

\$1.50

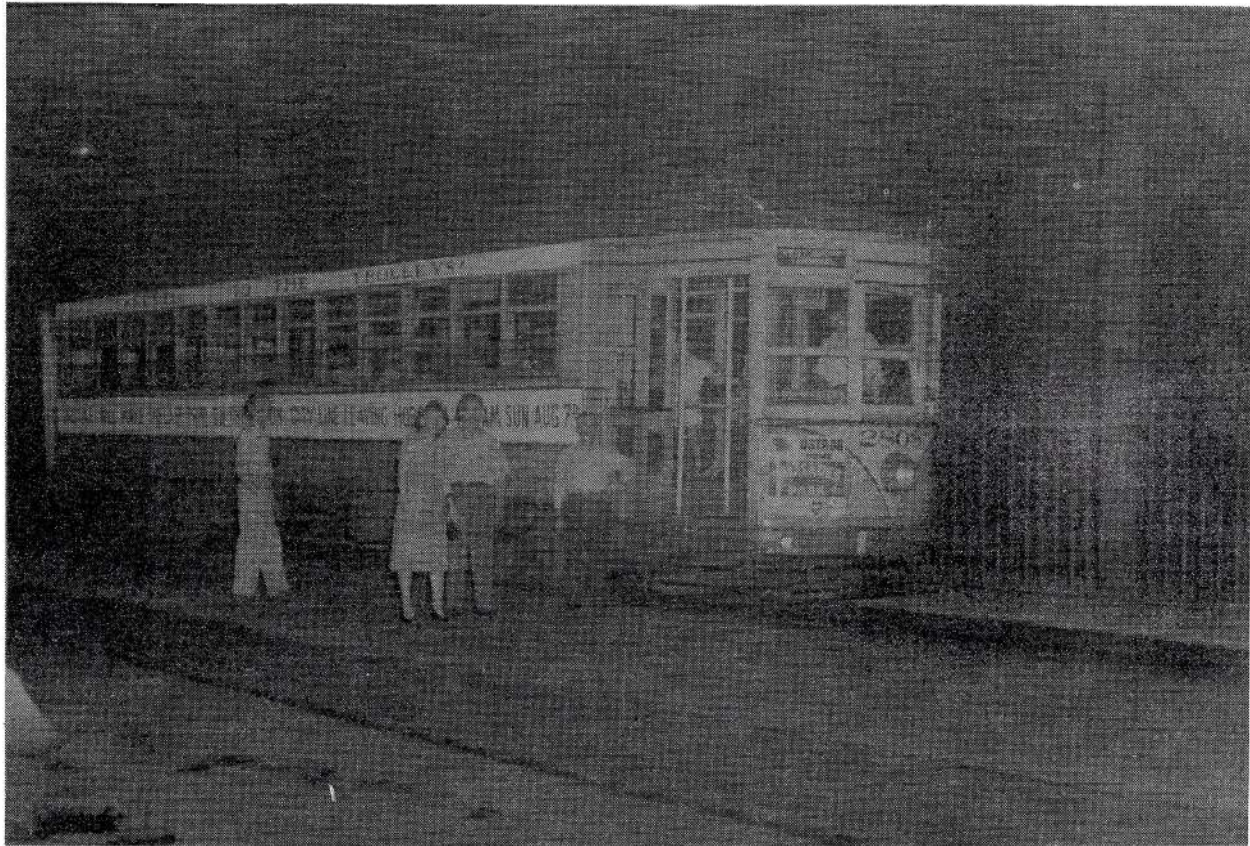


*The Newsletter of the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society*

Box 1770, Rahway, New Jersey 07065

Volume 9, No. 2

October 1994



*Photo from the collection of Frank Miklos*

The final runs for Public Service Consolidated Transport Hudson County trolley lines occurred in the early morning hours of August 7, 1949. Here car no. 2808 waits to begin the last run on the Union City Line signed for the "West Shore Terminal" on the soon to be empty second level loading loop of P.S.C.T.'s Hudson Place terminal in Hoboken, NJ.

## NORTH JERSEY ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Robert E. Hooper, Acting President  
Robert E. Landwehrle, Secretary

Frank S. Miklos, Treasurer  
Gary Madriss, Recording Secretary

P.O. Box 1770, Rahway, NJ 07065

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.

## MEMBERSHIP NOTES

### An OPEN LETTER FROM TONY HALL

Due to the continuing changes in my personal circumstances I regret that I must announce my resignation from the office of President of NJERHS. While my frustrations and disappointments with the railroad preservation movement in New Jersey are well known, there are not the reasons for this difficult decision. The fact is that increasing family obligations and reduced vocational activities have made it necessary for me to focus my energies on my immediate personal challenges. The NJERHS needs and deserves leadership able to bring energy, time and imagination to the offices provided, not to mention personal financial strength as well. For these reasons; the good of the organization, and a changing personal environment, I must step down and leave the helm to those able to set a successful course for the future. I say "Thank you" to all those who favored us with their membership over the last eight years and to all who supported the various projects and activities the group managed during that time. I hope that at some time in the future I will once again be able to become active in the NJERHS. In the meantime, to all officers, members and benefactors, thanks for your support and best wishes for a successful future.

Sincerely,

*Tony Hall*

Tony Hall.



### For your added information

Annual Meeting Notice - Page 8  
Hoboken Festival Report - Page 9  
Meeting Schedule - Page 8  
PSCT 2651 Update - Page 8

### WELCOME ABOARD!

Please welcome new members:

<b>Q Car Company</b> , Bangor, PA	<b>William Hope</b> , Roselle Park, NJ
<b>Jeffrey J. Jotz</b> , Rahway, NJ	<b>Janet McKim</b> , Fort Lee, NJ
<b>Albert W. Phillips</b> , Newark, NJ	<b>W. Ken Winterling</b> , Westwood, NJ
<b>Norman &amp; Marie Wright</b> , Neptune City, NJ	<b>Carl Hosler, Jr.</b> , Monmouth Junction, NJ - (Renewal)
<b>Al Arocha</b> , Elizabeth, NJ	

### Our thanks to the following members who have included a contribution with their dues:

Albert Ambrose	Charles F. Roselius
William J. Armstrong	Rev. Charles Reinbold
Douglas R. Bennington	E. Wayne Scott
Kenneth R. Brown	Johannes Sieberer
William E. Christian	Thorwald Torgersen
Robert Diamant	Harry J. Volpe
A. W. Mankoff	

We are sorry to have to announce the passing of one of our members. We received notice of the passing of Charles Clancy in June.

Frank Miklos, Editor

## INTERIM PRESIDENT

We accept with regret the resignation of Tony Hall as president of our organization. Tony was one of our founders and a vital force in keeping the organization going. He will be missed. He will still remain active with NJERHS.

As stated in our bylaws, I will complete the unexpired term portion of Tony's term until our annual election at the December meeting. I will do my best to keep the organization on track.

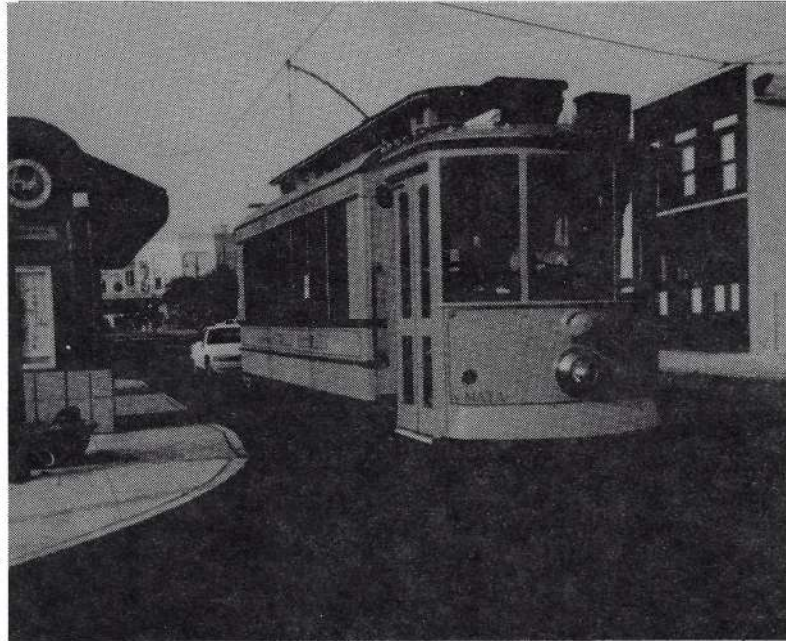
Bob Hooper, Acting President

## MEMPHIS' VINTAGE STREETCAR LINE AN INSPIRATION FOR NEW JERSEY

By Bruce Russell

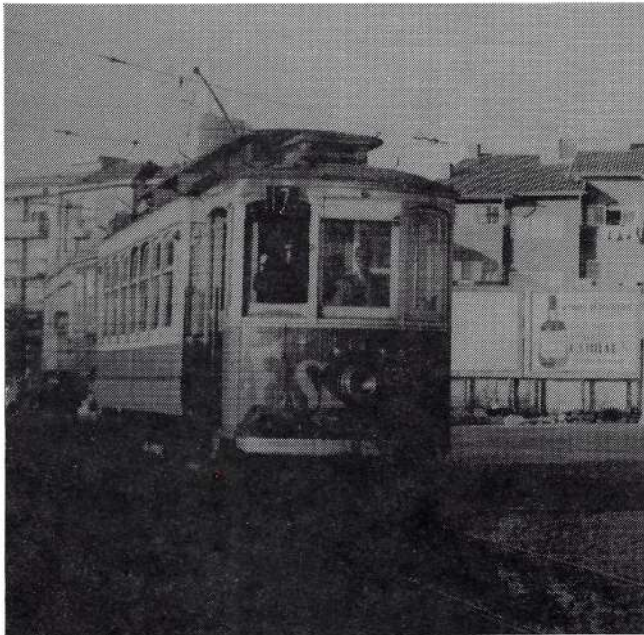
In May of 1993 Memphis, Tennessee, birthplace of the blues and headquarters of Federal Express, restored streetcar service after a 45 year hiatus during which the only public transportation in the city of 400,000 was provided by buses.

The concept of a downtown trolley line first surfaced before the city council six years ago. The goal was to revive a commercial and shopping district along the Mississippi River which was badly lagging due to competition from suburban shopping malls. It was determined that by constructing a 2.8 mile long double track streetcar line on Main Street to furnish transportation to shoppers,



Bruce Russell Photo

An ex-Porto, Portugal single truck streetcar makes a stop along Main Street in Memphis, TN on the 2.8 mile route which began running in May of 1993. The eight single truck cars will be joined by double truck models both from Porto as well as Melbourne, Australia. As of this date (July 1994) the Memphis operation has been very successful.

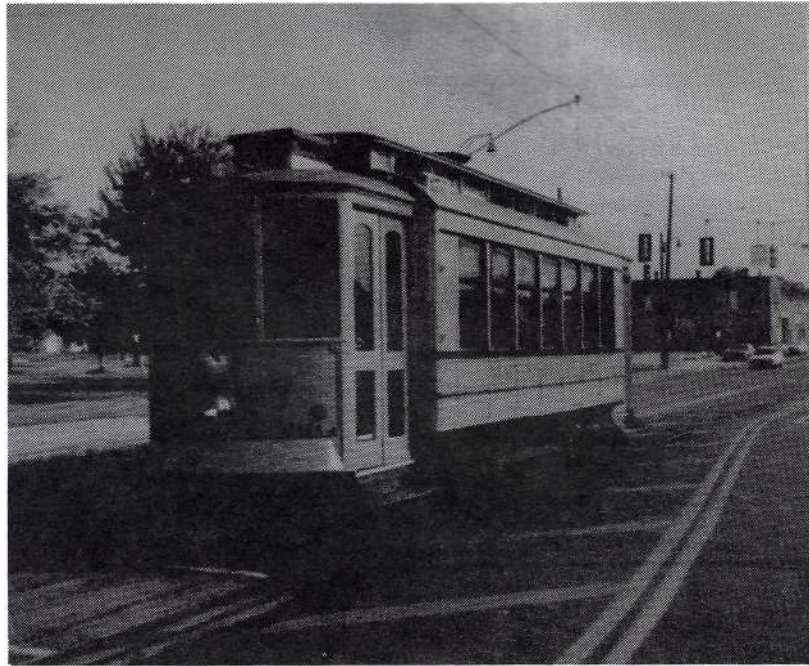


Bruce Russell Photo

A Porto single truck streetcar grinds its way through the streets of that seaport city sometime in 1977. Few at the time realized that this traditional American looking vehicle or one just like it would eventually migrate to Memphis, TN in the

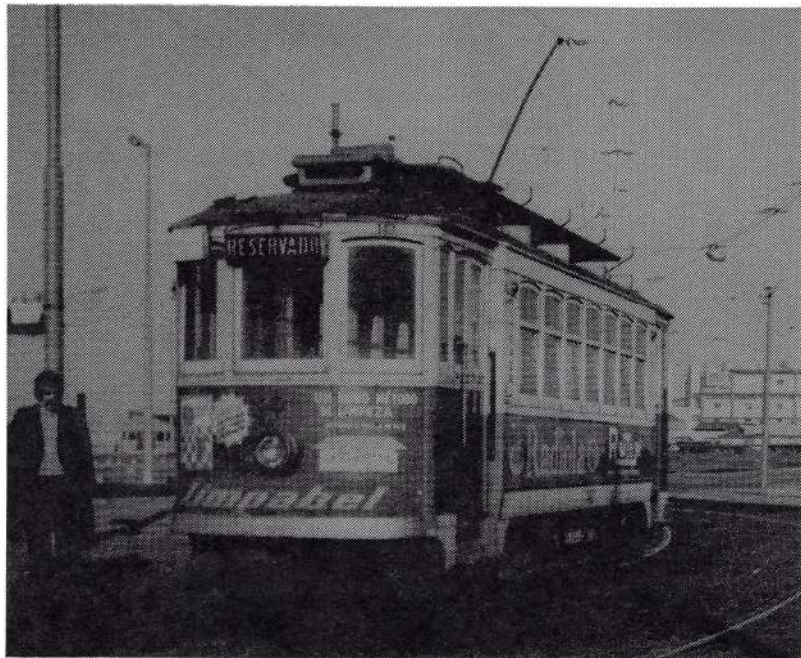
visitors and others the downtown business and civic district would have new life breathed into it. During the planning it was decided that while the line would use modern rail and overhead wires, the actual vehicles would be similar to old fashioned "Toonerville" trolleys with round ends and clerestory roofs. Contemporary pantograph equipped articulate cars were ruled out. The city planners had nothing against them, but truly felt that "classic streetcars" would be more in keeping with the character and ambiance of the area that they were trying to revive. Downtown Memphis boasts a collection of early 20th Century, Victorian, and mid-1930s Art Deco buildings which would provide the perfect backdrop for old time electric streetcars.

Obtaining vintage trolley cars can be accomplished in several ways, depending on factors such as money, availability, and intended level of usage. Some cities have contracted with specialized firms to build authentic replicas of old cars. For example, Lowell, Massachusetts ordered from the Gomaco Car Co. of Ida Grove, Iowa two classic open trolleys cars and one closed model. They were not 100% new since they make use of frames and trucks from former Melbourne, Australia W-2 streetcars. In Galveston, Texas, four diesel powered replica streetcars were manufactured by the Minor Car Co. of New Castle, Pennsylvania. And in Portland, Oregon, two historic double truck models were built to provide tourist service on the existing light rail line. Modeled after the so called "Council Crest" cars, they utilize trucks from former Boston PCCs and draw power from bow collectors



*Bruce Russell Photo*

Fully restored and rehabilitated, and minus the advertising signage which detracted from their appearance in Portugal, eight former Porto streetcars are now running in Memphis, TN on a 2.8 mile route through downtown. Interior woodwork as well as exterior surfaces were returned to an "as new" condition. The car is painted yellow and lettered "MAIN STREET



*Bruce Russell Photo*

A Porto single truck streetcar on a special charter in November of 1977. Note the word "RESERVADO" on the destination board. As the Porto streetcar network contracted many of its trolley cars were sold to various parties including museum groups and systems which are still operative such as San Francisco's MUNI. In 1992-93, several went to Memphis, TN.

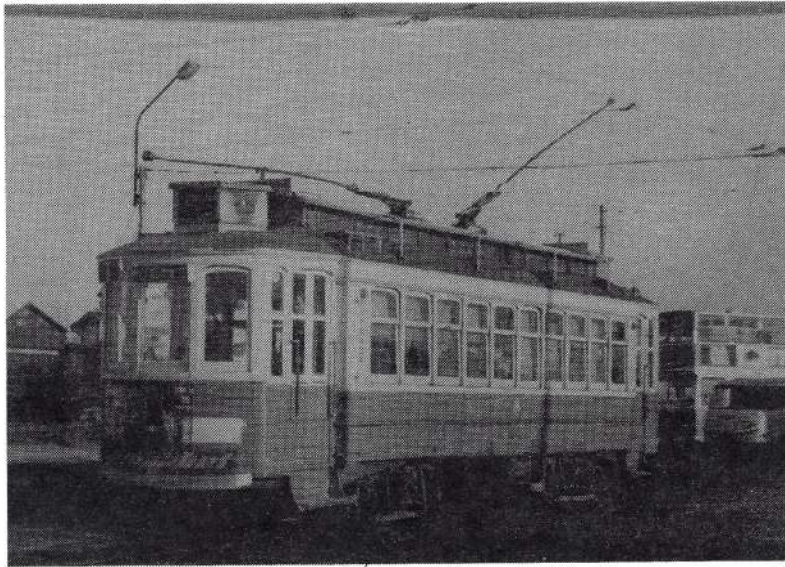
rather than standard trolley poles. Likewise New Orleans intends to turn to a group of ex-SEPTA PCCs to provide trucks for 15 cars which will operate on a restored route down Canal Street. Perley Thomas Company, once a manufacturer of streetcars and subsequently a bus builder, may fabricate 1920s era bodies for these cars.

Therefore one option for Memphis was to acquire "new-old trolley cars." A second course of action was to purchase cars from established streetcar and electric railway museums. Most have a surplus of vehicles which have little prospect of ever being refurbished. Selling them to potential rebuilders is a practical method of raising needed cash. The third way to obtain vintage trolleys is to buy them intact and in running order from an existing system. This is what Memphis chose to do. Custom

made replica cars were probably ruled on cost factors, and to restore derelict museum models involved too much work including the need to fabricate from scratch missing parts and fixtures. In addition there was the question of how well 60-70 year old cars could hold up in regular operation 16 hours per day.

The city of Porto, Portugal runs a vestigial streetcar network - a remnant of a vast system of lines that once included about 20 routes and hundreds of cars, both single and double truck models. Beginning in the 1950s the system was slowly abandoned in favor of electric and diesel buses, until the 1980s only three routes survived. They all operated out of the 1905 era Boavista Carhouse. As the retrenchment process continued, the Porto transit system sold many of its surplus vehicles to museums interested in acquiring classic looking, American style trolleys. In the 1970s some went to Yakima, Washington and to Orbisona, PA to run in conjunction with the East Broad Top steam railway. In the 1980s others traveled to San Francisco to be used in the historic TROLLEY FESTIVAL on Market Street. Porto also sold vehicles to many European streetcar museums and two went to Buenos Aires, Argentina to equip a tourist trolley line.

Why are Porto streetcars so appealing? The answer is that they are distinctly America rather than European looking. Rather than possessing the features found on Siemens products they have those which correspond to most people's conception of a "Toonerville Trolley". These cars were built to a 1900-1910 design in both single and double truck models. Initially the J.G. Brill Company of Philadelphia fabricated them in "kit" form and shipped them from Philadelphia. In subsequent years Brill sold wheels and frames to the Portuguese and they built the bodies themselves using Brill's plans. Interestingly the final vehicles were put together during the mid-1930s, long after the design had



*Bruce Russell Photo August 1993*

**A Porto double truck streetcar running on the streets of that city in 1977. Porto had both double as well as single truck models, all American looking and based on designs of Philadelphia's Brill Company. Double truckers have been also sold by the Porto authorities to other systems including**

become obsolete in the United States where the PCC was making its debut.

The appearance of these Porto cars is therefore 100% vintage US trolley rather than European. Furthermore similar looking cars but narrow gauge were acquired by the systems in Lisbon, Coimbra, and Braga. While Braga ceased operations in the 1950s and Coimbra quit in 1978, the Lisbon network survives, albeit in much reduced size. By the 1970s Portugal had become a mecca for American streetcar aficionados.

Through an equipment broker acting as a middleman, Memphis purchase six of these classic Porto streetcars and an option for several more was also arranged. They arrived in April of 1992 in a state of moderate deterioration. While some had recently been in service others had been unused for many years and suffered from exposure to the elements. Extensive restoration was begun by a local Memphis firm with the goal of preserving their 1910 elegance while incorporating some aspects of 1990s technology.

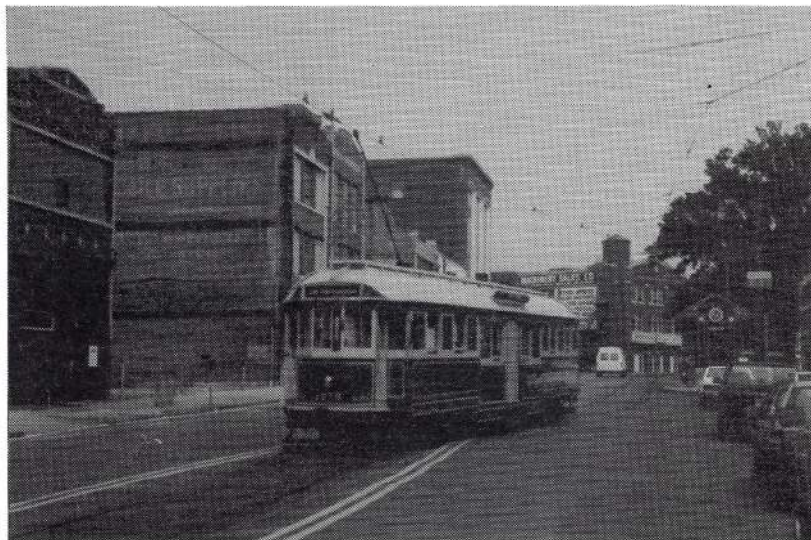
Efforts were made not to detract from the integrity of the original design and modernization were skillfully camouflaged. For instance additional metal was added to the frames to permit the cars to better withstand the throngs of riders. Frosted glass upper windows were restored and new paint was applied. The interiors of the cars required much work. Many coats of paint were carefully scraped away until bare wood was reached. Then two layers of varnish were applied, producing a shiny surface comparable to what existed when the cars were new. On the outside original colors of the Memphis streetcars system were used, and historical records made it easy for Sherman Williams Paint Company to reproduce these paints. With their new paint jobs the vehicles were absolutely gorgeous looking. While many people wanted to relocate the box shaped resistor grids from these cars' roofs to their undersides, this idea was rejected even though it would have improved their appearance.

When all of the rehabilitation was finished early in 1993 the cars looked like they had just emerged from the Brill factory in Philadelphia ready to begin revenue service. Besides the single truck models with which the line opened, there are also a couple of double truck models types as well as two ex-Melbourne, Australia W-2 cars. These larger vehicles are not yet restored and are being kept in reverse until patronage increases to the point where they will be required. (Ed. note: In August 1994, at least one of the Melbourne W-2 cars was operating. See photo on this page.) In keeping with tradition all of the cars running in Memphis will use trolley poles rather than pantographs or bow collectors.

Building the 2.8 mile long Memphis streetcar line involved use of standard "girder rail" laid directly on the street rather than in a European style reserved median. However a significant portion of the route involves a section of Main Street which has been converted into a pedestrian mall where automobiles don't regularly travel. The overhead wires are suspended from bracket arms attached to ornate Victorian

lighting fixtures which blend in with downtown Memphis' historic character. At one location on the pedestrian strip the cars pass beneath a steel clock tower which adds atmosphere to the system. Within the mall the street is covered with either red brick or stone paving blocks. Outside of this area the tracks are set in asphalt the same way they are on most modern streetcar systems.

Although the line could have been constructed as single track with a passing siding it was determined that double track would be more practical since there would be headways of every 5 minutes during peak periods. Experience with other trolley lines installed in recent years have shown that single track creates more problems than the money it saves. Ultimately a second track must be added. However at both ends the Memphis line narrows to just one track where the cars reverse direction. Patronage has exceeded expectation and 8000 riders a day are presently being carried with as many as six cars providing base service. Future plans call for running the line on an alignment next to the Mississippi River, creating a 5 mile loop. Cars will then operate in clockwise and counterclockwise direction. An expected future traffic generator will be the Amtrak Station, originally built in 1920 by the Illinois Central RR. Plans are being formulated to rehabilitate and convert it into an intermodal transportation center for Amtrak trains, long distance and local buses, and of course the Memphis trolleys.



*Frank Miklos photo*

**The Memphis system continues to make progress. As of August 1993, they had a least one of the Melbourne, Australia W-2 cars operational.**

The city's support for the line was manifested not only in terms of hard cash but also by the donation of a modern building which formerly served as the garage for a number of floats used during the annual Thanksgiving Day Parade. Tracks have now been installed inside as well as two inspection pits. This secure facility will also afford protection from vandalism. Having a safe place to store rolling stock is vital to an operation of this kind plus the railway preservation movement in general.

Although it presently consists of only 2.8 miles the Memphis streetcar system has been a terrific for the city's image. It permits tourists and others to easily reach the Great American Pyramid and the South Main Street Historic District without using their automobiles. It links hotels, restaurants, retail outlets, the previously mentioned unrestored Amtrak train station, and other attractions in a logical, pollution free manner. As an old Mississippi River steamboat port, Memphis is filled with historic, architecturally significant buildings. Furthermore just a block from the trolley line is Beale Street District, home of "The Blues". Each year people come to Memphis to listen to this unique form of music. Old fashioned streetcars are a natural for Memphis!

On a long term basis Memphis and its neighboring counties of Selby and Cordova intend to construct modern light rail lines. Mayor W.W. Herenton has stated that pursuing light rail is high on his agenda, with one line reaching the airport. But today Memphis is enjoying the benefits of vintage historic trolley cars. Furthermore the Memphis streetcar system can and should serve as an inspiration to other cities in the country where similar conditions prevail. For instance in New Jersey the city of Hoboken with its multitude of old building might be an ideal venue for old fashioned trolley cars running a route originating at the former Lackawanna RR ferry terminal. Likewise Wildwood with its magnificent beach and high population density during the summer might warrant a reincarnation of its long gone FIVE MILE BEACH ELECTRIC RAILWAY which was actually a streetcar line that used mostly open cars and ceased running in 1946. All that's needed for these kinds of schemes is desire, motivation, and a modest amount of funding. Plenty of old style American looking streetcars still exist in places such as Milan, Italy and Lisbon, Portugal.

## PS NJ 2800 Series Cars

### *John Brinckman - PSNJ Car Notes*

It is said that the 2800 series was a makeup group designed to replace cars lost through fire or accident. They did not seem fundamentally different than the 12600 or 2700 series except for the one short platform. Why? Having been constructed as late as 1923 with the end of two-man operation near, did they ever operate short platform at the front? We have no photos as such. Does anyone have such a picture?

What constituted the better refinements of this later era...short platforms and squared ends as with the 2200s, compromise roofs as with the 2600 and 2700s, one car (#2807) with rounded windows on the long platform side, high speed trucks (on some but not all). A motley collection at best, but with deluxe bucket type seats they were truly the riders' delight. Early on, they served Essex Division and after abandonment of the surface lines became the mainstay of Hudson Division's Union City line.

Two cars, 2811 and 2812, never made it to the finish in 1949. For some reason they exited to the Passaic Wharf scrap yard after cessation of Market operations in Newark.

[With the cessation of "EL" operations, all 2800s were scrapped. - Ed. note]



## Ira Deutsch Photo Collection

This collection of Public Service photographs consists largely of glass plate negatives rescued from destruction by Ira. A small portion of the glass plates have been printed in small quantities and are offered for sale by the Society. The Society has committed to printing all of the plates for historical purposes.

Copies of the complete index are available for the cost of duplication to members (\$4.00). Nonmembers cost is \$15. Requests for the index should be addressed to Photo Sales at the NJERHS Postal Box Address.

Contact prints from the glass plate negatives are \$4.00 each.

## It sounds like fiction

*The Charlotte Trolley, Inc. - Trolley Times Spring & Summer*

They ought to make a movie about Charlotte's old No. 85. One of those epics about the phoenix rising.

Old No. 85 is Charlotte's legendary "last streetcars" which made its final run to the square for its retirement ceremony in 1938.

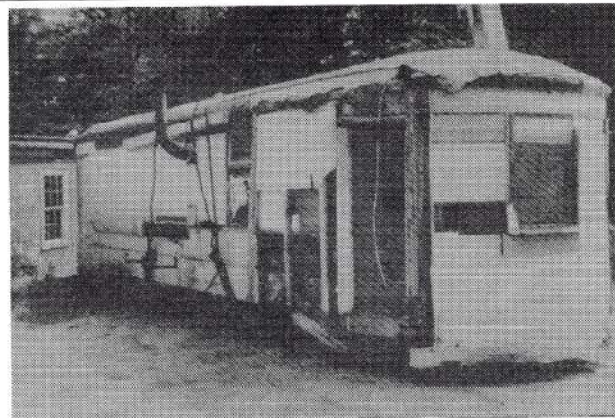
After finding the battered remains of a streetcar on a lonely road in Huntersville, the Charlotte Trolley crew worked at restoring the battered hulk for operation on the newly constructed trolley line in Charlotte. During restoration work, they discovered that the hulk was indeed No. 85, the last run car. The accompanying photos show the before and after.

Can it happen in New Jersey again? Can other car bodies remain still to be rediscovered? What interesting twists might be sitting in a barn somewhere waiting to be restored?

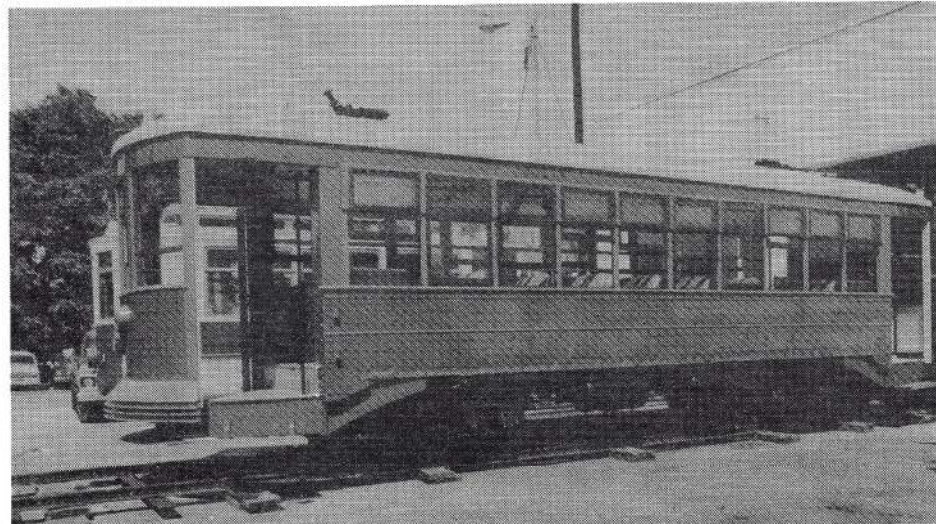
## MEETING SCHEDULE

**November 15, 1994** - Bruce Russell will present movies of "Streetcars in St. Petersburg" which has one of the world's largest street railway systems. You might have guessed that we are not talking about St. Petersburg, Fla. Bruce will also show footage of "Streetcars in Moscow."

**December 20, 1994** - Our annual Christmas meeting will feature Members' Night. Each member may present up to twenty slides of any traction subject. A second round of twenty slides will be presented if time permits. Complimentary refreshments will be served. A brief Annual Meeting including Election of Officers will be conducted.



Old No. 85 as it was found in 1987



Trolley No. 85 restored to its former glory.

*Photos courtesy of The Charlotte Trolley, Inc. "Trolley Times"*

## ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The annual meeting on the NJERHS will be held at the December 20 meeting. Election of officers for 1995 will occur at that time. Persons with an interest to serve are requested to let one of the present officers know of their interest.

## PSCT 2651 Update

We are in the final stages of an arrangement with the Sterling Hill Mining Museum to move the car from Ringoes to a building on their property in Ogdensburg, NJ. The building will be available to members for restoration work but NOT open to the public. It will provide covered work space for restoration work and storage.



## AUGUST 7, 1994 MARKED THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF "EL" CLOSURE

The end of trolley operation over the Hoboken El on August 7, 1949 brought to an end the operation of many Hudson County trolley lines. With the closure, P.S.C.T. converted the Summit, Union City, Jackson and Oakland car lines to bus operation.

We have collected a number of shots of the Farewell Trips from the collection of Frank Miklos. But we need your help and stories.

With the approach of the fifty anniversary of the "EL" closure, NJERHS would like to assemble a history of the lines as well as stories of the rides and other experiences. Where we can we will record oral history to save having to write a long conversation as well as keep the personal inflection of the historian.

Further, if you help with identifying people in these photos, or can provide additional photos, please contact us so we can collect and publish them.

In the meantime, enjoy the memories.

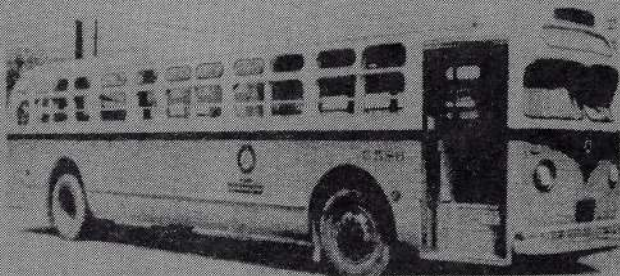
### Hoboken Festival

The NJERHS took to the road in attending the NJ Transit sponsored Hoboken Festival on September 24. While we were not able to move our commuter cars there for display, we did move a lot of photographs and old magazines. Gross sales were over \$600 to aid in our restoration work.

Our next sales effort will be at the Mother Seton show in March 1995 providing it doesn't snow too much.

*New Bus Lines*  
replacing  
Hudson County Streetcars

Starting **AUGUST 7, 1949**



New Bus Lines

JACKSON No. 7


JACKSON No. 8

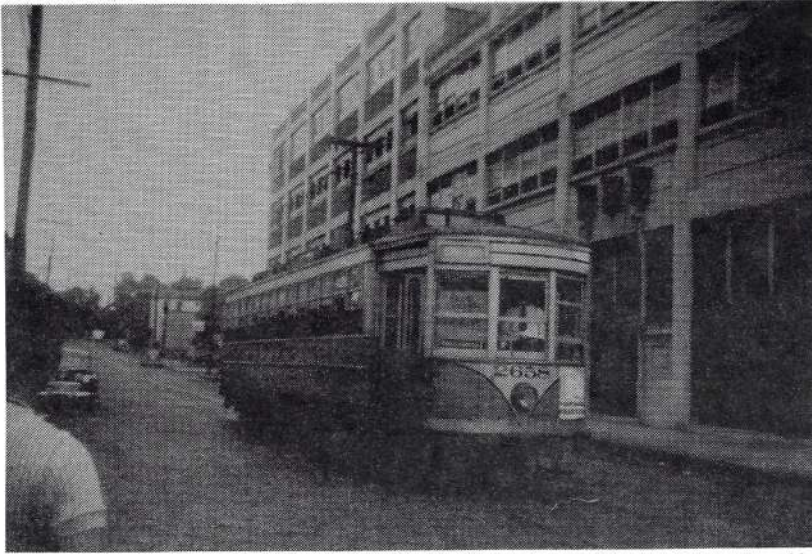
SUMMIT No. 17

UNION CITY No. 19

OAKLAND No. 37

PUBLIC SERVICE COORDINATED TRANSPORT

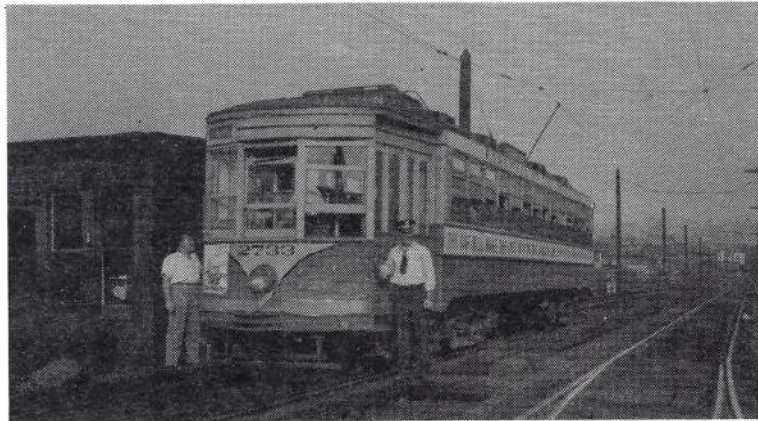




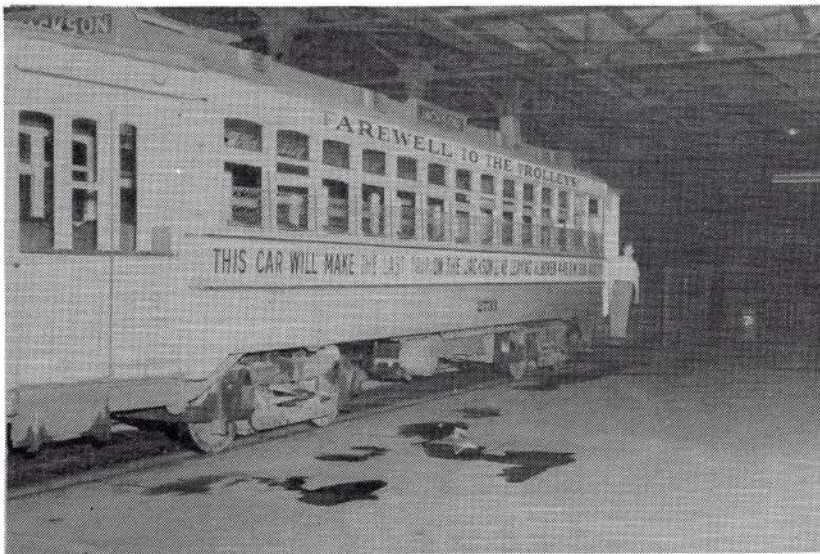
The OAKLAND line was a rush hour only operation at the end. Thus 2658 carries a hand made last run sign in the window on August 5, 1949. The "SPECIAL" sign suggests a possible fan tribute to the final run.

*From the collection of Frank Miklos*

Car 2733 advertising the final JACKSON line trip poses on the viaduct at the ramps leading to Palisades Avenue, Jersey City, NJ. August 6, 1949

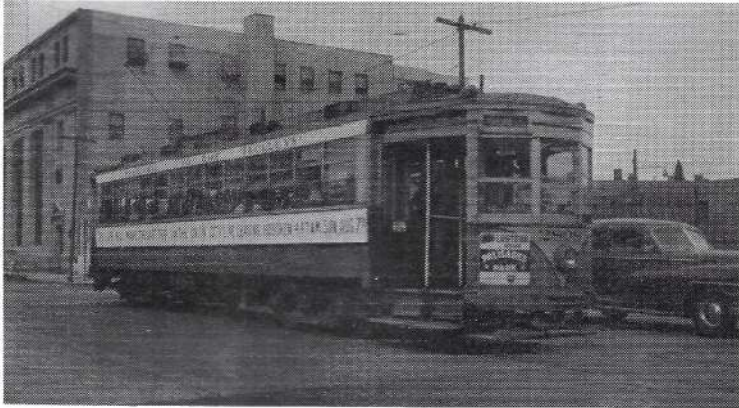


*From the collection of Frank Miklos*



PSCT 2733 waiting for the end at Hudson Place advertising the last run of the JACKSON line in the early morning hours of August 7, 1949.

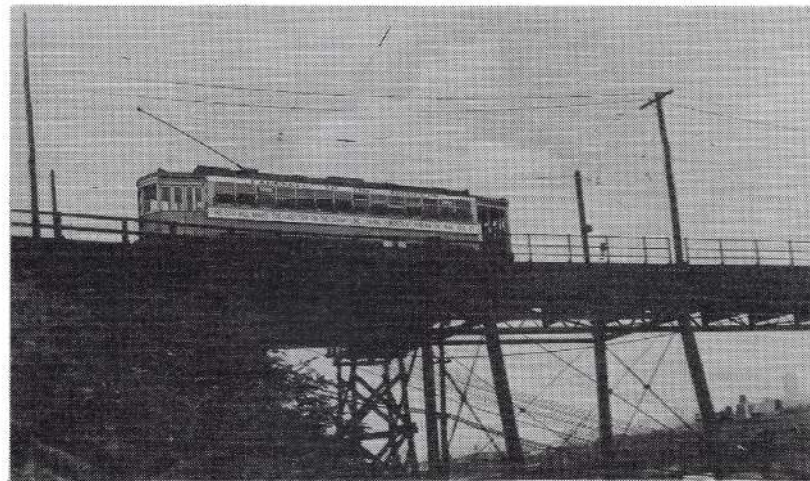
*From the collection of Frank Miklos*



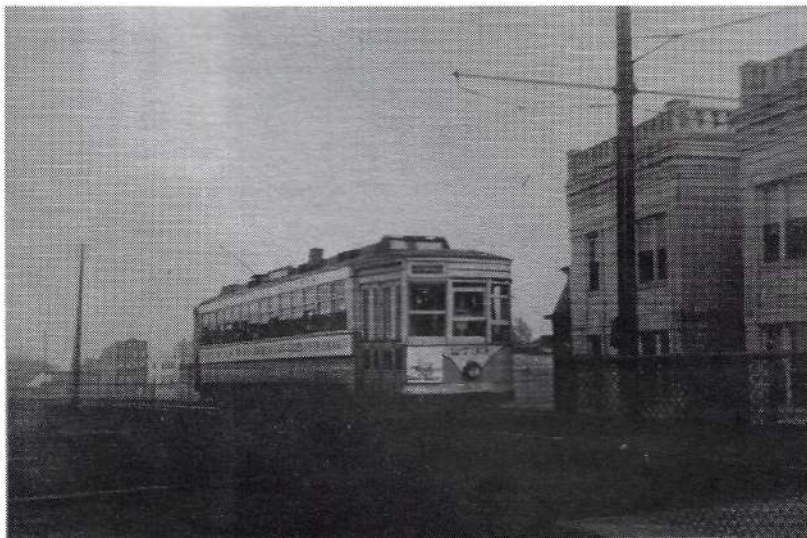
**Car 2808** pictured in Union City on August 6, 1949 in service on the UNION CITY line signed for Hudson P.S. Terminal and advertising Palisades Park until the end.

*From the collection of Frank Miklos*

**Car 2615** advertising the last run on the SUMMIT line which would leave Hoboken at 4:48 A.M. on Sunday, August 7, 1949 on the viaduct from Jersey City.



*Stephen Maguire photo from the collection of Frank Miklos*



**PSCT car 2733** on the JACKSON EL at Ravine Ave. station, Jersey City, NJ - August 3, 1949. Streetcar operation on the EL certainly brought transportation to your door especially on the second floor of these homes.

*North Jersey Chapter NRHS Photo 667.02c from the collection of Frank Miklos*



*From the Frank Miklos Collection*

August 7, 1949 marked the last trips for all PSCT Hudson Division Lines using the Hoboken elevated and the upper level of Hudson Place. Car 2808, the last run car on the Union City line, makes an appearance advertising the trolleys farewell.