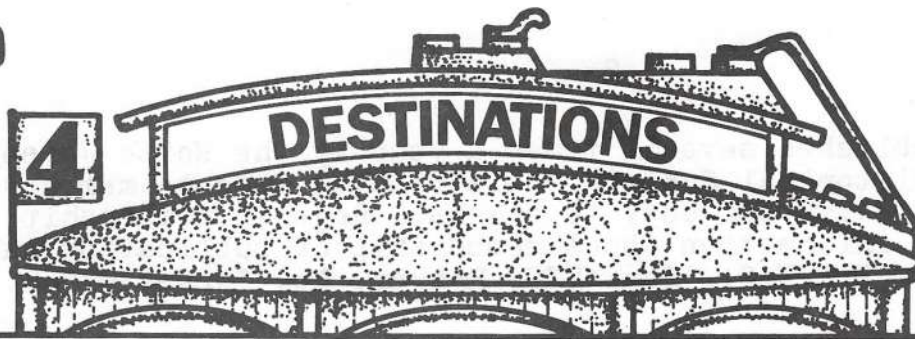


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The Newsletter of the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society

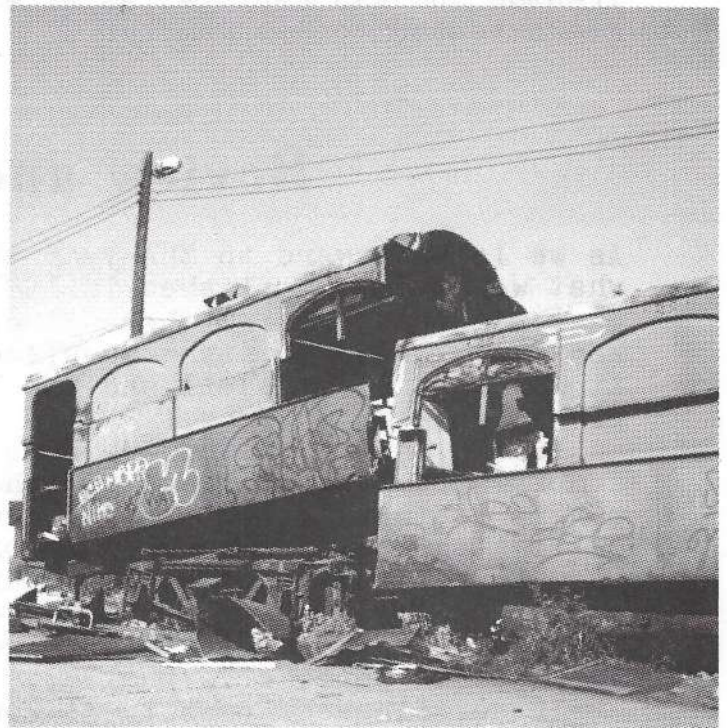
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Vol. 3, No. 1

January, 1988

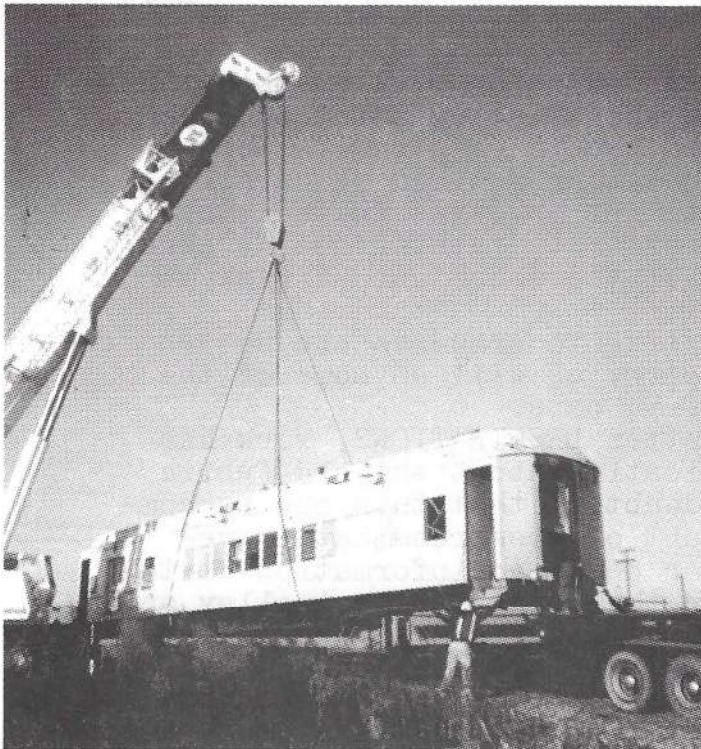
THE ALTERNATIVE

TO THIS →
IS THIS ↓



In September of 1987 \$15,000 was paid to destroy the last of the historic arched-window Stillwells left in New Jersey. Vandalism on the grand scale doesn't come cheap.

Photos by Tony Hall.



In stark contrast is the salvation of the Blue Comet combine at Harrison. This victory was achieved by the N.J.E.R.H.S. with the gracious cooperation of PATH. The generous support of our members helped make this rescue possible.

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 \$10 per year. For information about membership or publication sales write: North Jersey E.R.H.S., Box 1770, Rahway, New Jersey 07065.

Membership Notes

We were recently saddened to learn of the death of member George Brammer. Within any organization the size of ours, it is not always possible to get to know everyone. However, we were pleased to meet Mr. Brammer at our Summerfest last June. He resided in Trenton and was employed as an attorney. Our sincere sympathies are extended to his family.

Review and Preview

As we look forward to the year ahead we can take pleasure from what we have accomplished in 1987. Our combine (No. 3406) was restored to the point where it could be displayed at the Hoboken Festival. When we first acquired the car about three years ago, it was a derelict shell and our labors have transformed it to presentable appearance.

During the year 1988, we hope to do exterior work on both the combine and the motor car. Although the existing paint on each car is weathered, the surfaces remain smooth compared to the "alligatored" surfaces on many of the other retired MU cars. Therefore, it may not be necessary to get involved in the time-consuming task of stripping the old exterior paint from the cars. We also need to do work on the roof of the motor car--a task we were unable to acheive in 1987.

If our finances permit, we would like to preserve one or two of the soon-to-be-retired PATH "K" cars, as well as some of the Pennsylvania Railroad's surviving MP-54 cars.

In addition to our regular newsletter DESTINATIONS, work has begun on a special illustrated publication about the old Public Service Terminal in Newark. It is doubtful that this can be completed this year because of the amount of research that is required. We are currently looking for detailed information on the various changes that took place over the years in the trolley and bus routes which served the terminal. If anyone can provide us with some of this information, it would be appreciated.

Again let us thank everyone for their support. We hope that 1988 will be even more rewarding than the year that has just passed.

NORTH JERSEY ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Anthony J. Hall, President
William J. Keeler, Secretary

Robert A. Sherwood, Vice Pres.
Frank S. Miklos, Treasurer

Helping Hand

The June issue of DESTINATIONS reported that the North Jersey E.R.H.S. had become affiliated with the United Railroad Historical Society of New Jersey. This is the advisory group set up to provide railfan input to N J Transit and to the New Jersey Transportation Museum Study Commission. Since that time, several of our members have played important roles in working with the U.R.R.H.S. to determine which of N J Transit's retired rail equipment should be preserved. There are many pieces of rolling stock which are of historic significance and which should be included in the proposed New Jersey transportation museum. A listing of these cars and locomotives was presented to N J Transit several months ago and that agency has cooperated by withholding those units from their listing of equipment for disposition.

There is some concern, however, for the vulnerability of this rolling stock to vandals, and the U.R.R.H.S.'s first goal has been to find a secure storage area for them. The organization has succeeded in obtaining several sites including the yard adjacent to Public Service's North Bergen generating station.

Now that storage sites are available, the next concern is determining whether the equipment is road worthy so that it can be moved. Here is where the North Jersey E.R.H.S. played a key role. Bob Sherwood and Tony Hall joined with others from the U.R.R.H.S. on a recent occasion to inspect the equipment in question. Mike Burshtin and Jack Keeler had participated in prior equipment inspections. A report by Tony Hall on the most recent inspection trip is included in this issue of DESTINATIONS, along with a report on the Museum Commission's hearings in Trenton, and a proposal to rescue still another of the famed Blue Comet cars.

Although most of these reports do not directly involve equipment owned by the North Jersey E.R.H.S., it does show our commitment to work with all organizations to preserve our transportation heritage.

Frank Miklos, Editor.

Taking (Rolling) Stock

by Tony Hall

On Saturday, October 24th, an expedition was mounted to survey and inventory some of the roster of historic equipment held by New Jersey Transit. Its purpose was to establish the historic value of each piece and ascertain just how it would serve the State Transportation Museum, assuming that the museum movement is successful. Since the nature and scope of this museum has yet to be defined, the latter goal was difficult to pin down.

Participants were Steve Gazzo of N J Transit, Walt Grosselfinger, president of the United Railroad Historical Society, and the following U.R.R.H.S. members: Bob Sherwood, David Dutcher and myself.

First stop was Waldwick. Here we viewed the 1172 and 1173, two ex-Blue Comet cars mentioned elsewhere; the 5153 cab control car; car 2706, one of two surviving Erie Stillwells, both later models

without the famous "arched" windows; the two DC MU motors chosen for preservation by N J Transit (Nos. 3500 and 4600); the first ever stainless steel lightweight conventional coach, the ex-Santa Fe No. 3070 and four of her historic sisters Nos. 2402, 2406, 2425, and 3079. All are historic cars and all, except the MU's, are easily restorable. We wonder why these particular MU's were selected by Transit since they have been cannibalized to skeletons and so many identical cars were scrapped in serviceable condition. Being the first of their series is noteworthy, but since no other cars were saved for parts, the museum will have its work cut out for it.

Second stop was Raritan, E-8 City! Eighteen of these faded beauties are set out on two tracks, victims of countless rail thieves. Of the four selected by the U.R.R.H.S. for preservation No. 4285, ex-New York Central and No. 4332, ex-Southern Railway, were present and found to be in tolerable condition.

Third stop was Plainfield, where ex-CNJ RDC No. 557 languishes. She is one of four such units recommended for restoration by the U.R.R.H.S. and one of eleven stored at the Queen City. Finally, the 5450 ex-New York Central tavern-lounge car, one of five held by N J Transit, all of which having been strongly recommended for restoration. Open to vandals and thieves, it is none-the-less the pick of the litter in contrast to the other four stored elsewhere. Examined in the absence of its current "tenant," a person of questionable housekeeping skills, the interior seemed eminently restorable.

Fourth stop was the diner "Skotchwood," not a rail car I'm sorry to say, but an informal restaurant of some quality. There we had a late lunch and attempted to digest what we had seen in the day's travels. It was agreed that all of the equipment viewed had great historical value and should be moved as soon as possible to the Public Service North Bergen generating station. Steve Gazillo, our liaison with Transit, agreed and assured us that these views would be passed up the ladder on Monday morning.

We thanked Steve for all his efforts on behalf of the museum equipment and came away with a more complete and intimate knowledge of much of what we are trying to save. We felt reassured that the people at N J Transit would assign a higher priority to saving it before the ravages of time, the elements, thieves and vandals make their efforts unnecessary.

The Return of the Comet

The comet which surpasses Haley's in the minds of most informed New Jerseyans is the Blue Comet, the legendary first-class train which flashed briefly through our state between the cities named Jersey and Atlantic during the years between the wars, then, like Haley's disappeared into oblivion. But just as Haley's returns, so might the Blue Comet, this time it is to be hoped permanently, as a major attraction of the New Jersey Railroad and Transportation Museum.

Surprisingly, the Blue Comet exists, dispersed around the country in pieces, its once azure equipment now reduced to primer, house paint or the livery of work train service. Two air-conditioned coaches survive so far, under the shaky protection of N J Transit's

museum-designated collection, Nos. 1172 and 1173. The Tri-State Chapter of the N.R.H.S. is the proud possessor of the 1169 observation car, and N J Transit has altered the 1178 for non-revenue service. There are reports of a Comet car somewhere in Michigan. A Comet car was scrapped as recently as January 1986 in Red Bank when Transit sold unused yard land to a developer and failed to secure the fate of the Comet car located thereon.

It is our good fortune to announce that yet another piece of the flyer has recently come to light! We have recently concluded an agreement with PATH to preserve Blue Comet combine No. 302 named "ENCKE" located at Harrison yards. By the time you read this, the car will have been safely set aside as part of the Harrison Maintenance Facility construction, for it is there that the car has stood for decades on blocks, serving as a building similar to No. 1169 which served as a building at Bay Head Junction until rescued by Tri-State.

Procurement of trucks and other parts along with movement of the car from PATH property and relocating it are challenges we are now facing. It will not be easy and success is by no means assured, but the hope of having an authentic Blue Comet train restored for excursion service is more than sufficient inducement to make this effort. It is unfortunate that N J Transit is not yet geared up to undertake the rescue of additional historic equipment. The state museum movement is still in its infancy and no one knows for certain what the scope and nature of the museum will be, and indeed, even if there will be a museum at all. So in this environment of uncertainty, those of us who are True Believers must risk "our fortune and sacred honor" to save what we can, for it is certain that if we do not, there will be little remaining on which to build a museum.

Most of you reading this have already taken a big step by joining our organization, but we all have to do more. We urge you to get on board this effort to the very utmost. Persuade your friends to join. Write letters to political figures, state officials, newspapers and the like. Tell them how important the state museum is and how strongly you feel about it. The more interest is demonstrated in it, the more likely it is we will have a museum we can all be proud of.

Tony Hall.

Commission Hears Museum Site Proposals

Four days prior to the Hoboken Festival, a hearing was conducted in Trenton by Senator Gagliano and the Commission to study the possibility for establishing a railroad and transportation museum. One of those on the commission is Frank Reilly, Morris County Transportation Commissioner. John Wilkins of N J Transit is one of two liaisons between that agency and the commission, Steve Gazillo being the other.

I expressed the opinion, both my own and that which I believe best serves the aims of this organization, that the best location of the four alternatives presented for consideration is South Amboy for the great and obvious reasons that it is the most historic railroad site in the state through its association with the Camden and Amboy Railroad,

earliest in the state and one of the first in North America. Equally important, it is the only site offered which is equipped with electrification, enabling the most important museum pieces, the GG-1s and MP-54s, to operate. The site also scores high on all the other criteria set forth. The other three choices were Jersey City, Phillipsburg and Port Morris. The latter two enjoyed wide support among those who spoke. Port Morris advocates tied their arguments to an ambitious program of electrification extended to Netcong, and the restoration of service on the Blairstown Cutoff possibly combining restored N J Transit service there with Federal Park Service trains to the Delaware Water Gap and Steamtown in Scranton. A bold vision to say the least!

A few days after the hearing I learned that other sites had been placed into consideration. They were: Tuckahoe, Trenton (Coalport), Cranford, Asbury Park and Flemington.

Clearly, most of these sites have something to offer that is worthy of consideration. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the Camden and Amboy is a historic site of world-class proportions and the opportunity to operate historic, restored equipment on this hallowed line surely must reduce all other potential sites to the level of tourist traps. Added to that is the fact that half of this line is not only in place, but fully electrified and capable of operating the prime exhibits of the museum collection, the world-famous GG-1, as well as other electric equipment. Public accessibility and all other considerations set forth for our consideration by the commission find the South Amboy site and the Camden and Amboy line at least the equal of all the others, even those which were added later.

I urge our members to write to Senator Gagliano, Mr. Reilly, and the others on the commission, and urge them to make the right choice for the location of the New Jersey Museum of Railroads and Transportation--South Amboy and the Camden and Amboy Railroad.

Tony Hall

Hoboken Harvest II

by Tony Hall

Those of you who saw last June's issue of DESTINATIONS may recall our account of the first trip to Hoboken to gather spare parts obtained from N J Transit. That trip was made in a rented truck of dubious ancestry. After that voyage was all over, I swore I'd never do that again.

Well, one should never say never. Incredibly, I found myself bouncing and rattling toward Hoboken one more time on Monday, October 19th, this time in a rented rig not from some dubious dealer, but from a big-time rental agency whose name you would all recognize. Well, I thought, this time I was letting the "try harder" people put me in the driver's seat, so it shouldn't be so bad.

Whereas the previous run was made with a truck with questionable brakes, as we learned trying to stop the thing coming down Bergen Hill with a full load, at least it had steering. The second run was

accomplished with power brakes that could have sent the whole load through the cab, and through its occupants as well, but with steering which provided us with only minimal influence on the direction the vehicle would take.

And so the final load of DC MU car parts made its weaving, wandering way to Whippany and I have learned never to say never again.

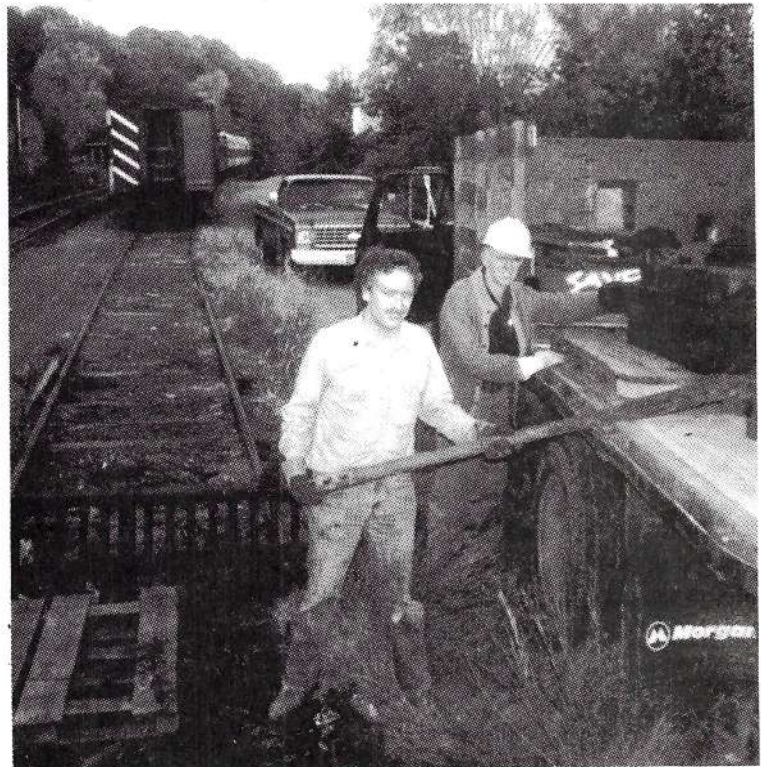
Photo Gallery



"Somewhere under the rainbow..."
But where's Judy Garland?

Photos by Tony Hall.

Physical fitness is a fringe benefit
of many NJERHS's activities.



Left Photo: Members of the group who participated in the October 24 inventory of N J Transit's rail equipment pause for a photo next to an E-8 at Raritan. Those pictured are Bob Sherwood, Dave Dutcher, Walt Grosselfinger and Steve Gazillo.

Right Photo: Bob Sherwood and Jack Keeler begin the task of unloading the latest batch of parts for our MU cars shortly after their arrival at Whippany.



A candid photo by member Ed Lonyai catches the action at the sales table set up inside the combine at the Hoboken Festival. Wayne Scott turns to adjust the sliding door, while Frank Miklos answers the question of a potential customer.

Hoboken Festival VII

On Saturday, September 26th the seventh festival at Hoboken swept into the mammoth terminal and overflowed into the surrounding streets. To describe the exhibits there as "the usual" does not begin to do justice to pin-striped GG-1s and E-8s, to say nothing of the Blue Mountain and Reading's STEAM train made up of their nicely refurbished ex-Lackawanna high-roof trailer MU cars and beautiful Reading T-1. Hoboken is an event where the usual fare is composed of superlatives.

As you might expect, all of this does not simply materialize at the wave of a hand or the pushing of a button. Many many folks put in many many difficult hours to bring this all together. For our part, the difficulties began when we decided to prepare No. 3406, our beautiful D.L.&W. trailer combine, for display at Hoboken VII along with coach motor No. 3541. Bob Sherwood and Tony Hall arranged to take two weeks vacation just prior to the Festival for the express purpose of seeing this project to completion. Pete and Bev Rodel joined them on several days as did Jack Keeler and Frank Miklos. We could have used more help but simply did not have the time to send out the call to the membership. Car No. 3406 was

moved to the Morristown shops of the Morristown and Erie Railroad where needed welding was done to attach the pilot and a pair of under-the-floor electrical cabinets which had been cannibalized during the long years that the car sat at Hoboken. Inside, re-glazing, re-wiring of light circuits, much, much plain cleaning and a bit of painting took the rest of the time available. With this cleanup, some fresh paint, new glazing, lights working and seat cushions installed, the car was quite presentable. When the big day came, that is to say Friday the 25th, the cars were re-coupled and, along with Tri-State's No. 10, departed Whippany for Hoboken via Morristown.

Our 7 A.M. arrival on Saturday morning found much activity already underway. Our two-car train was spotted on Track 12 along with Norfolk Southern private car No. 34, restored in glistening tuscan red Imron; an M & E Alco Century equally refinished; Tri-State's Erie Lackawanna training car No. 10, followed by No. 3541 and No. 3406 at the west end.

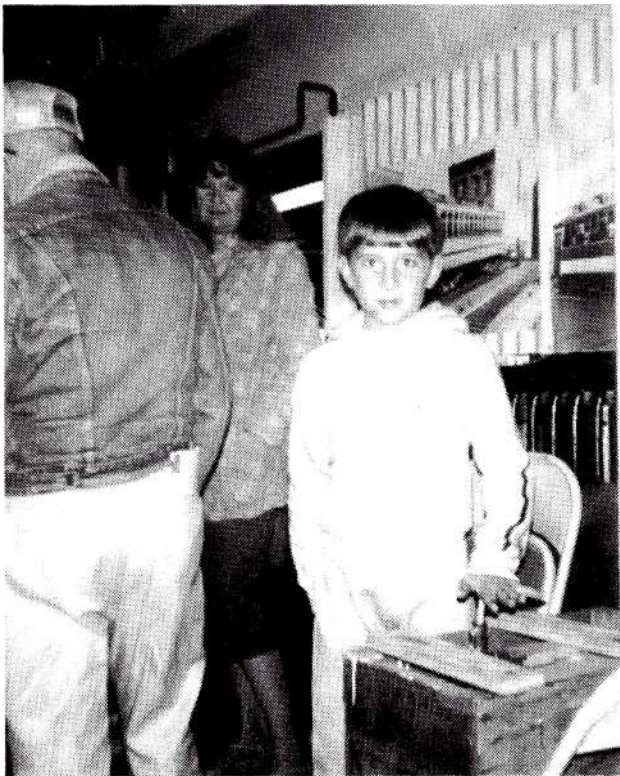
We busied ourselves setting up our displays unaware that a derailment on AMTRAK in Maryland the day before was about to put us out of business. Said accident had delayed AMTRAK's arrival in Hoboken. The "Heritage" sleeper they were displaying on the adjacent track required the construction of a wooden stairway. Carpenters doing this work managed to trip circuit breakers in the terminal by using powerful electric saws. So we we opened in the dark!

By noon the construction was completed, the breakers finally re-set and the considerable crowds began pouring through in earnest. First stop was our photo display featuring as last year, shots of the restoration work on Public Service trolley No. 2651 at the Black River and Western in Ringoes. There were also views of the major electric commuter operations in our area. Next, our display of videos presented by member Norm Hosler, provided visitors a chance to sit for a while, resting tired feet and viewing shots of Union Pacific Big Boys among other subjects. Crossing into the combine, visitors were greeted by the fruits of our recent labors in the form of No. 3406's refurbished interior, gleaming under the light from the illuminated fixtures recently rewired by Bob Sherwood. The baggage compartment, also repainted and lit, was the scene of our sales tables, groaning under the weight of collectibles contributed by our members, chiefly Al Mankoff and Chuck Wrege, authors of "TROLLEY TREASURES." Sales were rung up by Frank Miklos, Wayne Scott, Jack Keeler and Bev Rodel. Photos printed for us by George Kallimanis were a hot item also. The fare box garnered generous contributions and the trolley bell was rung by kids of all ages.

Toward five o'clock the crowd finally began to dwindle and before we knew it, Ben Friedland was asking us to button up the cars in preparation for the imminent move back to Morristown. Quickly, efficiently, all preparations were made and by 6:30 P.M. we were edging out from under the Bush sheds and into a blinding sunset, caught in the crosshairs of multitudinous Minoltas held by an army of railfans positioned in the yards west of the terminal. Bergen Hill tunnels have NO illumination and without our power source we experienced total blackout, proof that the Lackawanna Railroad can provide an "Erie" feeling.

Crashing into daylight at West End, we began a truly memorable non-stop ride back to Morristown. The weather had been flawless and a bright sun was beginning to set over the Orange Mountains. The cars rolled flawlessly west as they had so often during the previous half Century; 3406 high on her eight new wheels and 3541 slightly humming as her vintage traction motors enjoyed the free ride. It was dark when we arrived at Morristown so final disposal of the display materials would have to wait until the following day. We detrained at the M & E Depot tired but high in a way no chemical could induce. It had been a triumphant day of railroading; a rare chance to show off our train and to publicize our group and its work, followed by a glorious and equally rare opportunity to ride our historic cars over their very own tracks! If only we could have sold tickets! Maybe someday.

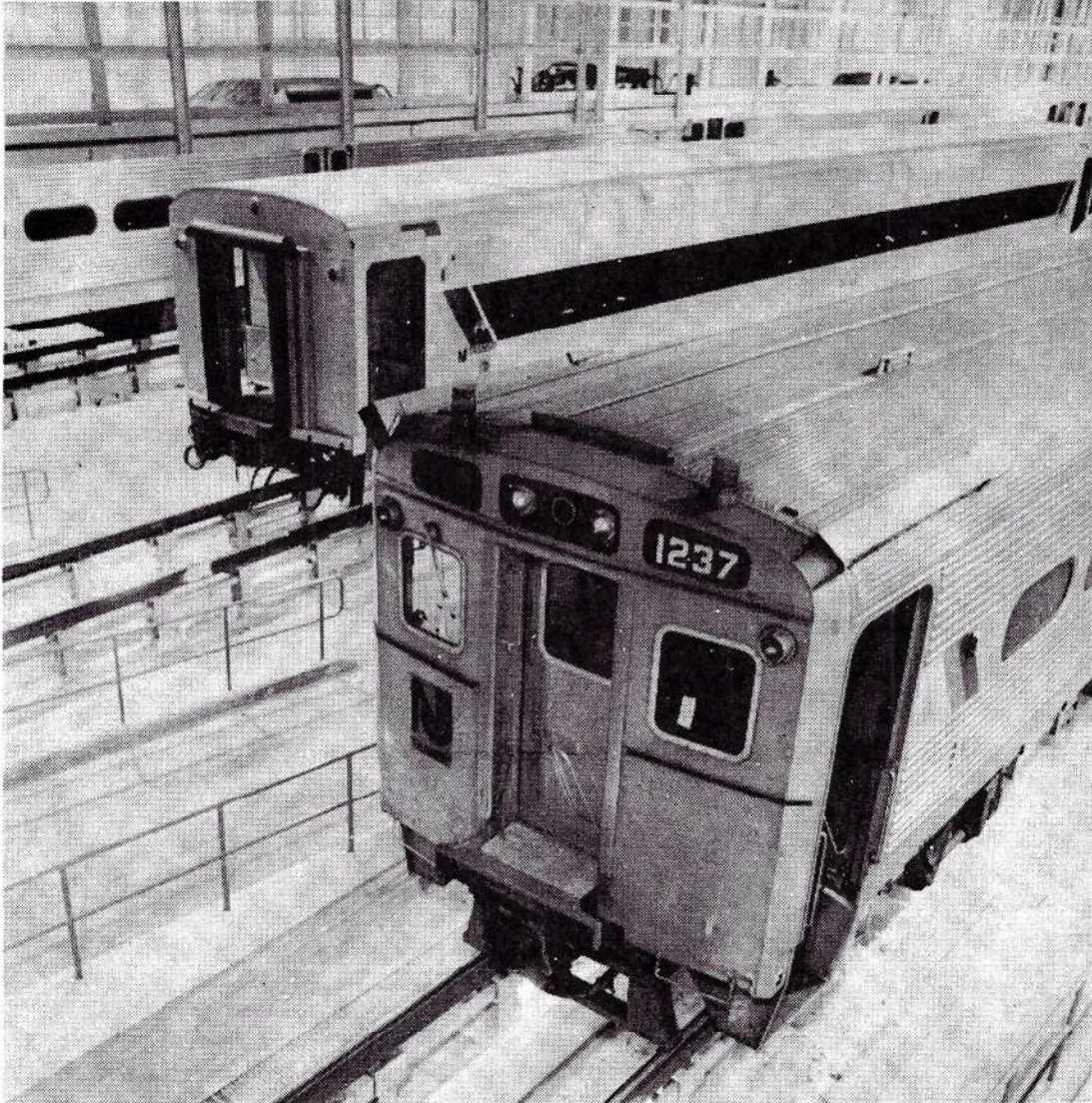
Festival Photos



Left Photo: A young lad tries his hand at clanging our trolley gong.

Right Photo: Car No. 3541 becomes a video theatre to entertain the Festival crowds.

Monumental Maintenance Improvement



MU cars and Push-Pull coaches await their turns inside N J Transit's modern maintenance facility.

N J Transit Photo

Those of us not yet sixty years of age have never witnessed a genuine expansion or improvement in passenger rail service in Northern New Jersey. True, there have been "upgrades" and "refurbishments" beginning with the advent of PATH and the Jersey Arrow electric cars, other new equipment, track and station rebuilds and so on, but these have been mostly efforts to catch up with half a century of deferred maintenance. The Matawan electrification could argueably be the first genuine expansion since rail service came under the control of state agencies, but as significant and desirable as that project is, it pales in comparison to the new Colossus of Kearny.

We refer of course to New Jersey Transit's Meadows Maintenance Complex, an Olympian state-of-the-art facility for the care and feeding of virtually every piece of rolling stock on the N J Transit roster. Three years in the making, well over \$100-million invested, 78 acres, over 500,000 square feet enclosed by seven buildings wherein work 500 employees. The impact on the 800 cars and locomotives in the N J Transit fleet will have to be immense and shortly noticeable as will that upon the familiar landmarks long observed by railfans which will disappear as a result of the opening of the M.M.C. last October. Elizabethport, Hoboken and Sunnyside will feel the loss of activity and in the case of E-port will disappear completely.

October 21st dawned gray and rainy with a gusty northeaster blowing inland, but foul weather did not dampen the turnout for the official opening ceremonies for the Meadows Maintenance Complex. Special trains departed from Newark and Hoboken simultaneously and deposited guests by the hundreds indoors at the Complex. Souvenir brochures, specially marked white hardhats and pocket flashlights with the N J Transit logo were presented to each guest. Lunch was served in the commodious lunch room on the third floor from which virtually the entire work area could be observed through huge indoor windows. A spirited musical background was provided by the Harrison High School Band and opening remarks were offered by Jerome Premo, the Executive Director of N J Transit. Mayor Hill of Kearny extolled the new facility as having increased the total real estate value of his city by 50 percent. N J Transit Chairperson Hazel Gluck recounted the long and difficult process required to arrange financing through UMTA, the Port Authority and sources within New Jersey. Alfred Della Bovi, Deputy Administrator UMTA lauded New Jersey as handling the most difficult and one of the largest public transit challenges in the nation. Alan Dustin, vice president and general manager of N J Transit Rail Operations, underlined the historic nature of the facility and the new economies and efficiencies which it will bring.

The large group which must have numbered in the hundreds was then divided into several smaller groups, each with a tour guide, and the tours of the shop floor began. In the MU area, turntables built into the concrete floor were shown to be able to divert power trucks out from under cars held high by hydraulic jacks which are built into the floor and operated at the touch of a button. From there, the truck is easily moved to the truck repair area and a "New" truck is just as easily moved under the car and the car eased down upon it, secured and the car returned to service. All this in a fraction of the time it would hitherto have taken in the MU shed at Hoboken.

Facilities for unpowered cars and diesel and electric locomotives are nearby and equally impressive. A wheel-profiling machine is built into the floor and wheels to be trued are rolled onto it for the work. Everywhere it is clean, spacious and well lighted.

There are many who hope that with this new ease and efficiency for maintaining the MU fleet, extensions of electrification will one day soon return to favor at N J Transit Rail.

Tony Hall.



North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society

Box 1770, Rahway, New Jersey 07065

Application For Executive Membership

Executive Membership is available to North Jersey E.R.H.S. members in good standing. Dues for Executive Members are \$300 per calendar year (payable in full or in monthly increments of \$25).

Executive members serve on the Executive Board. They may attend board meetings and vote on items brought before the board. Applicants for Executive Membership are subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

Executive Members have the option of renewing as regular members at the end of a calendar year, or continuing their Executive Memberships without any further approval of the Executive Board.

I wish to apply for Executive Membership:

Name _____

Send this application to the address listed above. Do not send money until your application is approved. Regular \$10 dues and contributions already paid will be credited toward the Executive Membership dues.



North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society

Box 1770, Rahway, New Jersey 07065

1988 Dues Renewal

The North Jersey E.R.H.S. appreciates the support shown by our members during 1987. Your dues help to defray the costs associated with our preservation efforts.

In the past year our insurance premiums increased by over \$400. New rental charges for storing our cars will take effect in 1988, and higher postal rates are anticipated. Therefore we feel that an increase in dues cannot be avoided.

However, in appreciation of the fact that 100% of our members were paid up during 1987, we are postponing any dues increase until 1989. We will instead depend upon individual contributions, an expansion of Executive Memberships (see application enclosed), and revenue from N.J.E.R.H.S.-sponsored trips and activities to carry us through 1988.

Your prompt payment of dues will help us meet our goals.

1988 Dues - Make checks payable to:
North Jersey E.R.H.S.
P.O. Box 1770
Rahway, N.J. 07065

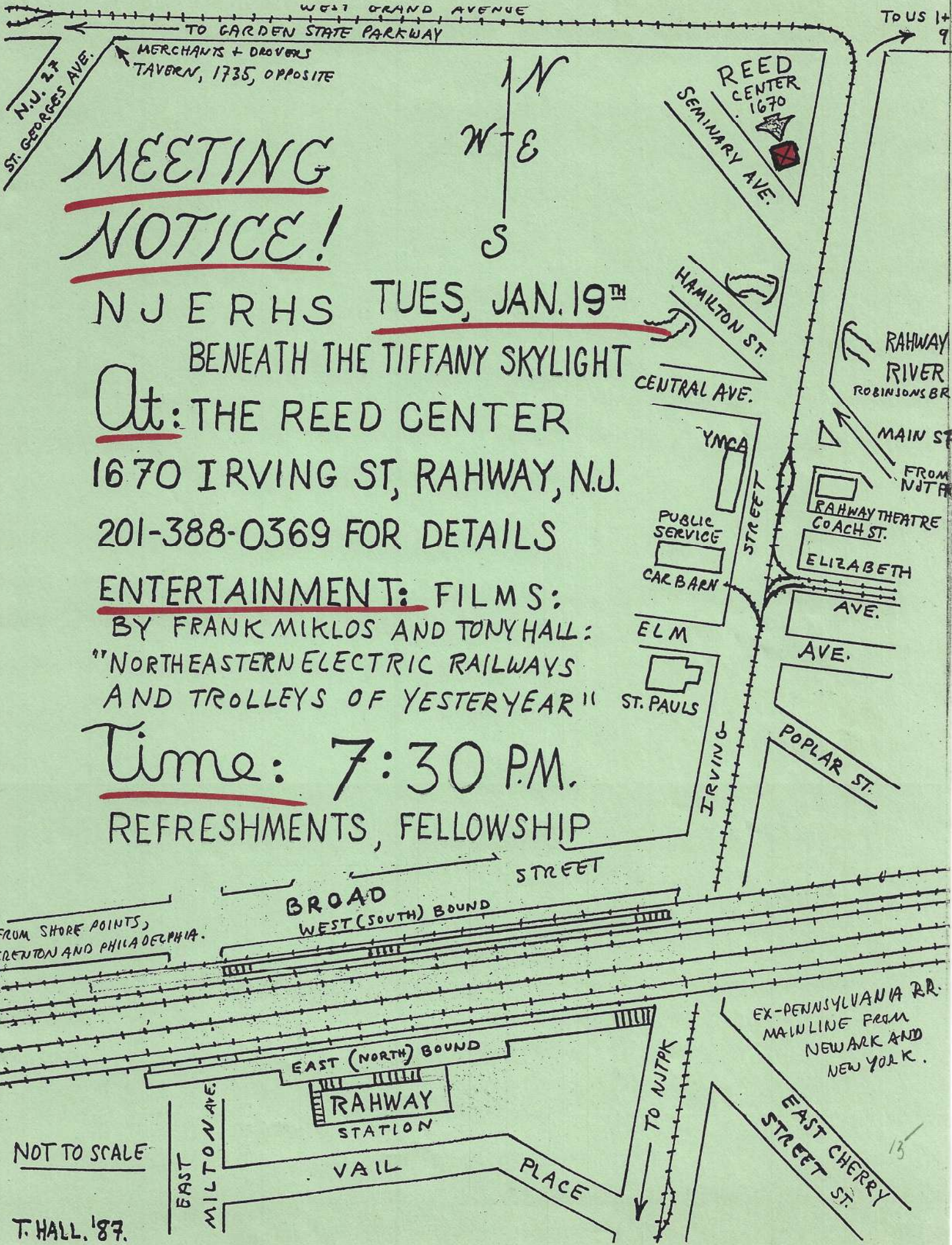
Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

1988 Dues at \$10 _____, Contribution (Voluntary) _____

Total Enclosed _____ Telephone _____ Day _____ Eve _____



MEETING
NOTICE!

NJ ERHS TUES, JAN. 19TH
BENEATH THE TIFFANY SKYLIGHT

At: THE REED CENTER
1670 IRVING ST, RAHWAY, N.J.

201-388-0369 FOR DETAILS

ENTERTAINMENT: FILMS:
BY FRANK MIKLOS AND TONY HALL:
"NORTHEASTERN ELECTRIC RAILWAYS
AND TROLLEYS OF YESTERYEAR"

Time: 7:30 P.M.
REFRESHMENTS, FELLOWSHIP

FROM SHORE POINTS,
TRENTON AND PHILADELPHIA.

EX-PENNSYLVANIA RR.
MAINLINE FROM
NEWARK AND
NEW YORK.

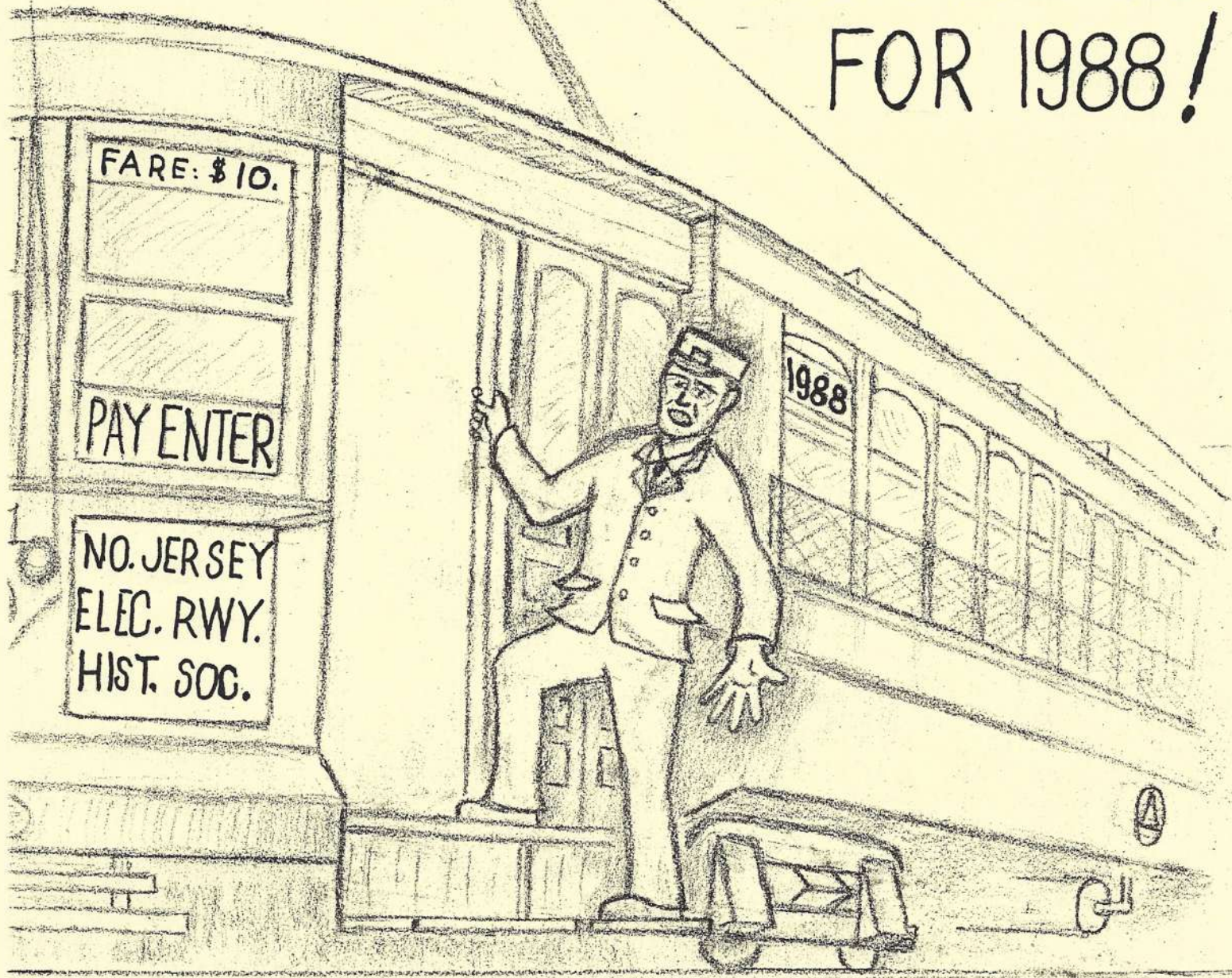
NOT TO SCALE

T. HALL. '87.

15

STEP
LIVELY!

ALL ABOARD
FOR 1988!



DON'T GET LEFT BEHIND-ACT NOW!
YOUR 1988 DUES ARE RENEWABLE.
IN 1987 WE ENJOYED 100% RENEWALS. DON'T BE THE
ONE TO SPOIL OUR PERFECT RECORD THIS YEAR!