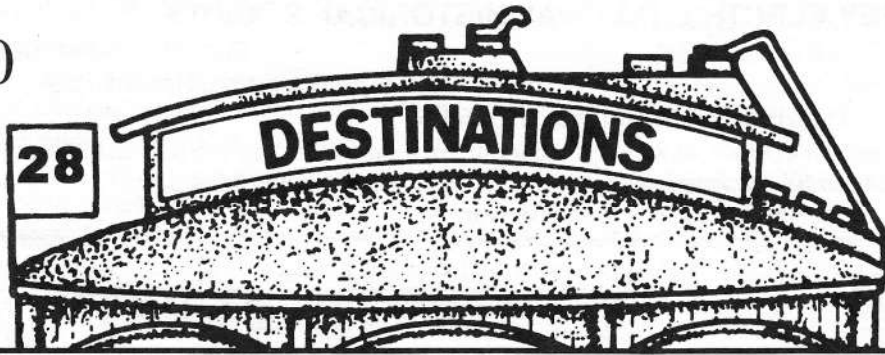


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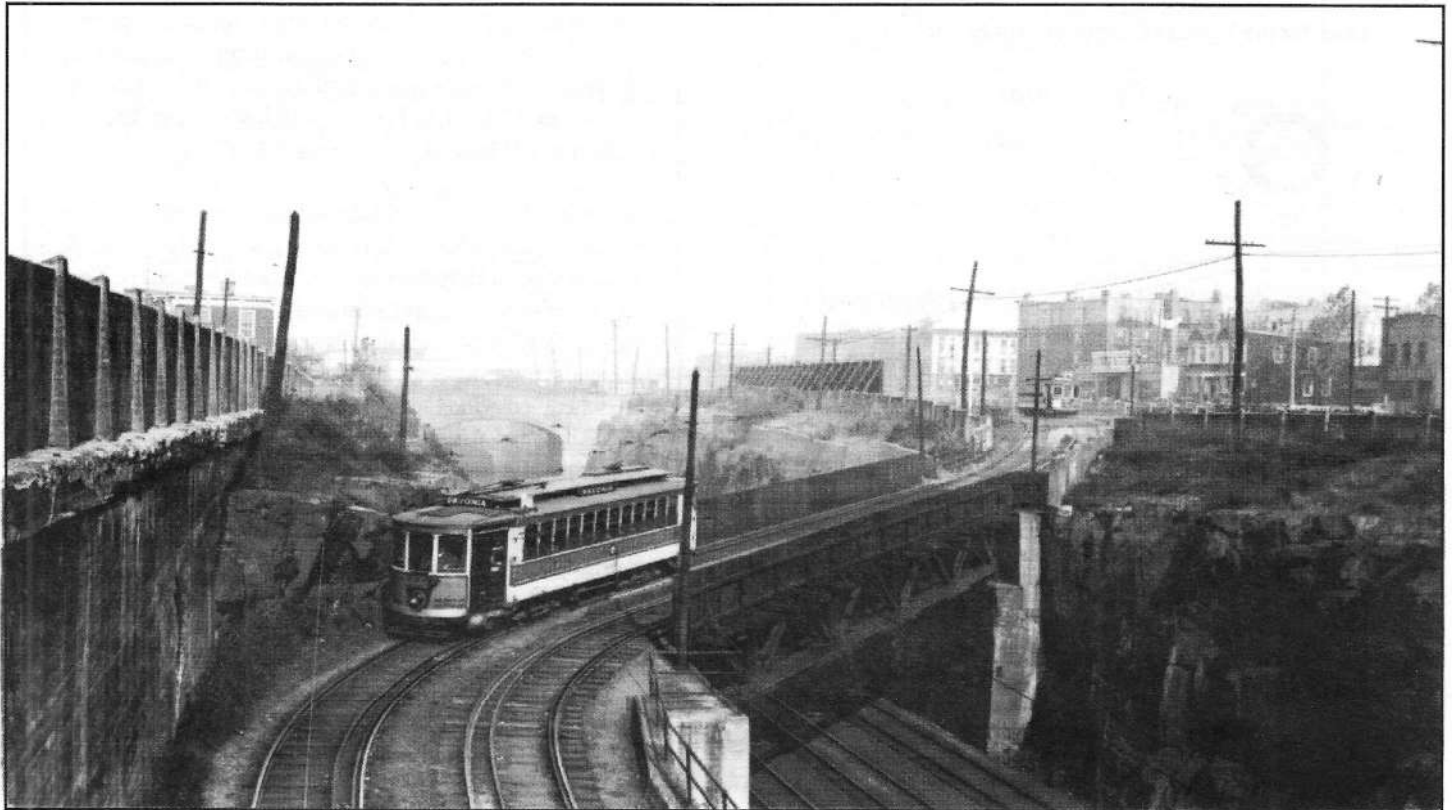


*The Newsletter of the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society*

Box 1770, Rahway, New Jersey 07065

Volume 14, No. 2

DECEMBER 1999



**PAVONIA LINE MEMORIES  
TROLLEY FLYING - TURNPIKE LINE**

**NORTH JERSEY ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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

Ed Gibbs, Vice President  
 Gary Madriss, Recording Secretary

P.O. Box 1770, Rahway, NJ 07065

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Rahway Senior Citizens Center, 1306 Esterbrook Ave., Rahway, N.J.  
 Beginning at 7:30 P.M., each meeting features a program featuring electric traction subjects.

Annual dues are \$15.00 per year.

**President's Message**

This issue is running late. I beg your indulgence. Things have been more than hectic.

Searching out the right photos to illustrate articles, doing some of the writing and doing the research to get the facts right just got away from me.

With the Year 2000, I was reminded by Al Mankoff that we are within three years of the centennial of the forming of the Public Service Corporation. Al made some suggestions on a fitting tribute which we explore. But, we are open to your ideas and suggestions. Pass them forward!

Dues for the Year 2000 are dues. Notice enclosed.



*Bob Hooper*

**Transportation Heritage Center Archives**

A substantial collection of New Jersey transportation artifacts and photographs belonging to Edward T. Francis has been donated to the Heritage Center. Acting as custodians of this extensive collection, Friends of the NJ RR&TM has asked NJERHS to assist with the cataloging, care and maintenance of them until the Heritage Center goes into physical existence.

The collection has been designated the Edward T. Francis Archives. Some materials have been used to illustrate articles in Destinations already and more will be appearing on a regular basis. The archives provides a valuable research for fact checking and article illustration.

Seven hundred plus glasses from the Public Service Engineering Department compliment a similar number already available to us. This greatly expands the cover of the Public Service. Additionally, Ed had fifteen hundred line images which have been transformed for a curled condition to an three organized volumes for easy study and reference.

We are indebted to Ed for his interest and foresight to preserve such a long volume of historically significant material.

**Friends of NJ RR&TM  
 Symposium  
 "Departing for  
 Phillipsburg"  
 April 1, 2000  
 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
 Drew University**

**Admission -**

**Friends Members \$20 - Nonmembers \$35**

Join Friends at the lovely Drew Campus for an exceptional day of interesting transportation topics. Auction of interesting transportation artifact. Lunch included in admission. Checks to Friends NJRR&TM c/o Thomas Hellyer 1720 Orchard Ave. Trenton NJ 08710.

Seventeen fast moving illustrated presentations focusing on the state-wide effort to create a Railroad & Transportation Heritage Center and restore/preserve New Jersey's historic transportation equipment, structures, sites, artifacts and memorabilia. Presentations will cover NJ railroads, buses trucks, canals, trolleys and ferries. Looks are scheduled at the Camden & Amboy, Public Service Ry/RR Archives, Underground Railroads, Morristown's Railroads, Lionel Production in New Jersey, Pine Creek Railroad, Yellow Coach & GM in New Jersey, NJ Transit Station Upgrades (Hoboken & Maplewood), Getting Battleship NJ Back, Lindenwold High Speed Line.

See you there as we will have a table.

**Cover: The Pavonia Line crossed the Erie RR mainline on a short stretch of private right of way as it traversed down the Palisades escarpment to the Erie terminal in Jersey City. This view shows 2300 eastbound (down) on the bridge and 2305 entering Hoboken Avenue westbound.- October 9, 1935**

*North Jersey Chapter NRHS Neg #307*

## Letters to the Editor:

From John F. O'Connor

Destinations 27 says in the caption for the rear cover picture of the Sip Avenue Terminal that in August 1949 the trolleys would stop running to be replaced by All Service Vehicles. Not so as the only ASV service ever to run through Sip Avenue, 9 NEWARK AVENUE, ended service on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1947 after nine years of operation. The only remaining ASV operation still in operation in Hudson County was 1 NEWARK that ended in June 1948; near the same time as did the SOUTH KEARNY trolley. The trolleys did indeed leave in August 1949 when the 7 JACKSON line was replaced by 50 GMC diesel 4509s in the C-343 to C-392 series plus several Ford 79-Bs in the A-800 series. The trolleys on the streets outlasted ASV operation in all cases by at least two years or in some cases by four.

Sip Avenue was laid out to loop trolleys in either direction. It may well have done so in the early years but all the time I observed operation, looping was done only to outbound cars to Bayonne, Greenville, short runs to Journal Square or SOUTH KEARNY cars. Passengers boarding to Hoboken did so on the street opposite the terminal. The track in the foreground on Page 19, coming out of the terminal was the unused loop for the cars going toward Hoboken, Union City or Exchange Place.

The car going into the terminal shown on the rear cover was making a regular run in outbound service. The upper straight track in the same picture had not been used in years. There was still a third track in the terminal in front of the bus and it ended just short of the overhead. The frogs are still in on the unused loop and can be seen just beyond the first parked car. At least six car lines operated from, or through, the terminal during the time it was used by trolleys, which was from 1913 until 1949. Some of these were the same lines with different names or destinations. Sip Avenue was unique in that for most of its service life for trolleys about half of the passengers boarded outside the terminal.

From Bill Myers:

Just a note to tell you how much I enjoy your Newsletter! I think I have seen more material on the All Service Vehicles in your newsletter than all other publications put together. You have cleared up many of the mysteries I had concerning the great Public Service empire!

I have enclosed a few photos that you may use if you like. I admit the picture of the PS trolley burning is a horrible sight but that one picture (by Bill Rosenberg) tells the sad story of what happen to most PS trolleys!

It will always be an interesting question, what would have happened if Public Service had embraced the PCC car in the 30s and 40s?

What happened to the private car used as a gate-keeper? At that point in time, this car should have gone to a museum!

Keep up the great work!

From Ken Roods:

Just thought you would like to put this in an upcoming edition if Destinations. My cousins from New Jersey send me the Jersey Journal newspapers from Jersey City, NJ. I spotted this the article from their "50 years ago" section. Is anyone familiar with this occurrence that happened 51 years ago, or knew the motorman Thomas Davey?

June 23, 1948

### Trolley cars crash in Hoboken

Five people were injured shortly before 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon when a Summit line trolley ran into the rear of a westbound Jackson line car at the Washington Street station on the Public Service trestle in Hoboken. All of the injured were on the Summit trolley.

Three of the passengers on the Summit car were detained at St. Mary's Hospital for X-rays to determine the extent of their injuries, while the other two were treated by Dr. Anthony Manollo, St. Mary's Hospital intern, for minor bruises and went home.

The Jackson car left the upper level at the Hoboken terminal in charge of Motorman Thomas Davey of Jersey City. The Summit car left shortly after that.

The Jackson car had stopped at Washington Street to pick up passengers and it was leaving the station when it struck by the Summit car. The fact that the Jackson car was already in motion helped it to absorb some of the shock.

The Summit car was badly damaged where it came in contact with the other car.

There was no statement as to what caused the collusion.

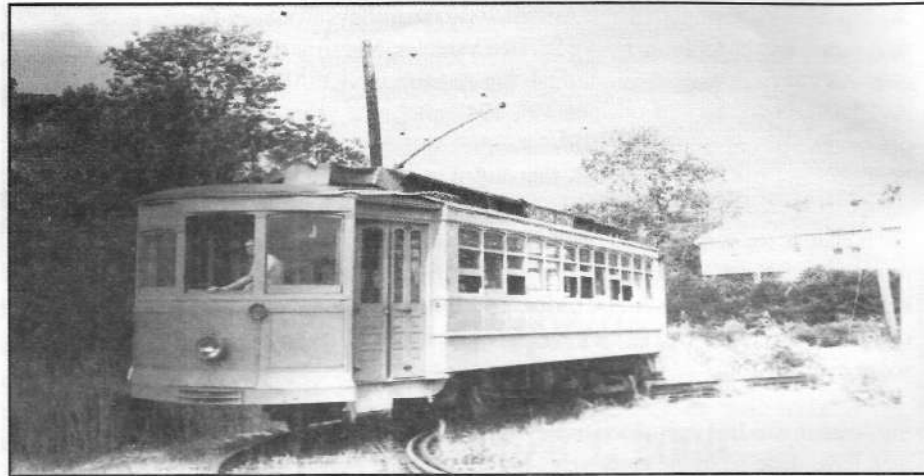
*Jersey Journal 6/23/1948*

## MEETING LOCATION

**NJERHS meets at the Rahway Senior Citizens Center, 1306 Esterbrook Ave., Rahway. It is the old post office building. The air conditioned facility is two blocks from Rahway Station. (From the station, go two blocks west on W. Milton St. to Esterbrook. Turn right to 1306 on the left. Ample parking in the rear of the building.**

Letters (cont'd.) - Myers

Public Service 2431, one of two Public Service cars that when to Shore Line Trolley Museum, Branford, CT, survives to this day. Bill Myers caught her on the line during its restoration. Undated photo.



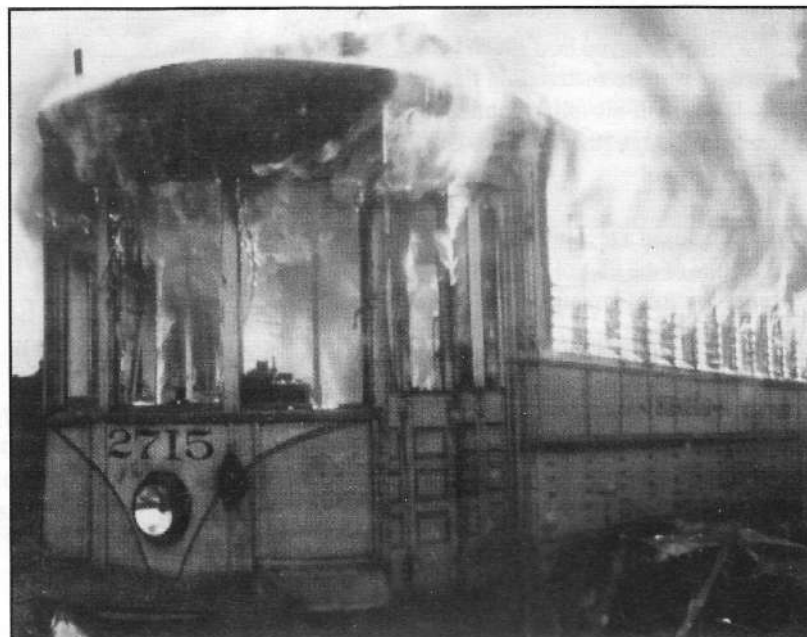
Bill Myers Photo



Scholes Photo - Myers Collection

Public Service 8006 had experimental noise reducing trucks when caught in this photo. It was one of three partial rebuilds completed July 15, 1936. (See Wrege's PSCT Newark Experiment - Destinations 24). In addition to the sound deadening plates on the trucks, the skirt on the lower body is clearly shown in this view. - Undated photo

Bill Myers provided this photo by Bill Rosenberg of the end for Car 2715. Unfortunately, the majority of Public Service cars suffered the same indignity.



Bill Rosenberg Photo - Myers Collection

## Letters (cont'd.)

From George Knopf:

Some time ago, I sent a photograph to Al Mankoff of a PS car (3280) taken at Roseville car house on a fan trip sometime before or on the last day fan trip of the BLOOMFIELD trolleys. In the letter I told the story of how and what went on that afternoon. Since there was some question about the identity of the car, Al suggested I send it out to DESTINATIONS in search of an answer. Perhaps some of the "old-timers" may be able to come up with a solution.

The following are some excerpts from the letter:

I think 'I can shed some light on the mystery of 3280, although I may need a little help verifying what I am passing along to you. What happened here occurred some 47 years ago and so I may be a little fuzzy on some of the details.

I am not sure when the picture was taken, but it was either on the last day of the BLOOMFIELD line or on a trolley (fan) trip taken some months before, sponsored by the North Jersey NRHS. On that trip we rode in a recently painted 3216 CITY SUBWAY car



from Roseville car house down to Penn Station then back to Bloomfield Avenue to the Montclair car house. When we arrived there, the front doors of the building were closed (which was a rarity) and we were told we would not be allowed to enter the building because there was a bus inside that had been badly damaged in an accident the night before and so, no viewing the cars inside.

We continued on up to the Caldwell loop and started back down toward Newark, and on the way down to Montclair, old 3216 started to falter and we barely made it back to the Montclair car house. After some negotiating by Al Creamer and PS officials, they finally agreed to let us into the car house, but definitely NO PICTURES! Well, that was great!

It was there while roaming about the back end of the building that I saw both 2630 and 2632 standing at the end of a side track, both with "29" blue route signs on their front platforms roofs and "BLOOMFIELD" on their roll-top route signs. I don't remember ever reading or hearing from anyone as to whether they were ever in service on that line, but there they were one behind the other! Even though they were single-end cars, they could have run on the BLOOMFIELD line.

After spending some time there, we were assigned to 2610 to continue our trip back to Roseville. Truly, that was a sad trip. I remember it especially, as the car was in bad shape. Old 2610 was in dire need of a new paint job, the upholstery was falling apart on the seats and every brass screw was missing from the window posts. Each time we would stop or start, you could actually see the roof sway forward or backward! We did make it safely back to Roseville and I started moseying around the grounds.

It was there I saw "3280" as you see it in the picture. Behind it, on the same track was 3281. Both cars were definitely out of service. I peeked inside 3281, and it still had the leather cross seats in it but there was quite a bit of junk piled inside. As I came back toward the front of the car yard, I noticed the subway interior inside 3280. I knew something was wrong. Because as far as I knew, 3280 had been converted into a work car in Hudson County. As I came out to the front of the car, a worker stopped me and asked what I was doing there. I explained about the fan trip and then asked him about 3280. After some coaxing, he told me that they had scrapped the real 3280 by mistake and that they painted an "8" over the "5" on 3250. At the time, it made sense, but after seeing your pictures of 3250 and some of the other of that 3250 series "subway" cars being burned at Greenville, I knew he was wrong.

I must add here that on the next two tracks to the right of "3280" stood 3258 and 3259 with CITY SUBWAY on their route signs. They too appeared to be out of service and both had dry rot on

*Continued on page 6*

## Letters (cont'd.) - Knopf

the window posts on the entrance side of the front platforms. He explained that this was the reason the cars were not longer in use. And that they were both scheduled to be scrapped. (This too may be inaccurate because 3259 was still around until January 1953.)

Now I must go back to the earlier time to make my point. The night the last ORANGE trolley ran to West Orange (May 1, 1951), some of North Jersey NHRS members met at the Roseville car house early that evening and took a short tour of the interior of the building. Inside the car house were two or three cars being worked on, one of them was over the pit, on horses with the trucks rolled out from under it. As I recall, there was also a new building added to the east side of the old car house. In it were a number of older PS busses and the B300 series that were to replace the old trolleys. The B300s were not new, but a pair of them were taken from lines from other garages to service the West Market Street portion of the ORANGE line. The trolleys would continue to run down Orange Street and into the Subway. Out in the yard stood single-enders 2616 and 2628 ready to roll out later on. They were scheduled to be the last two cars to make a scheduled trip to West Orange.

There were at least a half dozen of us on that trip; as I recall Howard Johnson, Al Creamer and Rudy Wendling were part of the group and a few others. I remember Rudy taking a picture of the group at the rear bulkhead of 8001 as we traveled up to West Orange. On the way back, we rode back past 14<sup>th</sup> Street, went into the Subway and got off at Penn Station. Al Creamer led the group as we walked back inside the Subway to the old Cedar Street spur and saw old 5221 and 5223 (I think it was still numbered 2683 at that time) stored there. On the way over to the spur a car came along, and the motorman saw us and stopped to inquire what we were doing there. After Al identified himself, the motorman nodded his head and allowed us to go on our way. A few pictures were taken at the spur and all walked back to Penn Station without incident and went on our way.

And now to get to the point of this story, the car standing over the pit was 3252. Could this be the answer to the mystery of 3280? Could this be the car the worker was referring to?

So much for the letter and the story. I learned since that the 3252 ran almost to the end of 1953 and that 3259 was still around about the time the PCC cars were brought in. Since I haven't seen or heard any more about the car, I thought it might be fun to throw the question out to see if anyone know which car really became the 3280 I saw at Roseville that afternoon so many years ago. Are there any old-timers out there that might have the answer?



*Volkmer Photo - Myers Collection*

**PSCT 9776 was one of the All Service Vehicle fleet that provided service to the 43 Jersey City Line between May 1, 1938 and August 8, 1948.**

## Why Trolleys Learned to Fly! Part 1

*Bob Hooper*

With the development of electricity and the trolley, a web of tracks began to spread across the countryside to connect the cities and small towns. And with the spread came the problem for the trolley lines -- crossing the tracks of the steam railroads.

Now this was not a new problem with the monopolistic railroads. Early railroad history is full of stories about "Frog Wars" between rival lines. Battles, both legal and physical, were waged by companies who wanted to break the rails with their crossing frogs. The monopolistic railroads were not selective in their refusal to permit their rails to be broken. Any competitor was treated with the same belligerent attitude.

Many frog installations were done in the dark of the night to avoid the rival labor gang. The battling railroad would station a locomotive to move back and forth across the crossing site to prevent the crossing installation.

The same issues of crossing the steam railroads were faced by the expanding trolley system in the late 1890s and early 1900s. There were numerous examples throughout the state where trolley patrons had to alight from the car on one side of a railroad track and board another, hoping waiting, car on the other side of the track to continue their journey. The Public Service Bergen Turnpike Line had five gaps at various railroad tracks. Four of these gaps were eventually closed, either by bridging, rerouting or crossing frogs. Generally these gap closing were accomplished with the aid of the courts or state chancellor. One gap on this line continued to exist in spite of Public Service's efforts. John Riley notes in his book "The Hudson River Line" that the Bergen Pike gap still existed in the line until abandonment of the trolley on April 26, 1926 for buses. A short section of track was installed between the two railroads. Whenever a piece of equipment needed to be moved across the gap temporary track crossings were bolted in place.



*Deutsch Collection Neg # 127*

**The reason trolleys learned to fly – Railroad tracks. Here we see the Bergen Pike Gap. This was the last gap on the Bergen Turnpike Line in Ridgefield Park on a line that once had five gaps. This last gap was never closed. The gap contained the tracks of both the NYS&W and the West Shore Railroad.**



*Deutsch Collection Neg # 758*

**Turnpike Line - 1913.** The line ran side of the road across the Kearny meadows. Bridge 25 of the PSR carried the Pennsylvania Railroad line from Hudson Transfer to New York City over the road and trolley line. The PRR electric line at this time was third rail DC. The transmission line to the right was the PS Electric right of way. PSR owned a right of way purchased in 1904 paralleling the transmission line and it was bridged by the Pennsy to keep it open. The road was dirt at this point. - April 24, 1913

In some cases, the crossing was considered so important that the company would invest in some construction over the railroad tracks to avoid the crossing at grade. This series of "Trolley Flying" will provide a visual record of the lengths that the trolley operations of New Jersey went to cross the gap at the railroad tracks.

### **Turnpike Line**

This first article addresses the case of the Public Service Railway's Turnpike Line overcoming the tracks of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad amid the muck and mire of the Kearny meadows between Harrison and Jersey City. The Kearny meadows were already home to the large industrial complex of the Koppers Company and the Pennsylvania Railroad Meadows shops (on the same site as NJT MMC). The Jersey City water aqueduct (pipeline) also floated across the Kearny Meadows turning for Jersey City just south of the intersection of the Newark & Jersey City and Belleville Turnpikes.

### **Western Side**

The western part of the Turnpike Line started out as the East Newark Line, an early city line which from Newark to Harrison terminating at the Car House at Hiram Ave. This line was extended eastward into the Kearny meadows toward Jersey City. This extension was first constructed by the New Jersey Traction Company in 1890 flanking the Newark and Jersey City Turnpike in side of the road fashion as it crossed the tidal meadows.

May 8, 1895 11 am saw the first trial run from the Harrison car house to the west side of Sanford's crossing of the DL&W Railroad in the meadows along the Newark Turnpike.

### **Eastern Side**

The eastern end of the line started as the Marion Line, running along Newark Ave. between Five Corners and the Marion section of Jersey City. The line stopped at the N.Y.S.&W. crossing of Newark Ave. A grade crossing was eventually installed in these tracks. Derails were later added.

*Continued on page 14*





First Trestle - West Side looking east. Wagons proceeded down the center between the two trestle ramps to cross the DL&W tracks. The PRR Meadows shops were to the south of the turnpike (left in the picture) Photo notation calls this Bridge 24 - April 24, 1913

*Deutsch Collection Neg # 799*

*^ Deutsch Collection Neg # 798*

First Trestles - East side looking west. The telephone system required a lot of overhead wires to provide sufficient circuits. Mosquito Tavern, a famous wateringhole in the middle of the meadows is to the left. Several buildings of the PRR Meadows Shops complex show to the right, on the south side of the turnpike. August 24, 1913



**Crossing looking west. The DL&W crossing was hidden in the shadows of the trestle. The “lacey” bracing of the connecting structure created a interesting pattern of light. At the center are the crossing gates and gateman’s shanty. The PS electric transmission line shows to the right. The road appears to be dirt. - Photo notation calls this Bridge 23 - March 29, 1911**

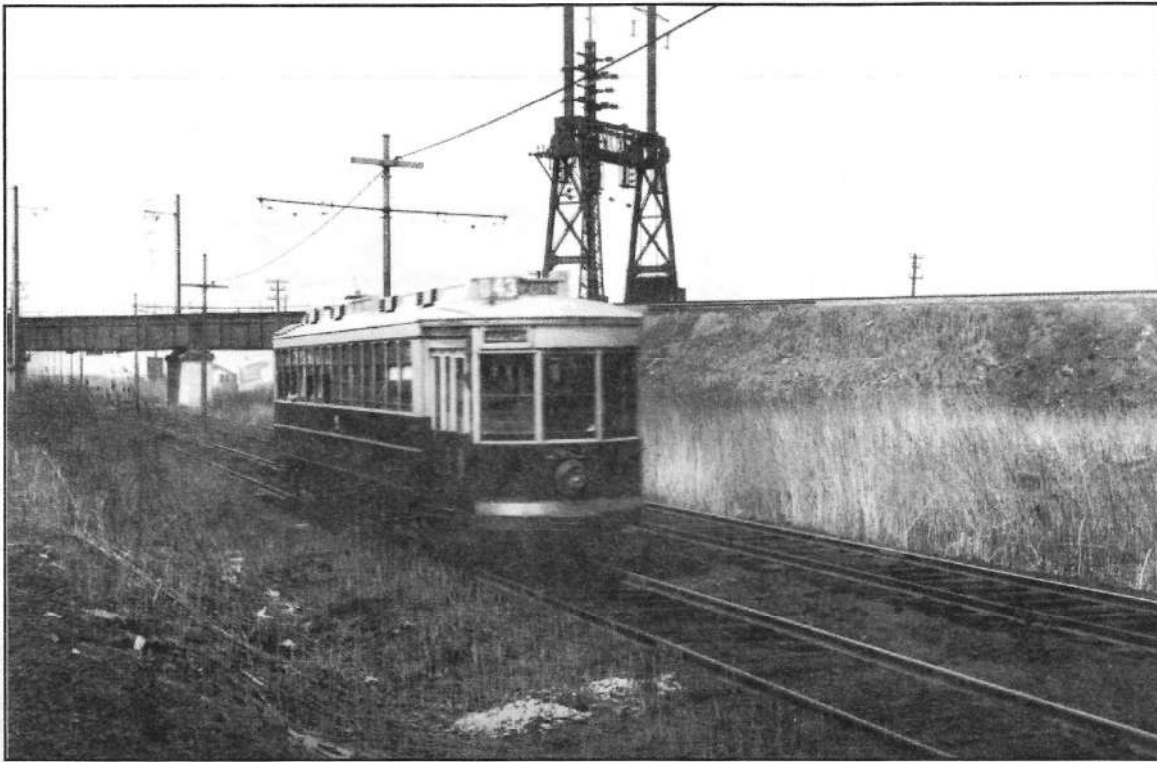


*^ Deutch Collection Neg # 214*

*Deutch Collection Neg # 779*

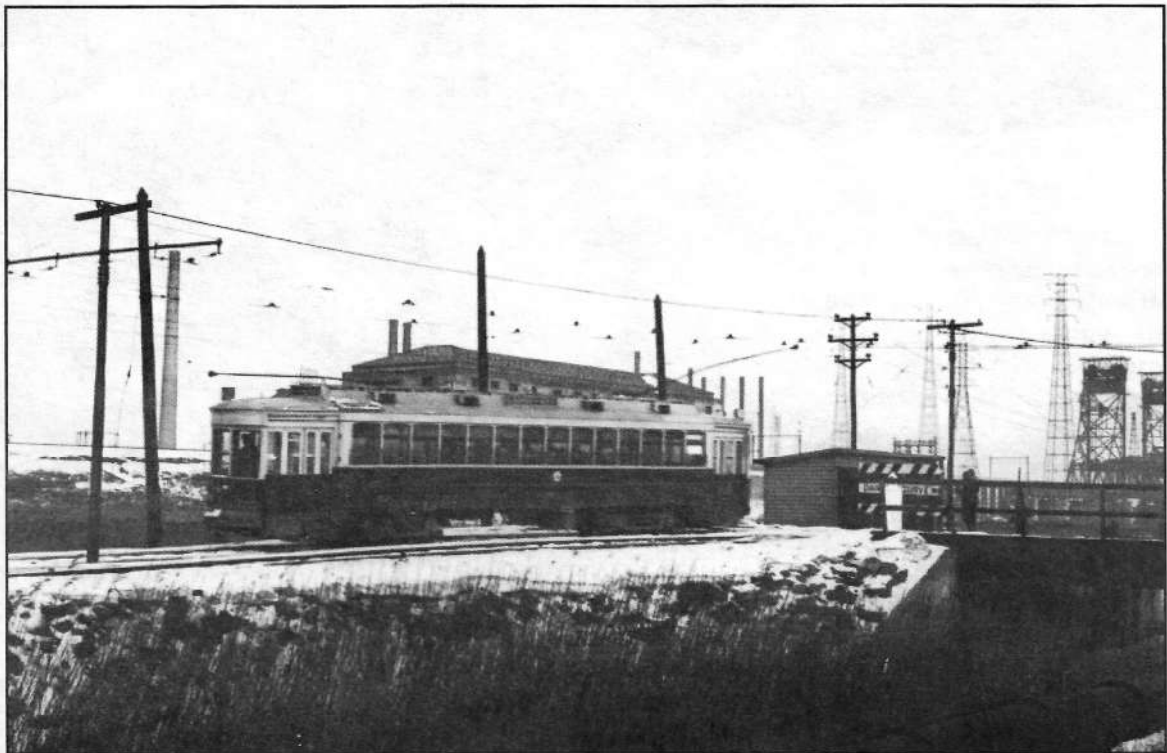


**Crossing looking west. The shadowy crossing from the opposite direction as the previous photo shows the crossing to be particular dangerous in the dark of night or in the thick fogs that typically occur in the watery meadows. Photo notation calls this Bridge 23 - August 24, 1913**



*Railroad Avenue Photo - R. E. Hooper Collection*

**Public Service TURNPIKE Line PRW Construction. An eastbound 43 JERSEY CITY line car breezes under the Pennsylvania Railroad electrified mainline to New York City. This 1936 view shows the new overhead catenary electrification.**



*Railroad Avenue Photo - R. E. Hooper Collection*

**The new PSR PRW had a stop (Sanford's) for the Pennsylvania Railroad Meadows Shop. The bridge crossed the Jersey City water supply aqueduct (pipeline). The westbound 2600 car passes the stop and the Kopper's plant on a snowy day in 1936.**





**Trestles - Old and New.** This view of the "new" trestle on the private right of way and the old side of the road trestles crossing the Lackawanna tracks in the Kearny meadows provides a fascinating view of the lengths that Public Service Railway would undertake to avoid direct grade crossings of steam railroad tracks. The steam powered crane in the center of the photo is lifting the girders of the new bridge into place. Undated - circa 1916

*NJ RRT&M - Francis Archives  
Neg #1328*

*Trolley Flying - Continued from page 8*

Permission was received from Kearny on February 28, 1893 to construct a line along the Newark Turnpike to the west side of the Hackensack River Bridge. This would connect with the East Newark line extension built across the meadows from Harrison.

### **Through Service - Sort Of**

During late 1894, the eastward portion was what was to become the Turnpike Line was constructed over the Hackensack River Bridge to connect to the Marion Line. January 17, 1895 saw the opening of Marion Line to the Hackensack River Bridge via Newark Avenue.

Upon reaching the DL&W tracks, the rails stopped just short of the tracks in the middle of the meadows. The road continued across the tracks at grade. Patrons walked across a 330 foot gap to where a waiting car continued their journey either westward to Harrison and Newark or eastward along Newark Ave. and Exchange Place Terminal.

### **First Trestle Construction**

As one of only two connections between the cities of Newark and Jersey City, the Turnpike line was critical to the growth of the Public Service System. On November 21, 1895, Hudson County gave the traction company permission to build steel trestles on both sides of the road over the DL&W RR at Sanford's crossing.

May 27, 1896 saw one of the trestles completed, permitting the operation of through service between Newark and Jersey City. The job had taken eleven months rather the projected two. The span was over one thousand feet in length and cost \$40,000 which was a considerable sum at that time.

The first construction over the DL&W tracks has been described as nothing short of breath taking (if one favors roller coasters). Indeed, the ride across the meadows in 1900 must have been like setting out to sea, especially at high tide when what little traces of land were inundated. But then to rise up off the land, it would have been described as flying but then the powered flight had only been achieved in 1903.

This trestle construction was very "light". The two single track trestles were interconnected to provide bracing. The images of the trestle illustrating this article attest to their fragile appearance and construction. No data is currently available on the capacity of the structure,

### **Line Reconstruction - Private Right of Way**

On July 10, 1904 the traction company purchased a private right of way in the meadow's that paralleled the Newark Turnpike from Frank's Creek to the Hackensack River for the purpose of taking the Turnpike cars off the sides of the Turnpike and running them on this own right of way.

At last in 1915, work began on the track relocation project and on May 21, 1915 permission was sought to build crossovers from the

Turnpike to the new PRW. Much of the fill for the PRW came from the excavation for the new Public Service Terminal, then under construction.

In October 1915, the westbound track was opened on the PRW from Frank's Creek to the DL&W RR crossing in Kearny. The eastbound track opened on November 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Rebuilding – The Second Trestle**

In 1916, a new private right of way was constructed 100 feet north of the curb line of the Newark and Jersey City Turnpike. The new PRW included a double track bridge over the Lackawanna Railroad. Slightly west of the new trestle, the tracks passed under the Belleville Turnpike. To the east, the line made an "S" curve onto the low level Hackensack River bridge.

The new section of PRW and its trestle opened from service in 1917.

The reconstructed line, now separate from the Newark & JC Turnpike, had stops for the Koppers Company at the Hackensack River Bridge on the east end, a stop for the PRR Meadows Shops and Yard at the Belleville Turnpike, and one at the western end where it entered Harrison Avenue for the nearby slaughter house.

The line designation was changed from "TURNPIKE" was changed to "JERSEY CITY" on January 3, 1916.

In April 1918 work began on eliminating the grade crossing of the Turnpike over the DL&W tracks. The concrete viaduct was completed and opened on May 12, 1921. So trucks and automobiles learned to fly as well.

Two thirty-six inch water mains (the Jersey City water supply aqueduct) were located between the PRW and reconstructed Turnpike.

### **ASV operation – May 1, 1938**

The 43 route was converted to All-Service Vehicles (ASV) along with other selected Public Service lines in May 1938. (See Destinations #20). So it was back to the Newark and Jersey City Turnpike for the line. However, it was now paved with Belgian blocks and the ASVs did not have the smoothing effect of steel rails. ASVs lasted until August 1948.

The Belgian block paving of the turnpike was a long characteristic of travel across the Kearny meadows for years. The paving still serves as the foundation for the roadway's asphalt surface to this day (2000 AD).

### **Remains**

While rail service left the scene in 1938, there are still visible reminders of the Turnpike line and its trolley flying days. The Amtrak Northeast Corridor Line crosses the meadows on a fill that is pierced several times as it travels across the sea of saw

*Trolley Flying - Continued from page 14*

grass. At the "Harrison" Pike crossing, there are a series of three plate girder bridges. The "Harrison" Pike, formally the Newark and Jersey City Turnpike, used the southern most bridge to duck under the Northeast Corridor. The other two provided a Public Service Company right of way. The 1916 PRW construction used the middle span. (See 1913 photo on page 8 and the 1936 photo on page 11)

The concrete abutment of the First Trestle still remains in the saw grass between the new intersection of County Route 7, the Belleville Turnpike and the Jersey City Water Aqueduct (Pipeline) and the entrance to the New Jersey Transit's Meadows Maintenance Center.

### Credits

This article would not be possible with the assistance of two individuals. The historic facts on line construction and newspaper accounts were provided by John H. Riley in his two books on the Public Service System, "The Newark City Subway Lines" and "Hudson River Lines." And, I am deeply indebted to Edward T. Francis for assistance in provided trestle photos and geographic references about the line and its operation and reconstruction.

**Our hosts from 21st Century greet the members of NJERHS as we arrive at the shop complex of the new line to inspect the cars of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail on June 5, 1999.**



## Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Visit

Continuing our interest in the Hudson Bergen Light Rail Project, a group of Society members embarked on a bus tour of the rebirth of trolley operation in Hudson County on June 5, 1999, Departing from Newark Penn Station to the squeal of the City Subway cars rounding the under ground loop, the group traveled in the comfort of an air condition bus arranged by member Mike Glikin,

On the way to the stopped to inspect the branch to West Side Avenue which uses the old CNJ right of way across Jersey City. The group enjoyed peeking through the chainlink fence to get a clean view of the light rail construction: concrete ties and Pandrol clips.

At the shops, we hosted by the 21st Century Corporation staff. The group was treated to an inside look at the maintenance and storage complex just coming together. The group was allowed to inspect one car set. Our tour guides delighted at showing off the many features of the cars. As the unit we inspected was being qualified and tested, we were treated to seeing how you hid sophisticated electronic equipment in a low floor car. The car designers were magicians to keep everything out of sight but still be accessible.

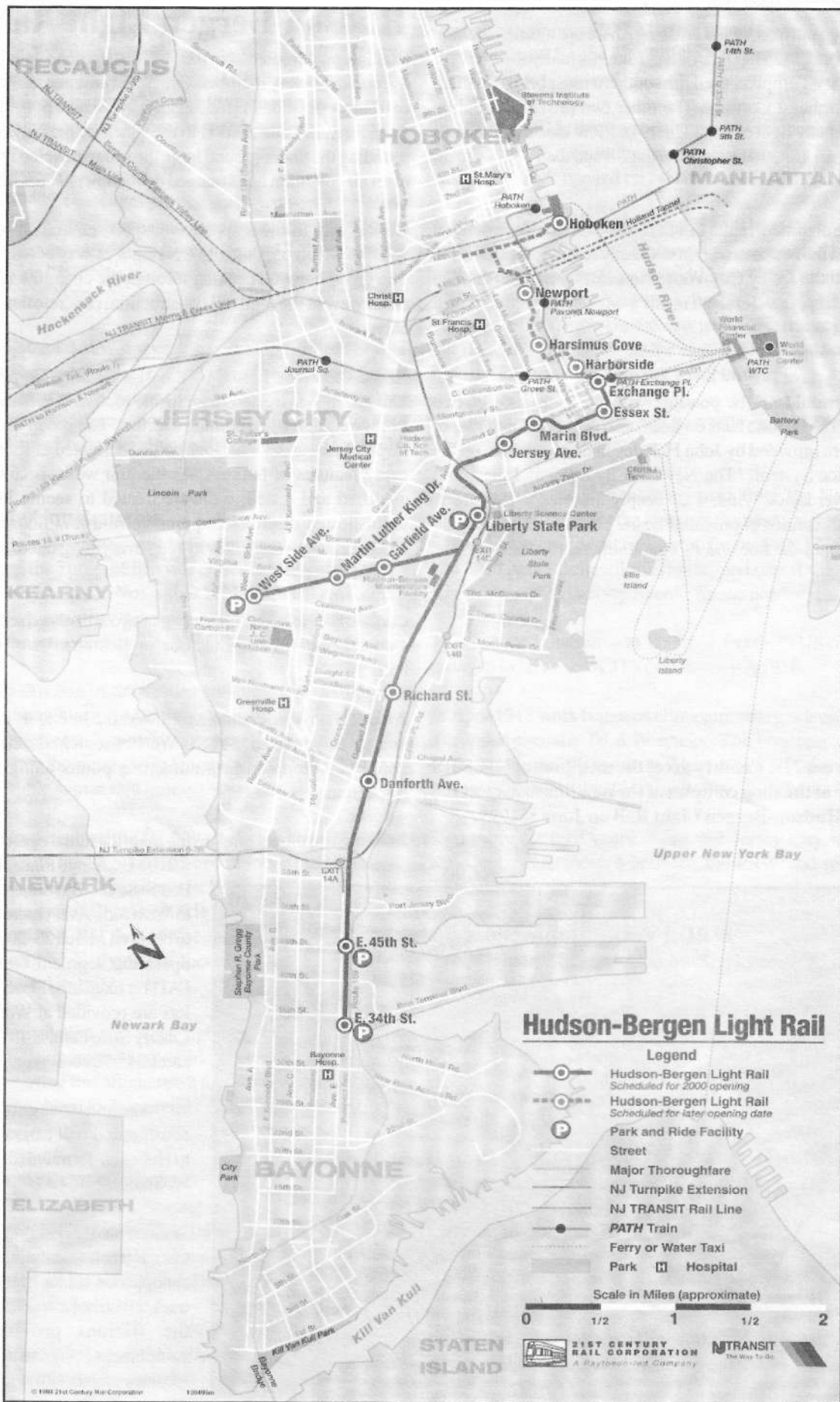
Cars are 87.7 feet long consisting of two articulated sections around a center section. Reminds one of Boston's "two rooms and a bath".

After the car shed tour, we followed the line to its current south end in Bayonne at 34<sup>th</sup> St. We hopscotched across the line northward stopping at a numerous points along the line for inspection.

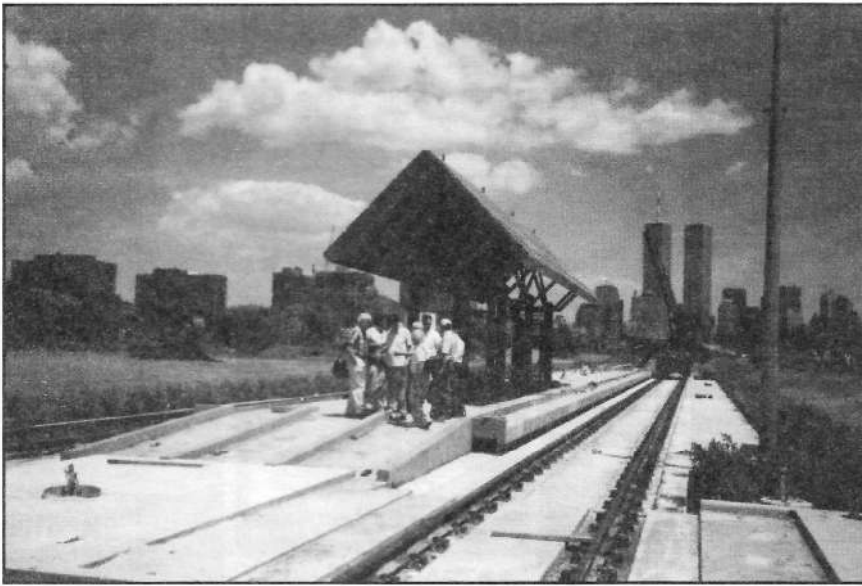
As shown on the accompanying map, the initial operating segment will be Exchange Place Jersey City to E. 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Bayonne with a branch to West Side Ave. Operation is slated to begin on March 25, 2000. The initial operating segment connections to PATH at Exchange Place. Park & Ride lots are provided at West Side Ave., Liberty State Park, E 45<sup>th</sup> St. Bayonne and E34<sup>th</sup> Street Bayonne.

A second segment under construction will carry service north to Hoboken Terminal (the old D. L. & W. Station).

Stations are designed for a minimum of maintenance featuring pitched roof canopies on center islands in double track territory. Low level platforms at the stations provide a ADA compliment design to access the low level car steps.







*Rob Hooper Photo*

**The group inspected the progress being made on the Jersey Ave. Station (Site of the to be constructed Jersey City Medical Center). The line rounds a sweeping curve into the station providing a spectacular view of the Manhattan skyline (a trade mark of Jersey City Living.) - June 5, 1999**

**The Liberty State Park Station like most all of the HBRL station features artful geometric brick walk ways. Just outside the Liberty Park Station, the line ducks under the CSX River Line and the New Jersey Turnpike. - June 5, 1999**

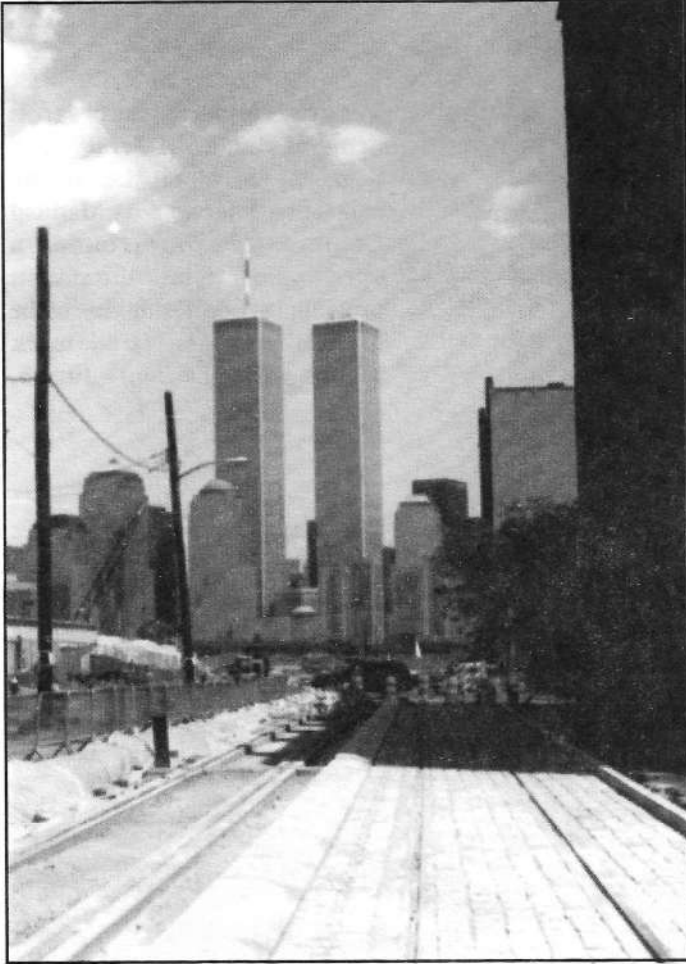


*Bob Hooper Photo*



*Bob Hooper Photo*

**Overhead line was being adjusted by the dual mode line truck. As the operation is a DBOM contract, 21st Century is responsible for all aspects of the line construction and operation. - June 5, 1999**



*Frank Miklos Photo*

**What appears to be street running on Essex St. is really half private right of way and half public street (One Way West).- June 5, 1999**



*Bob Hooper Photo*

**On the day of our inspection, the equipment was just being delivered to the storage shed for testing, check out and training. Few pieces of equipment were on the property yet. Car 2002 peeks out of the storage shed. Each car is articulated on a center section. Hence the A designation for one third of the car.**

## Mankoff published On National City Anti-Trust Case

Al Mankoff has finally reached a level of satisfaction. Look fascinated with the case but denied access to the information, he has pursued the real story. Through the Freedom of Information Act, he has begun to peel back the onion.

The Summer 99 Issue of TRANSITIONS (Volume 4), the publication of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc., carried an illuminating story entitled "Revisiting the American

Streetcar Scandal". It investigates the case of 1947 using information obtained from the FBI investigation. Al exposes the National City Lines Anti-Trust Conspiracy Case. The article is available online at <http://njtpa.njit.edu/trolley.htm>.

Al, who collaborated with Dr. Chuck Wrege on two PSCT volumes, has photos from the books and other PS related material on his web site, <http://www.almankoff.com>.

## DEUTSCH PHOTO COLLECTION ILLUSTRATES HISTORY

Read the history of HOBOKEN written by Patricia Florio Colrick (published by Arcadia Press) and you will share our good fortune, Ira Deutsch. Thanks to Ira's efforts, we were able to provide this author with twenty-seven views of Hoboken in the early 1900s. Pick up a copy and enjoy.

## Recollections of Revisiting the #27 Pavonia Avenue Car Line

*By Ken Roods*

The year was 1948. I was eight years old. I lived in Hackensack, N.J. I became interested in street cars when I visited my aunt in Jersey City. She lived on Neptune Avenue, two blocks from the Greenville Car Yards, which fronted on Old Bergen Road at Gates Avenue. As an eight year old, I and my neighborhood friends would walk down Old Bergen Road, past the street cars turning and exiting from the turnaround in the yard, to play baseball in a field at the Jersey City Bayonne border. I remember hearing the route number announcements over a loud speaker as the cars would leave the yard turnaround and head back onto the street.

While we walked across the tracks it seemed a car was coming every few minutes and you dare not linger on the tracks. I remember one day when my aunt took me to the corner of Neptune and Old Bergen Road where we boarded the number 7 Jackson Avenue car and rode in it to Journal Square Terminal on Sip Avenue to shop at the Square (that was the place to shop in those days).

The thing that impressed me as a kid was how smooth the car traveled in the street on the rails. Having ridden in buses, I was used to being bounced around, but this ride was level and smooth.

The car would growl and clang, clang over the various switches along the line. Little did I know that there was less than two years left for this mode of transportation in the city.

So, one day in 1956, now age sixteen, I took a day off from school (played hookie) boarded the number 124 Public Service bus in Hackensack (I used to ride buses a lot to get around to see what was left of the traction empire) and arrived in Jersey City with my camera. I left the bus at the Sip Avenue Terminal which was now buses only. Having seen the last street car seven years earlier, I set out to revisit the Pavonia Avenue Car Line which started as Public Service in 1907 and abandoned as streetcars July 9, 1938.

The car originally ran from Congress Street to Summit Avenue. Then Hoboken Avenue where they went to private right of way, then down the bluff side of the Erie Railroad cut and to lower Jersey City on to Pavonia Avenue which led to the Erie Railroad and Ferry Terminal.



*Deutsch Collection Neg # 127*

**The Greenville Car House looking north west at Old Bergen Road and Gates Avenue.**

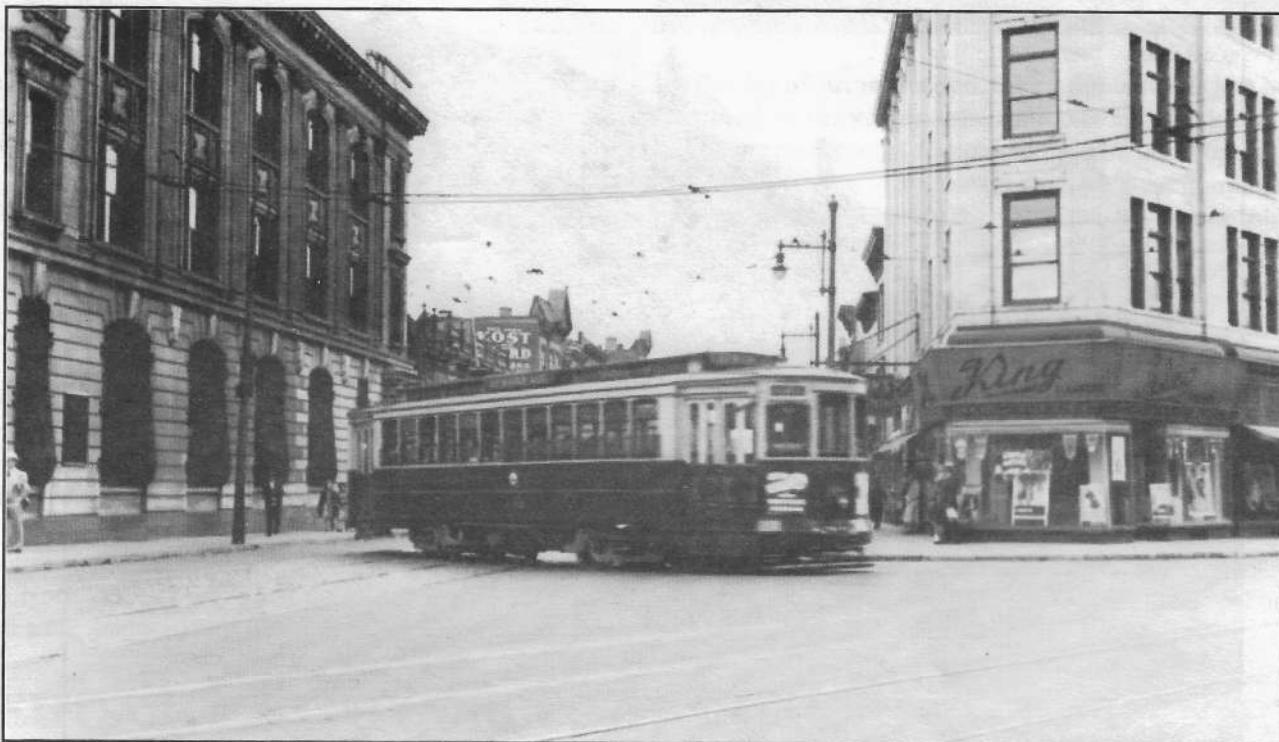
*Recollections of 27 - Continued from page 19*

So eighteen years after the abandonment, I set out to revisit what was left of the route the cars took to arrive at the Hudson River. Also this was the year after the Erie moved (lock, stock and barrel) to Hoboken at the Lackawanna Station.

I arrived at the intersection of Five Corners which consisted of Summit Avenue, Newark Avenue and Hoboken Avenue, where all these streets met at intersecting angles. This area was only a couple of blocks from the Square where I had arrived. They say that when rail service was thriving that this was a busy corner. I looked for rails in the street, but unfortunately they were paved over with black asphalt which Jersey City was noted for. All the overhead [supporting] green painted Public Service electric light poles with their frosted globes were standing, still stenciled PSCT in white paint, on all streets that had rail lines up to 1949. I remember that some had different designs in different areas of town, but they all looked like they were in place for decades; some plain and some very intricate design. I stated to walk down Hoboken Avenue and noticed a private right of way that left the street and entered the abandoned Erie Railroad Cut known as the Bergen Arches which was on top of the bluff of the railroad cut. This was between Oakland and Baldwin Avenues. These two streets crossed over the Erie with Baldwin Avenue also crossing the abandoned street car right of way. I remember that the right of way was black cindered covered. The rail had been long removed but the top of the ties were still visible in spots along the right of way where it turned sharply to the right crossing to the other side of the railroad cut.

A bridge once carried the tracks across, remembered only by the abutments made of cement on each side of the railroad cut. I then had to back track to Newark Avenue, walk about a mile down Newark Avenue to lower Jersey City, below the Palisades Bluffs, walk back up the abandoned right of way on the other side of the cut. I noticed that the Erie rails were red with rust from only being unused for a year. The old Public Service right of way had not become overgrown with weeds or trees as yet since only eighteen years had passed since the last car had run down it to Pavonia Avenue. While at this location I snapped a few pictures of where the old bridge crossed the railroad and of the Baldwin Avenue overpass which allowed the Erie and the street cars to pass under. I then headed down the bluff and walked to Lower Jersey City tracing the rest of the line that ran through a few streets to arrive at Pavonia Avenue and then along side of the deserted Erie Terminal.

I found out that this area will undergo a complete change in a year or two. Jersey City is going to put a highway in the old Erie Railroad cut for traffic to gain better access from the new developments along the Hudson River and relieve motor traffic on the depressed state highway which parallels Hoboken Avenue and the abandoned right of ways. I have seen recently newspaper pictures from Jersey City of the Old Public Service right of way with city and state officials surveying the area I had looked at in 1956. It is a jungle now with trees and heavy undergrowth in the railroad cut and on the trolley right of way - 43 more years did make a difference.



*Wilbur Sherwoo photo - Frank Miklos Collection*  
**Five Corners, Jersey City - A NEWARK AVE car #2641 rounds the corner - May 5, 1938. Appropriately five car lines passed through this intersection.**



*Ken Roods Photo*

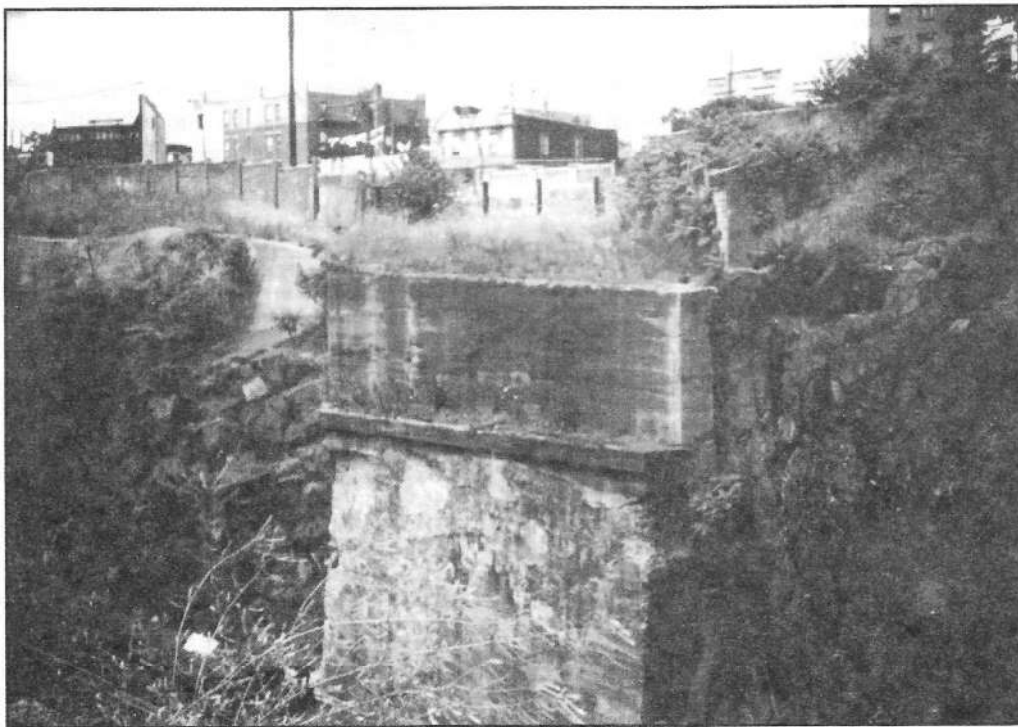
The year 1956 finds a stark bridge abutment as a silent reminder of the hustle and bustle that once was the Public Service Trolley and the Erie Railroad as they made their way toward lower Jersey City and the Hudson River



*Wilbur Sherwood Photo - Frank Miklos Collection*

The Pavonia Line (Hudson Division Route 27 although numbers were not displayed) swung off Hoboken Ave. to cross the Erie Railroad tracks as it passed through the Bergen Arches.

While the angle is slightly different in the two photos, the double peaked building facade (just to the left of the car) provide a landmark for comparing the scenes.



**The Pavonia line abandoned trolley operation on July 10, 1938 being replaced by motor buses. The bridge abutments were still visible in 1956.**

*Ken Roods Photo*



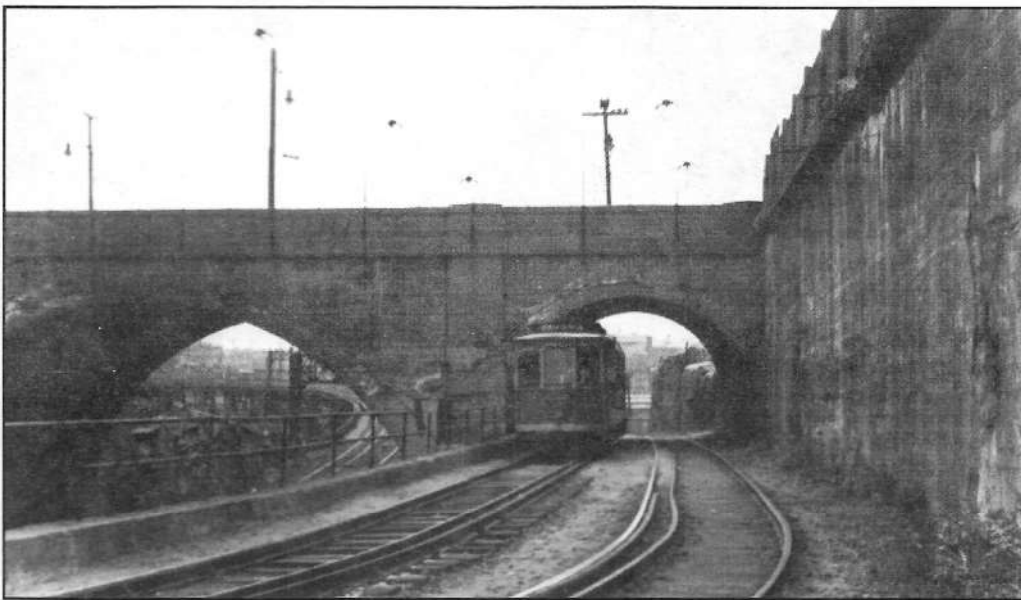
**The double tracked bridge features a board fence to provide some protection for the passengers from the soot of the steam engines passing beneath them. - September 19, 1936**

*R. S. Wendeling Photo - Frank Miklos Collection*



The arches of the bridge carrying Baldwin Street over the Erie RR and Public Service rights of way. 1956

*Ken Roods Photo*



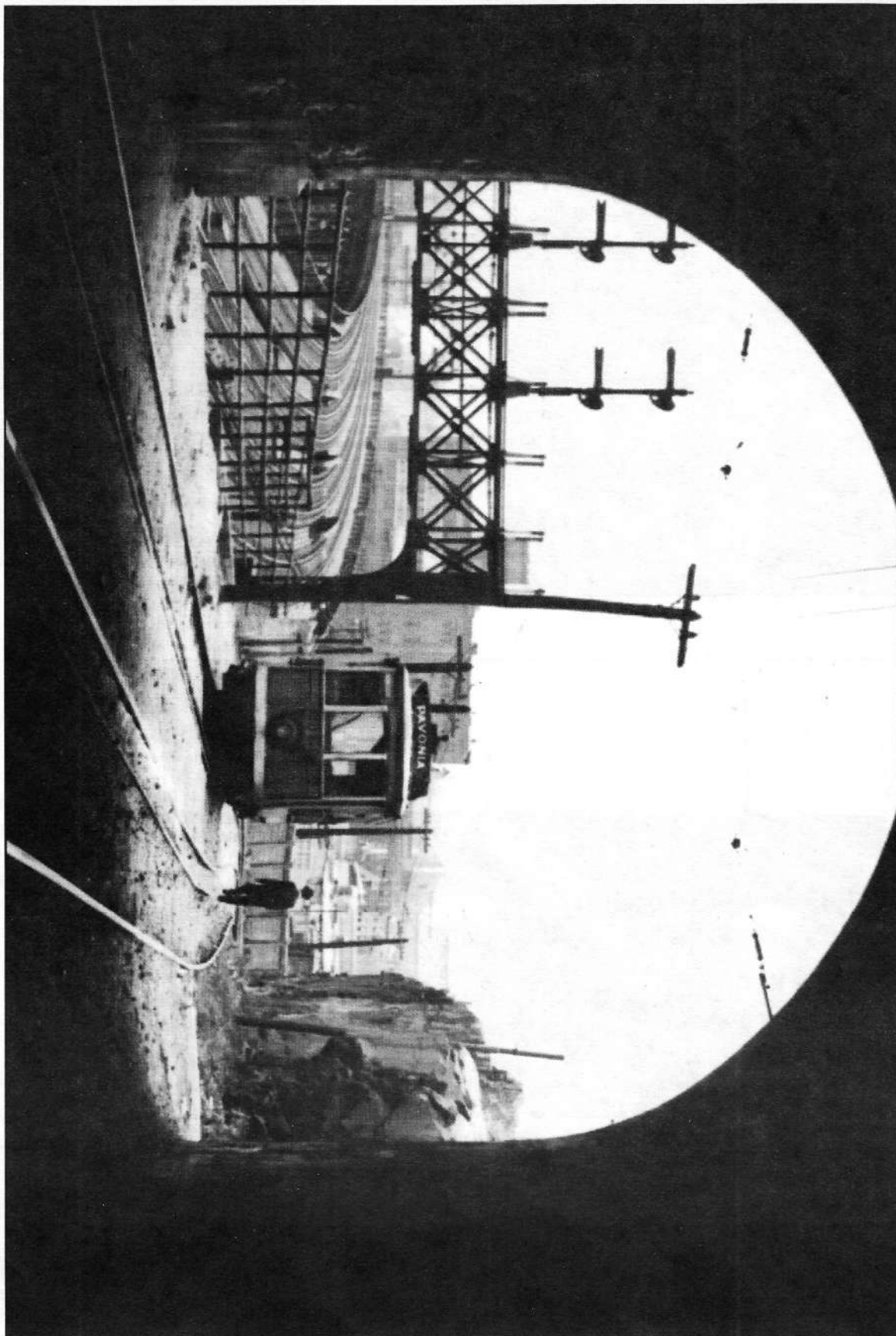
On May 5, 1938 Wilbur Sherwood capture car 2313 passing through the shadows of the arch Looking east (Compare with the photo above.)

*Wilbur Sherwood Photo - Frank Miklos Collection*

**Rear Cover: The arch of the street bridge prides a perfect cameo for Public Service car 2313 beside the Erie Railroad semaphore signal bridge. How many races were there between the trolley and the Erie commuters?**

**The riders were provided a birds-eye view of lower Jersey city from, the private right of way. Car 2313 climbs the westbound grade to the center of Jersey City. - May 5, 1938**

*Wilbur Sherwood Photo - Frank Miklos Collection*

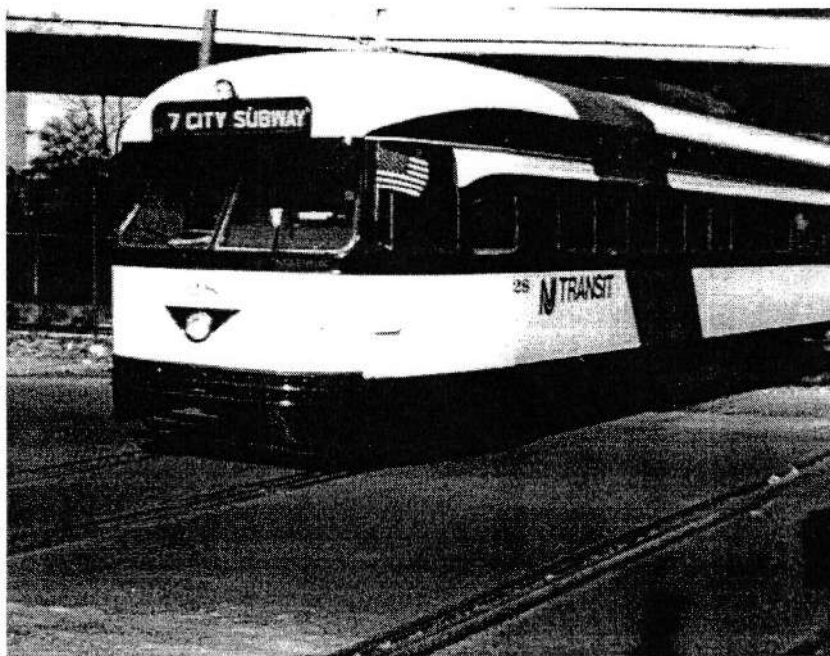




# ***North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society***

Newark City Subway Charter Tour

Saturday, April 22, 2000



This charter tour of the Newark City Subway will include a shop visit and several trips on the line on a private PCC car. Also included will be a visitor's pass for all-day riding on regular service PCCs with unlimited off/on privileges for "still" and "movie/video" photo opportunities.

The PCCs will be replaced by modern LRVs soon, so this may be your last chance to ride the Newark City Subway PCCs before they are gone. Part of these proceeds from this tour will be used for the restoration of PSNJ sweeper 5173.

Time: 11:00 AM to ???

Place: Newark Penn Station Subway Entrance (by McDonalds)

Also, you may wish to visit Jersey City to view and possibly ride the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line. Take the PATH train to Exchange Place. (Note: the first car of PATH will not platform at Exchange Place.) For additional information, please e-mail [trolleybill@home.com](mailto:trolleybill@home.com)

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