

CHINDERS

FEBRUARY 2017



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Volume 78

Number 2

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

Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS New Website January 1, 2017:

www.nrhphiladelphia.org

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 questionable circumstances arise, members should telephone 215-947-5769 after 12 Noon on the day of the meeting for a recorded advisory. Thank you.

The Drexel Dilemma...

The "Dragon" Has Devoured NRHS (We're Moving to Elkins Park in April)

Philadelphia Chapter has held its monthly membership meetings in the Main Hall at Drexel University since September, 2013. That year, after a good 21-year-run at Thomas Jefferson University, arranged by the late Dr. David Goodman, Jefferson closed and repurposed the Alumni Club building at 1020 Locust Street.

Looking for a new meeting venue, enter National Representative Peter M. Senin, Jr., and his good friend, Dr. Stanley A. Kligman, a retired professor on the Drexel University staff. The meeting venue in Main Hall on Chestnut Street, was ideal for our group, with plenty of seating and a complete built-in audio-visual system for our use.

While easy to access and use, the relationship between NRHS and Drexel's Events and Conferences Staff was not without numerous instances of frustration and, yes, indifference toward our organization in trying to arrange our meetings. In spite of the fact that the rooms in Main Hall (we actually met in adjacent Randell Hall) were virtually never occupied on Friday nights, we were obligated during each Drexel semester to wait until the academic staff "released" the meeting rooms for other than classroom use.

Indeed, this often-tenuous situation would cause quite a bit of unease when trying to pin down availability of meeting space.

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Meeting Notice

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017

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

Our meeting on Friday evening, February 17, 2017, will feature an excellent photo lecture entitled **From the Mainline – A contemporary Survey of the Pennsylvania Railroad**, presented by Michael Froio. This widely acclaimed program has been screened to a number of organizations, including other NRHS chapters, and has been quite well received.

Mr. Froio works and teaches in the Photography Department at Drexel (and is a graduate), part of the Westphal College of Media Arts and Design, and has been with Drexel for 16 years. Mr. Froio contemplates publicizing the program around the Drexel campus, and so we may have any number of attendees who are not members of Philadelphia Chapter. If that be the case, we would expect to make them welcome so we may tell them what we do.

Looking ahead, Steve Stewart, who was here last October with a presentation on the Reading's Bethlehem Branch, will be here on March 17 with a slide program on the **Lehigh & New England Railroad**, and we are hopeful of having Drew Galloway, recently retired from Amtrak for an April 21 meeting program. (we gave you Drew's incorrect last name recently). **We will not be at Drexel effective April 1, 2017 – see article at left.**

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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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 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.

JAMES R. GUTHRIE December 20, 2016

Philadelphia Chapter has been informed of the passing of Chapter-only Member James R. Guthrie, of Scranton, PA on Tuesday, December 20, 2016, at the age of 48. James was a full-member of the Long Island-Sunrise Trail Chapter, and had held a membership in our chapter, and had ridden any number of our rail excursions over the years.

A native of Smittstown, NY, he was a graduate of George Washington University and had careers in radio and print journalism and more recently in the garment industry. He had a passion for anthracite railroads, and was active in the Lackawanna Historical Society as well as the Anthracite Heritage Museum, both in Scranton.

An active Episcopalian, he was most recently a member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Scranton, where services were held on December 28, the Reverend Rebecca Barnes presiding.

James is survived by two sisters, Patricia Guthrie, of Park Forest, IL and Reverend Suzanne Guthrie, of Citrus Heights, CA, as well as his 30-year companion, Albert Guthrie. Philadelphia Chapter extends its condolences to the family.

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS Board of Directors Meeting Winter, 2017

Wednesday, February 15, 2017
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

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

Long-Time NRHS Chapter Folds

Another long-time NRHS chapter has closed up shop, victim of an aging, declining membership, plus a weakened National organization whose resurrection couldn't save it. Tampa Bay Chapter, NRHS was founded in March, 1971 when a group of Florida Suncoast railfans started the Tampa Bay Railfan Club. Two months later it become a chapter of NRHS with some 50 members. The Chapter ultimately grew to 130 members. Its membership decline started in the 1980's, accelerating during the 1990's, until only 30 members were left in 2000. At the end, only 4-6 members were on board in 2016.

Philadelphia Chapter members Larry Eastwood and Frank Tatnall visited the chapter a few times, bringing slide programs from the North to entertain the Sunbelt members. Acting President Don Jaworski urged the remaining members to support NRHS and/or a local preservation organization of their choice.

THOMAS E BRADLEY, SR. January 14, 2017

Philadelphia Chapter wishes to inform you of the passing of longtime Chapter Member Thomas E. Bradley, Sr., of Camp Hill, PA on January 14, 2017. He was 83 years of age. Tom has been a member of NRHS and our Philadelphia Chapter since 1957, a remarkable record of just under 60 years. He seldom attended our meetings, but was a loyal supporter.

Tom grew up in Mount Holly Springs, along the Reading's Gettysburg Branch, and was a graduate of Boiling Springs High School in 1951. He was an Army veteran of the Korean War. Early in his career he worked for the Reading, and later worked for and retired from the U. S. Postal Service in Harrisburg. He was also a member of the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society, as well as the Williams Grove Steam Engine Association.

Services were held on Wednesday, January 18, 2017 at the Mechanicsburg Church of the Brethren with interment in Mechanicsburg Cemetery. His wife, Pearl V. (Smith-Anderson) Bradley, as well as a whole group of family members, survive him. The Chapter and its Officers extend our sympathy and condolences to Tom's family. We are grateful for his longtime association with us.

The Drexel Dilemma...

(Continued from Page 1)

It manifested itself in May of 2015 when we needed to relocate our meeting because of space difficulty arising out of the East Penn Traction Club Meet in Center City. The Events and Conferences Staff informed us that there was absolutely no room available on the Drexel campus; everything was 100 percent booked due to graduation activities. Lo and behold, a quick letter to Drexel President John Fry miraculously turned up a room for our use, probably much to the chagrin of the Events and Conferences Staff.

Fast forward to January 2017, as the Chapter attempted to arrange meeting space for January through May of this year. On December 28, 2016, President Larry Eastwood E-mailed Drexel's E&C Office requesting approval of five dates from January through May. We received an automated response informing the Chapter that the Event Services office was closed from December 22 through January 2. The response said that the Office would re-open on January 3, and we would be contacted on the next business day. No response. On Tuesday, January 10, we resubmitted our original request and the answer was we would be contacted on the next business day. No response. This was following up with a telephone call on January 12, at which time the person answering the phone said our request was "in the queue" and in spite of being told our meeting was only eight days away, the tone of the phone answer was "we'll get to it when we get to it". "Because Monday is Martin Luther King Day, if you have not received a response by Tuesday, January 17, call us again."

On Wednesday, January 18, another follow-up call was made to Christopher Weir, Director of the Events Office, telling him that there was a sense of urgency due to Friday's meeting, which the Chapter would be hard pressed to cancel on such short notice. Finally, on Thursday, January 19, we received the contract for January through March, but it contained a big surprise.

On the contract was the normal \$120.00 the Chapter pays for room rental. But a new charge showed up - \$42.50 for the use of multi-media equipment - really, not an unreasonable charge because Rob Tyson from the IT Office shows up each meeting night to provide the access code to their system.

Then, there's the kicker. Because the University has "tightened up security" as of January 1, we would be required to have and be billed \$152.00 for each meeting (\$38.00 per hour) for a Drexel Security Officer to sit outside our meeting room. As a result, the monthly cost to Philadelphia Chapter has suddenly risen from \$120.00 per month to \$314.50 per month. Of course, there was never any communication from the Event Services Office to its "customers" informing anyone of this new charge. Then, the "legal beagles" at Drexel told us on January 24 that our insurance Certificate of Insurance should show a "waiver of subrogation", whatever that is. It has been referred to our insurance agent.

It has become painfully obvious that the Drexel Event Services Office doesn't want to be bothered with an outside organization such as ours, in spite of having a fee schedule for outside meeting rooms and events for groups such as ours.

As a result, our last meeting at Drexel University will be on Friday, March 17, 2017. Thanks to Historical Archivist Ken Thomas, who resides in Elkins Park, we learned that the large waiting room in SEPTA's Elkins Park station is available for rental

to groups. The space seats about 60 persons on chairs. On Thursday, January 26, Larry and Marie Eastwood, Rich Copeland, Dan Knouse and Ken Thomas met with Cynthia Blackwood to look at the proposed space. The only drawback is that the space is not available on Friday or Saturday nights due to concerts. The Chapter is, for the present, changing our meeting night from the third Friday to the third Thursday each month. It is hoped that this move will not unduly inconvenience too many people.

The Chapter has agreed to use the space, as a cost of \$100 per month, from April through June. We agreed to a four-hour rental from 6-10 PM. We will need to set up and put away the chairs each month, and we must provide any audio-visual equipment.

There is half-hourly train service to Elkins Park in each direction in the evening, via the Airport Line. SEPTA's Route 28 bus has suitable evening schedules between Torresdale & Cottman Avenues in the Northeast and the Fern Rock station on the Broad Street Subway. There is an excellent coop food market, Creekside, one block away that is open from 8 AM to 8 PM, and has a tables and chairs eating area.

IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ!! Chapter Senior VP Daniel Knouse has prepared an informal survey for each member to participate in so we can judge any adjustment going into the 2017-2018 meeting year. To access the survey, go to: <https://surveyhero.com/c/4b3b40c>. Complete train and bus schedules will appear in April Cinders. Stay tuned!!

Three Members Receive 50-Year and Eight Receive 25-Year NRHS Pins

It's a banner year in 2017 for Philadelphia Chapter members earning NRHS membership awards. Three members will receive 50-year NRHS pins and certificates and eight will get 25-year pins and certificates, according to NRHS Membership Awards Director Joseph C. Maloney, Jr. Those members receiving awards this year are:

50-Year Pin and Certificate

Richard H. George, Pittsburgh, PA
George W. Metz, Newtown Square, PA
Philip J. Mulligan, Philadelphia, PA

25 Year Pin and Certificate

John P. Almeida, Lansdale, PA
Robert D. Brubaker, Tucson, AZ
Alan B. Butler, Waltham, MA
Walter K. Emmett, Ardmore, PA
James S. Goldman, Harrisburg, PA
Steven Rosenberg, Willow Grove, PA
Richard E. Schaefer, Wynnewood, PA
Alex B. Sokil, Merion Station, PA

In listing the recipients of the 2017 awards, Chapter President Larry Eastwood noted that Philadelphia Chapter members are spread all across the United States; indeed, many of them are "transplants" whose lives and careers have shown location change, but maintain an interest in Philadelphia rails.

Philadelphia Chapter congratulates each member named above, and appreciates their longtime support. Pins and certificates have been mailed to each member during January.

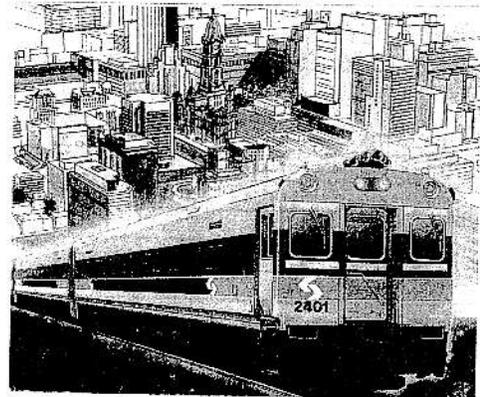
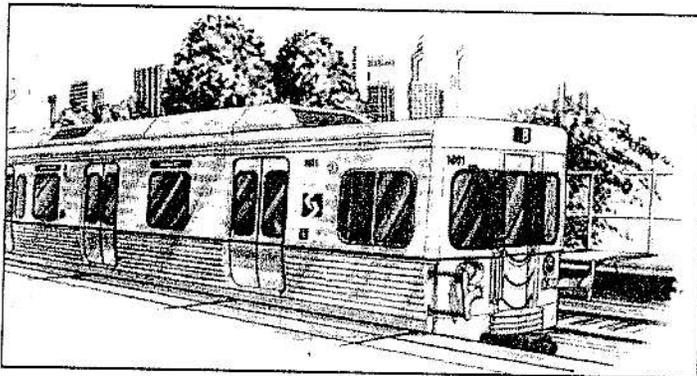
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA TRANSIT

SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



SEPTA riders in center city had to cope with crowds and bus detours on Thursday, January 26. President Trump and a bevy of politicians came to town for the annual Republican congressional retreat held in the Loews Hotel at 12th & Market Streets, prompting heavy security and thousands of protesters gathered nearby. SEPTA closed the 13th Street subway station for the day and detoured 16 bus routes around the area. NJ TRANSIT bus service also was detoured. Even SEPTA employees next door at 1234 Market Street were forced to use a rear entrance. Some of the conference attendees arrived aboard a special AMTRAK train from Washington.....SEPTA officials held a public open house on January 24 to discuss the capital budget process for Fiscal Year 2018 beginning July 1. The budget for the current fiscal year is \$548.6 million, which includes completed projects such as the new Crum Creek viaduct at Swarthmore, rebuilt bridge 0.35 on the Chestnut Hill West Line (which spans the Mainline in North Philadelphia), and rehabilitation of nine stone-arch bridges on other Regional Rail lines. The projected capital budget for FY 2018 is around \$732 million.

SEPTA plans to order a fleet of articulated low-floor trolleys to replace the 1980-vintage Kawasaki-built cars. No builder has yet been selected, but studies are being made on clearances and the needed bridge and traction power capacitiesEffective January 1 SEPTA cut fares on the Norristown High Speed Line and bus Routes 123, 124, 125 and 150. Passengers now pay the standard \$2.25 cash fare..... It appears that SEPTA will not proceed to reopen the old pedestrian tunnel connecting AMTRAK's 30th Street station to the adjacent Market-Frankford line station until there is more progress on plans to redevelop the entire 30th Street area (see December *Cinders* and previous issues).....One westbound Route 10 trolley rear-ended another on Lancaster Avenue at 38th Street on Wednesday afternoon, January 4. Forty-six persons were injured, including both operators.....Around 1:30 AM on Saturday, January 7, a man rushing to board a departing Broad Street subway train at the Olney Transportation Center tried to jump on between two cars. Not surprisingly, he was killed.

SEPTA issued new schedules for all Regional Rail lines effective Sunday, January 29, originally posted only online. But apparently due to the efforts of DVARP, printed copies also were made available.....SEPTA has gradually expanded its new Positive Train Control (PTC) system, most recently activating it on the Mainline between 30th Street and Fern Rock effective January 9. This means that all SEPTA-owned lines now have PTC in service. SEPTA expects to begin running its trains on AMTRAK using the PTC-compatible ACSES system by the end of March, which will include trains to Paoli-Thorndale, Trenton and Wilmington-Newark, DE.....Lower Merion Township has awarded a \$5.5-million contract to replace the century-old Union Avenue bridge over SEPTA's Cynwyd line in Bala Cynwyd. It's uncertain whether train service would be affected.

As of late January, AMTRAK locomotives and leased MARC coaches were still being used on two Paoli-Thorndale expresses, including the Great Valley Flyer. The locomotives are leased through the end of this month so it appears that the remaining MARC cars will remain in service for awhile longer. Meanwhile, 117 of the 120 Silverliner V's had been returned to service by month's end, but only the last 30 are fitted with the new forged equalizer beams on their trucks. SEPTA is dickering with MARC about the possible purchase of some of the borrowed equipment, which is now surplus to the needs of the Baltimore-based agency. The cars have all been modified to conform with SEPTA's own practices. Whether builder Hyundai-Rotem will pay for retrofitting the first 87 Silverliner V's with the preferred forged beams is still to be negotiated.

SEPTA expects that most if not all of its 15 new ACS-64 electric locomotives will be delivered by Siemens next year. The road numbers for the new units will be 901-915, recalling the days of the much-loved Reading FP7's which also were in the 900 series. The planned order for 45 multi-level coaches (34 trailers and 11 cab cars) has yet to be placed, but delivery is expected in 2020-2021.....SEPTA is in the second phase of its \$140-million project to expand and modernize its Frazer shop and yard complex west of Malvern, in order to accommodate the

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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AMTRAK

expected fleet of new electric locomotives and multi-level passenger cars.....SEPTA has begun construction of a new handicapped-accessible pedestrian tunnel under AMTRAK at Villanova station (see December *Cinders*).....The annual Philadelphia International Cycling Classic scheduled for June has been cancelled due to funding problems. SEPTA will not need to run any extra service to Manayunk this year.

January was a particularly tough month for Regional Rail customers. This was due to a number of factors, including bad weather, downed trees, disabled equipment, crew shortages and catenary failures. Here are some of the highlights, in chronological order: At 6:45 PM on Thursday, January 5, catenary wires came down on train #388 at Moylan-Rose Valley station on the Media-Elwyn line. At least ten trains were delayed as single-track operation was instituted between Secane and Media. On Saturday the 7th a light snow—the only one during the month—caused slippery rails which delayed almost 60 trains. Then, late on Tuesday evening the 17th a large boulder fell onto the #1 track in the notorious Gwynedd cut, delaying two Lansdale trains as single-track operation was placed in effect. Two days later, around 5 PM, a traction power problem with AMTRAK locomotive #611 stalled train #9561 **Great Valley Flyer** with five MARC coaches and SEPTA cab car #2401 on #4 track north of Temple station. That train and 11 others had to be annulled and a host of other rush-hour trains were delayed. Then, on Saturday the 21st, Regional Rail was overwhelmed by the high turnout for a women's march in center city to protest the election of Donald Trump. An estimated 50,000 people participated in the march, many of them riding in jammed SEPTA trains.

Then came the big nor'easter rain and windstorm that struck the area on Monday, January 23. Many Peco customers in the region lost electric power and all modes of transportation were under severe stress—rails, roads, airlines—from high winds and heavy rain. Regional Rail was hard hit with almost 60 trains annulled during that 24-hour period and 225 others delayed. Among the major problems on the railroad were the loss of catenary power on the Chestnut Hill West Line during the morning rush, causing five trains to be annulled, and the suspension of service on the Paoli-Thorndale line after a tree fell into the catenary around 7:20 AM. There was considerable damage to the wires over #3 and 4 tracks east of Radnor, causing 26 SEPTA trains to be annulled during the morning and part of the afternoon. Some SEPTA passengers were bused until rail service was resumed after 1 PM, with #9535 the first westbound train. For a time trains ran hourly instead of half-hourly. AMTRAK's Keystone trains were able to get by the scene but with delays.

Later in the morning of January 23 the winds brought down signal wires at Doylestown, causing problems there. Just after noon a tree fell into the wires north of Lansdowne on the Media-Elwyn line, and caught fire. Many delays ensued as the wire train went to work, taking out one track. Later, at 4:45 PM, Warminster-bound train #3420 reported a tree fallen on the track near Crestmont station. Service was suspended and seven trains annulled until the tree was cleared just after 6 PM. Some passengers were bused around the blockage. For the day, system on-time performance was only 63 percent. Another tree fell on AMTRAK's Harrisburg line at 3:30 PM on Thursday the 26th, this time just west of Merion station, fouling #1 and 2 tracks. Some eastbound trains were delayed, none seriously, as they ran express from Bryn Mawr to Overbrook. Local passengers were bused.

The inauguration of Donald Trump in Washington on Friday, January 20, brought crowds of additional passengers to AMTRAK. Before, during and after Inauguration Day regularly-scheduled trains were mostly sold out, and extra Regional and Acela trains were operated on Saturday and Sunday. The women's march on Saturday in Washington, which drew an estimated 200,000 people, also put pressure on Amtrak. Extra sections of long-distance trains were operated, stopping at stations not normally served by those trains. Immediately after the ceremony, former Vice President Joe Biden boarded Acela #2166, which departed at 1 PM to carry him home to Wilmington. After arrival he rode in a motorcade to the Chase Center for a big "Welcome Home" ceremony. Biden, of course, is well known for having ridden Amtrak thousands of times while commuting to and from his longtime post in the U.S. Senate.

AMTRAK President Wick Moorman shuffled his upper management staff last month, reducing it by half into six direct reports. They are the heads of Operations, Marketing & Business Development, Finance, Law, Administration, and Planning, Technology & Public Affairs. The new chief operating officer is Scot Naparstek, replacing D.J. Stadler who becomes chief administrative officer.....The 30th Street Station District Plan, which lays out an ambitious blueprint for the future of the area surrounding the station (see July *Cinders*), has been selected by the American Institute of Architects to receive its prestigious Honor Award for Regional and Urban Design in 2017.

AMTRAK also experienced some problems with the big nor'easter on the afternoon of Monday, January 23, when commercial power lines fell across the tracks near Linden, NJ. All service on the Northeast Corridor had to be suspended for about an hour, resulting in delays to numerous Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT trains.....Documents released last month by the National Transportation Safety Board point to poor communications as a major cause of the April 3, 2016, accident in which AMTRAK train #89 **Palmetto** collided with a track machine near Chester, PA, killing two maintenance workers (see May *Cinders*). The engineer of train #89 tested positive for marijuana after the crash, and no longer works for Amtrak. Engine #627, damaged in the accident, is in Wilmington shop for repairs.



CSX, NS OTHER ROADS



Both PATCO and NJ TRANSIT had problems last month affecting their service to and from South Jersey. PATCO riders experienced numerous delays, some of them after smoke billowed from a train at the City Hall station in Camden on Monday, January 9, and from several equipment issues which caused widespread inconvenience on the morning of Tuesday the

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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17th. DC traction motors are a particular source of trouble, especially from the storm on January 7 in which fine snowflakes were sucked into the motors, shorting them out. General Manager John Rink issued a public apology, noting that 21 traction motors had been replaced in just the week following the storm. About a third of PATCO's 120-car fleet has been upgraded by Alstom, and these cars seem to perform much better in snow than the unrebuilt cars. PATCO issued a new timetable effective January 28.

NJ TRANSIT's Atlantic City Line service had to be cut back to Cherry Hill on several days last month because CONRAIL's ancient Delair lift bridge over the Delaware River got stuck in the open position. Shuttle bus service was operated between 30th Street Station and Cherry HillNJT has extended three of its South Jersey bus routes beyond center city to 30th Street Station during peak hours.....The NJT board has decided to spend an additional \$32.5 million to speed up the installation of Positive Train Control (PTC), which is facing a Federal deadline of December 2018. To date none of NJT's 440 locomotives have been equipped for PTC.

Is CANADIAN PACIFIC's top man, E. Hunter Harrison, headed to CSX? That became an issue last month when he abruptly retired from CP and let it be known that he would like to turn around CSX the way he did on CP and before that on CANADIAN NATIONAL. Back in 2014 Harrison was rebuffed in an attempt to merge CP and CSX, but now it's reported that some big investors are on board with Harrison in trying to take over CSX. The company, which likes to talk about its "CSX of tomorrow strategy," is seen by some as an underperforming carrier which needs new leadership to find that tomorrow..... Current CSX CEO Michael Ward was quoted last month as saying that one-person crews on U.S. railroads are "inevitable." The rail unions have long insisted that freight trains should have at least two crewpersons, and have succeeded in convincing a Congressman to introduce a bill to enforce that rule (*Trains*).

Among the six major U.S. railroads NORFOLK SOUTHERN had the best record in traffic volumes during the down year of 2016. NS actually lost the least amount of traffic as compared with 2015, falling just 2.8 percent in spite of an 18-percent decline in coal tonnage. By comparison, CSX was off by 5.7 percent amid a 21-percent drop in coal traffic. UNION PACIFIC was last with a drop in traffic of 7 percent (*Trains*). NS railway operating revenues for the year 2016 were \$9.9 billion, six percent below 2015, but the operating ratio (the ratio of operating expenses to revenues) reached a record low of 68.8 percent. For the year CSX reported revenues of \$11.1 billion and an operating ratio of 69.4 percent. With the decline in traffic last year, it's not surprising that about 6,000 railroad employees lost their jobs. Total employment dropped 3.8 percent to 215,000.

Can you believe it? Kodak says that it will bring back its much-loved Ektachrome film later this year, in both still and movie formats. Bowing to demand, the E100 film will be available for the first time since 2012The Strates carnival show will not only continue to travel by rail this year but may expand its schedule in East Coast states as a result of the shutdown of the Ringling Bros. circus (see separate story)READING & NORTHERN says that 2016 was a record-breaking year, as it handled almost 20,000 carloads and more than 100,000 passengers. Financial results were not released.

Holiday Travel – PRR Style

This article originally appeared in THE MUTUAL MAGAZINE, in the February, 1941 issue (75 years ago this month!). It's been provided to us by Member Paul Kutta.

With holiday travel at the highest peak in many years, officers of the Pennsylvania Railroad estimated that during the period from December 13 to 24, 1940, inclusive, the movement over all divisions of the PRR totaled approximately 2,500,000 passengers, an increase of nearly 20 percent above 1939. Of this number, 2,000,000 rode in coaches and 500,000 in Pullman sleeping and parlor cars. The period covered embraced practically all the Christmas trek "back home" for family reunions and the heavy travel to Florida, as well as soldiers visiting their people on furloughs from various encampments throughout the country.

In handling this Christmas traffic, 1,314 extra sections and special trains were operated, in addition to many extra cars on regularly scheduled trains. The heaviest day was December 20, when 202 extra sections were required: 1,621 extra runs of Pullman cars, including 1,230 sleepers and 391 parlor cars.

To accommodate the tremendous demand for reservations to Florida, 12 extra coach trains, handling more than 4,000 passengers, were operated on four days from New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, via the Washington gateway, to leading Florida points. These were in addition to the regular daily luxury coach trains – the **Silver Meteor**, the **Champion** and the **Vacationer** – as well as extremely heavy Pullman travel.

Soldiers returning to their homes from the various encampments on Christmas furloughs, and carried at special round-trip coach fares, numbered about 16,000. Of these 9,500 rode in 18 special trains and the rest in extra cars on regular trains. These movements took place from December 19 to 23, inclusive, and were handled without the slightest interference with civilian travel or any lack of equipment to meet all needs.

The 18 special trains for furloughed soldiers included six from Fort McClellan, AL to New York; one from Shelby, MS to middle western points and to New York via Cincinnati; two from Cape Charles, VA to New York; one from Cape Charles to Philadelphia; one from Camp Hulén, TX to Boston; one from Edgewood, MD to New York; three from Fort Dix and Trenton, NJ to New York; two from Fort Dix to Buffalo; and one from Washington to New York with men from various connecting southern lines. The holiday movement of express and mail traffic was well ahead of 1939. Throughout the entire period of the exceptionally heavy holiday travel, despite the large number of extra trains and cars operated, there was no conflict whatever with the regular movements of either passenger or freight trains, and there was continuously available a sufficient supply of coaches, Pullmans and locomotives for all movements.

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

"Greatest Show on Earth" Rides into History

The world-famous Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus will end its more than 140-year run this spring, the victim of changing tastes in entertainment. In May the shows will return to their winter quarters in Venice, FL, for the last time, leaving many performers, staff and some 120 passenger cars and special-duty flat cars facing an uncertain future.

P.T. Barnum's original company, as well as the rival Ringling Bros. show, started out in Wisconsin, in 1875 and 1884 respectively, merging in 1919 to form Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows. The business was purchased by Feld Entertainment in 1967. For most of its long history the circus has traveled by rail, but starting in 1970 Feld began to operate two separate shows with their own dedicated "Red" and "Blue" trains, usually playing Philadelphia in alternate years. In recent times the venue here has been the Wells Fargo Center, and before that the former Spectrum. In earlier years the old Convention Hall and other sites hosted the shows. For many decades the circus had performed in its own "Big Top," a huge canvas tent with tiered seats set up on empty lots. But 12 years after the disastrous fire during a 1944 performance in Hartford, CT, in which 167 people died, the tents were folded in favor of indoor arenas.

This month, on its final journey, the Blue Unit carrying the show dubbed "Out of This World" will move from Raleigh, NC, to South Philadelphia via CSX. The train is expected to arrive at Greenwich yard sometime late on Tuesday, February 14. Performances at the Wells Fargo Center are scheduled for Thursday, February 16, through Monday, February 20, and circusgoers will find the Center easily accessible from the Broad Street subway.

According to a *Trains Magazine* report, the Blue train consists of 56 cars, all with RBBX reporting marks, of which 34 are coaches or sleepers for the performers and staff, plus the "pie

car" or diner. The rest are flatcars carrying the trucks and equipment. (All of the present lightweight passenger cars were acquired from the Union Pacific). The train will depart from Greenwich yard on the morning of Tuesday, February 21, bound for Brooklyn, NY, again via CSX, and as in past years may take a trip through the Amtrak tunnels to Long Island. Later, on March 17-19, the company will play Trenton, NJ, but this year skip its traditional dates in Hershey, PA. The final performances will be at Uniondale, NY, May 12-21.

The Red Unit, known this year as "Circus Xtreme," will make its farewell appearances May 4-7 in Providence, RI. This company travels in a 54-car train, and like the Blue Unit carries 250 to 300 performers and other workers responsible for setting up and dismantling the vast array of equipment needed for the show. Both units currently are playing at cities in the South.

Despite valiant efforts in recent times to make the circus more appealing to "children of all ages" (as the ringmasters used to say), the apparent death blow came last year when the beloved elephants were retired. They were great crowd favorites, and ticket sales sharply declined after their departure. Animal rights activists had for years waged a campaign against the use of the huge beasts, while circus management always contended that they were treated humanely. It was finally agreed to retire the 13 remaining animals to Ringling's Center for Elephant Conservation in Florida.

Railfans and many others will miss not only the circus itself but the long silvery trains that carried the shows far and wide. Sitting in the stands, eating popcorn and watching the awesome feats of circus performers—and their highly-trained animal partners—will be a fond memory for millions of witnesses to the "Greatest Show on Earth."

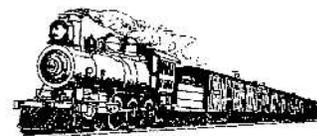
---Frank Tatnall

Norfolk & Western Class J #611 Sets 2017 Excursion Schedule

The Virginia Museum of Transportation (VMT) is pleased to announce that the Norfolk & Western Class J #611 steam passenger locomotive will return to the mainline in 2017 with another exciting schedule of public excursions.

Tickets went on sale on January 12, 2017 and full information, including ordering tickets can be obtained by visiting www.FireUp611.org. The 2017 excursion schedule is below.

- April 8: The *Virginian*, Spencer, NC to Lynchburg, VA
- April 9: The *Charlotte Special*, Spencer, NC to Charlotte, NC
- April 9: The *Piedmont Limited*, Spencer, NC to Greensboro, NC
- April 22: The *Roanoker*, Greensboro, NC to Roanoke, VA
- April 23: The *Roanoker*, Greensboro, NC to Roanoke, VA
- May 6: The *Cavalier*, Lynchburg, VA to Petersburg, VA
- May 7: The *Cavalier*, Lynchburg, VA to Petersburg, VA
- May 27: The *Powhatan Arrow*, Roanoke, VA to Lynchburg, VA
- May 27: The *Pocahontas*, Roanoke, VA to Walton (Radford), VA
- May 28: The *Powhatan Arrow*, Roanoke, VA to Lynchburg, VA
- May 28: The *Pocahontas*, Roanoke, VA to Walton (Radford), VA
- May 29: The *Powhatan Arrow*, Roanoke, VA to Lynchburg, VA
- May 29: The *Pocahontas*, Roanoke, VA to Walton (Radford), VA



Visit The World's Largest Train,
Toy, & Hobby Show
in **Wilmington, DE**

Greenberg's Train & Toy Show
Chase Center on the Riverfront

815 Justison Street, Wilmington, DE 19801

March 11-12, 2017 ~ 10am-4pm

Children 11 and under **FREE!!**

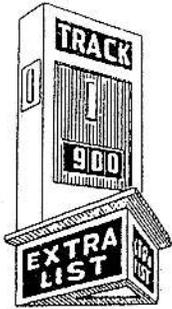
Huge operating train layouts * Free Seminars
250+ tables of trains, toys and hobby items for sale
Trains for kids to run * Fun for the whole family

Directions to the Chase Center on the Riverfront:
Take I-95 to Exit #6 in Wilmington; go straight at bottom of
ramp as far as MLK Jr. Blvd (Route 48); turn east on MLK
Blvd; turn Right onto Justison Street

www.GreenbergShows.com

Tuesday, February 14, 2017:

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 will start at 7 PM. Program will be an illustrated talk, *Trains That I Like and Liked*, by long-time Harrisburg Chapter Member Gary Sunday, who has lensed local and national rail activity for years.



Friday, February 17: Regular monthly meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 121 Randell Hall, off Drexel University Main Hall, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 7:00 PM. Program subject not available at presstime.

Saturday & Sunday, February 25 & 26: The Roundhouse Model Train Show at the B&O Roundhouse Museum, 901 W. Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21223, 10 AM-4 PM Saturday, 11 AM-4 PM Sunday. Admission: \$12.00 adults, \$6.00 children. More information at Roundhouse Train Show.com.

Monday, February 27: Regular monthly meeting of West Jersey Chapter, NRHS, Haddon Heights Borough Hall, 625 Station Avenue, Haddon Heights, NJ, 7:30 PM. Program is Members Photo Night. For complete info on submitting your photos, contact President Dave Homer at dshomerwoowoo@comcast.net.

Sunday, March 5: Annual Train Show sponsored by Jersey Central Railway Historical Society, at Mother Seton High School, 1 Valley Road, Clark, NJ (Garden State Parkway Exit 135 at Clark Circle), 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Admission: Adults \$5.00, kids under 12 Free. Additional information: 1-908-272-3910.

Saturday, March 11: 31st Annual Harrisburg Railroad Show & Collectors Market, 9 AM to 3 PM, Middletown First Church of God, Fellowship Hall, 245 West High Street, Middletown, PA 17057. Admission at the door: \$5.00 per person, children under 12 free. This always excellent train show is sponsored by Harrisburg Chapter, NRHS. Trolley historian Ken Springirth will present an illustrated talk entitled, *Philadelphia Area Trolleys*, starting at 11 AM.

Saturday, March 11: Southampton Railroad Station Society 2017 Rail History Symposium at North and Southampton Reformed Church, 1380 Bristol Road, Churchville, PA. Doors open at 8:00 AM, six presenters start at 9:00 AM. See article with complete details on this page.

Saturday/Sunday, March 11-12: Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show, Chase Center on the Riverfront, 815 Justison Street, Wilmington, DE 19801, 10 AM to 4 PM each day. Admission: \$9 for a one-day ticket, \$10 for a two-day ticket. Children 11 and under free. For more information, visit the Greenbergs Show website.

Monday, March 27: Regular monthly meeting of West Jersey Chapter, NRHS, Haddon Heights Borough Hall, 625 Station Avenue, Haddon Heights, NJ, 7:30 PM. Program will feature images taken by Member Bob Vogel (who gets everywhere!) of southern New Jersey rail scenes.

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 ayrcstower@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.

Railfan RDC Special April 22

Lehigh Valley Chapter, NRHS and Railroad Historians of the Lehigh Valley have announced a Budd RDC special on Saturday, April 22 over portions of the Reading & Northern Railroad.

The trip will use R&N's Budd RDC's #9166 and 9168 and depart the R&N complex at Port Clinton, PA at 8:30 AM. The special make an express run from Pottsville Junction to North Reading, and then travel over the freight-only Saint Clair Line, passing through Yuengling Junction. Included in the event will be a self-guided tour of the restored Schuylkill Haven station, plus tours of R&N's Port Clinton engine house, car shop, steam locomotive shop and the R&N offices and dispatching center.

Cost of the outing is \$49 per person, which includes train ride, photo runbys, tours and lunch. Deadline for ticket orders is March 15, 2017, and should be ordered from: James Danner, 840 Point Phillip Road, Bath, PA 18014-9618. Please make remittance payable to "Lehigh Valley Chapter, NRHS". Tickets will not be mailed, but will be held for pickup at the R&N complex in Port Clinton on the day of the trip.

Southampton Station Society Sets 2017 Rail History Symposium

The Southampton Railroad Station Society will once again this year sponsor a rail history symposium on Saturday, March 11, 2017 at the North and Southampton Reformed Church, 1380 Bristol Road in Churchville, Bucks County, PA. As in prior years, there will be six presenters at the event, as follows:

Dale W. Woodland, *Jack of All Trades: The Reading Alco RS3 Locomotives,*

James Rose, *Railroad Museums of the Midwest, Minnesota to Ohio*

Joseph Fusco, *Biggest Little Engine, The Restoration of CNJ #113,*

Norman Barrett, *Service Interruptions.*

Mitch Goldman, *Passenger Service, Philadelphia to New York.*

Larry Eastwood, *West Trenton Local & Beyond,* a look at the Reading between Philadelphia and West Trenton, plus coverage beyond to Bound Brook and Jersey City/Newark.

Doors open at 8:00 AM for coffee and donuts, with the Symposium beginning at 9:00 AM. Admission is \$35.00 per person, which includes lunch. Reservation should be made by mailing check or money order to Southampton Station Historical Society, Post Office Box 214, Southampton, PA 18966-0214. Payment may also be made by PayPal at Southampton Station@Mail.Com. This is always an excellent late Winter event.