picture or film might be the last footage you take. Tracks are for trains. They are not photo or movie studios." Railfans, of course, already are cognizant of the dangers of trespassing on the rails.

Regional Rail is lagging on its goal of providing 92-percent on-time service. During the first eight months of Fiscal Year 2016 on-time service averaged 81.5 percent, while during February it was 83.9 percent. It should be recalled that the only major snowstorm of the season occurred in January..... Shuttle bus service is being provided in place of trains between Woodbourne and West Trenton on most but not all weekends

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between April 16 and June 25, due to work on the second phase of the SEPTA-CSX separation project (see October *Cinders* and previous issues). Trains to Philadelphia are departing from Woodbourne station five minutes earlier than regularly scheduled during those weekends.



Probably the biggest AMTRAK news story of last month was the crash of train #89 at Chester on April 3 (see separate article on Page 3 of this issue). But the second biggest for railfans was the announcement that Amtrak will operate a special excursion on June 18 to commemorate the retirement of its last AEM-7 electric locomotives (also see a separate article on Page 1). As of late March only three AEM-7's remained on the active roster and were in use on MARC trains out of Washington. The June 18 special will have two of the faithful motors on the head end.

On March 24 AMTRAK activated its new ACSES Positive Train Control system over the entire Philadelphia-Harrisburg mainline. But power assignments on trains 43/42 Pennsylvanian remained the same, with a new ACS-64 electric locomotive leading the regular P42 diesel east of Harrisburg due to the fact that the P42's were not yet equipped with ACSES. Even more interesting was the fact that ACS-64 Veterans unit #642 led the trains on March 29-30-31 and April 1, and on April 3 handled Keystone trains #663/670 to and from Harrisburg. As several P42's arrived in Philadelphia with new ACSES equipment, the electric-diesel combo was discontinued on April 17, with Heritage unit #145 leading train 43 unassisted that day and #99 the next day. But a software glitch forced the diesels to be sent back for retrofitting and the electrics were restored on trains 43/42 effective April 19, a practice which continued at *Cinders* presstime. Non-Amtrak trains using the Harrisburg line (SEPTA and NORFOLK SOUTHERN) are still exempt from the rules governing ACSES.

The print edition of AMTRAK's well-loved system timetable has been discontinued, due to its cost and the fact that many passengers now use the online version. Thus, the January 11 issue featuring an Acela Express on the cover is the last of its kind and will become a collector's item. Pocket schedules for individual services such as the Northeast Corridor will continue to be published.....The scaffolding is up on the south side of 30th Street Station, the first phase of a \$60-million investment by AMTRAK to restore the façade of this national historic landmark. The building's metal portico doors, many of them original from the PRR construction, will be repaired and restored as part of the project.....A MARC trainset complete with HHP-8 locomotive and four cars was spotted in Penn Coach yard last month. It was being used in high-speed tests along the Corridor north of Trenton....."The "Acela primary" is what the press dubbed the April 26 primary elections in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

For one reason or another, trespassers continue to put themselves at risk on Northeast Corridor tracks and elsewhere. Just before 10 AM on Friday, March 25, a trespasser was struck and killed by southbound AMTRAK Regional train #185 near the Chester Transportation Center. The 384 passengers aboard the train were transferred to another train and both Amtrak and SEPTA services were disrupted for about 45 minutes. Three SEPTA trains had to be annulled. The following Monday the 28th another trespasser was killed by a MARC train during the morning rush hour near Lanham, MD. Service was suspended then further delayed due to the need for single-track operation between Bowie and New Carrollton. Finally, a male trespasser survived being hit by eastbound Amtrak Keystone train #672 at Cornwells Heights station around 7:30 PM on Sunday, April 3, but lost a leg in the process. The train was held at the scene for almost two hours and five SEPTA trains were annulled.



CSX, NS
OTHER
ROADS

In an unexpected announcement on April 11, CANADIAN PACIFIC said that it was dropping its bid to take over NORFOLK SOUTHERN (see April *Cinders*). Even beyond the fact that the NS board three times rejected the proposal, CP evidently realized that the massive groundswell of opposition to its plan would doom any chance of success. Not only did other major railroads and many shippers speak out against the merger but the U.S. Department of Justice said that it would oppose the idea of putting CP into a voting trust while its chairman, E. Hunter Harrison, took direct control of NS. Harrison nonetheless issued a statement saying that transcontinental rail mergers may be dead for now but are inevitable down the road. "This is not going away," he said.

NS and CSX last month issued their annual reports for year 2015. Revenues and profits for both roads were down from the previous year, largely due to the decline in coal traffic. NS reported net income of \$1.56 billion on revenues of \$10.51 billion, while CSX reported net income of \$1.97 billion on revenues of \$11.81 billion. NS's operating ratio was 72.6 percent while CSX achieved 69.7 percent. But NS's recent efforts to improve efficiency and cut costs apparently are paying off, since it reported a 25 percent increase in its net income in the first quarter of 2016 as compared with the same period a year earlier. Although revenues declined by six percent, expenses were down 13 percent, reducing the operating ratio to 70.1 percent. "We're on the right track and showing tangible results," said CEO James Squires. The carrier is looking to achieve \$200 million in savings this year and push its operating ratio below 70 percent and to 65 or lower by 2020. CSX also is tightening its belt to deal with the free fall in coal traffic, aiming to produce \$250 million in efficiency savings this year.

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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We neglected to mention last month that April 1, 2016 marked the 40th anniversary of the birth of CONRAIL. Cobbled together by the U.S. government in an effort to save freight rail service in the Northeast after a series of bankruptcies, Conrail began life amid dire predictions about its survival. But eventually the railroad became the beneficiary of good management and favorable regulatory actions by the government, turning profitable and being privatized in 1987. Finally in 1999 it was sold jointly to CSX and NORFOLK SOUTHERN at a price per share that was more than 800 percent higher than it was in the initial public offering of 1987! The name still survives in the form of Conrail Shared Assets, which is responsible for much of the freight rail operations in New Jersey and in the Detroit area, acting as a neutral terminal operator for its two owners.

NJ TRANSIT last month announced that it had hired former AMTRAK Chief Operating Officer William Crosbie to be its new executive director. But two weeks later it was revealed that Crosbie decided not to accept the job and instead stay in the Washington area, citing concerns on moving his family to New Jersey. Crosbie recently has been mentioned as a candidate to replace Joseph Boardman as president and CEO of AmtrakA westbound NJT Northeast Corridor train struck and killed a trespasser near the Princeton Junction station on Saturday evening, March 26. AMTRAK and NJT Corridor service was suspended for a time while the investigation continued.

At Altoona last month, NS unveiled its new safety train which will tour the system to educate first responders in dealing with train accidents. The emphasis will be on cars loaded with hazardous materials such as crude oil. The train consists of specially-painted GP38-2 #5642, two boxcars converted into classrooms, four tank cars containing a variety of fittings and two 89-foot flatcars to handle containers. CSX has had a similar train in service for more than a year.....For the first time in many years, READING & NORTHERN will operate RDC excursions this season from Pottsville to Jim Thorpe and return, using ex-Reading cars #9166 and 9168. Dates are: May 8 and 28, June 18, July 10, August 23 and 28. Other trips will run June 11, July 30 and September 10 Pottsville to North Reading and return with a tour of the car and engine shops at Port Clinton includedAfter a ten-year restoration, ex-Baldwin Locomotive Works 0-6-0 #26 is back in operation at Steamtown in Scranton. It was formally dedicated on April 17, and is credited in part for an upsurge in attendance at the park this season. "The people want steam," read the *Trains* Newswire headline.

The start of work on the new roundhouse at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg has been pushed back, again. Groundbreaking had been expected this spring but will be delayed at least until fall due to redesign work still being done. Beautifully restored Pennsy E6s 4-4-2 #460 will be a prime exhibit in the new roundhouse.....Ex-Maine Eastern GP9 #764 is now at the STRASBURG RAIL ROAD, where it will be used in freight service (see April *Cinders*)..... *Trains* Newswire reports that the Ringling Bros. Red Unit circus train visit to Wilkes-Barre April 28-May 1 will be notable, as it will be the final time that elephants are a part of the circus

performance. The 140-year tradition of elephants in the circus is ending, partly because of opposition by animal-rights activists to their use. The Red Unit show, "Circus Xtreme," will play at Trenton May 16-22 and then make the annual move via NS to Hershey for performances May 25-30.....Ex-Pennsy doodlebug #4666, long stored at Ringoes, NJ, was delivered by NS last month to the ALLENTOWN & AUBURN RAILROAD at Topton, PA. The plan is to restore the car to active service (Harrisburg Chapter).

Incumbent Chapter Officers Re-elected

At its annual meeting on Friday, April 15, the incumbent officers of Philadelphia Chapter were re-elected for another one-year term of office, all without opposition.

Those who will serve during the 2016-2017 year, ending in April 2017 are::

President – R. L. Eastwood, Jr.
 Senior Vice President – Daniel J. Knouse
 Vice President & Treasurer – Richard D. Copeland
 Secretary – Marie K. Eastwood
 National Representative – Peter M. Senin, Jr.

Nominations Chairman Daniel J. Murray reported that he received no additional nominations, either prior to or during the meeting. After opening the floor for any nominations, Secretary Marie Eastwood cast a unanimous ballot.

Chapter President Larry Eastwood also reappointed all committee chairs to serve for another year.

Reading & Northern Announces Excursions with Budd RDC's

From May through September the Reading and Northern Railroad will operate excursions using their Budd RDC cars. For the first time in a generation, RDC trips will originate in Pottsville.

Included in the ticket price, enjoy food service in our refreshment car on board the only RDC's which have windows that open and shut. The commuter-like schedule will get riders from Schuylkill County to Jim Thorpe in less than 2 hours, 30 minutes. While in Jim Thorpe, passengers will have time to enjoy many of the shops, restaurants and attractions in the Carbon County seat.

Trips from Pottsville to Jim Thorpe and return, with stops at Schuylkill Haven and Tamaqua will operate on May 8, May 28, June 18, July 10, August 13 and 28.

Also available are Schuylkill County trips that head from Pottsville to North Reading and return, including a tour of the Reading & Northern Railroad corporate headquarters in Port Clinton. The headquarters tour will last nearly one hour. See a function car shop, engine shop, headquarters building and dispatching center on the tour. These trips will also stop at Schuylkill Haven, and will operate on June 11, July 30 and September 10.

Those wishing tickets and additional information should call the R&N at 610-562-2102.

Amtrak "Farewell to the AEM-7" Trip Set for June 18

(Continued from Page 1)

The Special Train – The train is planned to consist of two AEM-7 locomotives, seven Amfleet I coaches and two Amfleet I food service cars. A box lunch and souvenir lapel pin will be provided to each passenger, and snack items will be available for purchase on board the train. Liquor will not be permitted on board the special train.

Tickets - Ticket price is \$155 per adult, half-fare for children. Employee passes and other discount tickets are not valid on this train. Tickets were expected to go on sale on Monday, May 2, 2016 at 9:00 AM ET. Ticket includes round-trip transportation on the excursion train from/to Washington, box lunch, souvenir lapel pin, photo opportunities and walking tour of Wilmington shop.

Special Boarding Instructions – Passengers must arrive at least 45 minutes prior to departure to complete **Entry on Property Release of Claim Form**. (This form will be available at Philadelphia Chapter's May 20 meeting.) Because of the unique access to railroad property not normally open to the public, participants must complete and sign this form. In addition, proper footwear will be required (no open-toe shoes, high heels, sandals, flip-flops, etc). The Release Form must be printed, signed and presented at trainside on June 18.

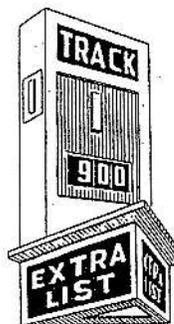
How to Book This trip (on the Amtrak website) –

From the "Buy Tickets" tab:

1. Select One-way
2. Enter Washington, DC – Union Station (WAS) in the "From" box
3. Enter AEM-7 Excursion Train, DC (AEM) in the "To" box
4. Select June 18, 2016 as the "Depart" date
5. Select the number of Adult or Child Passengers (maximum of 8)

Terms & Conditions

- Tickets are non-refundable
- Valid for sale May 2-June 17, 2016
- Valid for travel on June 18 only
- Valid between Washington, DC – Union Station (WAS) and AEM-7 Excursion Train – DC (AEM)
- Flat price of \$155 for adults and includes a boxed lunch and souvenir lapel pin.
- Up to two (2) children ages 2-12 may accompany each adult at half the adult fare.
- Children and infants must travel with an adult who is at least 18 years or older.
- Special excursion trains are eligible to earn Amtrak Guest Rewards points, but not available for redemption travel.
- Not combinable with any other discount offer or passenger type.



Saturday, May 14, 2016:
 "Down by the Station Day at Haddon Heights". West Jersey Chapter, NRHS will participate in a day-long series of events. The Delaware & Susquehanna Model Railroad Club will have the ex-PRSL Haddon Heights station open to view their work. West Jersey Chapter will screen one or two DVD's at the Haddon Heights Borough Hall (their normal meeting place), 625 Station Avenue, beginning at 10:30 AM. About 1 PM, the Chapter will hold its regular meeting in the Borough Hall, with a show featuring the photographs of West Jersey Chapter Member Robert L. Long. Seeing Bob's photos is worth the trip alone.

Friday, May 20: Regular monthly meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 121 Randell Hall, Drexel University, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA, 7:00 PM. Amtrak VP Operations Chris Jagodzinski will present program on **ACES (Positive Train Control) on the Northeast Corridor**.

Saturday, June 4: Museum of Bus Transportation annual "Spring Fling – A Bus and Motorcoach Show" at the Antique Automobile Museum and Campus, Hershey, PA (one mile from Hersheypark), 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Bus displays, inside bus and transportation flea market with a variety of transit-related artifacts. Admission: \$7.00 (Museum of Bus Transportation members are free). For additional information, please call the Museum at 717-566-7100, Extension 119.

Tuesday, June 14: Regular monthly meeting of Harrisburg Chapter, NRHS, Hoss's Restaurant, 743 Wertzville Road, Enola, PA. Optional dinner at Hoss's 5 PM, business meeting and program begins 7 PM. Program will feature "Information and the Railroad Industry", an illustrated talk by Alex Lang, Chief Information Officer for Oakmont, PA-based Carload Express, Inc. and how information technology applies to the short line railroads.

Sunday, June 19: Friends of Philadelphia Trolleys will sponsor Father's Day Charter covering SEPTA Subway-Surface Lines using a Kawasaki LRV. Trip departs from Elmwood Depot, 7311 Elmwood Avenue in Southwest Philadelphia, and lasts from 11 AM to 3 PM. Fare: \$45 per person. To reserve a seat, send check or money order, payable to FPT, Inc., to Harry Donahue, 103 Mulberry Court, Morgantown, PA 19543-8843. All proceeds will go toward restoration of former PTC Peter Witt car #8042 at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum.

Philadelphia LCL.....

While outside the Philadelphia area, we sadly note the passing of **Mildred Hodges**, of Oneonta, New York on Sunday, May 1, 2016, following a period of declining health. Hodges was in her early 90's, and was a member of the Leatherstocking Chapter, NRHS and a longtime volunteer on the Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad, based in Milford, NY. Millie was the mother of Leatherstocking Chapter and Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad President and former NRHS Secretary **Bruce J. Hodges**. While a regular on the C&CV, she was also a fixture at many NRHS National Conventions, and had countless friends from NRHS chapters across America.