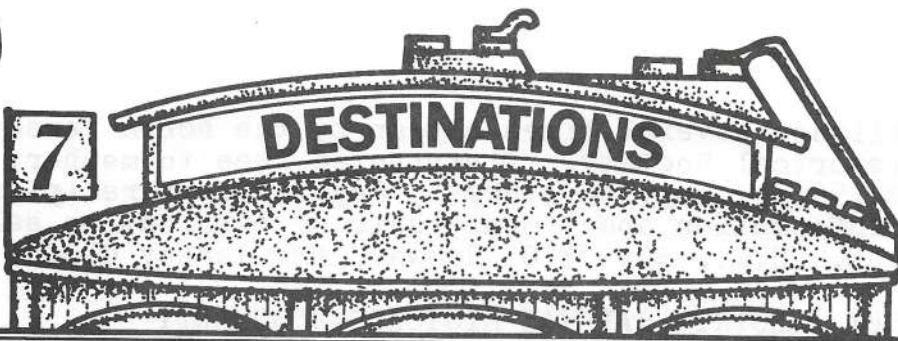


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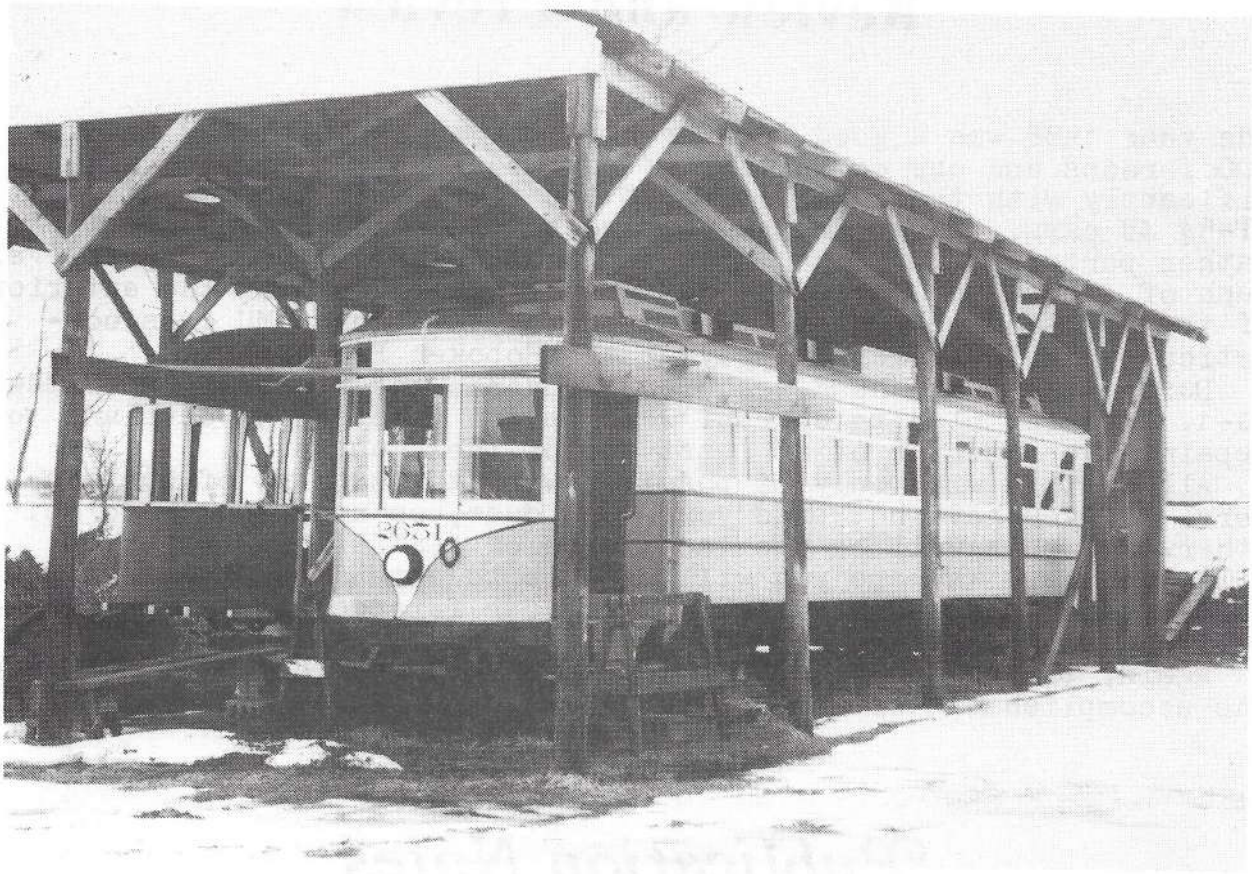


*The Newsletter of the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society*

Box 1770, Rahway, New Jersey 07065

Vol. 4, No. 1

February, 1989



Public Service trolley No. 2651 was the first rail car acquired by the founders of the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society. Many regard it as our most unique car because of its rarity. This photo shows the car shortly after the completion of an exterior repainting and restoration. The scene is Ringoes, New Jersey on the Black River and Western Railway which was chosen as the site of the New Jersey Railroad and Transportation Museum. photo by Bruce Russell



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

#### NORTH JERSEY ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

## Review and Preview

The year 1988 was a good one for us. Our membership grew to over 100 persons and our collection of rail equipment increased significantly with the acquisition of the four Pennsylvania Railroad MP-54 MU cars. Early in the year we braved the cold weather to gather parts for the Blue Comet car that we are trying to preserve. Much of the summer was spent doing preliminary work on the exterior of the GG-1 and we managed to get one of the Pennsy MU cars cosmetically suitable for display at the Hoboken Festival.

During the year ahead we hope to advance the restoration of the GG-1. We also plan to do roof work on the fleet of MU cars and to repaint the exterior of at least one of these units.

All of this will only be possible with the support of our members. If you have not paid your 1989 dues, we urge you to do so. Otherwise, this will be the last issue of DESTINATIONS that you will receive. We hope you will be able to attend our meetings and participate in our activities. Tell your friends about our organization and encourage their support.

Again, thanks to all of our members. We hope that 1989 will see the accomplishment of most of our goals.

## *Publication Notes*

This sixteen-page edition of DESTINATIONS is our largest issue to date. We welcome comments from our readers along with news and articles that they may wish to contribute.

# *Old Man (Black) River Just Keeps Rollin' Along...*

*by Tony Hall*

By now everyone in the free world must have heard that the New Jersey State Railroad and Transportation Museum Study Commission has chosen Flemington and the Black River & Western Railroad to be the site for the New Jersey State Railroad & Transportation Museum. The vote taken at the commission's December 28th meeting in Trenton was eight to two.

While it is a matter of record that our organization has in the past taken a strong stand for South Amboy as the best museum site for reasons of history and accessibility, that was before Flemington had become one of the potential sites to be considered. Other considerations aside, locating the museum in Flemington will assure a steady flow of patrons, both railfans and general public alike, and further assure funding for future expansion when the patronage which that location will surely bring materializes. We congratulate the commission on its courage and dispatch in coming to a decision, confounding those who feared a long and protracted debate, dragging over months and possibly years. The decision is made and we call upon the railfan community to unite behind the commission and work with them so that we might have as fine a museum as is possible, one which will not merely "successful." but a genuine credit to New Jersey and to the extensive rail history which is our heritage.

For almost sixteen years the Ringoes depot of the B.R.&W. has been home to the trolley restoration project which became the main focus for the founding of the North Jersey E.R.H.S. in 1985. It was the late John Bishop, former president of the B.R.&W. who invited us to bring the car there in March of 1973, to work on it there and to set up a trolley operation in Flemington to connect outlying parking facilities with the Turntable Junction Shopping Mall. While John has passed on, the dream survives. Work on the car and its support structures has continued and does continue. Subsequent managements have been unanimous in their support of the trolley restoration project, even after the operation concept had faded somewhat. Now with the State Museum coming to Black River, the dream we shared with John Bishop may ultimately materialize after all. The new General Manager, Kean Burenga, has agreed to facilitate the installation of the 5223 in the bay we have prepared for it and to help recreate the agreeable work area we had established there in the mid-1970's. Since, as we have reported earlier, we have signed an agreement with N J Transit to acquire and use for parts the 5223, it looks as though this "Dream Deferred" is not going to turn into "A Raisin in the Sun". The coming of the State Museum to the Black River is nothing short of Divine Intervention from the point of view of the trolley project. While the hospitality of the B.R.&W. management over many years has been responsible for the continued survival of the effort, the coming of the Museum will have the effect of boosting us over the top.

When Frank Miklos and I undertook the project back in 1971, we did not anticipate that it would become a life's work. We imagined that enough support would materialize to complete the work in about five years. Unfortunately the track to success proved a long and difficult route rife with washouts, hotboxes, slow orders and the like. The support we had hoped for did not become more evident. We formed an organization to increase our support base, then found other deserving

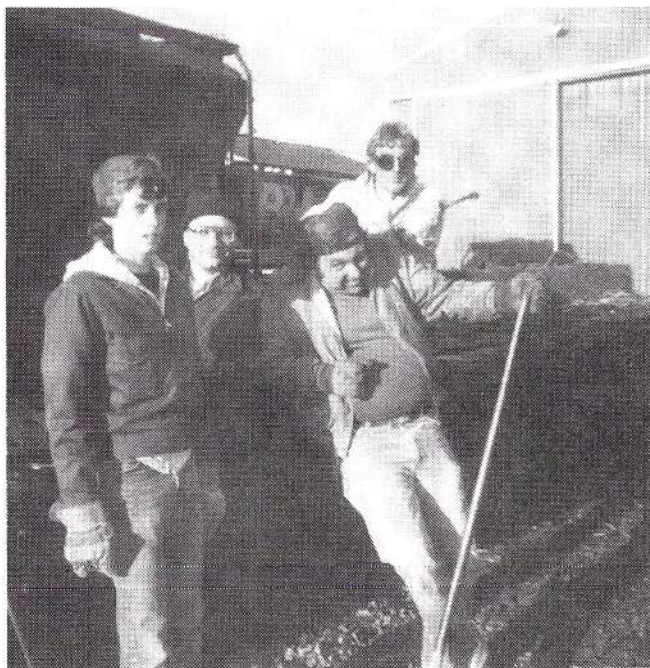


projects to spread our increased resources over, leaving the trolley project on continued short rations. But, with the availability of the 5223, the continued support of the generous folks at Black River and now, the hoped for advent of the New Jersey Railroad Museum at Flemington, the future of the 2651 trolley restoration project is taking on a much grighter aspect.

Meanwhile, the B.R.& W. management is not content to merely sit back and wait for the state to take over the railroad, which has frankly, been hurt by the closing of the Flemington Tenneco plant a few years ago. It's no secret that the property has not been experiencing the level of prosperity its previous freight business had provided. Nevertheless Kean has undertaken the refurbishment of No. 60 with Steve Sweeny taking an increased responsibility for this project. With the return of steam for the Fourth of July weekend this summer it stands to reason that the rest of the season will see the beginnig of the long hoped for recovery for the line. With the prospect of the museum still far from a certainty, the railroad will emerge as a strong, independent tourist operation even if the long-sought museum should suffer some last-minute calamity. By the same token, should the museum finally emerge in Flemington in the near future, it will inherit a much stronger operation needing mush less upgrading than would be the case if the property were simply to remain in its present state.

This is not to say that the previous managements were in any way at fault for the recent downturn in the line's fortunes. On the contrary, operating a short line railroad in the present political and economic environment is a supreme challenge. It is a credit, to say the very least, that the Burengas have been able to maintain the operation at all. It is unfortunate that a single freight customer can, by closing, have such a negative impact on the railroad which served it. But that is part of what makes running a shortline railroad no job for the slow witted or the faint hearted. Fortunately Black River has had folks with the Right Stuff at the helm in the past and for the future as well.

Thanks again, Nick and Louanna, and Good Luck, Kean!



A little comic relief breaks up the routine of breaking up an ex-Pennsy flanger.

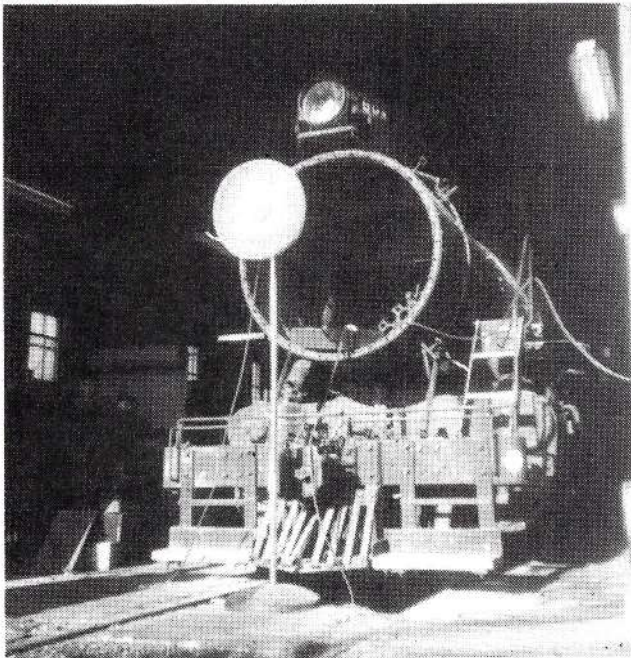
Pete Reiner is the cut-up, while BR&W General Manager Kean Burenga holds the cutting torch and volunteers Bob Prusek and Greg Ill (member) look on.

Tony Hall Photo.



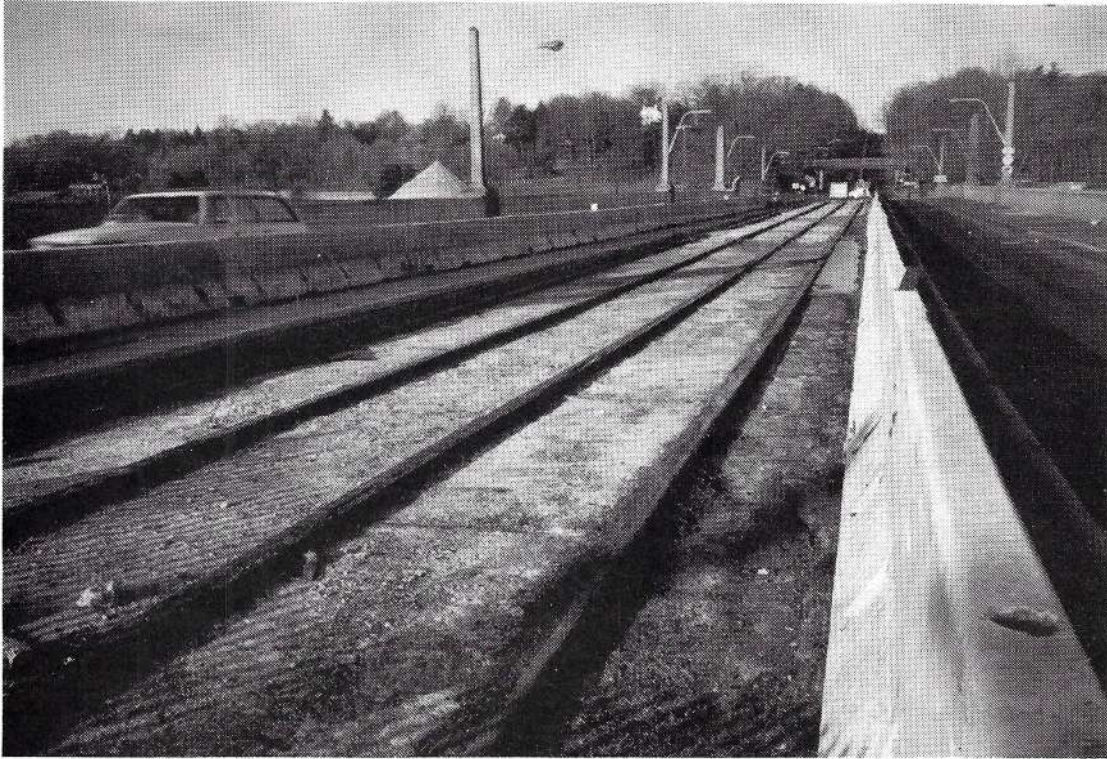


The Ringoes station is a scene of quiet tranquility after a dusting of snow in this January, 1989 scene. Photo by Peter Reimer



Work is underway in earnest on the rehabilitation of Black River & Western's faithful steam engine No. 60. Tom Butkowsky is shown working inside the firebox with the goal of returning the locomotive to service by July, 1989 Tony Hall photos





Fifty years have passed since the Hudson River trolley line was abandoned. Yet a portion of it seemed to come alive during a recent reconstruction of the Broadway bridge over the Passaic River. Contractors uncovered the tracks to reveal this scene taken by member James T. McNamara.



The North Jersey E.R.H.S. summer picnic was held at Whippany in August. The members and guests are shown posing for this picture around one of the picnic tables. In the evening there was a slide show by Steve Hepler and Frank Miklos which lasted until the mosquitos took over. Tony Hall photo.



# The Keystone Comes to Hoboken

by Tony Hall

This has been a banner year for all of us at the North Jersey E.R.H.S. After doubling our membership and the size of our collection, we wanted a very special showing at the Hoboken Festival, something that would display our progress and perhaps attract some new members.

Our first thoughts ran to the No. 4873, already under refurbishment at Whippany, but logistical problems ruled the big "G" out of the festival this year and our attention turned to the Paoli Local, or at least two of our four MP-54s, last vintage equipment to serve that famous service. Cars 413 and 437 are the standouts and so we considered further cleaning and painting of these units for the big show.

Two weeks before the festival we discovered that we had visitors who did not wish us well; they had in fact broken into 413 by cutting a lock hasp and then proceeded to kick out every window in the car, breaking three of them in the process. Immediately, we ordered three replacement windows from a nearby plastics company and began the tedious job of re-fitting each pane to each sash, using only a screw driver. Fortunately, all the rubber gaskets remained at the scene and the sashes were undamaged. The job took several days and ruled out any further consideration of preparing the two cars for Hoboken. We would now have to hustle to prepare just one of the newly acquired Pennsy units in the time remaining. The second display would have to be D.L.&W. 3541. This car would then gain the status of having been our only unit to have served at all three Hoboken Festivals at which the North Jersey E.R.H.S. was present.

After the glazing was finally in place, Ben Friedland, whose generous cooperation has made our activities possible placed No. 413 at the platform track in Whippany station, near the needed electrical outlets and water service. Our work party assembled, consisting of Frank Miklos, Jack Keeler, Bob Sherwood, Peter and Beverly Rodel and myself. The first project was to remove all seat backs and cushions and place them on the ground for scrubbing. The ceiling had to be swept (yes, the CEILING) free of peeled white paint. Next the floor was thoroughly washed and mopped. Broken glass had to be removed from vestibule lights and windows. Door latches and grab irons, or more accurately, "grab stainless-steels," were re-installed to facilitate the handling of the car in a train by yard crews. Interior drying was delayed due to the high humidity of the day, not to mention the heat which together had the effect of keeping the work crew as wet as the floor and as resistant to evaporation. But, puddles or no, darkness comes eventually, even in those distant days of summer, and so the seats were laboriously reinstalled in the now sparkling, if still damp, interior.

The next hurdle was to be the exterior paint job. As time constraints became ever more apparent, our plan regressed from sandblasting through all stages down to broom job. The only question was to be: "Would we have time even for that?" No time for sandblasting, or sand papering for that matter, nor primer, nor any of the preliminaries; we cut directly to the finish coat: Tuscan Red obtained by

Bob Sherwood.

We started painting feverishly just days before the festival. Jack shanghaied the services of Raymond, an employee of his family business; without Raymond we would probably still be painting. We began work on the south side of the car thinking that in the event we failed to complete the job, that would be the side that would face the platform, we hoped. But we not only finished the south side, but half the north as well, this with yet another day to work. Forget drying time. The breeze enroute to Hoboken would be all the drying we would get.

And so we arrived on the last day sure in the knowledge that there was plenty of time to finish. But, imagine our astonishment; the car was GONE! We chased up to Morristown and spotted No. 413 perched on the hill coupled into the Morristown & Erie's display train, ready for the run east. Out came the brushes and rollers and frantically we worked to cover the last of the weathered SEPTA bicentellian tricolor, while in the background the throbbing hearts of two spotless, red ALCO Centuries served as a constant reminder of the imminence of the departure. Gone were even the pretenses at surface preparation. On went the enamel over the dirt, rust and even the white potatoe chips growing from the side of the car. The supply of paint was running low; the supply of daylight even lower, and finally, painting by flashlight, the sides, ends and doors were completed, but we had to accept white vestibules, since we had run short of paint and our flashlight batteries were burning out. We had to throw in the sponge; and the rollers and brushes as well, and I'm sure Jack's trunk is still stained red, because that's where we threw them.

We arrived early the next day in Hoboken. The good news was that the weather was perfect and that No. 413 and her unaccustomed date for the weekend, ex-D.L.&W. motor car No. 3541, had indeed arrived safely under the expert hand of Ben Friedland, and not only had the tuscan red dried overnight, but so had the floor. The not so good news was that we were set out at the west end of Track 13, last track used for the festival, bearing a close resemblance to Siberia in the early morning light, an effect enhanced by the absence of our volunteers.

But not to worry. In due course Norman Hosler and his wife Mary Jane showed up along with Wayne Scott and friend Anne. They set up our sales table on the platform due to the absence this year of our combine. Inside, picture displays, membership solicitation and our contribution farebox were set up in No. 3541 which was equipped with working lights, thanks to Bob Sherwood. Meanwhile in No. 413, Norm set up the video screening room with his usual fine program of rail videos. The subdued lighting, proved to be just the ticket for effective viewing and many festival goers took advantage of the opportunity to relax for a while and enjoy a part of the show.

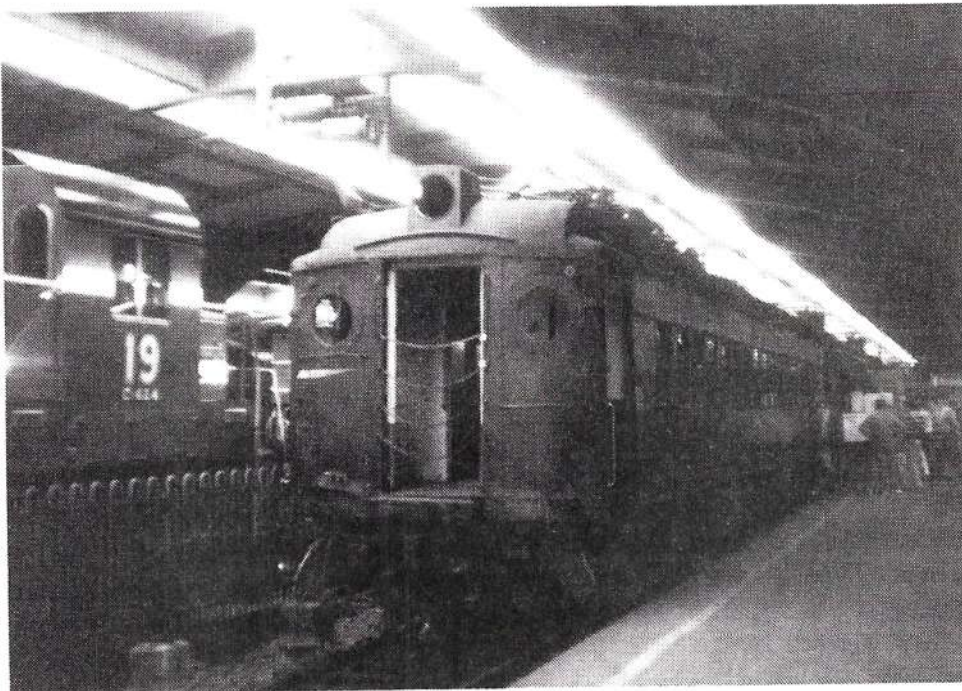
An added attraction this year was the availability to us for the first time of a P. A. system, courtesy of Norman Hosler. With it we were able to attract the attention of festival goers on the adjacent platform which early became crowded due to the great number of displays located there. Our location soon revealed an advantage we had not anticipated. Trains loaded with festival goers began pulling up and unloading on Track 14 right in front of us! The ebb and flow of the huge crowds soon convinced us that our location was not the disadvantage that it had first appeared to be. Many famil-



iar faces passed through our unusual train, many stopping to study our photo displays, view the videos, take membership flyers, make contributions and do business at our table which was well stocked with a wide variety of railroadians. Beverly and Pete Rodel's grandson Jason did an outstanding job of manning the sales table for the entire day without time off for a break. He was ably assisted by his grandparents, along with Wayne Scott, Anne and Mary Jane. Many visitors, then and since, have exclaimed to us their extreme pleasure at seeing an MP-54 in the hallowed halls of Hoboken. Even after a rather hasty application, tuscan red, plus portholes and pantographs, work their magic.

All things must end and the good things always end too soon. Shortly we were wrapping it up in preparation for the run up the hill to Morristown. Our cars were moved to Track 12 and soon our strange consist was reassembled. Moving west into a brilliant sunset, through phalanxes of railfan photographers, we plunged into the basic blackness of the big Bergen bore. Daylight again at West End and Newark before our eyes have readjusted. The equipment is rolling flawlessly, no noise, no vibration, no flat spots; both cars showed themselves to be in fine condition. A touch of the macabre was added west of Summit by the sighting of a deer on the eastbound track displaying the grisly effects of having been recently run over by a train YUCHGH!

Arrival at Morristown was just at dark after a ride which cannot be described as merely magnificent because it was so much better than that! If the insurance mess in our state can ever be ironed out, perhaps one day we might be able to sell tickets for one of these runs. Gingerly we removed the headlight from No. 3541's roof for safe storage and, discovering that we had better than an hour's wait for the next train back to Hoboken where our automobiles were parked, we repaired to the August Moon restaurant for fine food and refreshment, truly a fitting finish for a fantastic festival day!



Back in Tuscan Red, MU 413 makes its first Hoboken appearance.

Frank Niklos Photo.



# WHIPPANY RAIL<sup>N</sup> FESTIVAL

## BY FRANK S. MIKLOS

The morning of October 8 was damp and gloomy. Raindrops bounced into puddles with increasing intensity, and the once dry earth was dissolving into mud. It was hardly the kind of a day to hold a rail festival. By necessity such events must be planned months in advance and this was the date that was chosen for the Whippany Railroad Museum's annual event. And the North Jersey E.R.H.S. was scheduled to participate!

Original plans had called for Tony Hall and me to leave for Whippany around 9 A.M. This would allow us plenty of time to open the MU cars and set up our displays. However, in view of the dismal conditions, we decided to postpone our departure with the hope that there would be a break in the weather. After all, how many people would want to walk around Whippany in the rain and mud?

We finally set out around 11 A.M., or roughly the time that the events at Whippany were scheduled to begin. Our arrival was shortly after noon and much to our surprise, the place was swarming with people. We were lucky to find an empty parking place and we scrambled out of the car and hastened to unlock the Lackawanna motor car and the Pennsy MU No. 413. As soon as the cars were opened, the crowds began to file through, and we had to rush to get our displays in order. Because the threat of rain was imminent, we kept our sales table inside the car. We also had our farebox available for contributions.

In the course of the day, the number of persons visiting the MU cars rivaled the crowds at the Hoboken Festival. We did very well financially, and we attracted several new members in the course of the day.

At the end of the festivities we had two nagging questions, namely: How well would we have done if we arrived earlier as originally intended, and how well would we have done if the weather was bright and sunny?

## West Jersey Rail Excursion

by Frank S. Miklos

The April, 1988 issue of DESTINATIONS described the delivery of two former P.R.S.L. RDC's to the West Jersey Short Line for restoration and preservation by the Seashore Lines Historical Society. Included among their membership are several persons who also belong to the North Jersey E.R.H.S., and they arranged for some other members to ride the equipment on that delivery run to Salem. As described in the article, the cars were inoperable, without heat, and with more than a fair share of accumulated interior grime.

But this did not discourage the dedicated members of the Seashore Lines Historical Society from predicting that the cars would be run-



ning under their own power within a year, and they pledged to make them available to the North Jersey E.R.H.S. for an excursion over the West Jersey Short Line.

By the end of July, one of the RDC's was operational, although some bugs still had to be worked out, especially with some balky brakes. A date of October 23 was selected for the excursion and the North Jersey E.R.H.S. made preparations for it. A bus was chartered for transportation between Metro Park and Salem. Member John Yohannan would be the driver.

Despite mid-week predictions of possible bad weather, the skies were clear and the temperatures were pleasant on the day of the trip. The bus was at Metro Park well in advance of the scheduled departure time. After making sure that everyone was aboard, we departed with a comfortable load of 24 seated passengers. John Yohannan drew attention to various rail facilities and other points of interest en-route. Taped music was punctuated by occasional tapes of railroad sounds over the bus's lounspeakers.

After a lunch stop near the Delaware Memorial Bridge, we arrived at the yard of the West Jersey Railroad, which was renamed when the West Jersey Short Line was recently sold to new owners. Prior to departure we were able to photograph the equipment in the yard including the former Lackawanna MU, owned by member Tom Moran which has been gloriously repainted into Tuscan Red to symbolize a P.R.S.L. coach.

While we were waiting, the engines of the RDC were started and we were treated to the distinctive whine that only RDC cars make when idling. It was music to our ears. At this point our ranks were swelled by West Jersey Railroad employees and other railfans who had purchased tickets for the rail portion of the trip alone.

After everyone was aboard, we were advised to remain in our seats while the train was moving. The train departed Salem and moved a short distance before stopping for a test of the car's brakes. I learned the following day that there were problems with the car's braking system right up to the evening preceeding the trip. The situation appeared to be resolved that night, but only when it was too late to test the system. If the brakes did not function on the day of the trip, it would have been necessary to run the excursion with the RDC in tow behind a locomotive. The brake troubles had been experienced when the RDC was operating by itself, but not when it was being towed. The test of the brakes showed that the previous evening's repairs provided the "fix" that was necessary and the RDC performed flawlessly for the rest of the day.

Caution about potential problems with the first-ever passenger excursion led the management of the West Jersey Railroad to impose a speed restriction on the passenger train. This meant that there would not be enough time for a second trip with a locomotive-hauled coach. However, they more than made up this with a half dozen photo runbys against some picturesque rural backgrounds. As an added bonus the RDC made a short side trip over the railroad's Glass House branch in Salem.

One could not but be impressed with the excellent condition of the West Jersey Railroad's roadbed. New ties and fresh ballast combined to provide a smoother ride than is found on many branch lines on existing commuter railroads, and it would put most tourist railroads to shame. The territory served by the West Jersey Railroad is mostly agricultural and a ride on the line reveals why New Jersey still retains the nickname "Garden State." Most of the railroad's freight traffic involves farm products and materials, although some indust-



rial customers are located on the line, particularly in the immediate Salem area. There are rolling hills, well maintained farms and a spectacular trestle over Oldmans Creek between Woodstown and Swedesboro. All of the scenery was set against a backdrop of autumn foliage that was at its height of color.

We are grateful to the staff of the West Jersey Railroad and the Seashore Lines Historical Society for their cooperation. Particular thanks must be offered to Guy Brinckman, the new President of the West Jersey Railroad for making our trip possible, and to Tony Macrie, and Mike and Linda Burshtin for taking the extra steps that were necessary to ensure that the RDC was ready for service. Thanks also to John Yohannan for providing us with a smooth comfortable ride in a bus that was spotlessly clean. Finally, thanks to all who joined us for the trip. Your participation made it all possible.

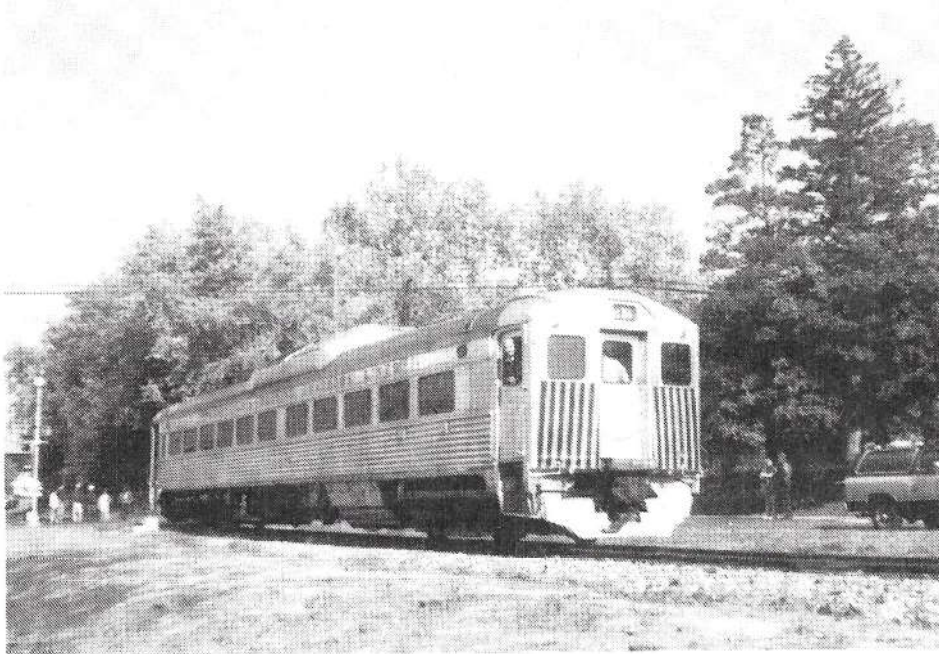


At the end of the trip the participants pose next to the chartered bus which took them to Salem.

Tony Hall Photo

In the photo below, North Jersey E.R.H.S. member Mike Burshtin leans out of the cab window at a photo stop below Swedesboro. Mike was the man at the throttle for the entire trip, and gave us excellent runbys and photo stops.

Frank Miklos Photo





# **Trolleys - The Long Road Back**

## **Part 2 - Boston Bucks the Tides**

**by Frank S. Miklos**

The 1950's marked a turning point for the American trolley industry. In previous years many trolley operators sought to upgrade their systems through the purchase of more modern cars. However, a steady decline in orders for new cars led to the shutdown of the PCC assembly lines in 1952. New Jersey's Public Service Coordinated Transport became the last trolley operator in the United States to enter the PCC market when they replaced their older cars with second-hand PCCs from Minneapolis in 1954. All other American transit properties would turn to buses rather than PCCs to replace older trolleys, except for systems which already had PCC cars on their roster. These systems took advantage of the opportunity to expand their fleet of PCCs through the purchase of second-hand cars at bargain prices.

The number of trolley systems abandoned in the 1950's was staggering. Between 1950 and 1960 the following city systems bypassed PCCs entirely and converted their trolley routes to buses: Toledo, Denver, Buffalo, Wilkes Barre, Des Moines, Fort Collins, Reading, Yonkers, Indianapolis, Altoona, Scranton, Omaha, Rochester, Queensboro Bridge, Portland, Oregon and Milwaukee. Many PCC systems were abandoned and disposed of the streamlined cars as follows: Cincinnati, Cleveland and Birmingham sold their PCCs to Toronto; Minneapolis-St. Paul sold their PCC fleet to Mexico City, Newark and Shaker Heights; Detroit's PCCs went to Mexico City. Kansas City's PCCs went to Philadelphia, Toronto and Tampico with the balance of the fleet stripped of parts and electrical gear for new PCCs in Brussels, Belgium. Chicago did the same thing with its PCCs for use in new rapid transit cars. Dallas sold its PCCs to Boston. Atlantic City scrapped its streamlined Brilliners, and Brooklyn sent its pioneer fleet of PCCs to the junk pile. The following electric interurban lines were also abandoned in the 1950's: Jamestown, Westfield and Northwestern; Baltimore and Annapolis; Cincinnati, Newport & Covington; Speedrail; Salt Lake, Garfield and Western; West Penn Railways; Bamberger Railroad; Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley; Cedar Rapids and Iowa City; Lehigh Valley Transit; Hagerstown and Frederick; Piedmont and Northern; Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern; Sand Springs Railway; Waterloo, Cedar Falls & Northern; Chicago, Aurora & Elgin; Key System, and the Illinois Terminal Railway. Many trolley operators which survived the 1950's none-the-less made drastic cutbacks to their systems, resulting in buses providing the bulk of transit service. These included cities like Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, St. Louis, San Francisco, and the Newark City Subway which lost the surface lines that fed into it from the suburbs.

Thus it was that Boston shocked the transit industry in 1958 when plans were announced for a new trolley line. Although Boston's Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) abandoned numerous trolley lines



in the postwar years, it still retained a number of heavy routes in the 1950's which operated through a subway under the downtown streets. A portion of this subway dates back to the turn of the century, and holds the distinction of being America's oldest subway. Over the years the original subway section was expanded by several miles.

The subway has served a variety of different types of trolleys from single-truck open-bench cars in the early years, to PCC cars and articulated light rail vehicles. New PCC cars were purchased from Pullman in 1951, marking the end of trolley production for that famous car builder. The new PCC's were a radical departure from earlier models with large picture windows and forced-air ventilation. In 1957 the system became 100% PCC operated with the acquisition of six cars from Dallas. Although the Dallas PCCs were out of service for several years, they were of great value because they were of a double-ended design and enabled Boston to retire the last of their 1920's-vintage Type-5 double enders. Regular single-ended PCCs could not be used in the service to Northeastern University because there was no loop at that location. The Dallas cars were built by Pullman, making them compatible with the rest of the Boston PCC fleet.

On May 31, 1958 the Boston and Albany Railroad discontinued service on its Highland Branch to Riverside. At the time of its abandonment, the service was limited to weekday rush hours only and ridership was down to 3,000 passengers a day. The Highland Branch served several middle-income suburbs and could be compared to N J Transit's Boonton Line passing through communities like Bloomfield and Montclair.

The Highland Branch came within several hundred yards of the Boston trolley subway just beyond Kenmore Square. Recognizing the potential that could be realized from linking the two rail facilities, the Mayor of Boston along with officials from some of the nearby suburbs proposed that the MTA acquire the Highland Branch and turn it into a high-speed trolley line if the Boston and Albany Railroad discontinued service. The MTA already operated trolleys over an abandoned railroad line between the south shore suburbs of Mattapan and Ashmont. The legislation authorizing the acquisition of the Highland Branch was approved on June 20, 1957 in anticipation of the impending abandonment, and the MTA officially took title to the rail line on June 24, 1958.

The project had the enthusiastic support of the MTA's General Manager Edward Dana whose career with the Boston transit system began more than 40 years earlier. Mr. Dana postponed his retirement to oversee the rebuilding of the Highland Branch for trolleys. His enthusiasm was not shared by members of the MTA Board who regarded the line as a defunct commuter branch with limited potential. They denied Mr. Dana's request for the purchase of new PCC trolleys which the carbuilders were willing to supply. They feared that they would be criticized for a large investment in equipment if the rail line proved to be a "white elephant." However, the Board did approve the purchase of the remaining 19 PCC cars from Dallas, but these would not be enough for the new service. Equipment for the new trolley line would have to come from other sources within the MTA.

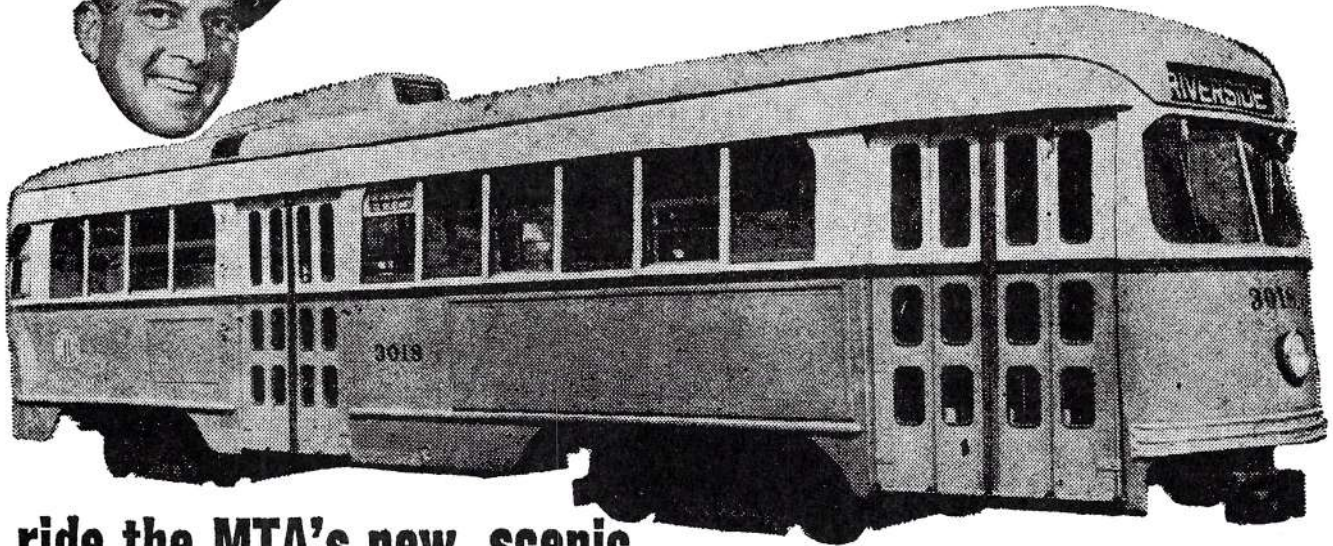
This set into motion a major shuffling of equipment and forced the abandonment of the trolley lines operating through the short subway under Harvard Square in Cambridge. The trolleybus lines operating out of the Arborway depot were replaced with diesel buses and the vehicles from those lines were designated to replace the PCC trolleys in the Harvard Square subway. That facility was already jointly used by trolleys and trolleybuses since the Huron Avenue

(Continued on Page 12)





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**YOU GET there so much faster when you ride on your MTA**

This was one of the ads placed in Boston area newspapers to announce the opening of the new line on July 4, 1959



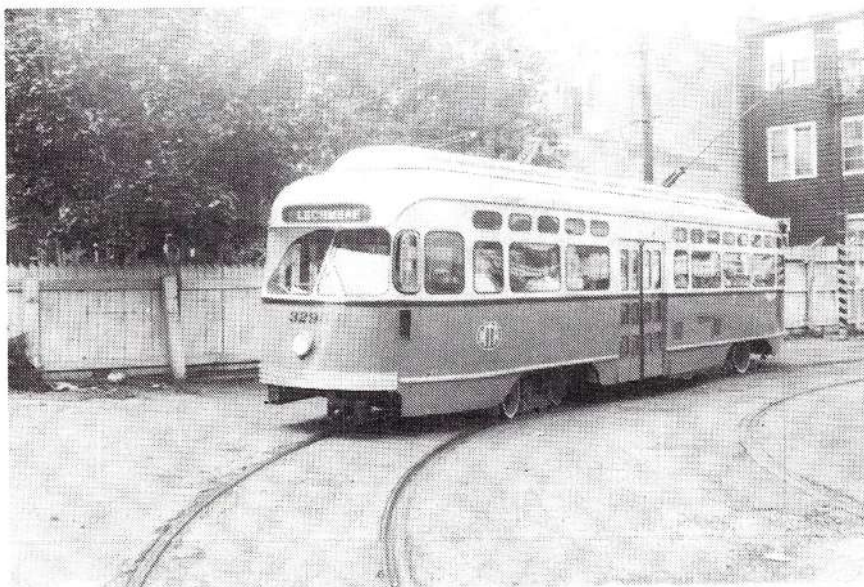
trolleybus line began operation in the 1930's. Although Mr. Dana was reluctant to take these actions, he felt that the positive effects of the Highland Branch would outweigh any negative aspects of the service changes.

A contract was awarded to the Perini Construction Company for the construction of the new line. Work got underway almost immediately and proceeded at a remarkable pace. In less than a year the new trolley line was ready and service began on July 4, 1959.

Almost as soon as it opened, the Riverside line became a victim of its own success. The makeshift fleet of PCCs which was rounded up by Mr. Dana was stretched to the limit to handle the ridership which far exceeded projections. For the next 20 years the system would be plagued by chronic car shortages as a result of the MTA Board's failure to approve the purchase of new PCC cars for the opening of the new line. Boston's struggles during the turbulent 60's will be covered in a future issue of DESTINATIONS.



A three-car train of PCCs pauses for passengers at Newton Center. The stone station in the background is a reminder of the days when locomotives pulled passenger trains between here and South Station in Boston.



Picture window PCC No. 3295 was the first trolley in service on the Riverside Line. It was restored to its original appearance in 1979 to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the inaugural run.

photos by,  
Frank S. Miklos



# THE FAST LINE NETWORK

Memories. History, Information

Public Service Railway

Public Service Coordinated Transport

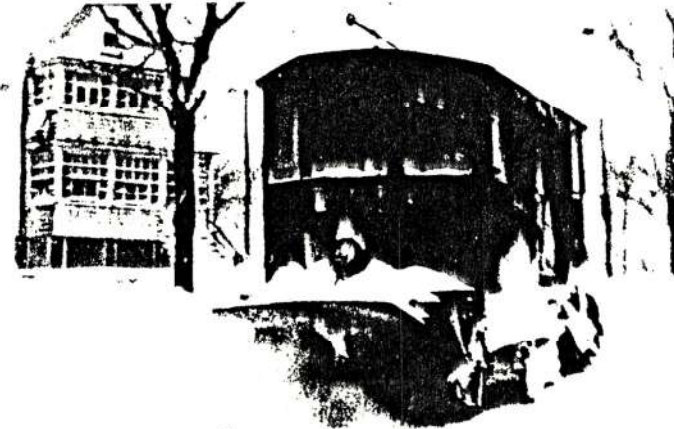
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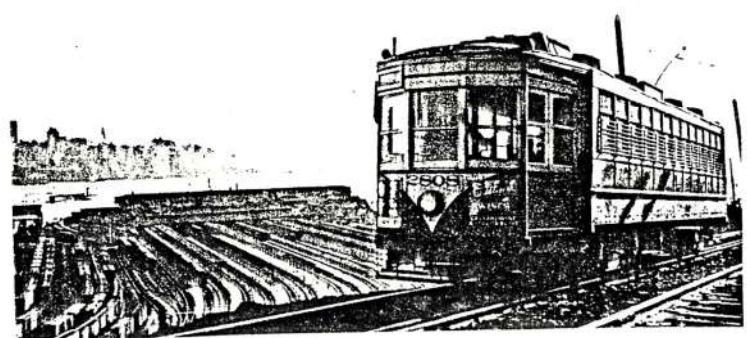
AMERICAN HISTORIC TECHNOLOGY

2237-3 Woodside Lane

Sacramento, California 95825-7456



Sweeper #5704 works Main Street, West Orange, just below Ridgehurst Road, winter of 1940-1941. Same scene below, in 1986--tracks, wires, gone, homes rebuilt for commercial use.



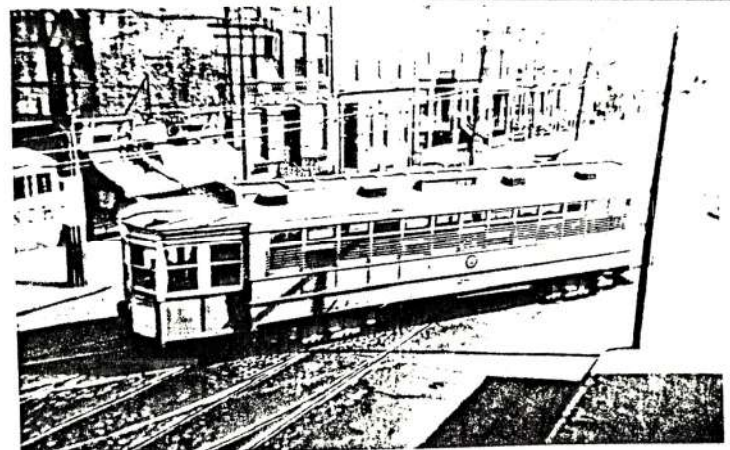
## SPOTLIGHTING: THE 2800's

The last of the home-built compromise roof cars of Public Service were the striking 2800 series cars--a "short run" of 13 compromise roof cars turned out by the master craftsmen at the Newark Shops on Ferry Street, in 1923. While 11 of the original cars survived until the demise of street car service in Hudson County in August of 1949, and most enthusiasts active at that time will remember them well as perhaps the most comfortable home-built cars operated by PSCT, many unanswered questions remain about the full series.

According to the Ed Francis, insurance requirements demanded that cars built to replace trolleys lost as a result of fire, accident, or other damage had to replicate the characteristics of the cars that were destroyed. And, the 2800s were a "replacement group". A replacement--for what? Cars lost in the Camden fires of 1918 and 1919? Wrecks, accidents on city streets? And why 13 windows? Why a compromise roof? Why, at a time when it was common knowledge that 2-man cars were being rebuilt at a rapid pace as 1-man cars, were the 2800s originally constructed with a short front platform housing the motor-man, and a long rear platform, accommodating the conductor and the principal loading and unloading areas for passengers?

The 2800s were hardly off the production line as single-end, 13-window, longitudinal rattan seated cars, when the one-man mania struck (for very good reasons)--and all 13 cars were reversed, with the long platform now in front and the short platform in the rear! And, on the heels of that came the "deluxing" fever. Eleven of the cars, 2800-2810, were returned to the shops and rebuilt with truly deluxe black leather composition cross seats from the fifth window back. Up to the 5th window, the seats remained in a longitudinal configuration, but were also re-cushioned and covered with the black leather-like material.

On the outside, the cars were among the very first to wear the new maroon-and-cream body colors, with gray roofs and black trucks. Initially, the cars appeared without the characteristic



On same run, #5704 clears Main Street tracks at Tory Corners. Waist-high drifts line curb.



headlight shield, a feature adopted later and, eventually, in universal use on all deluxed cars, as well as cars which retained the chrome yellow and cream colors. Initially operated on the Bloomfield and the Orange lines, the cars later saw service on the 13 Broad and, more rarely, the 25 Springfield lines. It's uncertain as to whether any of the cars operated on the 31 South Orange or the 43 Jersey City lines. Tell us, if you will, where you saw them operating!

2811 and 2812 were not deluxed. They continued to run, principally on the Market line in Newark. These two cars retained chrome yellow paint and longitudinal rattan seating right up to the end of downtown Newark surface operation in 1937. Eventually, they found their way to the Passaic Wharf, where they were summarily scrapped in 1940, breathing their last beside the hulk of 2490, 2811 on its side and 2812 upside-down on the scrap heap as the torches were lighted.

2800 thru 2810 served faithfully as Union City line steadies until the final days, then were sliced into 3 sections, trucked to federal iron & Salvage lots located on the south bank of the Passaic River, around the great curve north of the Passaic Wharf at Lockwood Street. There they were burned and scrapped in full view of passengers riding by aboard H&M tubes trains running between Newark and Exchange Place on the right of way across the river.

At first glance, the 2800s appear little different from their sister compromise roof cars, but close examination reveals many startling differences--a factor that makes the study of Public Service equipment such a fascinating topic. Note the flat platform roof dashes, the bowed windows and body structure, the clean, smooth sides with only the lower body sills wearing rivets, the front-left platform windows and the flat, square panelling. They were cars than an enthusiast could spend hours with, combing over each detail--endless surprises were at hand.

The cars illustrated here--2808 on the long, tortuous climb up the sheer face of the Palisades at Weehawken in a photo taken by Joe Genne in 1940, and 2806 in a side view taken by Chuck Wrege from the Hoboken El in 1941--are wearing the notorious "bug-eyes" on the front platform roof, a requirement of all cars operated in Union City, by municipal ordinance. Note that 2808 still wears the metal route sign holder--the vertical bar above the destination sign--a relic of the cars' Essex Division days and the white-on-blue number identifying the routes, there.

Readers are invited to comment further on these remarkable cars. All photos submitted will be returned.

#### MEMORIES - THE BRIDGE OF TIME

My earliest memories of Public Service go back to around 1930. I was four years old (Al Mankoff speaking) and the family lived on Stuyvesant Avenue in Newark, a short block or so from South Orange Avenue. Each afternoon at around five o'clock, my mother would bundle us up and we'd walk to the car stop on the avenue, usually just in time to see the great red trolley carrying my Dad home from work at B&O Radio in Newark. Many times, he'd greet me with a hug and a toy--who remembers Tootsietoy's?

That summer, my mother took us on a grand adventure, on a weekday afternoon--a trolley ride to a park with an enormous round shallow lake. After we walked round the lake, we crossed South Orange Avenue to a marvelous ice cream shop, had wonderful drippy cones, and then boarded a trolley I'd never seen before. It was enormous. It had a round roof. Inside were wooden seats that looked uncomfortable, but were nice to sit on. But the most memorable thing about the trolley was that you could sit there and look right out--its sides were screens and the breeze came through and made the hot day cool. What an adventure that was! (We were riding one of Public Service's remarkable 4100 series open-air's).

In 1935, we were living on South Orange Avenue, on the 3rd floor of a building across from the Mayfair Theatre. The Frankstein Monster on the billboard across the way scared the bejebers out of my brother and me. We looked out of the windows and directly below watched the long gray roofs of the trolleys passing on the avenue below, like giant whales.

And one day, my cousin Charley, who was six years older than I, came by; my mother gave us some money, we walked down and took one of the great red cars into Newark, and somehow wound up at Newark Airport. After seeing one of American Airways beautiful Curtiss Condor sleep planes there--royal blue fuselage and bright orange wings--we wandered over to port Newark and walked all the way out, as far as you could go, throwing rocks at sea gulls and getting as muddy as two kids can get. What a day!(Try doing that today!!!)

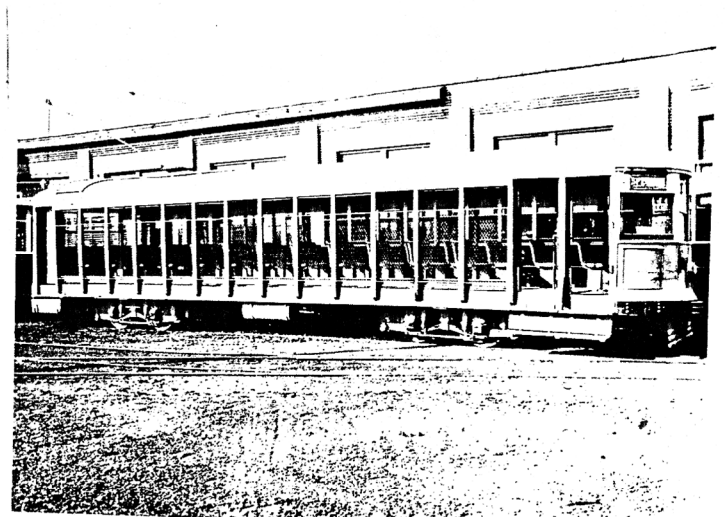
My grandfather lived with us and was a good man, a real friend to me. He'd often awaken me at 3 in the morning, wait while I dressed, then sneak me out of the house and down the street to a diner, where he'd order a big, hearty hamburger cov-

with onions, and a cup of hot coffee. The early morning trades men would come blustering in on freezing February days, while it was still dark out--I recall vividly the fragrance of wet wool, the loud, boisterous voices--and sitting in a booth, the window frosted, hearing a strange noise, dzuh,dzuh,dzuh--wiping the frost away and seeing, for the first time in my life a sweeper! What a magnificent sight as the snow flew, the soft golden headlight blurred by the falling snow. I'll never forget the sight of that astonishing red car! And my mother never figured out why I could not eat my breakfast and why I'd be so sleepy in the mornings!

And, one evening, my grandad took me for a ride on one of the red cars. We got off at a cross-street. It was dark out. We waited at another car line--I know now it must have been the 9 Clifton line, or the 3 Bergen. Moments later my eyes bugged out as a great yellow trolley appeared! It must have been a recently outshopped 2700, because it was brilliantly painted, and inside looked like a rolling palace. It had longitudinal seats, but everything looked brand new. We rode that car to the office of my grandad's doctor--and later, that evening, we were downtown in Newark and we witnessed--close up--one of the major events in the city's history--the burning of the old Pennsylvania Station. I recall hoses over the car tracks, all traffic tied up, firemen sweating and cursing, great clouds of evil black smoke and water, everywhere.

And, lastly, a Memorial Day parade on Springfield Avenue. The quick-stepping veterans of World War I, blue coats with Orange campaign pants, stainless steel helmets, stepping along proudly, eyes straight ahead, their feet a beating, shuffling melody. They pass. My dad is holding me, so I can see. A car appears, a long black, open sedan. Standing in the back, held by two young men, is an incredibly old, white-whiskered gentleman, dressed in a strange blue uniform and wearing a blue campaign hat with gold piping. He waves feebly as he passes. For a moment, our eyes meet--and in that moment, time becomes meaningless. A century passes. I write to you, today, in 1988, having seen, eye-to-eye, a man who fought at Gettysburg, whose father, no doubt, lived in the earliest years of this nation. Remember--the next time you look into the eyes of a newborn--you are looking through time, to an age that no one alive today can even begin to imagine. Each of us, who lived the proud years of the twentieth century, is a wise old man, standing in an open Cadillac, greeting the world that is to come. Now, try to tell me that you have nothing to say!

Let's hear from you! What role did trolleys play in shaping your life? What have you seen, and where? What have you to tell the children of the New Age, who will read these words 50 and 100 years from now?



Open car 4098, shown at Newark Shop, Ferry Street. Each year, early in May, trucks were removed from stored snow equipment and placed under open cars. In last year before conversion to garage, Central Avenue Car House stored open cars.



Snow-laden 8004 fights the great snowfall of 1947, just south of Park Avenue on Main Street, West Orange. With other traffic paralyzed, only trolleys rolled on.