

\$1.50



The Newsletter of the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society

Box 1770, Rahway, New Jersey 07065

Volume 7, No. 2

November, 1992



Among the attractions at the 1992 Hoboken Festival was a PCC car from the Newark City Subway. This view shows car 13 on display in the plaza next to the old ferry slips. *Frank S. Miklos*

DESTINATIONS is published several times a year by the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society. Distributed free to members in good standing; \$1.50 per copy to others. Regular membership is \$12 per year. For information about membership or publication sales write: North Jersey E.R.H.S., Box 1770, Rahway, N.J. 07065. Frank S. Miklos, Editor; Anthony J. Hall, Assistant Editor; Beverly Rodel, Production Assistant.

NORTH JERSEY ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Anthony J. Hall President
Robert E. Landwehrle, Secretary

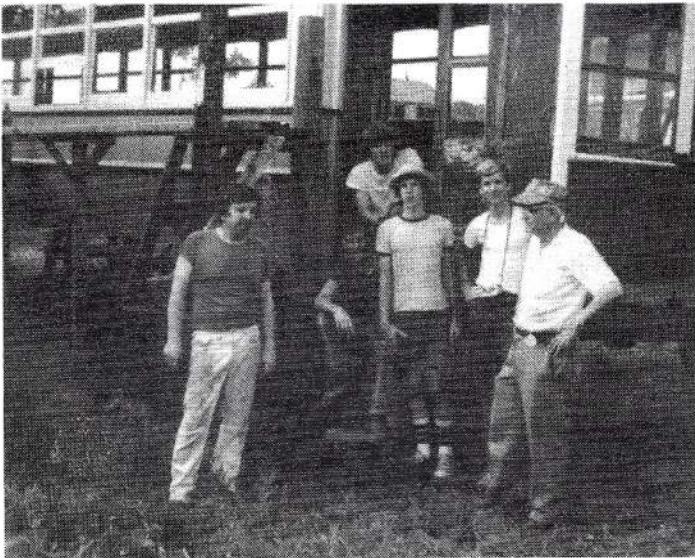
Robert E. Hooper, Vice-President
Frank S. Miklos, Treasurer

Regular meetings of the North Jersey E.R.H.S. are held on the third Tuesday of each month (except July and August) at 7:30 P.M. at the Reed Center, 1670 Irving Street, Rahway, N.J. Entertainment featuring electric traction subjects is presented at each meeting.

Manuel Deutchman

This organization lost a valued member and I lost a good friend with the recent passing of Manny Deutchman. A member since 1989, Manny showed an interest in the 2651 project as early as 1974 [see photo]. We had become acquainted through our mutual interest in vintage Lionel trains. Manny was an expert repairman and kept my two aging 260-E's running in top form after others had given up on them. Even in declining health, Manny was always ready to share his knowledge and his enthusiasm. When the success of our Summer 1990 outing was in question, Manny was among those who supported the organization, despite inclement weather and even wheelchair confinement. His generosity and all around good humor were only a few of his many virtues which will be missed by all who were fortunate enough to have known him. To Mrs Deutchman, his son Benjamin and daughter Rosalie, we offer our condolences.

Tony Hall



The summer of '75 at Ringoes finds Manny on the right with Tony Hall on the left and Perry Didriksen in the vestibule. Ben Deutchman is seated on the steps next to two of his friends. Manny was an early fan of the trolley project which gave rise to the North Jersey E.R.H.S. *Frank S. Miklos*

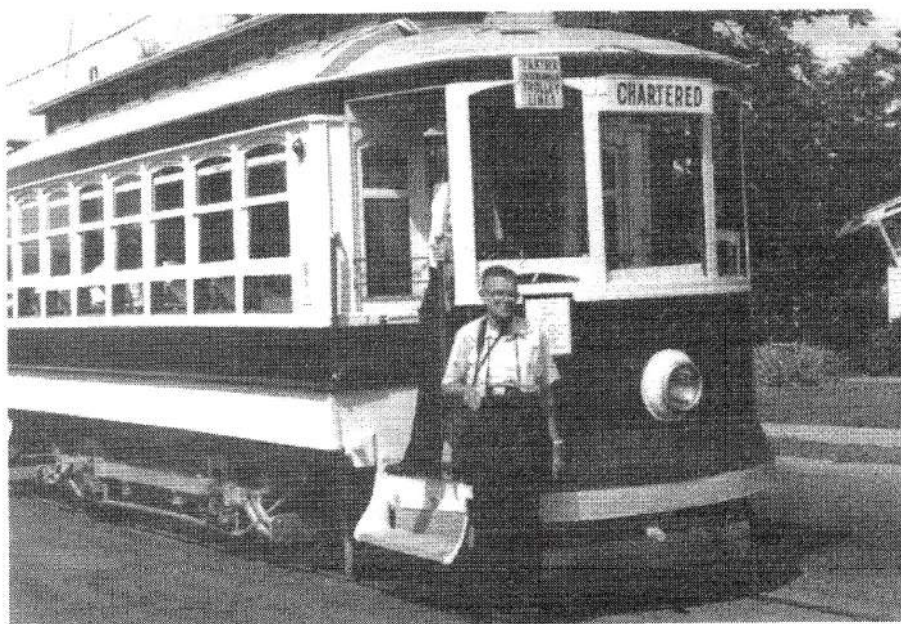
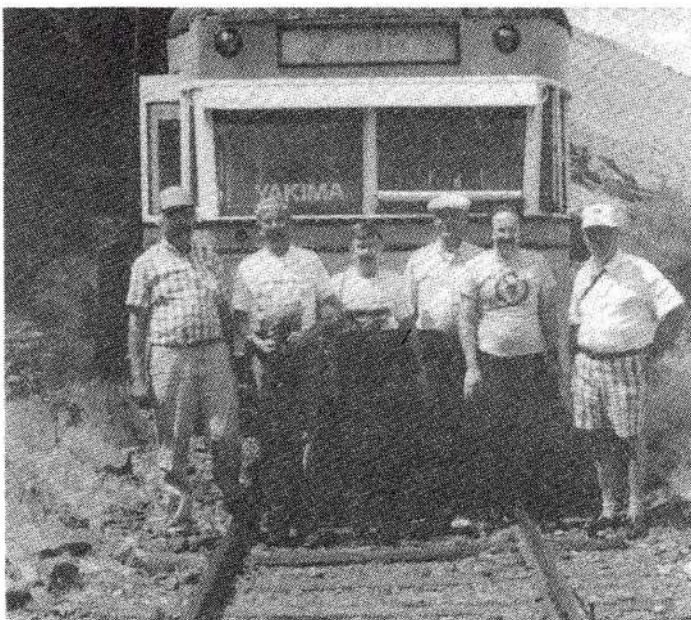
MEMBERSHIP NOTES

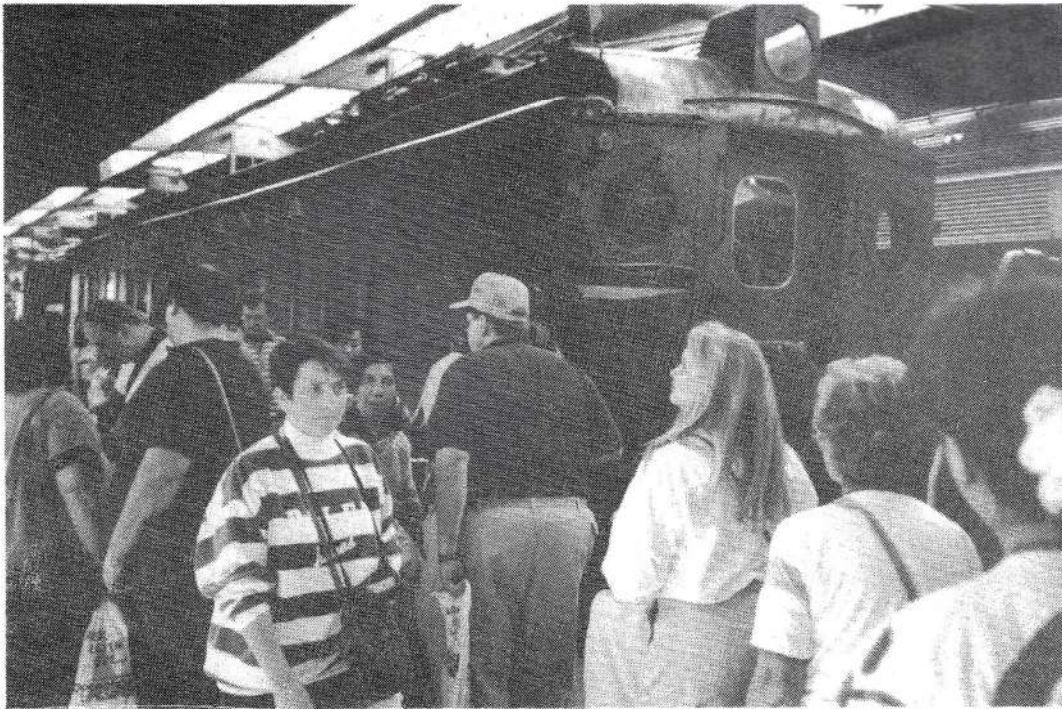
We are grateful for the support we receive from our members. Since our last issue we have received contributions from the following individuals:

Herman Bachman, Joseph A. Haas, Robert E. Hooper, Carl Hosler, George A. Knopf, Albert M. Mankoff, Anthony C. Mazzella, Michael E. Popp, Henry Ruschmeyer, Johannes Sieberer, and Harold M. Tepper.

Thanks again to these contributors as well as to all the members who support us through their dues and encouragement.

Several members of the North Jersey E.R.H.S. participated in the 1992 convention of the Electric Railroaders' Assn. which was held in the Pacific Northwest. Posing in front of Yakima Washington Master Unit No. 21 are Frank Miklos, Dick and Betsy Shiels, Phil Stevenson, Jim Hoffman and Gene Gordon. *Below: Barker Gummere poses next to one of Yakima's Porto cars. Frank S. Miklos.*





Nice weather attracted large crowds to this year's Hoboken Festival. Some of the visitors are seen on the platform next to car 413. *Tony Hall*

1992 Hoboken Festival

by Frank S. Miklos

The 1992 Hoboken Festival was held on Saturday October 10, and once again we were able to display one of our cars at this event. This year's Festival was held in conjunction with the annual private car owners' convention which is usually held in mid-October. To accommodate the convention, the Festival was held about two weeks later than in previous years.

Getting one of our cars to the Festival involved the same down-to-the-wire planning that took place in 1991. Early in the summer Bob Hooper wrote to Conrail in behalf of the North Jersey E.R.H.S. to try to arrange the move. With the Festival date approaching, we still had not received a reply from Conrail. As with any large organization, the people who assisted us last year had either left the company or had moved on to other positions within the Conrail organization. Therefore, our correspondence which was addressed to them, wound up lost in the "system". Bob got on the phone and was able to speak with other people who could help us. However, it took a major push by Ben Friedland of the Morristown and Erie Railway to cut through the red tape and finally get Conrail's approval for the move.

This was accomplished through a conference call involving Ben, several officials from Conrail at several locations in the United States, Bob Hooper, and Tony Hall. Ben's persuasion succeeded in breaking the logjam and paved the way for the move by Conrail.

The weather was subject to question on the day of this year's Festival. Rain was forecast for most of the weekend, following the pattern that characterized far too many weekends this summer. This time the weather cooperated. Following a gray overcast morning, the sun broke through the clouds and we enjoyed a perfect day.

We decided to ride in from Morristown on the train that was scheduled to depart at 7:46 a.m. I picked up Tony Hall at his home and we drove to the Morristown train station, arriving there about twenty seconds ahead of Bob Hooper in a great display of coordinated timing. From the trunks of our cars we unloaded additional boxes of items for use at the Festival. Bob was able to obtain the use of a small television with a self-contained VCR, and I brought along a supply of video tapes to be shown on that unit. Fortunately we were able to find parking spaces within inches of the eastbound platform, so all we had to do was carry the boxes onto the train. The Morristown station has low-level platforms which made the job a little tougher, but we succeeded in getting everything aboard without delaying the service. The train crew was well aware of the Hoboken Festival, so no doubt this led them to be more tolerant. Bob Landwehrle boarded the same train at Convent, so we had an extra hand to help us unload at Hoboken.

Upon arrival at Hoboken we waited until all the passengers had exited so that we could unload the material without disturbing anyone. Then we set out in search of car 413 which was situated at the end of Track 9. There is always a sense of relief at actually seeing that the car made the journey safely to Hoboken.

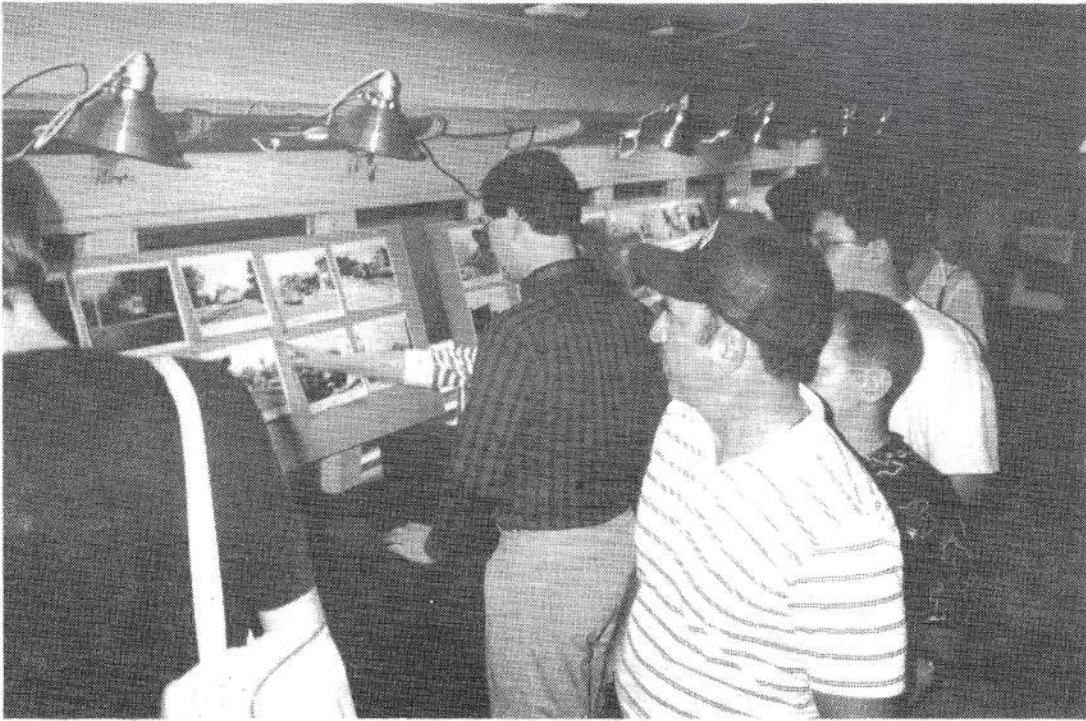
Now came the task of setting up the sales table on the platform; arranging the displays inside the car and tracking down N J Transit electricians to get us plugged in. While all this is going on, there are always the early birds who show up wanting to walk through the car while we are frantically trying to get our act together.

Eventually we had taken care of all the necessary tasks and were able to welcome visitors. Just before we opened the sales table, Bill McKelvey stopped by with a carton of railroad-related magazines which he donated for us to sell. Meanwhile, Bob Hooper manned the video presentations, Tony Hall stood by our photo displays, and Beverly Rodell, Bob Landwehrle and I attended the sales table. During the day we were joined by Bob Hooper's son Rob along with Mike and Lynn Burshtin who were able to take over while the others took a break for lunch and a chance to look at some of the other displays at the Festival.

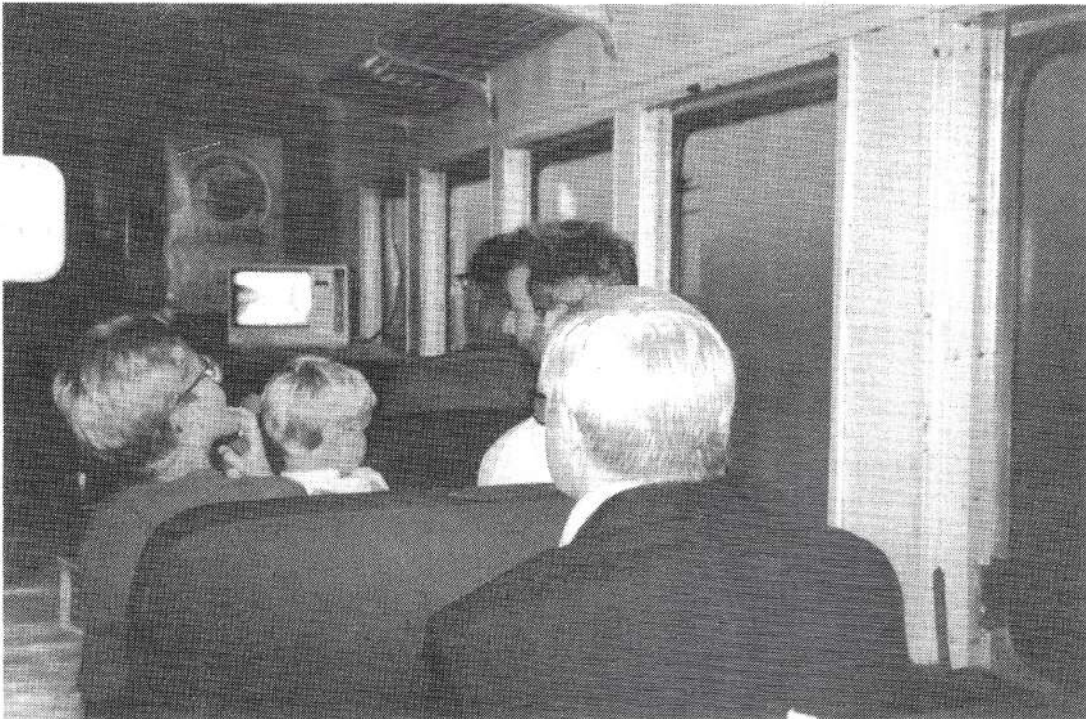
In the course of the day hundreds of visitors passed through the car. The videos proved popular with many people who welcomed the opportunity to sit down for a few moments after walking up and down the platforms of the sprawling terminal. The track directly opposite was used for the **Great Train Robbery** specials and we enjoyed a surge of visitors each time the train returned from its trip to the land of desperados. There were also special trains to the N J Transit maintenance complex which departed on another track. Other features of this year's festival were tours through the collection of private cars, displays of buses, and a PCC car from the City Subway which was trucked over for the day.

As 5 p.m. approached, we began to close up shop and move the merchandise and sales table into the car. Then we disconnected the electricity and rolled up the extension cords. Within an hour the car was enroute to Morristown where it was laid up for the balance of the weekend. We were able to ride back in the car and we are pleased to report that car 413 ran well and has since made the trip back to the Gilbert Generating Station without incident.

Once again we have to thank Conrail for moving the car safely. Particular gratitude must be given to Ben Friedland of the Morristown and Erie for his outstanding assistance in making this day a success for our organization. Without his efforts in our behalf, our participation in this year's Hoboken Festival would not have been possible.

FESTIVAL PHOTOS

Visitors to car 413 proceed down the aisle past our display of traction photos. *Below:* A group relaxes with one of our video presentations. *Tony Hall*



TROLLEYS: THE LONG ROAD BACK

Part 4

BOSTON WEATHERS THE STORM

by FRANK S. MIKLOS

While the Riverside Line exceeded ridership projections when it opened in 1959, it did not serve as a catalyst for a further expansion of the trolley system. In fact, the whole future of Boston's trolleys seemed very much in doubt with the retirement of the MTA's General Manager, Edward Dana. After a 50-year career with the Boston transit system, Mr. Dana had already delayed his retirement to oversee the completion of the Riverside Line. With that accomplished, he reached the point where he had to step aside.

He was succeeded by Thomas F. McLernon who had been a top official with the New York City Transit System. From the day he took over, it was obvious that Mr. McLernon wanted to apply New York's methods to Boston's transit operations. He failed to recognize the unique differences between the two transit properties. In all fairness to Mr. McLernon, there were some wasteful practices in Boston that should have been addressed, such as the requirement for one guard (conductor) between every two cars on the rapid transit system. These matters could have been resolved through collective bargaining, but Mr. McLernon tried to impose these reforms on the spot, by showing up at transit terminals and ordering trains into service with less than the full compliment of crew. The result was a series of wildcat walkouts that left riders stranded with no means of transportation.

Perhaps influenced by the 1960's notion that trolleys were "old fashioned", Mr. McLernon declared that they had no place in Boston's transit future. After all the New York City Transit Authority had retired its Brooklyn PCCs in 1956. It was unthinkable that Boston could still be running them! He went so far as to say that the Riverside Line should never have been built, even though it was attracting nearly 30,000 riders a day. He proposed the replacement of the remaining trolley lines with buses that would provide feeder service to the subway. His plans called for the demolition of the Lechmere Viaduct to Cambridge, and the eventual conversion of the Riverside Line to heavy rapid transit. These proposals clearly showed the inconsistencies of Mr. McLernon's positions. The Lechmere Viaduct was targeted because it included a drawbridge over the Charles River that "inconvenienced" riders when it was opened. Situated as it was on an elevated viaduct, the drawbridge saw limited use when an unusually tall vessel passed through the channel. By contrast, the replacement bus service proposed by Mr. McLernon would use the lower-level vehicular drawbridge which had to be opened for anything larger than a rowboat. The Riverside Line proposal for investing large sums of money for conversion to heavy rapid transit seemed questionable in view of Mr. McLernon's statement that this line should never have been built. It was clearly a case of doing whatever had to be done to achieve the goal of eliminating the streetcars.

The first target of Mr. McLernon's attack was the Tremont Street Line to Lenox Street. This street-running line entered downtown Boston through one of the original portions of the trolley subway which connected with the other underground trolley lines at Boylston Street. It served an impoverished area whose residents had almost no political clout. Those residents who were almost completely dependent on transit, lost their streetcars when the line was cut back to the subway portal, with buses serving the remainder of the route. Since there were no turning loops or crossovers at the subway portal, the surviving portion of the rail line consisted of two shuttles using the ex-Dallas double-ended PCCs. One ran back and forth to the inbound subway platform at Boylston Street, while the other one served the outbound platform. Passengers who formerly had a one-seat ride to the center of Boston were now



Nearly thirty years have passed since the Tremont Street portal of Boston's trolley subway was abandoned. This view shows a PCC pausing at the platform enroute to Lenox Street. *Frank S. Miklos collection*

required to take a bus to the subway portal, transfer to the subway shuttle to Boylston Street, and transfer again to reach their final destination. This ill-advised arrangement ended after a few months with the discontinuance of the subway shuttles, and a rerouting of the buses to Boylston Street. To this day the section of the subway used by the shuttles lies abandoned beneath the streets of Boston.

When plans were announced for the replacements of the surface portions of the Watertown, Commonwealth Avenue, Beacon Street, and Huntington Avenue lines with feeder buses, the reaction was swift and vocal. The more affluent residents of the neighborhoods served by those routes were quick to point out that they would not tolerate the type of service changes that were already foisted upon the mostly minority transit riders along the Tremont Street line. Public hearings drew large crowds and were characterized by angry confrontations between transit officials and opponents of the plans to eliminate the streetcars. In reality, the conversions of those lines could not be easily carried out because there were not enough double-ended PCCs to provide connecting service within the subway, but the proposals continued to be pushed anyway.

While Ed Dana was at the helm, the Boston transit system earned a reputation for high standards of maintenance. The main repair shops were located in a sprawling facility in Everett where transit vehicles were periodically put through a rehabilitation program that saw them emerge in almost pristine condition. The PCC cars were among the vehicles that were regularly sent to Everett for overhaul. Many of the PCCs were rebuilt with monitor roofs and ceiling fans for better ventilation in the subway. By 1960 only one of the fleet of 345 Pullman-built PCCs had been scrapped. That lone vehicle was damaged beyond repair when it derailed and wrapped itself around an elevated pillar.

In what was billed by Mr. McLernon as an economy move, the service trackage between the streetcar loop at North Station and the Everett shops was abandoned. A ramp was constructed at the

Lechmere Terminal to enable streetcars to be loaded onto a flatbed trailer for transport to Everett. With this slow and cumbersome arrangement, the number of cars sent to Everett for work was greatly reduced. The supervisors at the various trolley depots chose instead to do whatever maintenance they could at their facilities rather than go through the hassle of trying to arrange for a car to be trucked to Everett. In many cases, it took months before cars were returned to their assigned depots after work was completed. Ultimately the condition of the fleet deteriorated and breakdowns became more frequent.

By the mid-1960s the situation had reached the crisis stage. A bill was introduced in the Massachusetts legislature that would dissolve the Metropolitan Transit Authority and replace it with a new agency that would serve a wider area. The purpose of the legislation was two-fold. By expanding the territory served by the transit system there would be a larger tax base upon which to draw funds for subsidizing mass transit. The opening of the Riverside Line with its large park & ride lots attracted a substantial number of riders from outside the MTA territory. Future expansions of the transit system could serve commuters from other outlying areas. The second purpose of the legislation was to establish a new transit agency that would be more responsive to the needs of the riders.

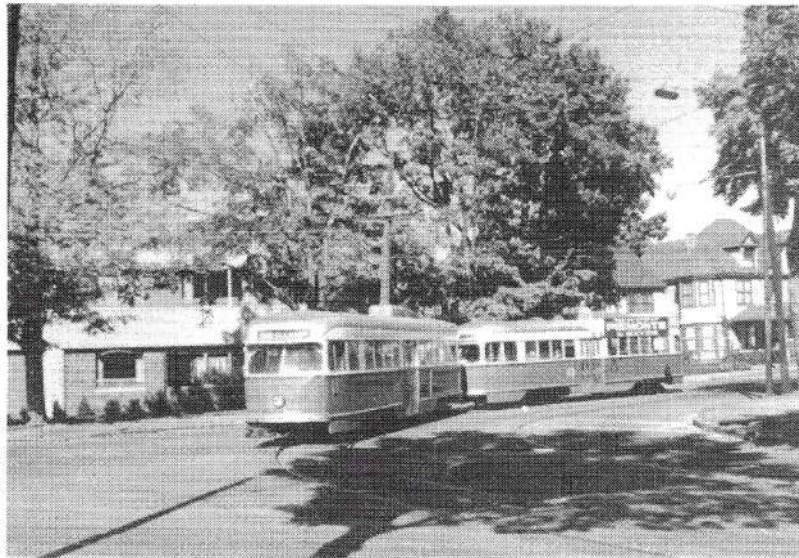
The new agency was known as the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and served 79 communities in the Boston area compared with 19 communities served by the MTA. A provision of the legislation called for the MBTA to honor all contracts that were in effect on the MTA. This was done to set aside fears of the transit unions that sweeping work rule changes would be implemented. After a difficult period of labor unrest, the legislature wanted to assure the passengers and the unions of reliable transit service. Among the contracts that were in effect at the time, however, was the ten-year pact that was signed by Mr. McLernon at the time he was hired. Therefore he was retained as General Manager of the new agency. When Mr. McLernon continued to pursue his own agenda, the new MBTA Board of Directors voted to relieve him of his duties by buying out the remaining time on his contract even though he still had more than five years to go.

He was replaced by Rush Lincoln, a retired military officer whose primary objective was to restore a favorable image to the transit system. An industrial design consultant named Cambridge Seven Associates was chosen to design new graphics, and to establish standards for a station rehabilitation program. They introduced a new logo consisting of the letter "T" inside a circle, and a new paint scheme of gray and white with yellow doors. They also introduced a color coding system for the rapid transit lines. The Everett-Forest Hill line was renamed the Orange Line; the East Boston line was renamed the Blue Line; the Cambridge-Dorchester Line was renamed the Red Line, and the trolley subway system was renamed the Green Line. At first the color route designations were looked upon with amusement by other transit properties, but in keeping with the "monkey see, monkey do" mentality that prevails in the transit industry, color designated routes have since been adopted by transit systems in Washington, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Los Angeles and recently, Chicago.

Despite the new image that resulted from these changes, the years of deferred maintenance continued to catch up with the fleet of PCC cars. By 1969 so many cars were laid up with mechanical problems, that the service was in shambles. The MBTA decided to temporarily replace the Watertown line with buses until such time as the severe car shortage could be overcome. The Watertown line was the second longest on the system and had the most trackage in street paving. Buses were operated between Watertown carhouse and Kenmore Square where passengers transferred to streetcars for the remainder of their trip.

The PCC cars that were released through the conversion of the Watertown line provided only temporary relief for the acute shortage of cars. In a further effort to relieve the problems, the now unused Watertown carhouse was refurbished into a satellite heavy overhaul shop to supplement the facility at Everett. A rehabilitation program for the PCC cars was set up at Watertown and the number of breakdowns were gradually reduced.

About the only part of the MBTA's new image that was never fully accepted was the gray, white and yellow paint scheme that was recommended by Cambridge Seven. Cars that went to Everett or Watertown for overhaul would usually emerge in the "official" gray paint scheme, but cars that had work



Two-car trains were used for base service on the Watertown Line. This view shows a pair of PCCs rounding a curve in Newton Corners. *Frank S. Miklos*

done at the depots kept showing up partially repainted in fresh coats of the old tangerine, cream and silver colors. These facilities retained a supply of the old colors for "touch up" work, but in at least one instance, a gray car was completely "touched up" back into the old colors.

Finally, the MBTA gave in to reality and announced that the rapid transit vehicles would be repainted into the colors of the lines on which they operated, while the bus fleet would be repainted into the yellow that had been designated for the vehicle doors. While most of the fleet took on a fresh new appearance with the new colors, the streetcars were repainted into the somber shade of green that was designated for the Green Line. This is probably the most impractical color for vehicles that have to operate in mixed traffic. Bright colors are usually chosen for these conditions, especially on routes like Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue that operate in median strips that are landscaped with trees and shrubs. A dark green car emerging from this vegetation cannot easily be seen by motorists, but the consultants who recommended the name "Green Line" for the trolley system could not have foreseen the potential problem that would result from this color selection. About the only thing that nearly everyone agreed upon was the fact that even the green was an improvement over the drab gray. Incidentally, the small group of PCC cars assigned to the Mattapan line were repainted red since that service was a feeder to the Red Line at Ashmont. In later years PCC cars which were transferred off the Green Line to the Mattapan service were not repainted and are running today in the green paint scheme.

By the early 1970s, the MBTA was still unable to keep pace with a fleet of deteriorating cars. Plans were drawn up for a new streetcar which would replace the aging PCCs. The new car was named the "Type 6" and was of a double-ended, single-unit design. The "Type 6" reverted to the traditional end-platform design of streetcars, but in this instance, the ends were severely tapered in an attempt to give them a more streamlined appearance. A plywood mock-up of the new design was actually built, but nothing further came of the project. The mock-up of what might have been currently resides in one of

barns at the Seashore Trolley Museum.

At the same time that Boston was preparing an application for federal money to fund the purchase of the Type-6s, the San Francisco Municipal Railway was also planning to purchase new streetcars to replace their fleet of PCCs. The federal government saw an opportunity to save money, by directing the two transit agencies to come up with a standard car design that could be used on both properties. They knew that other transit systems would also be purchasing new cars in the future and they hoped that an off-the-shelf streetcar could be made available for purchase, much like the situation in the bus manufacturing industry. Since the term "Light Rail" was considered more fashionable than streetcar, the new rail car was called the "Standard Light Rail Vehicle" (SLRV).

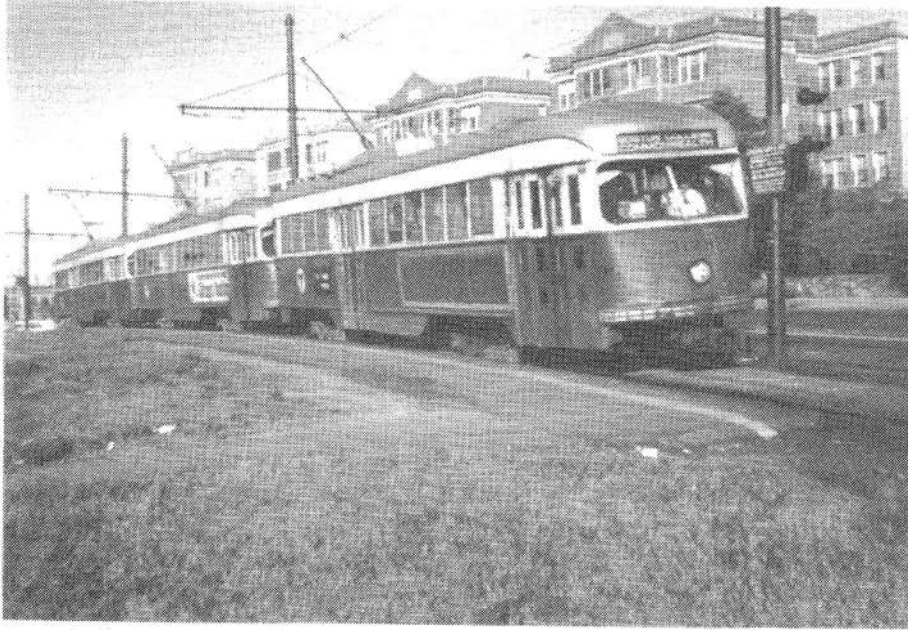
The engineering staffs of the MBTA and the San Francisco Municipal Railway got together with the aid of outside design consultants, and finally agreed on a car that would be acceptable to both properties. A double-ended articulated design was chosen, with modifications to suit the need of each system. There was a minor setback to the project when the bids were rejected as excessively high. The design of the cars was altered in an effort to reduce costs and new bids were sought. Among the changes in the car design was the elimination of one set of doors per side of car. The successful bidder for the redesigned car was the Boeing Vertol Company which set up an assembly line at its helicopter plant near Chester, Pennsylvania.

The first fully assembled car was shipped to Boston for testing. Ironically this was a car that was earmarked for San Francisco and it carried the orange and yellow "MUNI" colors. Tests were conducted during the night when regular service was not operating. At the end of the testing period, the San Francisco car was returned to Boeing and delivery began on the MBTA's fleet of new vehicles. A modern shop facility was built at Riverside in anticipation of the new rail cars.

Meanwhile the transit agency struggled to survive with its deteriorating fleet of PCCs. Trains were limited to a maximum of two cars, not only because of the car shortage, but also because of the fact that the more cars that were coupled together, the greater the risk that at least one car in the consist would break down. The situation came to a climax in December 1976 when a blizzard struck the Boston area. Car after car failed, as the yard crews went from vehicle to vehicle in an effort to meet schedules. When it became evident that there would not be enough operable PCCs to run the service, the yard supervisors set their sights on the new Boeing cars that were lined up in the yard. After making a few phone calls, they were given the ok to do whatever had to be done to maintain schedules. The new LRVs were not supposed to enter service for another week, in conjunction with an inaugural run to be attended by state and local politicians along with the media. However, when the last available PCC in the yard refused to run, the supervisors grabbed an LRV, posted the correct destination sign, and dispatched it to the boarding area at the Riverside Terminal much to the surprise of the passengers waiting on the platform. The initial LRV was followed in succession by a parade of other Boeing cars until the regular schedule was completely filled out. Passengers waiting at stations along the Riverside line stared in disbelief as the brand-new cars glided to a stop. Among the persons waiting as the first of the Boeing cars arrived at the Longwood station was Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis who regularly traveled by trolley to the Statehouse, so by a twist of fate the first run was attended by a public official.

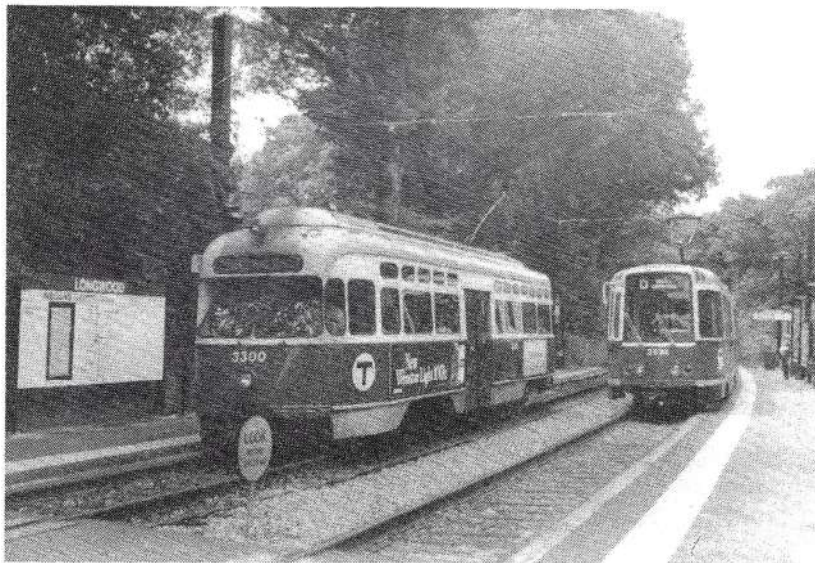
While the new cars entered service on a triumphant note, it wasn't long before they fell out of favor. Their complex electrical and mechanical equipment began to fail when exposed to the rigors of daily service. Their doors alone had over 500 moving parts, any one of which could malfunction. Since the doors were interlocked with the brakes, the cars could not move if one was not completely closed. Many other problems such as a tendency to derail under certain conditions, forced the removal of the cars from service for extended periods. Although Boeing had cooperated in trying to correct the problems, the number of out-of-service cars was continually higher than what was considered normal for a rail transit system.

With no easy solution in sight, the MBTA was forced to take action. They embarked on a complete rebuilding program for PCC cars and at the same time cancelled the balance of the order from



Three-car trains were soon to become a memory when this trio of well-worn PCCs climbed a grade on Commonwealth Avenue. *Below:* The first Boeing car in Boston was this San Francisco LRV which was sent to the MBTA for testing. *Frank S. Miklos*





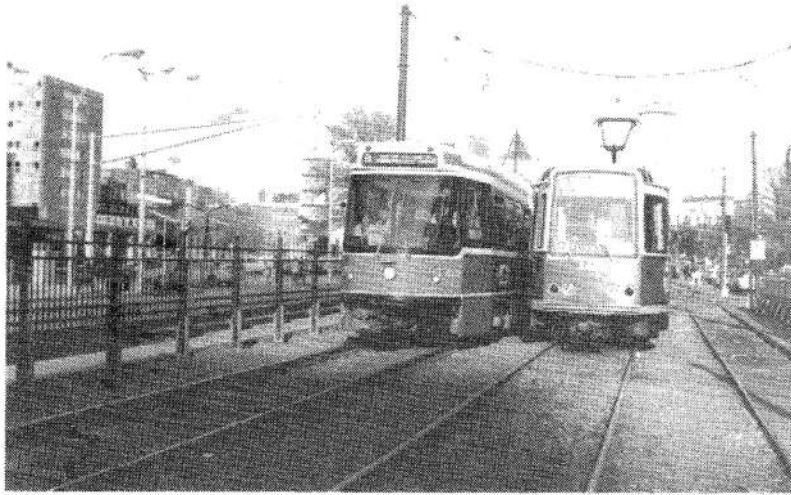
By the time that the new cars entered service, most of the trips with PCCs were limited to single cars. This led to severe overcrowding as seen in this view of PCC 3300 with passengers pressed against the windshield. Frank S. Miklos

Boeing.

They recognized that the PCC rebuilding program was only a stopgap measure and started planning for yet another order of new cars. Three of Toronto's new cars were tested in service on each of the Green Line routes. Although these cars performed generally well, the MBTA opted instead for a fleet of articulated cars similar in appearance to the Boeings, but with more traditional components. An order for 50 cars was placed with Japanese car builder Kinki Sharyo, with an option for the purchase of 50 more cars.

Until these cars could be delivered, the MBTA stepped up its efforts to get the bugs out of the Boeing cars, and pressed forward with the PCC rebuild program. An inspection of the by now out-of-service picture window PCCs showed them to be structurally superior to many of the older cars that were part of the rebuilding program. They were pulled out of storage and rehabilitated at a fraction of the cost that was involved with the older cars. Unfortunately the 25 all-electric PCCs which were thoroughly rebuilt a few years earlier, were no longer on the property. They were retired by the MBTA because they were considered "oddballs" in a fleet that was comprised mostly of a pre-war style air-electric design. More than a dozen of the picture window cars were also scrapped before the remaining cars were rescued for the rebuilding program. They served out their years on the Arborway line until that service was temporarily discontinued for a sewer reconstruction project in 1985. During this period, the MBTA continued to work on improving the reliability of the Boeing cars. In 1983 they agreed to acquire nine cars which remained in Boeing's possession. These were units that the MBTA refused to accept when it cancelled its contract with Boeing. Other cars that had been rejected by the MBTA were sold to San Francisco.

By this time the car situation had improved considerably and the PCC rebuilding program was



Car 4031 which was borrowed from Toronto passes Boeing car 3478 at the Blandford Street turnback track on Commonwealth Avenue.
Frank S. Miklos

concluded in anticipation of the delivery of the new Japanese-built cars. More than enough rebuilt PCCs were available for the Green Line services, so a group of them were transferred to the isolated Mattapan Ashmont line to replace the last of the now battered ex-Dallas cars.

The new cars from Kinki Sharyo went into service in 1986 and have performed better than expected. They are heavier than the Boeings and have a slower top speed, but they make up for these shortcomings in the form of reliability. The MBTA did exercise its option for the purchase of an additional 50 cars. This has enabled the transit system to curtail the use of the Boeing cars to mostly peak hour service.

With a massive light rail infrastructure in place, one would imagine that the MBTA would be planning further extensions of the system, but this is not the case. When the Orange Line elevated structure along Washington Street was closed, the residents demanded something better than a replacement bus service. The relocated Orange Line was too far west of the original routing to serve the former riders. The residents along Washington Street comprise the same racial and ethnic mix as those who depended on the Tremont Street trolleys in the 1960s. Several proposals for transit service to replace the Washington Street elevated were studied, including the construction of a branch off the Green Line which would utilize the portion of the subway that was abandoned when the Boylston Street shuttle service was discontinued. This proposal was rejected in favor of a plan for trolleybus service along Washington Street. The initial service would run between Dudley Street and the Lafayette Plaza shopping mall on the edge of the downtown business district. There riders could transfer to Orange Line trains. A further extension of the trolleybus line would utilize the former trolley subway to Boylston Street where a lower level turning loop and platform would be built. Passengers would transfer there to the Green Line cars for the remainder of the trip. While this fulfills the MBTA's promise of something better than just a replacement bus service, it essentially represents the most minimal improvement that could be provided,



New Japanese-built car 3693 heads outbound on Huntington Avenue in this view taken at Brigham Circle. *Frank S. Miklos*

and again denies the residents of the impoverished neighborhood of a one-seat ride. Perhaps to stifle criticism of this slap in the face to these residents, the MBTA has proposed a branch off the Washington Street trolleybus line to serve Boston's redeveloped Waterfront area. Under this plan the trolleybuses would run underground through this district through a new subway similar to the arrangement at Harvard Square or the new trolleybus tunnel in Seattle. Public pressure forced Seattle to install light rail tracks in that tunnel's paving, but as of now there is no indication that the MBTA is considering doing the same thing.

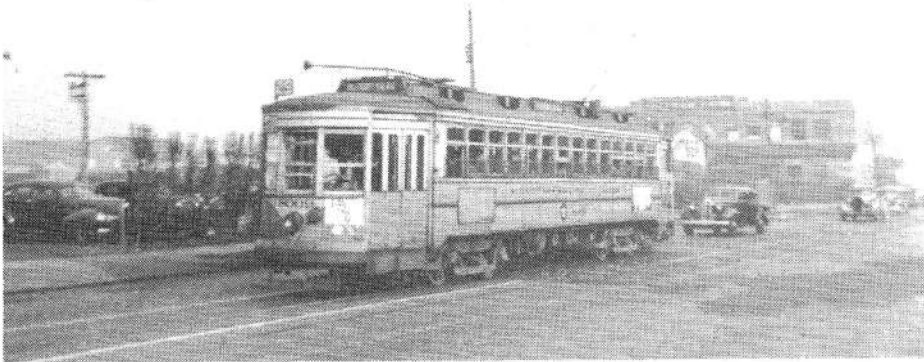
About the only expansion of the Green Line that has been seriously discussed in recent years is an extension beyond the Lechmere Terminal into Somerville. A restoration of the Arborway Line also seems likely. The new Forest Hill Terminal on the Orange Line has a turning loop and platform for the Arborway streetcars along with signs directing passengers to the Green Line. However, the restoration of service is being held up by opposition from the disabled community who are concerned that the wheelchair-accessible buses temporarily in use will be replaced with streetcars that cannot handle the handicapped. When rail service was restored as far as Heath Street on that line, the first streetcars were prevented from entering the loop by a blockade of people in wheelchairs who disrupted the service for several hours. Ironically, on a recent visit to Boston I rode the temporary bus service on the outer end of line. **Every** bus stop along Centre Street was occupied by parked motor vehicles. The buses were forced to pick up and discharge passengers from the middle of the roadway and could get no closer to the curb than the streetcars. Even if the buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts, they are of no value if they cannot pull up to the curb at bus stops.

Restoration of the Watertown Line is less certain, although the prospects are more encouraging than they once were. In December of 1991 the MBTA announced plans to remove the trolley wire and to repave the tracks. This was done in response to the merchants in the Allston area who regard the tracks

as hazardous, and who have been campaigning for more than ten years to have this done. Transit users in this area took a different position on the subject and forced the MBTA to halt the dismantling of the line pending a public hearing, and an environmental impact review. At the same time, other communities along the line such as Brighton and Newton have spoken in favor of restoring rail service. Newton has proposed the construction of a transportation center at the point where the Watertown Line crosses the Massachusetts Turnpike. This facility would not only serve as the terminal for the streetcars, but would also be the location of a new station on the commuter rail line to Framingham. Trolleybus service from Watertown Square would also be extended to this facility which would serve several local bus routes as well.

Regardless of what happens to the Watertown and Arborway lines, the remaining Green Line routes have a bright future and enjoy heavy ridership. Construction is underway at North Station on a new subway that will replace the Green Line elevated structure over Causeway Street. The new subway will provide an easier transfer with the Orange Line at North Station and will be linked to the Lechmere Viaduct just east of the Science Park station. New low-floor cars which are about to be purchased should replace the troublesome Boeing cars and serve the needs of Boston's disabled community. The streetcars have survived, despite going through a very difficult period. Not bad for a mode of transportation that once had "no place in Boston's transit future".

A Scene From the Past



The year 1992 marks the 40th anniversary of the abandonment of the 29 BLOOMFIELD trolley line. Service on that route was usually provided with 2600-series cars equipped with walk over deluxe seats for the long ride to Caldwell. However, occasionally other cars would venture onto the line as witness this view of car 8009 in Bloomfield. Another curiosity is the reading "BLOOMFIELD AVE" which appears on the roof destination signs of this car. *Frank S. Miklos collection*