

CINDERS

MAY 2021



IN THIS ISSUE:

- P1 – OFFICERS/ PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
- P2 – CHAPTER INFO/ZOOM MTG INFO
- P3-5 - PHILLY EXPRESS/ SEPTA BRIDGE
- P6 - MEMBER MAIL/ TRIPS & TRAVEL
- P7 – PAGE 1 CONTINUED
- P8 – PREVIEW OF RT 6 TROLLEY

Vol. 82 NO. 5-OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER of the
 PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER OF THE NRHS
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 WEBSITE: www.nrhsphiladelphia.org

OFFICERS NAMED for 2021-2022

Treasurer Thomas Steps Down

*R. L. EASTWOOD, JR.,
 Outgoing President*

Because of the lack of in-person meetings, the Chapter’s Annual Meeting, which is held at the April meeting each year, was held via ZOOM and outgoing President Larry Eastwood named officers for the 2021-2022 year. There were no nominations from the members who signed in on ZOOM. A makeshift cabinet was named for the coming year, to serve until April 2022, by which time it is hoped that normal meetings and elections can be held.

Kevin Feeney and Larry Eastwood are switching positions, with Feeney becoming Chapter President (and Editor) and Larry Eastwood become Senior Vice President (and Editor Emeritus). Secretary Marie Eastwood will continue on as Secretary but will also assume the duties as Treasurer of the Chapter, caused by former Treasurer Ken Thomas’ sudden need to resignation due to family reasons.

William Welk of South Philadelphia has stepped up to fill the position of National Representative, a vacancy caused by the passing of former National Representative Peter M. Senin, Jr., at the end of February. It is hoped that these adjustments in Chapter management will provide continuity on our management operations in the forthcoming year.

Every organization says it needs more folks to be involved and ours is certainly no different. Thanks to Larry, Frank and Marie for their **decades** of dedicated service. However, to provide for continued chapter leadership, we really need for some younger members to step-up and become more involved in our chapter. We also need someone who can design a new membership brochure for the Chapter [Editor].

INCOMING PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Kevin Feeney

This is my first message as Chapter President and it is my honor to serve in this role. Our May 20th meeting will feature longtime Chapter member and former Delaware County resident Mike Yuhas with an overview of aerial (drone-based) railroad photography. The first half of the program focuses on flight basics, equipment basics, regulatory issues, safety, and photographic aesthetics. A slide show of some of Mike’s finest aerial work will round out the presentation.

Mike recently retired from a 30-year stint in advertising at Kalmbach Media (Trains and Classic Trains magazines) and currently serves as the president of the NRHS Wisconsin Chapter. Over 6,000 of his railroad photos are available for browsing at www.mikeyuhas.org.

With many of PA’s COVID restrictions being lifted later this month, it MIGHT be possible to hold a live meeting in June. We will see how things go over the next few weeks and let you know in the June issue of *Cinders* as to how we will meet on June 17th. Historically, our chapter has not had regular meetings in July and August.

As mentioned when I became Editor of *Cinders*, my involvement with the NRHS goes back to the 1980s. I originally joined the Tri-State Chapter. to receive *BLOCK LINE* magazine. I transferred to the Western CT Chapter. eventually becoming Editor of its newsletter and later served as its Treasurer, VP and docent in its museum. I transferred into this chapter in the early 2000s after my wife and I brought a hi-rise condo in Center City as our “weekend home”. I often attended our Chapter meetings at Jefferson and Drexel. After retiring at the end of 2018 and moving to PA in early 2019, I became more involved with the chapter.

Our Chapter has a long history; it was founded in 1936 as the fourth chapter of the then newly formed NRHS. Major changes have certainly taken place in the railroad industry [continued on page. 7]

The Philadelphia Chapter will not hold an in-person meeting for the month of May. Please see below in the right column for instructions for our May 20th ZOOM program.

**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 WEBSITE:

For current Chapter information, as well as vintage views of Chapter trips and activities, visit:

www.nrhsphiladelphia.org

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ZOOMmaster	<i>Eric Dervinis</i>	610.613.2828

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Effective September 1, 2020, dues are \$20.00 per person, which covers Philadelphia Chapter thru Dec. 31, 2021. (NRHS National membership dues for 2021 are \$50.00, billed directly by NRHS.) NRHS chapters bill members separately for Chapter dues.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS should forward remittance in the amount of \$20.00, payable to:

Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS
Post Office Box 7302
Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302.

Please be sure to include name, complete mailing address, telephone number and E-mail address.

ADDRESS CHANGES:

Send to Editor Emeritus at
Post Office Box 353
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353.
(Include your CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBER and E-MAIL ADDRESS so our records are complete.)
Also contact the Editor Emeritus if your copy does not arrive or arrives in a damaged condition.

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**Chapter ZOOM Meeting for MAY 20
2021 at 700 PM EDT**

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/99419801992?pwd=WC84dmNZQ0Q3aW10WGgxUTgzK1R4UT09>
Meeting ID: 994 1980 1992
Passcode: 696177

Dial 1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

The **Rockledge Model Railroad Museum** [aka **GATSME**] at 323 Montgomery Ave. in Rockledge, PA is open to the public on Saturday June 12th from Noon to 3 PM. Going forward, the club expects to be open on the 2nd Saturday of each month, with possible additional dates later in 2021. At the Museum, there is an area offering donated model RR, Lionel and RRiana items for sale. Visitors are asked to confirm the open house dates on its web site or Facebook page before traveling there.

Flash Train Show Saturday May 15th 8AM-2PM
Renninger's Antique & Farmers Market, 740 Noble St, Kutztown, PA 19530



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



“Pandemic aid buys time for SEPTA” read the front-page headline in the April 24 edition of the *Inquirer*. The story referred to a proposed \$1.52-billion operating budget for Fiscal Year 2022 beginning this July 1 that the SEPTA board had released the previous day. The budget, which promises increased service and no fare increases for at least another year, relies heavily on \$800 million in emergency funding that SEPTA expects to receive from the recently enacted “American Rescue Plan” legislation (see April Cinders). At the same time a temporary hiring freeze and other cost reductions are planned. Although overall ridership still is only around 38 percent of pre-COVID levels, which currently costs SEPTA almost \$1 million a day in lost fare revenues, it plans to use the federal funding to increase service during the new fiscal year to around 96 percent of normal on transit lines and 80 percent on Regional Rail. Four virtual public hearings on the new budget will be held May 24th and 25th.

SEPTA also is advancing its \$688.9-million capital budget for FY 2021, and a 12-year capital plan estimated at \$7.4 billion. Two virtual public hearings are scheduled for May 26. The biggest single project for FY 2022 is vehicle acquisition and replacement costing \$159.7 million, or 25 percent of the total budget for the year. Major funding sources are the State (\$353.4 million) and the federal government (\$253.6 million). Of particular interest is the purchase of 45 multi-level railcars from CRRC costing \$179.2 million, of which just \$8.8 million is covered in the FY 2022 budget but \$99.4 million in prior funding is already in place for the project. Delivery is said to begin next year and extend through FY 2025.

The budget proposal, said General Manager Leslie Richards, “would provide resources for ramping up service as more customers return, and advance efforts to make our operations sustainable in the long term by finding savings and efficiencies.” She continued that “SEPTA has been the backbone of the region during the pandemic, providing access to essential jobs and services. We are looking forward to welcoming more customers back, and we are working hard to make SEPTA an attractive option for new riders.” But the City of Philadelphia, in releasing its proposed \$5.2 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2022, predicted that at least 15 percent of suburban commuters will never return to their former offices in the city, resulting in a permanent loss of wage and parking taxes (and SEPTA ridership as well).

Another significant project in the pipeline is the \$216.4-million Trolley Modernization Program. The FY2022 budget contains

\$30.1 million as a down payment for replacing the fleet of 40-year-old Kawasaki-built trolleys used on the five subway-surface lines and two suburban routes out of 69th Street Transportation Center. One setback to the plan is the loss of a property on Elmwood Avenue in Southwest Philadelphia which SEPTA was eyeing as the site for a shop building to service the new trolley fleet (see November *Cinders*). Instead, the 28-acre former General Electric property has been sold to Amazon, which plans to build a “last mile” warehouse to handle local deliveries. Some nearby residents are said to be unhappy with this development, fearing increased truck traffic in the area. But powerful politicians back the sale, because of the 300-odd jobs Amazon will create. Also in the capital program is the planned replacement of the 218 Market-Frankford Line cars, which are around 27 years old and in need of extensive overhauls. There is \$97.3 million in the budget as an initial investment in the new car fleet, which is to be acquired starting in 2027.

SEPTA received some favorable publicity last month when it unveiled a large mural in the newly rebuilt 5th Street subway station, depicting scenes from Philadelphia’s history. It is the work of local artist Tom Judd, who came under some criticism when it was discovered that the name of famed Black Abolitionist and Statesman Frederick Douglass was misspelled. Both SEPTA and Judd promised a quick fix, and an extra “e” was added to Douglass’ first name. Work continues on the \$38.8-million project to rebuild the east section of the Market-Frankford Line station at 30th & Market Streets. The old headhouse has been demolished and will be replaced with a new structure. A new elevator and escalator will be installed along with lighting, signage and other improvements on the mezzanine level. SEPTA has increased its use of clean energy with the recent opening of a 17.75-megawatt solar farm in Franklin County, PA (see September 2019 *Cinders*). The farm will supply SEPTA with nearly 10% of its annual 380,000 MWh consumption of electric power

SEPTA last month launched its much-discussed Comprehensive Bus Network Design project, which should make the current sprawling system more efficient and user-friendly. The transportation consulting firm Nelson/Nygaard has been hired for \$3 million to help advance this “Bus Revolution,” which will realign the 120-route bus system to better serve areas of higher ridership, possibly shorten or eliminate some lines, make transfers easier and speed service by consolidating close-together stops. The plan is expected to be finalized within three years. Following up the restoration of the vandalized Somerset station on the Frankford el (see April’s *Cinders*), SEPTA closed the nearby Allegheny station for three nights in late April to allow for a thorough cleaning, needed maintenance and repairs. SEPTA has been offering non-vaccinated employees \$100 each to take time off to get the COVID vaccine.

While SEPTA continues to issue paper timetables for all of its lines, both rail and bus, AMTRAK last year discontinued printed timetables which, forces passengers or would-be passengers to

rely on the Internet for information. Even online it's impossible to print out actual timetables for individual Amtrak routes, but schedules can be found by entering origin and destination points. Though SEPTA is now operating about 460 weekday trains on its Regional Rail system, as compared with the normal pre-pandemic level of 774 trains, it should be remembered that in June of last year only 115 weekday trains were being run. That was SEPTA's so-called "Lifeline Service" when ridership was at its lowest point during the pandemic, because hardly anyone other than essential workers was riding the trains. The Tango restaurant in the old Bryn Mawr freight station, which was shuttered in late 2019, will soon be reborn. A new eatery, this one with an apparent railroad flavor, is on the way to occupying the same space. Its name: "The Pullman".

Strong winds whipped through the region on Friday, April 30, with gusts up to 60 mph recorded. One impact on SEPTA service occurred on the Warminster Line around noon, when a large tree fell across the track near Crestmont station. Service had to be suspended for almost two hours before the tree was cleared. Meanwhile, downed trees blocked AMTRAK's Harrisburg line east of Exton for much of the afternoon, with damage to the catenary. SEPTA trains to and from Thorndale had to be cancelled for the rest of the day and service east of Paoli was reduced, with eastbound trains running non-stop from Paoli to Bryn Mawr for a time. Finally, all Paoli-Thorndale service was suspended, and was not resumed until mid-morning on Saturday. Amtrak's own *Keystone* trains were delayed for up to three hours on Friday afternoon and evening, and some delays persisted into the next morning as other power problems between Philadelphia and Paoli still had to be corrected. Normal *Keystone* service was restored by Saturday mid-morning.



President Biden visited Philadelphia on the afternoon of Friday, April 30. But he spent most of his time at 30th Street Station, or more precisely in Penn Coach yard, where he gave a speech that recognized

AMTRAK's upcoming 50th anniversary and at the same time promoted his \$2.3-trillion infrastructure rebuilding proposal (see April *Cinders*). On a relatively warm day Biden's podium was set up in the yard with a new Acela power car and two specially painted "50th anniversary" P42 diesels prominently displayed behind him. One of the units was midnight blue #100 and the other #46 with large 50th Anniversary logos on its sides. The Comcast towers in center city loomed in the distance. Introducing the President was Blake Weaver, an Amtrak conductor who became friends with then-Senator Biden during the many hundreds of times he rode the train between Wilmington and Washington.

In recognizing AMTRAK's half century of service, Biden said that the railroad is extremely important to the nation, so much

so that if the Northeast Corridor were shut down for even one day it would cost the American economy \$100 million. Amtrak, he said, "is the bargain of bargains" and that much of the \$80 billion earmarked for railroads in his huge infrastructure plan should be invested in long-needed improvements to the physical plant on the Corridor as well as to expansion of passenger service elsewhere. In touting his plan, Biden declared that "we have a once in a generation opportunity to position Amtrak, and rail and intercity rail to play a central role in our transformation of transportation and economic future." He was joined at the event by Amtrak CEO Bill Flynn, other Amtrak officials as well as numerous State and local political figures including Governor Wolf and Mayor Kenney.

Just two days earlier AMTRAK submitted its Fiscal Year 2022 General & Legislative Annual Report and Five-Year Plan to both Congress and the U.S. DOT. The FY22 grant request seeks \$3.88 billion for base needs and to offset the pandemic's financial impact on the railroad, as well as \$1.55 billion for a "bold proposal" to start work on improving the infrastructure along the Northeast Corridor and to advance the planning of new corridor routes across the U.S. The proposed program also could support increases in service frequency for less-than-daily long-distance trains—the *Cardinal* and *Sunset Limited* are the main examples.

Of course, on the occasion of AMTRAK's Golden Anniversary, the railfan websites and social media posts are full of "last run" photos of favorite trains making their farewell trips on May 1, 1971. *Railfan & Railroad* Magazine devoted its photo-filled May issue almost exclusively to AMTRAK, including an interview with President Stephen Gardner. A colorful eight-page introduction to the newly opened Moynihan Train Hall in New York shows in detail how the 1910-vintage Post Office Building has been repurposed as an impressive entrance to the railroad's busiest terminal, somewhat offsetting the grim reality of old Penn Station next door.

Two new books will be published to coincide with the anniversary. One of them is *Fifty Years of Amtrak Trains* by Bruce Goldberg and David Warner from White River Productions. Warner is an Amtrak veteran now serving as an engineering officer at SEPTA. The other book from Indiana University Press is more of a corporate study: *Amtrak, America's Railroad, Transportation Orphan and Its Struggle for Survival*, due for release in October.

"As AMTRAK prepares to mark its 50th anniversary of service," CEO Bill Flynn said last month, "we look forward to important milestones on the journey to a modern and growing passenger rail network, such as the arrival of our new Acela and long-distance diesel locomotive fleets and beginning work on the Portal North Bridge project of the Gateway Program, in partnership with New Jersey Transit." "Gateway" is the name given to the massive project to build an alternate route into New York City via two new tunnels under the Hudson River.

Progress on the legislative front also is hoped for, as Amtrak is asking Congress to give it the right to sue host freight railroads that fail to provide dispatching preference for passenger trains, as already required by law but often seen as unenforceable.

AMTRAK has selected Siemens Transportation Systems to build a fleet of 83 single-level intercity trainsets for use on the NEC and on various state-supported services. This equipment would eventually replace all of 45-year-old Amfleet I cars and ex-Metroliner cab cars. The first set of new Acela trains, which has been testing at a center in Colorado for the past year, was returned to Alstom’s shop in Hornell, NY, on May 1. It will be fitted out with interior furnishings prior to entering revenue service on the Northeast Corridor, which could happen late this year. AMTRAK this month is ending its 50% limit on coach seat sales, which has been in effect since early in the COVID-19 pandemic. Amtrak hopes there will be no more half-full cars!

Norfolk & Western Class J #611 will visit the STRASBURG RAIL ROAD again this season. With the cooperation of owner Virginia Transportation Museum, the big 4-8-4 will operate on SRC starting May 21 and extending through October 3. As was the practice when it last visited Strasburg in the fall of 2019, the 611 will be under steam on its ferry move from Roanoke, although NORFOLK SOUTHERN diesels will have it in tow. The recently revived EAST BROAD TOP narrow gauge railroad at Orbisonia, PA, will begin its tourist season on June 11. At first General Electric center-cab diesel M-7 will haul the one-hour excursions on alternate weekends in June and July. Meanwhile, restoration work continues on two of EBT’s surviving Baldwin-built 2-8-2 steam locomotives, #14 and 16.

The requirement that passengers wear masks while riding trains, planes or transit lines has been extended through September 13, by order of the Transportation Security Administration. The order was scheduled to expire on May 11, but the fact that only about half of the adults in the U.S. have received COVID-19 vaccinations led to the extension. Two Senators, one Democrat and one Republican, last month introduced a bill to provide \$2.5 billion over the next five years to build grade separations where dangerous highway grade crossings now exist (*Trains*).

NJ TRANSIT is conducting a “transitway” study to consider



replacing the “Princeton Dinky” rail service with possible rubber-tired vehicles. The 2.7-

mile branch that connects Princeton with Princeton Junction now hosts the shortest commuter rail operation in the U.S. and has often been threatened with abandonment. Currently the single-track electrified line is operated with two-car trains of Arrow III MU’s. NJT last month began road testing its first new ALP-45 dual-power locomotive. Twenty-five of the units are being built by Alstom in Germany Governor Murphy announced last month that NJT now has a full roster of 390 locomotive

engineers, after a year’s-long program to recruit and train more engineers to fill long existing vacancies.

NJ TRANSIT has issued a request for proposals (RFP) to undertake a \$250-million project to replace the existing Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden (see March Cinders) NJT will receive about \$3.57 billion in subsidies from the New Jersey Turnpike Authority over the next seven years, under an agreement approved last month. This appears to be similar to the present situation in which the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission is required by law to provide \$450 million per year to assist transportation agencies in the State, including SEPTA (but this largesse will mostly end next year).

Both CSX and NS had middling first quarters this year but were confident that business will get much better as the economy continues to build. CSX saw net income decline about nine percent from the year ago period, while NS reported an increase of just one percent. NS had a much-improved operating ratio of 61.5% while CSX’s OR rose slightly to 60.9%. (The operating ratio represents the percentage of operating revenue needed to cover operating expenses, so the lower the better.) Nationwide, total carloads rose 0.2% for the first 15 weeks of 2021 while intermodal units increased by 15.7% over the year-ago period.

It should be noted that President Biden’s plan to reduce fossil fuel emissions as a way to fight climate change will eventually impact railroad coal traffic. Coal already is suffering due to lower demand from electric utilities, which are increasingly converting to lower cost natural gas or using renewable energy sources. Coal generated less than 20% of U.S. energy needs last year, down from 48% in 2008. In 2020 coal made up just nine percent of NS traffic volume and 11% on CSX (*Trains*).

PennDOT closed RT 152 {Limekiln Pike} where it cross over SEPTA’s line to Landsdale on the border of Abington and Cheltenham on April 24th. The bridge, located midway between SEPTA’s

Glenside and North Hills stations, was originally built in 1959 and has a posted weight limit of just 12 tons.



This project was driven by the immediate need to address the bridge deck and superstructure, which were both rated in serious condition due to deterioration and severe cracking during a recent inspection. The project will remove and replace the existing bridge superstructure, including concrete railroad protective barriers, parapets and sidewalks. The contractor will also repair the existing abutments and footings, as well as install new approach guiderail, and concrete bridge approach slabs. The \$3.2 million project is expected to be finished by later this summer.

MEMBER MAIL & FOLLOW-UP

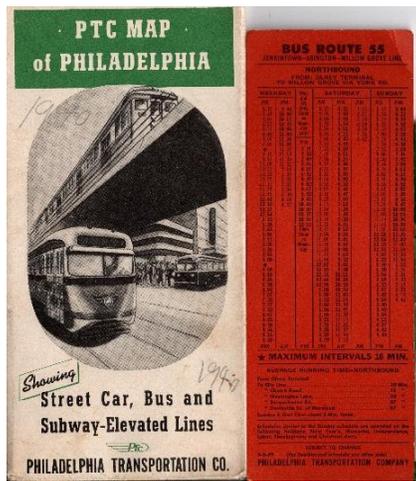
Sheila Dorr sent me a copy of a 4/17/21 NEWS RELEASE from GREAT AMERICAN TRAIN SHOWS INC., a new company formed to assume operations of train shows nationwide from TRAIN SHOWS INC. The latter company went bust after almost a year of no shows due to the COVID crisis.

GATS includes: Greenberg Train & Toy Shows, the Great Midwest Train Show [a monthly swap meet held in a fairgrounds just west of Chicago], Great Trains Shows and World's Greatest Hobbies. The first show up is a Greenberg Show near Pittsburgh on July 24-25. Your editor had a timed ticket to attend this show at the same time last year but it was eventually cancelled. The first show in our area will be a Greenberg Show at the Greater Philly Expo Center in Oaks, PA on Aug 21-22. The WGH shows will resume in 2022.

For more information, please visit the TRAINSHOW.com website that was retained from the prior company.

Dan Cupper, a long-time member of the NRHS' Harrisburg Chapter, is also involved with the Railway & Locomotive

Historical Society. He sent me a press release on "celebrating 100 years 1921-2021". R&LHS is North American's oldest railroad history organization. While some might view R&LHS as a competitor of the NRHS, no doubt some of its 2200 members also belong to the NRHS. Your editor is not a member of R&LHS but did attend its annual convention in Indianapolis a while back. Its original oval image was designed by Otto Kuhler in 1932. For more information, please visit rlhs.org.



While sorting thru the many boxes in our Willow Grove storage unit, I came across these interesting PTC items. The map is from 1940 and it shows the RT 55 trolley that was featured in April's Cinders. The orange card is a Sept. 9th, 1959 schedule for the RT 55 bus [all bus] from Olney Terminal to Willow Grove.

TRIPS & TRAVEL



My wife and I travel frequently from PHL airport and our trips usually begin at the Jenkintown train station. While waiting for the train last month, my wife looked at this building [just west of the tracks] and asked me what it was used for. Not having a clue, I emailed our Editor Emeritus who responded with the

following. This was originally the office building for the old Nicholson Coal Company. Their supply yard is now the south parking lot at Jenkintown station. There was a scale right beside the Nicholson building on which trucks of coal were weighed before delivery to customers' homes. The building is now used by SEPTA as an office for some of their maintenance people.

From PHL, we flew to Ft. Myers FL to see a relative's new house in nearby Punta Gorda. While not a train trip, I manage to find RR things almost everywhere!

We went to see the amazing model circus display at the Ringling Museum in Saratoga that included several railroad scenes.



Located in Punta Gorda is a restored historic Atlantic Coast Line train depot. When



home I looked at 1961 ACL Time Table. and saw back then, the depot had four trains at day. Two went north to Lakeland from where connections could be



made to Jacksonville or points up to NYC. The other two went south to Naples. Passenger service ended 50 year ago with the start of AMTRAK on May 1, 1971. The station was built in Mediterranean style back in 1928 and is the only one of this style left in FL. Current rail freight service is provided by the Seminole

Gulf Railway based in Ft Myers. I heard a train whistle one day when we were in the pool, but never saw any traffic.

[Continued from page 1]

and life in general since then. While remembering history is certainly important, our Chapter still needs to reflect current realities and member interests.

It seems to me that our Chapter has six areas of activity. *First*, we are part of the larger NRHS that has approx. 130 chapters with over 5,000 members. The NRHS holds annual convention and other meetings and publishes a magazine and newsletter. *Second*, we publish a monthly newsletter and have a website. *Third*, historically we held monthly in-person meetings with presentations on railroad or transit history. The in-person meetings also allowed members to socialize. For the past year, our meetings have all been thru ZOOM. *Fourth*, our Chapter has sponsored many “fan” trips over the years. *Fifth*, the Chapter owns a historic Reading Company FP-7 [#902] currently at Steamtown. *Sixth*, we rent a storage unit in Willow Grove that is full.



My view of these six activities is as follows. *First*, the NRHS has certainly had its share of problems in the last few years. It is not surprising given the demographics that a sizable of members passed away in the last year, some due to COVID. On the other hand, several inactive chapters are seeking to reactivate. We are all awaiting details of the upcoming annual convention in Milwaukee from Aug 23rd -28th, which I plan to attend. *Second*, I belong to other RR related groups, most of which have gone to electronic delivery for their newsletters and the like. I receive exchange copies from several NRHS chapters electronically and when I told one editor that we spent over \$6,000 a year on Cinders, he did not believe me, saying I must mean \$600. Besides saving the money, electronic delivery would speed up receipt and allow us to avoid postal delivery issues like we saw in late 2020 into 2021. We need to make better use of our website and expand our use of social media.

Third, we are all looking forward to the return of in-person meetings. ZOOM meetings were a mixed blessing and allowed us to continue our monthly meetings. While our

ZOOM meetings averaged 30-35 attendees [same as prior live meetings], some attendees were from outside our service area. Clearly some local folks that we used to see at live meetings were not in attendance. Why? What to do going forward? I know other groups are struggling with the same issue. In a perfect world, we could ZOOM our in-person meetings. But we do not live in a perfect world.

Fourth, given the current environment, issues with insurance, etc., it is highly unlikely that we will be able to offer any special trips in the foreseeable future, with the possible exception of ones on SEPTA. *Fifth*, we need a long-term plan for the FP-7's preservation and possible use. *Sixth*, there is an extensive collection of photos, slides and RRiana in the Willow Grove storage unit. We are not a museum so there is no ready access to the collection by our members or others. Recently my wife and I spent several hours there trying to sort thru the stacks of boxes. We have boxes and boxes of donated items only some of which are labeled. One box was full of bus timetables from the Jersey Shore. We took home some books, the bus timetables, Lionel catalogs, issues of *High Line* plus other RRiana to sell on eBay. I was surprised to find a “bus guy” thru eBay who purchased 10 lots. Sales of donated items have totaled almost \$1000 in the last three months. By the time this issue is received, I will not have any active eBay auctions, but please look for seller “ic4277” in the future for some interesting local RRiana and other items for sale. We also recycled some worthless magazines and newspaper clippings; we plan to recycle more when my town has its next recycle day. Hopefully, we can have a live auction at one of our future meetings and sell some of these treasures to our members. What to do with the rest? I could use help sorting thru the unit's contents.

I really want to hear from our members about the activities mentioned here. To help in this regard, I will be preparing a member survey. Look for a link to the survey in the June's *Cinders*. However, please feel free to email or mail your thoughts or comments as well.

In the past B.C. [before Covid HAH] the Chapter regularly held a summer dinner meeting. Things might not be totally ready for that so I propose a summer picnic or BBQ at a park overlooking train tracks. We need a park with a covered pavilion, close parking and a one that allows cooking. The suggested date would be Thursday Aug 12th from say 4:30-7:30PM. I would ask members to let me know of possible locations, perhaps on the Mainline? Recently I drove past *Whistle Stop Park* across from SEPTA's Colmar Station that seems to meet our requirements. However, when I stopped to check it out, a sign said the park is only for Montgomery Twp. residents and their guests. Do any of our members live in that township?

PTC Route 6 – coming in June Olney Avenue to Willow Grove

In the April’s *Cinders*, we detailed Philadelphia Transportation Company Route 55, the route which operated on Old York Road between Olney Avenue and Willow Grove. Coming up in our June issue, Larry Eastwood and Harry Garforth will provide some information on Route 6, which had an unusual routing from Olney Avenue, via Ogontz Avenue and Keswick Avenue to Willow Grove, feeding the Willow Grove Park amusement complex, which PTC itself owned as a traffic builder.

Here are several views from the Route 6 as a teaser for the forthcoming article in June.



This photo shows PTC Peter Witt #8182 in the “woods” south of Glenside on July 8, 1934. This photo is of special interest because it was taken by the late Robert G. Lewis, one of the founding members of Philadelphia Chapter on March 13, 1936. Lewis was later Publisher / Editor of *Railway Age Magazine*.



PTC PCC #2033 at Church Road crossing near Arcadia University in August 1956. Stone building on the left still exists in 2021 as a private office building (Photo by Joseph M. Mannix, Philadelphia Chapter NRHS Collection)



A southbound Route 6 PCC leaving Willow Grove on March 23, 1958 – taken from the Welsh Road bridge (Photo by Joseph M. Mannix, Philadelphia Chapter NRHS Collection)



An aerial postcard view of Willow Grove Park from sometime in the 1950’s. Easton Road looking north is on the right. (Postcard from R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Collection)

Samuel M. Herb

Lecturer, RDG Heritage Museum Docent

NEW BRITAIN, PA--Samuel Martin Herb, 82, passed away at his home in New Britain, PA on Monday May 3, 2021.

Herb had a lifelong interest in railroads and their heritage. He was a frequent presenter at Southampton Station Historical Society’s annual symposium at the North & Southampton Reformed Church in Churchville. He was also a docent at the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum in Hamburg, PA. He was active in local Boy Scout activities.

He had four children, with his wife predeceasing him. Services were held on Thursday, May 6, 2021 at St. Jude Roman Catholic Church in Chalfont, PA with interment in St. John Neumann Cemetery in that Bucks County community.