



# CINDERS

## NOVEMBER 2016



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Volume 77

Number 10

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](http://www.phillyNRHS.com)**

### 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. On November 1, Transport Workers Union Local 234 went on strike, shutting down City Transit Division service. It is our intent to still hold the November 18 meeting as scheduled. If questionable circumstances arise, members should telephone 215-947-5769 after 12 Noon on the day of the meeting for a recorded advisory. Thank you.*

### About This Issue of Cinders

This issue of *Cinders* will be mailed closer to our November 18 meeting than we might like.

We had to wait until we could determine whether Transport Workers Union Local 234 was going to strike SEPTA's City Transit Division, which, regrettably, they did on Tuesday, November 1. How long that strike will last is unknown at this writing, and in its first day, striking picketers decided to try and block some Regional Rail crews from reporting to their terminals, causing annulment of some evening rush hour trains due to lack of crews.

R. L. EASTWOOD, JR., President and Editor

## Meeting Notice

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2016

Room 121, Randell Hall (access through Main Hall main entrance, 3141 Chestnut Street – just east of 32<sup>nd</sup>) Drexel University, (three blocks from Amtrak/SEPTA/NJ Transit 30<sup>th</sup> 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, November 18, 2016, Philadelphia Chapter will host Rail Historian and Chapter Member Dale W. Woodland with a PowerPoint program, **Call the Wrecker**, detailing “mishaps” on the Reading Railroad between 1856 to 1980. This program is sure to be interesting, and may provide an in-depth look at wrecks and the “Road of Anthracite” and their causes.

Looking forward, on Friday, December 16, 2016, Chapter Member Kevin Feeney will provide another of his excellent “potpourri” PowerPoint programs on his rail travels over the past year. Kevin’s programs are always entertaining, to be sure.

Mark your calendars for both of the above dates. Programs are needed for 2017, although numerous presenters have indicated their interest and availability in presentations next year.

## 2017 Chapter Dues Bills Mailed; NRHS Dues Bill Mailing Questionable

As promised in the October issue of *Cinders*, all 2017 dues bills for Philadelphia Chapter members, including Additional Chapter Members, were mailed to members during the week of October 17-21. As of November 1, more than 100 renewals have been received, and member response has been excellent, and the officers of the Chapter thank you. Members are reminded that the dues level for Philadelphia Chapter membership has increased for 2017 from \$18 per member to \$20 per member, the first increase in Chapter dues since 2010. This nominal increase is prompted by paper cost increases for printing, postage adjustments and other ongoing costs in operating our Chapter.

Those members who have renewed have provided generous financial support to the Chapter above and beyond their normal dues remittance. This show of support makes the job of Chapter officers easier in insuring that funding is available for our liability and property insurance, as well as our storage site in Willow Grove. Prompt renewals ease the officers functions as we look forward to the year 2017.

More questionable, however, is the mailing of National NRHS dues bills to those holding full membership through our Chapter. At the Chapter’s meeting on Friday, October 21, one or two members indicated they had been notified and were able to renew on-line. There have, however, been no U. S. Mail hardcopy bills mailed and/or received as of October 31.

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*

**CHAPTER OFFICERS (Elected)**

President.....R. L. Eastwood, Jr. (215) 947-5769  
Senior Vice President.....Daniel Knouse (215) 659-3436  
Vice President & Treasurer.....Richard Copeland (215) 343-2765  
Secretary.....Marie K. Eastwood (215) 947-5769  
National Representative.....Peter M. Senin, Jr. (609) 458-2090

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS (Appointed)**

Editor.....R. L. Eastwood, Jr. (215) 947-5769  
Equipment Chair.....David R. McGuire (856) 241-8046  
Historical Archivist.....Kenneth Thomas (215) 635-2335  
Membership Chair.....Sheila A. Dorr (610) 642-2830  
Program Director.....Harry Garforth (215) 266-3180  
Publicity Chair.....  
Webmaster.....John P. Almeida (215) 361-3953

**2016-2017 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:** Effective September 1, 2016, \$20.00 per person, which covers Philadelphia Chapter dues through December 31, 2017. (NRHS National membership dues for 2016 and 2017 are \$50.00, billed directly by NRHS). NRHS chapters bill their members separately for Chapter dues, which is done annually in October. The donation requests for Philadelphia Railfriends are mailed during October via separate mailing from *Cinders*. Anyone interested in becoming a member of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS should forward remittance in the amount of \$20.00 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 sent 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](mailto:ayrestower@comcast.net).

**PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Winter, 2017**

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**Wednesday, February 15, 2017**  
**7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**  
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**Passenger Services Conference Room**  
**Amtrak 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station**  
*(If meeting is at alternate location, note  
will be posted on Conference Room door)*

**PROGRAMS NEEDED!**

As we enter our new program year, Philadelphia Chapter is still seeking presenters with programs that would be of interest to our members. Several months in the 2017 period from January through May are currently available. Please contact President Larry Eastwood ([ayrestower@comcast.net](mailto:ayrestower@comcast.net)) or Program Director Harry Garforth ([hgarforth@comcast.net](mailto:hgarforth@comcast.net)) for details (phone numbers on Page 2). PowerPoint programs preferred but we are able to accommodate 35mm slide programs, too.

**WALTER W. SCHOPP**  
**October 20, 2016**

We regret to inform you of the passing of Chapter Member Walter W. Schopp of Hamilton Square, NJ on Thursday, October 20, 2016, following a brief illness. Walter was 73 years of age. Walter had been a member of Philadelphia Chapter and NRHS for 49 years, joining in 1967. He was also a member of Lehigh Valley and West Jersey Chapters.

Walter was born in Philadelphia, and his family moved to Trenton, NJ following World War II. There was an interest in trains in the Schopp family, with his uncle working for the Pennsylvania Railroad on the Chesapeake/Maryland Division. Schopp would often ride with his uncle, taking photos along the way.

He graduated from Trenton High School in 1960, immediately obtaining a letter carrier position with the then Post Office Department in Trenton, a career which totaled 35 years until his retirement in 1995.

Walt could usually be seen with at least two SLR cameras around his neck, one for black-and-white negatives and the other for 35m Kodachrome slides. While his favorite railfan hangout was the Reading's West Trenton station, he also traveled far and wide to ride, experience and document railroading at its finest. He was also a collector of model railroad equipment.

Schopp is survived by his brother, Robert D of Hamilton Square and sister Eleanor S. Mail of West Palm Beach, FL, and their families. Graveside services were held on Monday, October 24 at Rocky Hill Cemetery, Rocky Hill, NJ. Walt leaves behind many friends within the railfan and model railroad community. We of Philadelphia Chapter extend our condolences to his family on their and our loss.

**Philadelphia LCL.....**

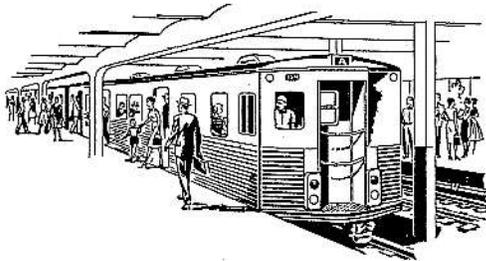
Lawrence T. Todd, Jr. 78, of Havertown, PA passed away on September 26. Todd was the proprietor of Todd's Hobby Store on Terminal Square in Upper Darby from 1937 to 1992. His store was convenient to 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal and the Media and Sharon Hill trolleys passed by the front door. It is said that Entertainer Mel Torme was a regular customer of the store. Todd was also a dispatcher for the Haverford Township Police Department and a member of the Brookline Fire Department.....**Jim McClellan**, a primary architect of North America's modern railroad landscape, passed away during October. He was involved in the split-up of Conrail, with the properties going to CSX and NS, as well as the author of a number of railroad books. A 1961 graduate of Penn's Wharton School of Business, he worked at varying times for New York Central, Penn Central and Southern Railway. Following a stint with the U. S. Railway Association and the Association of American Railroads, he retired from Norfolk Southern in 2003 as senior vice president of planning.....Last month, we reported the passing of RCT&HS founding member **John F. Stoudt, Jr.**, of Reading. John passed away from ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), and not from Alzheimer's which we previously reported.

# PHILADELPHIA



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

## SEPTA TRANSIT



Transport Workers Union Local 234 carried out its threat to strike on the morning of Tuesday, November 1, when the current contract expired. This effectively shut down all bus, trolley and subway-elevated service in the city, forcing riders to find alternative ways to get around. The major sticking points in the negotiations seemed to be equalizing union workers' pension benefits with those of management personnel, the cost of health care and certain work rules such as rest time between shifts. SEPTA issued a ten-page guide containing "Travel tips for customers in the event of a City Transit Division service interruption." It shows riders how to use Regional Rail, suburban trolley and bus service and the Norristown High Speed Line, which will continue to operate because their workers are represented by different unions. The walkout, of course, throws a major additional burden on the already-challenged Regional Rail system (see article elsewhere in this issue). The strike could be a short or a long one, with Election Day on November 8 an added issue.

The Bicycle Coalition is pushing the city to pave over some of the abandoned Route 23 trolley rails on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets. The group says the rails are a hazard to bicyclists, and some of the work already has been done.....A series of posters illustrating the history of buses in the Philadelphia area is displayed in the lobby of the SEPTA building at 1234 Market Street.....A blind man fell off the platform of the Race-Vine station on Wednesday, September 28, and was killed by a southbound Broad Street subway train. Service was halted at several stations for about 90 minutes..... Single-track service was in effect on weekends during October at the 8<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Street stations of the Market-Frankford Line, due to an improvement project at the 15<sup>th</sup> Street station. Trains in both directions ran on the normally eastbound track, and the project is to continue on future weekends.

Harold C. Juram, 98, an assistant general manager for SEPTA back in its formative years, passed away on September 4. He began his long career with the Philadelphia Transportation Company and as its comptroller was one of the key officials in the transitioning of PTC into SEPTA in 1968. He held degrees from Drexel and Rutgers Universities. At SEPTA Juram was named as

AGM for planning and development and later was in charge of the Regional Rail system before retiring in 1980. He later joined a transportation consulting firm but continued his practice of riding public transportation whenever possible.



## SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

SEPTA is continuing to extend its Positive Train Control (PTC) system on Regional Rail. On Monday, October 24, PTC operation started on the West Trenton line, following its activation on the Airport Line October 10 and Media-Elwyn on September 26. Ongoing tests on SEPTA trains will ensure compatibility with AMTRAK's ACSES train control system so that the Paoli-Thorndale, Wilmington-Newark, Trenton and Cynwyd services also will enjoy the safety benefits of PTC.

SEPTA officials last month told Lower Merion Township commissioners that a construction contract for the new Ardmore station will go out to bid in 2017. But pending additional funding a proposed 500-space parking garage at Ardmore is not included in the plan. The badly-needed station was part of a much-larger redevelopment project in Ardmore that had been drastically downsized over the past few years. But SEPTA stepped in to assume responsibility for building the new station (see October, July and previous issues of *Cinders*).....On October 21 SEPTA officially dedicated the new Crum Creek viaduct on the Media-Elwyn line, which opened for service on September 5 after a year of construction work (see October *Cinders*).

SEPTA will participate in a major PennDOT-sponsored project to improve traffic conditions on the 60-year-old Schuylkill Expressway. Several means for reducing the notorious rush-hour traffic jams are being proposed, among them opening the highway shoulders to traffic during peak hours and encouraging alternative modes of travel. That's where SEPTA comes in, with its plan to improve service and equipment on the paralleling Manayunk-Norristown line. *Cinders* will follow this story as further announcements are made.....During SEPTA's annual Rail Rodeo at Fern Rock Transportation Center on Saturday, October 15, the following Regional Rail equipment was on display: Silverliner V #726, Silverliner IV #406, Bombardier cab car #2401, coach #2517, ALP-44 locomotive #2308 and genset switcher #70.

(Continued on Page 4)

# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 3)

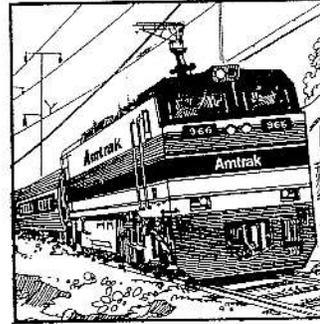
Several recent and ongoing improvement projects on Regional Rail should be noted. Over the weekend of October 15-16 the University City tunnel in West Philadelphia was closed for track and infrastructure work. Shuttle buses replaced all Airport trains, while Media-Elwyn riders transferred between trains and buses at University City station. Wilmington trains originated and terminated in the Lower Level of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station ..... AMTRAK is performing switch replacement work at "Bryn Mawr" interlocking, which has forced all weekend inbound trains on the Paoli-Thorndale line to operate on outbound #4 track during late evening hours. Inbound passengers at all stations between Paoli and Overbrook must board at the outbound platforms, which has caused frequent delays.....SEPTA has announced that a new pedestrian tunnel will be built at the Villanova station, forcing late-night trains to load and unload on the express tracks. Even during the day westbound trains are stopping well short of the station building because of construction equipment in the area.

Regional Rail riders are still plagued by train cancellations due to a manpower shortage, particularly of engineers and especially on weekends. New engineers are graduating from their training program but still must actually operate trains for a time under the watchful eye of qualified engineers. On the Sunday of the Eagles-Steelers football game September 25, 37 trains had to be annulled due to crew shortages and the manpower problems continued through October.

During the afternoon rush two days later, on Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup>, train #3547 with six Silverliner IV's became disabled at Jenkintown, recovered and ran express to center city. More problems soon developed with the train but the crew was instructed to run express to Bryn Mawr, local beyond. Then at 4:57 PM smoke was reported coming from the rear car, #339, at Overbrook, the Fire Department responded and ordered service stopped on all four tracks. Eventually, passengers were moved up to the first four cars, which were cut away and run to Narberth where everyone was discharged. They were picked up by Bryn Mawr train #1581 using AMTRAK equipment, and it was extended to Malvern. (Train 3547 later became disabled at Ardmore and had to be towed back to Overbrook shop.) Horrendous delays ensued on the Paoli-Thorndale line, with at least 30 trains affected. Three were held for more than two hours. Even westbound Amtrak trains #651 and 653 to Harrisburg were delayed more than an hour, although no eastbound Keystone trains were affected.

SEPTA began its annual battle with fallen leaves on October 23, sending out three work trains that use high-pressure jets to blast away the oily leaves that fall on the railheads. A special gel also is deposited on the rails to increase traction, but still trains often slide past stations due to the slippery rails. The night patrols will probably continue until early December .....Push-pull train #9340 with AEM-7 #2306, became disabled in "Arsenal" interlocking near University City on the morning on Monday, October 17, delaying over two dozen other trains. Around 6 PM on Monday, October 24, SEPTA's PTC/CTC control system crashed, delaying many trains on the Reading side. The system was restored at 6:38 PM, but delays persisted through the evening.

Monday, October 31, proved to be a less-than-jolly Halloween for Lansdale-Doylestown riders, when a massive power failure around 5:30 AM shut down the entire line between Glenside and Doylestown. A failed transformer in a Lansdale substation appeared to be the cause, and only sporadic service was provided until full catenary power was restored sometime after 3 PM. Sixteen trains were annulled and many others delayed. Some bus shuttles were operated.



## AMTRAK

AMTRAK issued a new system timetable effective September 9, but only online. An updated version was issued effective October 3. Both have a photo of the westbound **California Zephyr** in Colorado on the cover. Amtrak also issued a new Keystone Service timetable on October 24, which includes a severe weather and service disruption plan that shows which trains will run during emergencies. At *Cinders* presstime the special Thanksgiving timetable for Northeast Corridor service had not yet been published .....AMTRAK and lawyers representing victims of the wreck of train #188 at Frankford Junction in May of 2015 have reached a settlement of the claims filed on behalf of those killed and injured in the derailment. The \$265-million payout will be divided up among the families of the eight killed and more than 200 injured, and is less than the \$295-million cap set by Congress for passenger train accidents.

AMTRAK's pair of "Autumn Express" excursions on the weekend of October 29-30 were a big success. Both were sold out and both ran smoothly and on time from New York to Harrisburg and return. The route was via Amtrak from Penn Station to Newark where additional passengers were boarded, then to the CONRAIL connection in Newark and continuing on via NORFOLK SOUTHERN's freight-only ex-Lehigh Valley and Reading lines through Bethlehem and Reading. The trains returned via Amtrak's Harrisburg line to Philadelphia, then back to New York over the Northeast Corridor. Power for the train was very unusual: P42 diesel #145 (painted in the Phase III Heritage scheme), P42 diesel #42 (Veterans scheme) and ACS-64 electric #642 (also Veterans scheme). All three units made the entire trip, with the electric obviously raising its pantograph only when on Amtrak. Photo runs were staged at Lancaster station. Editor Larry Eastwood was on board the Sunday special and reports that the service and equipment were excellent.

AMTRAK last month debuted its first national on-board magazine, *The National*. It will be distributed free to passengers. It is also available on various digital and mobile platforms.....Following the lead of several airlines, AMTRAK has forbidden passengers to carry the fire-prone Samsung Galaxy Note7 smartphones on its trains. Several of these

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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 4)

phones have caught fire due to the failure of their lithium-ion batteries.....The Sunday Business Section of the *Inquirer* on September 25 ran a lengthy illustrated article on AMTRAK's **Pennsylvanian**. It pointed out the good features of the train and the scenic area its serves, but also the 7-1/2 hours the trip requires between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Efforts to inaugurate a second train over the route face daunting challenges, financial and otherwise.....A 27-year-old male trespasser narrowly escaped death when he was "brushed" by a westbound AMTRAK train near Croydon about 6:50 PM on Thursday, October 20. Three SEPTA trains had to be annulled and several others were delayed by the accident.



CSX, NS,  
OTHER ROADS

NORFOLK SOUTHERN has leased 162 miles of its ex-Pennsylvania Railroad lines on the Delmarva Peninsula to shortline operator Carload Express. To be known as DELMARVA CENTRAL, the railroad extends as far south as Pocomoke City, MD. Two other shortlines already operate on the Delmarva, MARYLAND & DELAWARE and BAY COAST RAILROAD, and will connect with the new company (*Trains*).....Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and CSX CEO Michael Ward last month renewed their commitment to increase clearances in the 121-year-old Howard Street tunnel in Baltimore to accommodate double-stack container trains. This will be a difficult project because the tunnel lies directly beneath the street in downtown Baltimore, but new advances in construction technology may make the work more feasible.

Two CSX freight trains had a head-on collision near Concord Road in Delaware County, just outside of Chester, on Friday morning, October 28. The low-speed impact damaged the front ends of the two locomotives, derailed one, and caused two crew members to suffer slight injuries. The westbound was an eight-car container train powered by AC6000 #5000 and the eastbound train of empty hoppers was headed by ex-CONRAIL GP40-2 #4402. One train passed a signal at an interlocking where the other train was supposed to move onto a passing siding. The railroad, part of the Philadelphia Subdivision, was blocked for the entire day until the trains could be cleared. CSX and the Federal Railroad Administration are investigating.

AMTRAK, CSX and NS all were seriously impacted by powerful Hurricane Matthew which struck Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas in early October. Amtrak had to suspend most service south of Richmond for nearly a week and the freight railroads spent millions of dollars repairing washouts and restoring service throughout the area. Both CSX and NS reached out to affected employees and communities to assist them in their recovery efforts.....Four tank cars derailed in Paulsboro, NJ, on Tuesday morning, October 11, while being

moved by a CONRAIL crew. Three of the cars contained lube oil and the fourth was empty. Paulsboro residents still remember the much more serious accident on the Mantua Creek bridge in November 2012, in which seven cars derailed and one containing vinyl chloride was breached, releasing toxic fumes into the air.

Governor Christie on October 14 signed the long-debated bill to raise the motor fuel tax in New Jersey by 23 cents per gallon. The new revenue will flow into the badly-depleted Transportation Trust Fund, which will be used for infrastructure repairs to highways, bridges and transit systems. Work on many projects had been halted in the spring by the lack of funding, while the Legislature and Governor haggled over the details of raising the gas tax which was already one of the lowest in the nation.

NJ TRANSIT and its riders will be major beneficiaries of the new tax revenue. On October 28 the NJT board adopted two budgets for the current Fiscal Year 2017, a \$2.11-billion operating budget and a \$1.68-billion capital program. Some of the capital spending will be for the long-awaited installation of Positive Train Control (PTC) on NJT's railroad system, which is facing a Federally-imposed deadline of December 2018. NJT said that it finally had been able to secure all of the radio spectrum needed to operate the PTC safety system.....NJT has named Steven Santoro as its new executive director, replacing Veronique Hakim who resigned last year. Santoro had served as assistant executive director in charge of capital planning.

**2017 NRHS Convention**  
**Nashville, Tennessee**  
**June 20-24, 2017**

## The Last Train of the Week

Here's a story about the Pennsylvania Railroad's Whitmarsh Branch, which ran from Allen Lane to Fort Washington. Some of the right-of-way is today covered by PA Route 309 in Springfield and Whitmarsh Townships, Montgomery County.

At the location where the Branch crossed over Germantown Avenue there was a tiny, but surprising well-kept shelter for inbound passengers, named "Germantown Road", at the north end of the bridge.

One Friday evening, the last train of the week was inbound so, of course, there were no passengers aboard and the conductor was up front with the engineer. As they passed the Germantown Road shelter, they realized there were two people standing there so they stopped and backed up, and a man and a woman climbed aboard.

They said they weren't familiar with the neighborhood, but saw the Pennsylvania Railroad station sign and figured there would be a train along after a while. The conductor informed them that "while" would have been until Monday morning!!

--Contributed by Paul Kutta; written by Chapter Member C. Bruce Irvin for Lancaster Chapter, NRHS' Lancaster Dispatcher.

**Thursday, November 17, 2016:** Regular monthly meeting of Wilmington Chapter, NRHS 7:00 PM, in the Darley Room, Claymont Community Center, 3301 Green Street, Claymont, DE 19703-2062. Program subject not available at presstime. For additional information, visit the Chapter website at [www.WilmingtonNRHS.com](http://www.WilmingtonNRHS.com).



**Friday, November 18:** Regular monthly meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 121 Randell Hall, of Drexel University Main Hall, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 7:00 PM. Program will be another of Dale W. Woodland's excellent PowerPoint presentations, **Call the Wrecker**, covering Reading Railroad "mishaps" between 1846 and 1980.

**Friday, November 18:** Annual Banquet of Lancaster Chapter, NRHS at the Historic Revere Tavern, 3063 Lincoln Highway (US Route 30), Paradise, PA. Fellowship social hour 6:00 PM, Family-style meal 6:30 PM. Program by noted Rail Photographer E. Steven Barry. Tickets: \$25.00 per person. Order tickets by November 7, 2016 from Lancaster Chapter, NRHS, c/o Thomas Shenk, 11 Marquis Court, Lititz, PA 17543-7612. Make checks payable to Lancaster Chapter, NRHS..

**Monday, November 28:** Regular monthly meeting of West Jersey Chapter, NRHS, Haddon Heights Borough Hall, 625 Station Avenue, Haddon Heights, NJ, 7:30 PM. Program will be three DVD's of films taken by West Jersey (and Philadelphia) Chapter Member J. William Vigrass, as follows: **Trains, Planes and Trolleys in Ohio, the 1960's; Electric Traction Around Chicago, 1964-1964;** and **Africa Safari November 15 to December 11, 1964** (*we're told it's not about giraffes and lions!*)

**Saturday, December 3:** The annual "Bryn Athyn Train Wreck" talk and walk, hosted by the Old York Road Historical Society at the Pennypack Ecological Historic Trust meeting room, 2995 Edge Hill Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006. Lecture by Chapter President Larry Eastwood. Reservations are required. See complete details on this page.

**Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4:** Ocean City Train Show at the Ocean City, NJ Sports & Civic Center, 6<sup>th</sup> Street at the Boardwalk, 10 AM-5 PM Saturday, 10 AM-4 PM Sunday. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$1 children. For additional information, please telephone 1-609-399-6111.

**Tuesday, December 13:** Regular monthly meeting of Harrisburg Chapter, NRHS, Hoss's Restaurant, 743 Wertzville Road, Enola, PA. Optional dinner at Hoss's at 5 PM, business meeting and program start at 7 PM. Program topic will be "The Passenger Stations of Carlisle (PA)", presented by railroad and fire department historian Randy Watts. His program will describe Carlisle's stations on West and East High Streets as well as Gettysburg Junction. He will also recount the last passenger train in the borough and the current status of rail operations there.

**Friday, December 16 (third Friday):** Regular monthly meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 121 Randell Hall, off Drexel University Main Hall, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 7:00 PM. Program will be Chapter Member Kevin Feeney, with another of his "potpourri" Power Point shows detailing his travels during the past year -- always entertaining!!

## Annual Bryn Athyn Train Wreck Talk and Walk Set for December 3

On Saturday, December 3, the annual "Bryn Athyn Train Wreck Talk-and-Walk" will be at the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, 2955 Edge Hill Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006, beginning at 1:30 PM.

Co-hosted by the Old York Road Historical Society of Jenkintown, the program features a 45-minute lecture by Chapter President Larry Eastwood on the causes and results of the horrific accident, which occurred on Monday, December 5, 1921. Two Philadelphia and Reading passenger trains collided head-on in a deep rock cut on the Newtown Branch. A total of 27 people were killed and 70 were injured, many as a result of the fire that destroyed the wooden coaches on the train.

Following the talk, Old York Road Historical Society President David Rowland leads attendees on a walk through the woods to the wreck site, located along Montgomery County's Pennypack Trail.

Reservations are required for this event, and may be made by telephoning the PERP at 215-657-0830. There is a nominal charge of \$5.00 per person. Participants who are members of the PERP are free. Some 50 individuals took place in the 2015 event.

## NS Issues 2017 Wall Calendar

Norfolk Southern has issued a 2017 wall calendar, featuring photos taken by NS employees around the system. The 11x16.5 inch calendar costs \$12.99. To order by credit card, telephone 1-800-264-4394, 9 AM to 5 PM, or send check or money order to: Norfolk Southern Calendar, c/o Nyberg, Fletcher & White, 801 Cromwell Park Drive, Suite 100, Glen Burnie, MD 21061-2539. This calendar is always high quality, with photos taken by some NS people you may know.

## East Penn Traction Club Issues 2017 Calendar

East Penn Traction Club has announced its 2017 calendar, featuring a color cover and 13 black-and-white photos of Philadelphia area trolley lines. This calendar is especially great for trolley fans or anyone interested in nostalgic photos of a bygone era.

Price for one calendar for non-members of EPTC is \$10.00 each. Postage and handling for one calendar is \$2.00, and \$3.00 for two. Postage and handling for three to five calendars is \$5.00 for Priority Mail shipping. Pennsylvania residents are requested to add 6% State Sales Tax. For East Penn Traction Club members, the price is \$9.00 for one calendar, \$8.00 each up to 5, and \$6.00 for six or more. Postage and handling is same as above.

Calendars may be purchased on EPTC's website via PayPal, or by mail to East Penn Traction Club, c/o Charles Long, 227 Locust Road, Fort Washington, PA 19034-1425.

## New York and Newark to Harrisburg And Return on Amtrak Autumn Express

by R. L. Eastwood, Jr.

On Saturday and Sunday, October 29 and 30, some 1,300 passengers took part in two sold-out 2016 Amtrak Autumn Express trains originating in New York Penn Station, with stop at Newark Penn Station, and operating through New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania to Harrisburg, PA and return.

Powered alternately by Amtrak "America's Veterans" ACS64 #642 and Amtrak Heritage P42 diesels #156 and 42, the train's operation was virtually flawless, and two really beautiful Autumn days. For those who keep track of such things, the consist of the Special, in addition to the motive power, was Conference Control Car #9800 (for the Amtrak staff), Sales Car #85999, Coaches #82798, 82660, 82654, 82599, Amcafe #43372, Coaches #82787, 82701, Amcafe #43383 and Coaches #82744, 82745, 82647, 82562. All cars in the train's consist were Amfleet I. Metroliner cab control #9800 (ex-Metroliner Café #863, built by Budd in 1967) was the oldest car in the consist.

For this writer, riding the Express meant getting up at 4:30 PM, driving to NJ Transit's Hamilton station, and boarding NJT Train #7808 to Newark, arriving there at 7:10 am for the 8:30 departure of the special train. Newark Penn Station (an NJ Transit facility) has undergone a beautiful restoration job. The only drawback to this facility is that at 7 AM on a Sunday morning, it is overrun with homeless individuals, and the men's restroom was nothing other than repulsive, although two NJT maintenance people were trying to get it cleaned up.

Amtrak had set aside three Amfleet coaches for those boarding at Newark, and two of the car hosts who would be manning those cars were on hand to direct passengers to a waiting area in one-half of the main station, which was held for Amtrak Autumn Express passengers only. Fortunately, the Dunkin' Donuts facility was open to get some breakfast. About 8:10, we were led as a group to the boarding platform for the train.

Joining us at Newark Penn Station were four Norfolk Southern engine personnel, who would operate the train from "Hunter" to Harrisburg, where a second Amtrak crew would take over the return the train to Philadelphia and New York. These professionals were only too willing to chat with the waiting passengers at Newark, and were obviously looking forward to giving us a good ride on former Lehigh Valley and Reading trackage, which they did. The NS guys had also operated the Saturday trip. At Newark, the pantograph on the ACS64 was dropped and the two P42's fired up to lead us on.

Meanwhile, on board the train, the car hosts made sure everyone was comfortable and enjoying themselves. The really decent fall scenery made for a very pleasant experience. Don Pepi in New York provided a tasty bag lunch, in a beautiful souvenir insulated bag produced by Amtrak. Amtrak Vice President-Operations Chris Jagodzinski personally distributed a beautiful souvenir pin with highly colorful autumn leaves beside lead P42 #145. Chris, as one might have expected, paid attention to every little detail to insure a pleasant experience for those on board. As usual on the Autumn Expresses I've ridden, a really nice heavy cardstock itinerary was prepared which can be kept as a lasting souvenir.

As we crossed New Jersey, we passed Port Reading Junction, where traces of the former Reading route to Bound Brook were observed, went through 4,893-foot Musconetcong Tunnel, noting traces of the abandoned former Jersey Central mainline before we descended downgrade into Phillipsburg and across the Delaware River on the former CNJ bridge to Easton, PA.

Weaving our way west, we passed the former Bethlehem Steel Plant on the south bank of the Lehigh River, before traversing the former connection to the Reading at East Penn Junction. Rolling along the ex-RDG East Penn Branch, we soon reached Blandon traveling around the City of Reading on the Belt Line to Wyomissing Junction, accessing the ex-RDG Lebanon Valley Branch for the run to Harrisburg. We passed a half dozen NS freights, including auto carriers, general merchandise and a crude oil train.

After a couple of short waits for NS freights, we passed through Lebanon and Hershey, and around the north side of Rutherford yard before descending the grade to the Amtrak station at Harrisburg. We ran west, weaving through some container trains and pulled out onto Rockville Bridge to make a reverse move to the Buffalo Line to permit our return to Harrisburg and Philadelphia.

We stopped at Harrisburg long enough to permit the Amtrak crew to take over (including that notable Amtrak conductor, Chapter Member Rich Bernhardt). We had arrived at Harrisburg rather early, but laid in the station awaiting the departure of Keystone Train #670 at 2:05 PM and followed him east. At "Roy", we paused to permit Train #43-Pennsylvanian to pass, and we crept along the line until we were just west of Lancaster, where we held to permit Keystone Train #615 to pass, as well as Train #42-Pennsylvanian. We then pulled into Lancaster and executed an "arriving" photo stop. At that point, the two P42 diesels were shut down and the pantograph on the 642 raised for a speedy return through the western Philadelphia suburbs.

Departing Overbrook, we slowly rolled through the New York-Pittsburgh subway, and it was then a very speedy return to Newark on the Northeast Corridor in spite of some horrendous thunderstorms going across Jersey. Conductor Bernhardt was smiling like a Cheshire cat in announcing an on-time arrival at Newark at 6:00 PM. Because of the on-time arrival, this writer was able to make a 12-minute connection to NJ Transit Train #7863 back to Hamilton station, ending an excellent day.

To Chris Jagodzinski and everyone involved in Amtrak's 2016 Autumn Express, thanks so much for providing an absolutely outstanding day of railroading, all 360-plus miles of it.



## Silverliner V's Are Returning to Service But SEPTA Must Deal with City Transit Strike

by Frank Tatnall

As October drew to a close, SEPTA had completed repairs to about 90 of its missing Silverliner V cars. This brought the number of available seats almost to where it was prior to the withdrawal of the 120 Silverliner V's in early July, following discovery of potentially dangerous cracks in their truck assemblies. Even though the entire Silverliner V fleet may not be in service until mid-November, some 25 leased MARC coaches remain available to fill the gap left by the sidelined MU's. All refitting work on the Silverliners is being carried out at the Overbrook and Wayne Electric shops.

The wild card in SEPTA's hand was the looming transit strike set for 12:01 AM on Tuesday, November 1, which would force many thousands of additional riders onto the Regional Rail system every day. As advertised, the 4,700 members of Transport Workers Union Local 234 did walk out for the first time in seven years, shutting down all subway-elevated, bus and trolley service in the city. Regional Rail engineers, conductors, mechanics and station employees are represented by different unions and continued to work, but were forced to deal with much heavier passenger loads. The extra MARC equipment, hauled by borrowed Amtrak locomotives, helped to move the increased traffic. SEPTA's strategy of collecting tickets at the stairways in center city stations during afternoon rush hours was still in effect, thus relieving crews of the task. It was hoped, of course, that the strike would end quickly as would the severe congestion on Regional Rail.

On Monday, October 3, SEPTA officially returned to full Regional Rail service as shown in the June 19 timetables, with the caveat that some trains might have shorter consists than usual. In the three-month period since early July, the system had operated with a series of "interim" (i.e., reduced) schedules on all lines, as passengers often experienced crowded trains and fewer cars. (Cynwyd riders were bused to and from 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station during the summer, but train service has been restored.) The only timetable to be reissued was the Media-Elwyn effective October 2, which reflects the restoration of rail service over the entire line following completion of the Crum Creek bridge project in early September.

While it seems assured that the MARC equipment will stay on SEPTA for a while longer, the eight-car set borrowed from NJ Transit departed for home after its final trip on Friday, October 14. It had been assigned to Trenton line service. The Amtrak Keystone trainset used in Newark morning service and on Bryn Mawr locals in the afternoon was returned during the third week of October, but four other ACS-64 electric locomotives continue in service on SEPTA. (Amtrak will need them back for the Thanksgiving rush.) During the week of October 24, MARC cars hauled by Amtrak power were operating on rush-hour Paoli-Thorndale trains #9524-9526-9506-9538 in the morning and 9547-9559-9561-1565 in the afternoon.

In an effort to recover from the dismal summer, SEPTA last month launched a campaign to lure back the thousands of regular riders who gave up on the railroad during the emergency. SEPTA reported that overall RRD ridership dropped 14.8 percent over the three months of reduced service, costing it more than \$7 million in revenue. Deputy General Manager Richard Burnfield said that the Authority would focus its efforts on offering convenient schedules and improved reliability. The fare increase originally set for last July 1 has been postponed until next year, giving at least some relief to the many inconvenienced riders. But this action was due mainly to the introduction of the SEPTA Key electronic fare collection system on the transit side. It is planned to extend SEPTA Key to Regional Rail during 2017.

### 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 [avrestower@comcast.net](mailto:avrestower@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.

## National Museum of Industrial History Now Open in Bethlehem

The rich industrial heritage of the steel industry in Bethlehem, PA is yet another attraction for individuals visiting the former Bethlehem Steel Company complex. The National Museum of Industrial History is located at 602 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Bethlehem, PA. It's open from 10 AM to 5 PM Wednesday to Sunday, except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

Located in a 100-year-old former Bethlehem Steel facility, the museum houses four galleries whose themes showcase stories of local industry and their global reach. The exhibits tell the stories of workers in the steel, silk and propane industries. You can learn which skyscrapers in New York City were built with Bethlehem Steel. Visitors will also see the 20-foot-tall Nasmyth Steam Hammer, one of the oldest surviving in America.

Admission is \$12 for adults 18-64, \$11 for seniors (65 and older), veterans and students, youth (7-17) \$9, and children (6 and younger) free. If you're going to the Sands Casino in Bethlehem, save some time to visit the National Museum of Industrial History. For more information, visit [www.nmih.org](http://www.nmih.org) or telephone 610-694-6644.

### Important Phone Numbers

*CINDERS* lists below the telephone numbers which should be used to report suspicious sightings, emergencies or other conditions affecting rail operations, including trespassers, vandalism, fires, defective equipment, etc.

<b>AMTRAK</b>	<b>800-331-0008</b>
<b>CSX</b>	<b>800-232-0144</b>
<b>CONRAIL Shared Assets</b>	<b>800-272-0911</b>
<b>NJ TRANSIT (NJ only)</b>	<b>800-242-0236</b>
<b>NORFOLK SOUTHERN</b>	<b>800-453-2530</b>
<b>PATCO Transit</b>	<b>856-963-7995</b>
<b>SEPTA</b>	<b>215-580-8111</b>