



# CINDERS



DECEMBER 2007



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Newsletter of the  
**PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER**  
**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
 Post Office Box 7302  
 Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

**PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS WEBSITE: [www.phillyNRHS.com](http://www.phillyNRHS.com)**



At the end of each year, we take stock in the achievements of not only the rail history community, but the rail transportation industry as well.

The year 2007 has given us reason to be optimistic about the future of rail transportation in the United States, with particular satisfaction derived from rail passenger, both at the national and local levels.

Here in the Delaware Valley, SEPTA seems to be moving toward a more predictable, stable funding basis, but even this is not without its perils, with rural legislators totally convinced that the urban and suburban areas of Pennsylvania receive too much funding (and attention). What often seems to be overlooked is the percentage of tax monies the Commonwealth receives from urban/suburban areas.

On the national level, there seems a renewed sense of commitment to Amtrak, as gasoline prices hold steady around the \$3.00 per gallon level. All of a sudden, rail passenger transportation everywhere looks like the bargain it really is.

In addition, the freight railroads in America have a seemingly good problem - more business than they or their infrastructure can handle. We are seeing restoration of multiple-track railroads all around the country on lines which in the 1960's and 1970's were rationalized during a period of downturn in American railroading.

Philadelphia Chapter certainly has its challenges ahead. We need a new, younger cadre to assume positions of responsibility within our Chapter. People need to understand that this wonderful hobby of ours needs (and deserves) commitment from its members to preserve our rail heritage for future generations. Our challenge has been made more difficult by events at the National level, to the point where a fair number of long-time members have informed us they will not renew for 2008 because financial constraints will find them placing their monies where they believe they will achieve the best value.

On a bright note, FP7's 903 and sister 902 were operated this year on some short excursions, performing admirably to the satisfaction of all involved. As we enter the year 2008, the officers of Philadelphia Chapter thank you for your loyal support over the last year, and we extend our Best Wishes for Festive Holiday Season and a Healthy New Year!!

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, INC.  
Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

Founded 1936, incorporated 1973 as a 501c3 non-profit corporation

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**MEETINGS:** 7:30 PM, third Friday of each month (except second Friday in December), at Faculty Club, Second Floor, Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Dinner (optional) at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM. No meeting July or August.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:** \$50.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$17.00 per person per year. Membership applications should be forwarded to: Membership Chair, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Membership in the parent National Railway Historical Society is required to hold Chapter-only membership.

**ADDRESS CHANGES** should be sent to the Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER** and E-mail address so our Membership List is complete. We will notify the NRHS National Headquarters of the change.

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**EXCHANGE COPIES** should be sent to: R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353.

### MEETING CANCELLATION NOTICE!

In the event of snow, sleet or freezing rain on a Philadelphia Chapter meeting day, Chapter officers will make a decision on whether to hold the meeting as scheduled. If in doubt, members should telephone 215-947-5769 after 12 Noon on the day of the meeting for a recorded advisory. Thank you.

## MEETING NOTICE:

#### FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 14, 2007

Faculty Club, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University,  
1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA (three blocks south of  
Market East Station)

Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM  
Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9<sup>th</sup> Street above Locust  
(\$6.00 after 6 PM), Parkway garage, also 9<sup>th</sup> above Locust  
(\$5.75 after 6 PM), or Downtown Garage, Walnut Street east of  
10<sup>th</sup> (\$4.00 after 6 PM) (*Note that some of these parking prices  
have changed and will be adjusted in a future issue of Cinders.*)

Our December 14, 2007 meeting will feature Chapter Member Joel Spivak with an excellent slide presentation, **Metros of the World**. Joel is a serious mass transit enthusiast who has done extensive traveling, and this program is sure to be of interest to everyone.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE DECEMBER MEETING IS ON THE  
SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH - DECEMBER 14!!

The evening begins with our usual optional sit-down dinner in the Faculty Club, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University, beginning at 6:15 PM, at a cost of \$20.00 per person. DINNER RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY and MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 11, 2007 to Chapter Secretary Marie Eastwood at 215-947-5769. The menu choices were not known at presstime, but the dinner always includes salad, entrée, dessert and beverage. **NO-shows will be responsible for payment for meals ordered!** (*Meetings for the 2007-08 year are held in the Faculty Club, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Alumni Hall.*)

Come out and celebrate the Holiday Season with your fellow members and enjoy **Metros of the World**. Please consider joining us for dinner, too!

### NRHS Member Henry Dickinson, Jr. Passes Away; Former Chapter Leader

Longtime NRHS Member Henry Dickinson, Jr., well known to many veteran Philadelphia Chapter members, passed away on October 17, 2007 at St. Andre's Healthcare Facility in Biddeford, ME. He was 91 years of age. Henry was a member of Wilmington Chapter, NRHS at the time of his passing.

Henry spent most of his working life in the petroleum refining industry, working for Atlantic Richfield Company. During those years, he was a member of Philadelphia Chapter, and was a kingpin in arranging rail enthusiast excursions for our Chapter in the 1940's and 1950's. Henry lived in Glenolden, Delaware County, during those years.

When Wilmington Chapter was formed in 1967, Henry became active in that chapter as well as on the Wilmington & Western Railroad.

After his retirement from Arco, he moved to Maine and became active in the Seashore Trolley Museum, where he was able to enjoy his favorite section of rail activity, traction.

A bachelor, Henry is survived by one sister. Interment was held on October 23 at Northwood Cemetery in Philadelphia.

## LoneStar Rails 2008

**NRHS Convention**  
Fort Worth, Texas  
June 16-22, 2008

For Registration Form, see the  
November 2007  
issue of *NRHS News*  
or visit

[www.LoneStarRails2008.com](http://www.LoneStarRails2008.com)  
(Pre Registration \$25.00 until February 15, 2008)

# PHILADELPHIA



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



## SEPTA TRANSIT

SEPTA is awaiting a decision from the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court on the City of Philadelphia's effort to scuttle the proposed discontinuance of paper transfers (see August-November *Cinders*). A hearing was held October 29 before a panel of judges, and a decision in the case may come down within weeks. On October 1 SEPTA increased the price of both transfers and tokens by 15 cents, which it said was needed to offset the loss of revenue from eliminating transfers ..... Weekday ridership on SEPTA during October averaged 813,000, three percent higher than in the same month of 2006. Consolidated passenger revenues of \$31.4 million were 12 percent higher than a year ago, mostly as a result of the recent fare increase. For the first four months of Fiscal Year 2008 average daily system ridership of 749,000 was up by three percent over 2006, while passenger revenues of \$119 million were nine percent higher.

Following years of studies, SEPTA now is working on a plan to replace its obsolete fare collection methods with a new state-of-the-art system featuring so-called "contactless" smart cards. Similar cards already are in use in cities such as Atlanta, Washington, Boston and Chicago—and are being phased in at PATCO. The contactless card contains an imbedded computer chip which is passed near a reader device in the station or on board a vehicle. The system then automatically deducts the amount of the fare and reports the transaction via a wireless network, providing greater convenience for passengers and more accurate accounting of revenue. It will be designed to accept SEPTA-branded smart cards (to be pre-loaded with value) as well as VISA-type credit cards which contain the electronic chip. Like PATCO, SEPTA also will continue to issue single-ride tickets for infrequent users. The above-described plan would be rolled out only on the transit side, with Regional Rail requiring a somewhat different approach. SEPTA hopes to phase in the new system over the next four years at a cost of around \$50 million. A contract award is expected by early 2009.

SEPTA has issued its annual report for Fiscal Year 2006, which in addition to the usual financial statements contains sections on several major projects ongoing during that period. These include the Market Street elevated reconstruction, the rebuilding of Suburban Station, completion of the Frankford Transportation Center and the system Control Center, and inception of the Silverliner V program..... J. Clayton Undercofler, a prominent Philadelphia attorney who served as

SEPTA board chairman from 1988 to 1993, died last month of a heart ailment at the age of 66. It was Undercofler who brought well-known Transit Expert Louis J. Gambaccini to SEPTA as general manager, and the two were credited with reversing the malaise that gripped the agency at that time.

November 16-19 was the final weekend shutdown for Market Street el construction until the spring of 2008. Work will then resume with periodic weekend outages and probable longer shutdowns again next summer..... Chester Avenue between 42<sup>nd</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> Streets remains closed through the Clark Park area for the installation of more than 4,000 feet of new rail in this section of Route 13. In spite of protests from neighbors, concrete is replacing cobblestones in the track area. The project most likely will continue through the end of the year ..... The new southbound platform and shelter at the Route 100 Gulph Mills station was opened early last month, just to the north of the old platform which was demolished. It was hoped that the northbound platform would be open by the end of November, even though work remains to be done on the stairways, bus shelters and parking lots.

SEPTA will host a public meeting on Friday, December 14, to discuss its Fiscal Year 2009 capital budget and FY 2009-2020 capital program. The meeting will begin at 11 AM in the Board Room at the 1234 Market Street headquarters, and public input is invited. Both the proposed capital and operating budgets for FY 2009 beginning next July 1 will be presented for approval at the May 22, 2008 meeting of the SEPTA board..... The series of 12 commemorative posters celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Market Street elevated will continue to be displayed in the lobby at 1234 Market Street at least through the end of this year. Among those who contributed materials for the posters are Philadelphia Chapter Members Larry Eastwood, Harry Garforth, Jim Sparkman and the late Ron DeGraw. Joe Mannix also is represented with several of his own photos taken in the area around 30<sup>th</sup> & Market Streets before the el was demolished. If you haven't seen the display, plan to do so soon.

The "Smart Stations" program mentioned here last month actually will encompass 62 stations in all, in two phases extending through 2011. The \$103.7-million program will upgrade Broad Street, Market-Frankford and subway-surface stations with state-of-the-art technology for security and communications. The pilot installation for the project is at the Cecil B. Moore station on the Broad Street Line, which has proven to be quite successful..... The \$21-million project to rehabilitate the North Philadelphia station on the Broad Street Line is in progress. New street-level headhouses have been erected, and new elevators between the mezzanine, street and platform will be installed along with a new escalator at the northeast corner of Broad Street & Lehigh Avenue. An expanded mezzanine, new station lighting, new paint, signage and graphics, a reopened entrance from Glenwood Avenue and streetscape improvements will round out the project.

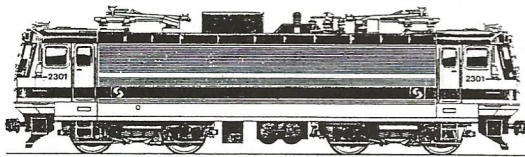
(Continued on Page 4)

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 3)

Once again this year, SEPTA ran its traditional "Santa Express" trains to the Gallery at Market East on "Black Friday," November 23. The special trains originated at 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal and the Frankford Transportation Center on the Market-Frankford Line, at Fern Rock on the Broad Street Line, and at the Paoli and Chestnut Hill West stations on Regional Rail. Upon arrival, Santa and Mrs. Claus and their passengers were there to kick off the holiday shopping season. The Paoli train, a Bombardier set pushed by AEM-7 #2304, ran about 40 minutes late..... SEPTA has published a "Commuter Calculator" on its website ([www.septa.org/tools](http://www.septa.org/tools)) to show motorists how much they can save by switching to a SEPTA pass for their daily commutes .....SEPTA has produced a leaflet entitled "Meet the eco-happy hybrids of SEPTA," describing the efficiencies of its "impressive fleet of hybrid buses." SEPTA recently ordered 400 of these diesel-electric buses from New Flyer to supplement its current fleet of 32 hybrids.

## SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



With the reissuance of all Regional Rail timetables on December 2, SEPTA has revised a number of schedules to improve on-time performance and increase capacity on certain rush-hour trains. Three express runs have been added or converted from locals in order to address the overcrowding issue, with other local trains picking up the slack at intermediate stations. But hourly midday service will continue on both sides of Route R5 due to construction projects. R5 Paoli-Thorndale and R6 Cynwyd trains will be affected by single-tracking through the new "K" interlocking near "Zoo," where construction will begin in January and run through September 2008 (see November *Cinders*). Eventually, service on the R7 Trenton and R8 Chestnut Hill West lines also will be affected by the work at "K."

AMTRAK's long-running concrete tie and welded rail project between Overbrook and Paoli should be completed by the end of November, allowing restoration of R5 service on track #4. The December 2 schedule shows numerous minor schedule changes, some necessary to coordinate with Amtrak Keystone schedules which also changed effective December 3. Up until now, westbound R5 and Amtrak trains have had to share the #3 track as #4 was being rebuilt. Meanwhile, Amtrak has increased the track speed on the #2 and #3 express tracks from 70 mph to 80 mph between Overbrook and Paoli. A few days before Thanksgiving, the track-laying crew finished work on #4 into Overbrook, leaving only the ballasting and surfacing work to be done east of Narberth. The big machine then moved east of Overbrook, putting down concrete ties and welded rail on #4 in the direction of "Zoo." (The #1 and 2 tracks east of Overbrook already have the new ties and rail.) It's uncertain how much of this can be done before the end of the construction season.

Over on the R5 Lansdale-Doylestown line, midday single-tracking continues due to a project to replace the 75-year-

old catenary between Glenside and Lansdale, also to begin next month. When this is completed the present 55-mph track speed could be raised to 70 mph, the same as on the Neshaminy (West Trenton) Line. Morning inbound train #6515 is one of the locals converted to express service south of Glenside, saving four minutes. The missed stops will be covered by a new local from Glenside, operating behind renumbered 515. As mentioned here last month, work was completed on the new "Dale" interlocking at Lansdale, which allows two trains to operate into and out of Lansdale station at the same time. Concurrently, all automatic signals between "Gwynedd" and Lansdale were retired, as the new cab signal/automatic train control system was placed in service .....Work continues on building high-level platforms at the R5 North Wales station, and high-level platforms also will be installed at Ambler next year. In the latter project, the outbound platform will be relocated from north of Butler Avenue to the parking lot area south of the grade crossing, across from the existing inbound platform.....The new Fort Washington station was formally dedicated on November 13.

SEPTA crews have been making a strenuous effort to reduce the train delays caused by autumn leaves falling on the rails (see November *Cinders*), but have had only modest success during this season's campaign. Because electric MU cars do not carry sanding devices, they are especially vulnerable to slick rails. In late October and November SEPTA logged a huge number of delays caused by slippery conditions, some of which involved trains sliding past stations and being forced to back up. Delays were reported on virtually all SEPTA lines as well as on AMTRAK's Harrisburg line, with conditions especially bad on rainy days. One unpleasant day was Saturday, October 24, when more than 40 trains were delayed anywhere from two to 14 minutes. Much worse was the rainy Sunday of November 18, when an astounding 177 trains were delayed due to slippery rails! Diesel switcher #51 has patrolled the western and southern commuter territory, including the Harrisburg line, carrying a tank car and a device which sprays water at high pressure to remove the leaves and their oily residue from the railheads. But this technique left something to be desired, so in late November a work train headed by RL1 #61 began applying "traction gel" to the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line. It was spotted operating during daylight hours on Friday, November 23, an unusual sight in that this work normally is performed at night. Two leaf trains also have been covering the Reading side.

SEPTA suffered a number of mishaps during the past few weeks. Among them: late-evening R3 train #395 out of West Trenton struck an automobile at the Red Lion Road grade crossing near Bethayres on Wednesday, October 24. No one was injured but the train had to be annulled. The next afternoon, dispatchers lost control of the "16<sup>th</sup> Street Junction" interlocking in North Philadelphia, delaying a long list of trains until the signals could be restored. On Tuesday, October 30, Trenton-bound R7 train #4749 struck a trespassing deer on the Northeast Corridor just west of Cornwells Heights station. Due to a broken air line the train could not proceed and passengers were transferred to following #751. In the evening of Wednesday, November 14, unattended Silverliners #455-456 rolled out of the Overbrook maintenance yard and onto the little-used "EJ" freight track, finally derailling a mile and a half away near 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. They were rerailed the next day and hauled back to Overbrook shop. Also on the 14<sup>th</sup> Warminster-bound train #6246, a push-pull set, stalled on #1 track at Market East station when AEM-7 #2301 became disabled. The train had to be annulled on the spot. Because this occurred during the heart of the evening rush, riders on at least 25 other trains suffered delays ranging up to a half-hour.

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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 4)

SEPTA plans to award a \$4.7-million contract to Alstom Signaling as part of its plan to install cab signal and automatic train control (ATC) technology on the R2 Warminster Line. This line was the scene last year of a head-on collision between two trains which probably could have been avoided if an ATC system were in service.....A nationwide epidemic of copper thefts has been reported due to the soaring price of scrap copper. So far, SEPTA has been hit only occasionally, but railroads should be on the alert. The best way to deter thieves from stealing electric wire is to keep it charged with high voltage!.....A Lower Merion Township committee has named EBL&S Development as submitting the best of five competing plans for revitalizing the Ardmore business district and the area around the joint SEPTA/AMTRAK station. One of the plan's recommendations is to develop the air rights over the four-track mainline at Ardmore station, in addition to other commercial and residential projects in the area. A new railroad station will be an important part of the development.

The Railroad Safety Enhancement Act of 2007 (S. 1889) now before Congress is causing concern not only to the freight rail industry—its original target—but to passenger carriers as well. Among other things, the bill would double the number of Federal Railroad Administration safety inspectors and rewrite the present hours-of-service regulations by increasing the required rest time for crews. And here's where it would particularly affect SEPTA: Six-day work weeks would in most cases be eliminated. Well over half of SEPTA crew members now work six-day weeks, and to convert to five-day weeks would force SEPTA to hire at least 250 new engineers, conductors and signal maintainers at an additional annual cost of about \$22 million. To make matters worse, many of these train crews *want* to work six days because of the extra money they make, and if their work weeks are shortened some might resign to take positions with other roads that pay higher hourly wages. The bill also would mandate the installation of satellite-based positive train control (PTC) by 2018, and require additional right-of-way fencing.

On November 19 SEPTA began its promotional "fare credit" program for passengers who pay cash fares on board trains. SEPTA has taken a lot of heat since last summer when it began charging a premium for on-board cash fares—whether or not the origin station has an open ticket office. Unfortunately for these passengers, only 78 of 153 Regional Rail stations have ticket offices open for all or part of the day (see October, November *Cinders*). SEPTA's intent was to eliminate at least 25 percent of the cumbersome cash transactions by offering an incentive to purchase tickets or passes in advance, but many riders viewed the move as discriminatory. Under the fare credit program a person paying an on-board cash fare who wishes to return to his or her origin station will be given a receipt which must be presented to a ticket agent at the destination station the same day. The agent then will subtract the cost of the on-board fare from the price of an advance-purchase round-trip ticket and issue a return ticket upon payment of the balance due. This often produces a saving of \$1 on the return ticket, although the on-board fare is between 50 cents and \$1.50 higher than a "discounted" ticket purchased in advance, depending on time of day and which one of the six fare zones is involved. While the receipt must be turned in on the same day as the on-board sale occurs, the return ticket is not restricted to that

day. The term "promotion" indicates that this arrangement will last for only a limited period.



AMTRAK operated its usual beefed-up service on the Northeast Corridor during Thanksgiving week, the busiest travel period of the year. While many regular daily and Monday-Friday trains did not run on Thanksgiving Day, November 22, almost 50 weekend-only trains were extended to operate on that day. Several other trains which normally do not run on Sundays did so on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>. The ten scheduled "Holiday Extra" trains in the 3000-series were programmed to use commuter equipment—NJ TRANSIT or MARC. One ran southbound from New York on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> and four on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>. Northbound one operated on Wednesday the 21<sup>st</sup> and four on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>. Two of the extra trains with MARC equipment were scheduled as a round-trip between Baltimore and New York. Amtrak leased two six-car sets with locomotives from MARC, two eight-car MU sets from NJT and a single six-car push-pull set with locomotive from SEPTA for weekend service to Harrisburg. For the holiday period all Keystone trains operating west of Philadelphia were reserved. As in past years, Amtrak issued a special Thanksgiving NEC timetable effective November 20-26—this time printed in color instead of the usual sepia tone.

On Sunday morning, November 18, catenary wires fell on the Northeast Corridor mainline between Newark and New York City, snarling AMTRAK and NJ TRANSIT service for the next six hours. Amtrak estimated that 10,000 of its passengers were affected as the delays extended down the Corridor, while NJT said that around 17,000 of its riders were inconvenienced. One NJT North Jersey Coast train was marooned in the Hudson River tunnel when the power failed, stranding some 300 riders for over two hours until they were rescued by another train. Many Amtrak and NJT passengers got off at Penn Station, Newark, transferring to PATH for the last miles into New York. An Amtrak spokeswoman later said that it was fortunate that the failure occurred when it did rather than during the Thanksgiving rush .....On Tuesday, November 6, AMTRAK and MARC service was halted for a hour between Baltimore and Washington, after a telephone caller claimed that a bomb was on board northbound MARC train #412. Police searched the train at BWI Airport station but found nothing (*Trains*).

Acela trainset #16 has been fully "wrapped" with a huge ad for the History Channel's upcoming special "1968 with Tom Brokaw," scheduled for broadcast on December 9. The colorful set, with power cars #2012 and 2013, made its first trip from Washington to New York on November 12 as train #2104, and will remain in regular service until December 9.....A major renovation project at AMTRAK's Lancaster (PA) station is scheduled to begin this coming summer. The project will include a facelift for the building, including the interior with new shops, a restaurant, Amtrak offices, a bus passenger waiting area and improvements to the parking area (Harrisburg Chapter) .....AMTRAK is facing a possible systemwide strike next February 1 (see November *Cinders*). President Bush is expected to appoint an emergency board to look into the long-

# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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running contract dispute with nine unions. The board would make its recommendations by December 30, after which there would be a 30-day "cooling-off period" for further negotiations. If there still is no agreement and no action by Congress, a strike could occur.

AMTRAK and much of the Federal government continue to operate at Fiscal Year 2007 funding levels, the result of another continuing resolution effective through December 14. The delay in enacting FY 2008 appropriations bills for the Department of Transportation and many other agencies is caused by a rift between the Democratic-controlled Congress and President Bush, who has threatened to veto any spending bills which exceed his budget. The Administration has requested only \$800 million for Amtrak in FY 2008, which began October 1, while Congress has approved about \$1.4 billion as part of the DOT appropriation (NARP).....By a veto-proof 70-22 margin, the Senate last month approved the bipartisan Passenger Rail Investment & Improvement Act that would reauthorize AMTRAK and set spending levels for the railroad over the next six years.

Donna McLean has been elected chairman of the board at AMTRAK, replacing David Laney whose term has expired. McLean was appointed to the board last year by President Bush, after running her own Washington transportation consulting firm. Earlier, she had served as assistant secretary and chief financial officer for U.S. DOT and as assistant administrator at the Federal Aviation Administration.....The President has named three new members to the AMTRAK board. They are Nancy A. Naples, a former commissioner of motor vehicles for New York State; Denver Stutler, Jr., a former secretary of transportation for the State of Florida; and Thomas C. Carper, the former mayor of Macomb, IL, and onetime chairman of Amtrak's Mayors' Advisory Council. Carper is not related to Democratic Senator Thomas Carper of Delaware, a former Amtrak board member. The nominees are subject to Senate confirmation (NARP).



## CSX, NS, OTHER ROADS

On November 9 CSX suffered another serious accident, when an 89-car cut of loaded coal hoppers drifted away from Benning yard in Washington, DC, rolled onto the Anacostia River bridge and derailed six cars into the river. Four other cars derailed but did not fall into the water, even though a section of the bridge collapsed under the weight of the 100-ton cars. The runaway was blamed on the failure of a crew to secure enough hand brakes on the parked train in Benning yard. The ex-Pennsylvania Railroad Anacostia bridge actually is two separate, parallel steel spans. Unfortunately, the runaway cars entered the bridge that has been out of service since last November, when both spans were shut down for structural repairs. Lifting the cars out of the river and dredging up the coal proved to be a major operation, which continued for several days. CSX was forced to suspend operations over the other active bridge for 24 hours, with several priority movements including the Tropicana juice train rerouted over

NORFOLK SOUTHERN via Hagerstown, MD. The Capital Subdivision through Washington is a vital link for CSX between its southern lines and points in the Northeast (*Railway Age*, Trainorders.com).

The CSX board of directors has issued a statement strongly backing CEO Michael Ward and denouncing the efforts of the TCI hedge fund to force a change in management (see October, November *Cinders*). TCI, a major shareholder which owns a 4.2-percent stake in the company, has, according to the board's statement, recommended "that current management seek a leveraged buyout, leverage the company to 'junk' credit status to fund massive share repurchases [and] publicly commit to effectively doubling prices to customers over ten years." TCI also submitted a recommendation to freeze capital spending until certain issues with the Federal government are resolved. The board countered by saying that "CSX is a well-run company [whose] operating income has nearly doubled since the current management team took charge in 2004," while the operating ratio has improved to its best level in a decade. "In the same period," the statement said, "shareholders have benefited from a stock price that has risen nearly 150 percent and CSX shares have significantly outperformed all major North American railroads and the broader market" (*Railway Age*).

In its November issue *Railway Age* ran a cover story on NORFOLK SOUTHERN to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landmark merger that created NS in 1982. Editor William C. Vantuono calls NS "arguably the world's best-run freight railroad" .....NS has applied to discontinue service over about ten miles of the ex-PRR Phoenixville industrial track between a point near Oaks through Phoenixville to the end of the line at Devault. Part of this is the former PRR Schuylkill branch and the rest the old Phoenixville branch, which at one time connected with the Mainline at Frazer but during World War II was cut back to Devault. Warner Company, a major sand shipper was located there. Later, CONRAIL and NS delivered tank cars of corn syrup to a sweetener plant at Devault but that facility closed several years ago and no traffic has moved over the line since. NS is careful to note that this is a service discontinuance and not an abandonment, so apparently there is some prospect of a revival sometime in the future (and there will be no hiking trail put down on the right-of-way).

The DeKalb Street overpass across NS's Harrisburg Line in Bridgeport is listed by PennDOT as the most structurally-deficient bridge in the Philadelphia area (see September *Cinders*). It was to be closed in September for replacement, but as of late November highway traffic was still using it..... After some delay NS has opened its new intermodal terminal near the Navy Yard in South Philadelphia, adjacent to the CSX Greenwich yard. According to the NS website it operates five days a week, handling containers only for Chicago and California points. As a result of this, the old Port Authority-owned Ameriport terminal off Columbus Blvd. has been closed..... An overheight TBOX boxcar which CSX mistakenly hauled down SEPTA's Mainline out of Lansdale on August 28, striking the catenary at several locations (see September *Cinders*), was set off on a siding at Glenside. As of last month it was still there.

Bennett Levin's private varnish special which left Philadelphia on November 2 turned out to be another of his impressive rail ventures. The 15-car train, led by the Levins' meticulously-maintained ex-Pennsy E8's #5711 and 5809 assisted

(Continued on Page 7)

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 6)

by AMTRAK P42 #91, was made up of an Amtrak coach, dinette and Viewliner sleeper followed by Washington Chapter's **Dover Harbor** and no less than 11 other private cars, with open-platform **Pennsylvania 120** bringing up the rear. (The Amtrak cars were deadheading to "Lackawanna Railfest" at Steamtown that weekend.) The special followed a freight-only route over NS via Reading, Allentown, Easton, the ex-Pennsy Bel-Del line along the Delaware River and the ex-Lackawanna branch through Bangor to Portland, PA, then via DELAWARE-LACKAWANNA's former DL&W main through the Water Gap to Scranton. The train spent a day in Scranton, then ran via CANADIAN PACIFIC to Binghamton, NY, NS to Hornell, NY, and WESTERN NEW YORK & PENNSYLVANIA to Olean, NY, for another overnight stay. The return on November 5 was via WNYP and NS's Buffalo Line to Harrisburg, then AMTRAK back to Philadelphia. It was a mileage collector's dream trip and some actually paid up to \$5,000 per person for the privilege of riding the PV's!

On November 19 PATCO began phasing in its new Freedom "smart card". The "contactless" fare card with an embedded computer chip was supposed to have been introduced last year, but technical glitches have held it up. (PATCO will continue to issue magnetic strip tickets for infrequent riders.) Initially, the Freedom cards will cost \$5 with that value already stored, and they can be reloaded with additional value at station terminals. The first stations to be fully converted to the Freedom cards will be Broadway and City Hall in Camden, replacing the old magnetic card system that dates back to the opening of PATCO 38 years ago.....It now appears that a nationwide economic downturn is affecting railroad freight traffic. Intermodal traffic, normally a growing segment of the business, was down 4.9 percent in October compared with a year ago, adding to declines in lumber, paper products, automotive and coal shipments during what is usually the robust fall shipping season. In response, many carriers are trimming their workforces and cutting back on orders for new equipment. But in the long run railroads and trucking firms are expected to see a substantial boost in traffic volume and revenues due to increasing demand for U.S. agricultural products (*Traffic World, Kiplinger Letter*).

A long article in the November 2 edition of the *Inquirer* describes the situation at Schuylkill Banks Park. This is the linear green space extending for 1.2 miles from the Museum of Art to Locust Street, squeezed between the river and CSX's mainline. For several years the park has been the subject of contentious negotiations—and even a lawsuit—over the City's insistence that the two grade-level entrances to the park across CSX tracks be retained, while CSX wanted to close them for safety reasons. A compromise finally was worked out last April, whereby the pedestrian crossings would be protected by automatic gates installed by the City and a new bridge built over the tracks to connect the Spruce Street area with the south end of the park. Now the controversy is over which of three options for the overpass should be adopted, with October 2009 the deadline for completion of the project.

Sometime over the weekend of November 3-4 thieves stole the K5LA horns off Philadelphia Chapter's FP7 locomotive #903 and RCT&HS's #902. The units were parked on an EAST PENN RAILROAD siding in East Greenville, PA, following the two weekends of excursions in October over East Penn's line out of Pennsburg. It was thought that the horns were either stolen for

use on a highway truck or for resale, and members have been watching eBay to see if they appeared for sale. If not recovered, new horns will have to be purchased. As of the third week of November, the units had not yet been moved to their new (temporary) home at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg.....The long-awaited ID cards to be issued to transportation workers finally made their first appearance in October, at the Wilmington Marine Terminal. Dubbed "TWIC" for transportation worker identification credential, the card has been under development for over three years by the Transportation Security Administration, and eventually will be required of all maritime, rail and motor carrier employees who have access to port areas. To secure a TWIC employees must pass an extensive background check and those who fail to qualify will be barred from secure areas (*Traffic World*).

CANADIAN PACIFIC started its annual "Holiday Train" tour at Steamtown in Scranton on December 1, then visited several towns enroute to Rouses Point, NY, southern Ontario and the U.S. Midwest. Brilliant in festive holiday lights, it is one of two trains that CP runs each year to collect food and raise money and awareness for local food banks. The trains, powered by freshly-painted CP freight locomotives, will stop at over 100 U.S. and Canadian communities during their 18-day tour.....After more than a year, the United Transportation Union and the nation's freight railroads will resume their contract negotiations next month. The UTU, which represents some 66,000 conductors and brakeman on five Class 1 carriers, is the only one of 14 rail unions that has not settled on a new contract. Effective with the New Year, UTU will merge with the Sheet Metal Workers Association to form SMART, the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail & Transportation Workers Union (*Railway Age*).....The Friends of the Railroad Museum has begun a fund drive to cosmetically restore ex-PRR 4-4-2 #460, the famed "Lindbergh Engine" now stored at the museum in Strasburg (*Trains*).

Well-known Railroad and Trolley Authority John Denney of Columbia, PA, died October 25 at the age of 83. A longtime member of the Lancaster Chapter NRHS, the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society and a charter member of the Friends of the Railroad Museum at Strasburg, Denney owned a vast collection of railroad memorabilia and wrote numerous articles for the *National Railway Bulletin* and other publications .....The Codorus Creek Railway has been formed to revive train service on the inactive Northern Central line between York and New Freedom, PA (Harrisburg Chapter) ..... Brookville Equipment Corp. has opened a new 24,000-square-foot building at Brookville, PA, for use in manufacturing locomotives. Once known for its small mining and industrial locomotives, Brookville has expanded into other fields including the rebuilding of historic trolleys. It was Brookville which rebuilt the 18 PCC-II cars for SEPTA and several ex-NJ TRANSIT PCC's for MUNI in San Francisco (*Trains*).....NJT again is looking at the possibility of restoring rail commuter service from West Trenton, over CSX's former Reading New York branch. Public meetings were scheduled for November 29 and December 6.

An interesting critique of the widely-acclaimed new *Encyclopedia of North American Railroads*, published by Indiana University Press, recently appeared in the newsletter of Mass Bay RRE. Editor John Reading titled his review "Some assembly required," pointing out a host of errors and significant omissions in the 1,300-page tome. Reading said he plans to publish an "unofficial supplement" to the *Encyclopedia*, listing corrections

(Continued on Page 10)

## ODDS AND ENDS.....by Roy L. Hudson

(This column will appear from time to time to provide *Cinders* readers with some hopefully interesting, yet useful information which has been gathered from miscellaneous sources).

The first trip (and display) of Wabash/Union Pacific's **City of St. Louis** took place on June 2, 1946 in its namesake city. Christening ceremonies were made by Miss St. Louis and Miss San Francisco. Later, newspapers reported that both ladies happened to be members of the Wabash office staff (*Mixed Train*).....Between the 1930's and early 1950's the Pennsylvania Railroad used specially-equipped 40-foot stock cars to transport ripe tomatoes from Lancaster County, PA to Campbell Soup Company in Camden, NJ to be processed into soup and juice. They would be loaded one day and the next day unloaded at Campbell. The Camden plant had about 200 cars a day in season! In the late 1940's over-the-road trucks could be loaded adjacent to the fields, reducing handling and transit time. (Chuck Blardone, Jr., via *Lancaster Dispatcher*).....In 1959 the Maine Central made an effort to abandon all passenger service. The hearings were held in the Bangor, ME court house and train-on proponents had to face an expensive battery of railroad lawyers who tried to shoot down everyone's testimony. One exasperated elderly woman, after recounting a trip to Boston, barked at the railroad lawyer, "Now I suppose you'll prove to me that I didn't really want to go there in the first place!" (Rev. W. F. Smith, *BLHS Bulletin*).

VIA Rail Canada operates the last open-section sleeping car accommodation in North America, but by 1958 the New York Central and Pennsylvania had eliminated this type of car for all their intraline trains. You could still ride in an upper on the NYC and PRR after then on the inter-line **Montreal Limited** (NYC-Delaware & Hudson), **Montrealer/Washingtonian** (PRR-New Haven-Central Vermont-Canadian National) and **The Federal** (PRR-NH), as well as on the PRR between Washington, DC and Cincinnati, OH (S. H. Lustig, *Central Headlight*).....While it seems only like yesterday, the Los Angeles-area MetroLink Commuter Railroad has just completed 15 years of service. The system now spans 512 miles, with 55 stations in six counties, carrying more than 42,000 riders daily (*MetroLink Matters* newsletter).....They Never Seem to Learn Department: Last September a woman in Hammond, IN tried to beat an eastbound CSX freight train at a grade crossing, which worked; however, her car was then hit by a westbound train, knocking her vehicle back into the path of the eastbound, killing her and two children, and placing three other children in critical condition! (*Headlight & Markers*).

GE Transportation (GETS) at Erie, PA has received an order for 40 ES44DC Evolution Series locomotives. GETS is currently on track to produce about 900 units in 2007, a total second only to the 911 units produced in 1999. GETS currently has a backlog of some 1,500 locomotives (*Lake Shore Time Table*).....On December 21, 1829 (178 years ago!), the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's Carrollton Viaduct, the first large stone bridge in the United States, opened near Baltimore. This ancient railroad structure still supports many daily modern CSX freight and MARC passenger trains (AAR).....During the period 1848 to 1852, Colonel Robert E. Lee (USA) was stationed in Baltimore to oversee the rebuilding of Fort McHenry and during that period, he often traveled on the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore to visit his son at West Point, NY (*PRR Facts*).....The Western

Pacific's Northern California Extension ran 112 miles between Keddie and Bieber, CA. The line never had regularly-scheduled passenger service. Was this the longest "freight-only" line in the United States? (David F. Myrick).....Fifty years ago, on December 31, 1957, the Norfolk & Western's coal-turbine locomotive "*Jawn Henry*" was retired as a failure.

### Roy Hudson's Christmas Train Consist

(prepared by R. L. Eastwood, Jr.)

#### Reading-Jersey Central

#### Train #192

#### Queen of the Valley

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania - December 25, 1929

#### Loco/Cars

RDG 346, 341  
CNJ 278  
CNJ 876  
CNJ 1075  
CNJ 1194  
CNJ 1196  
RDG 1199  
Larabee (26-1)  
Gardetta  
Clearview  
Inglehart  
Jessie (26-1)  
RDG 1541

#### Description

P5 4-4-2 steam locomotives  
combine/coach  
coach  
coach  
coach  
coach  
café/diner  
Pullman parlor  
Pullman parlor  
Pullman parlor  
Pullman parlor  
Pullman parlor\*  
coach\*

\* - These cars dropped at Reading

Source: Joe Wirzbicki

Then, there was the Reading's Train #81, the late night courier of mail, express and perhaps newspapers, but no passengers. Consisting of baggage cars and crew rider coach, she stole out of Reading Terminal at 2:30 AM, ran along the City Branch and stopped at West Falls to pick up empty milk cars that had been brought there from the milk yard at 3<sup>rd</sup> & Berks Streets. The train's nocturnal journey took it to Reading, where it became Train #149 to Harrisburg and Gettysburg. The train was discontinued about 1949. (Bert Pennypacker - *The Bee Line*).....This year (2007) marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first American Freedom Train. The locomotive was an Alco-GE PA1, with the Pullman Company providing three cars used as sleepers by the 29 U. S. Marines who were guards/hosts, plus a Pullman conductor and three porters. The PRR provided the three display cars. It ran all across the United States from 1947 to 1949, hosting more than 1.5 million visitors, who viewed such documents as the Declaration of Independence (*Orderboard*).....The American Car & Foundry plant at Milton, PA has signed a contract to build 1,400 tank cars for American Railcar Industries. Once up to full production, output will be four cars a day (*Harrisburg Rail Review*).....How many steam locomotives have ever been built in the entire world? The answer is about 636,000! The peak year was 1907, when 15,000 were constructed. The first was Richard Trevithick's **Penydarren**, constructed in 1804 and used in South Wales. The last were two Chinese SY Class 2-8-2's assembled in 1999. The U. S. produced the most, with 177,000 made between 1831 and 1955, with Baldwin the most dominant builder with nearly ten percent of the world total. (Dave Byers, May 2007 *Railway Magazine, The Orderboard*).



DECEMBER 8, 15, 2007: "Home for the Holidays" at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, with a nostalgic look at holiday rail travel in the past. Costumed engineers, conductors, ticket agents and passengers will represent travel from another era, with seasonal music, decorations and "Polar Express" parties for children. Regular hours and admission charges apply (\$5 extra fee and advance registration required for "Polar Express" parties). For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: [www.rmmuseumpa.org](http://www.rmmuseumpa.org)).



DECEMBER 9, 2007: Abington Train Show & Sale, at Bryner Chevrolet, Route 611 (Old York Road) at Route 73 (Township Line Road), Jenkintown, PA. Hours: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Admission: \$5.00 per person, children under 12 free. For additional information, please contact Paul Myers, 15 Mystic View Lane, Doylestown, PA 18901-2040 (telephone 215-345-5017).

DECEMBER 15-16: Greenberg's Train and Toy Show at Sun Center, 63 Concord Road, off Route 452, Aston, PA, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM both days. Operating layouts, model train sales, clinics and modeling seminars. Admission: \$7.00 adults (good for both days), children 11 and under free with adult.

JANUARY 5, 2008: Mass Bay RRE will sponsor "Steam in the Snow Photo Special" on Conway Scenic Railroad, using ex-Grand Trunk Railway 0-6-0 #7470. Train leaves North Conway at 10:30 AM, returns about 3 PM. Coach fare: \$55, children 12 and under \$35. Dome seat in ex-GN dome is \$80. For information, contact Mass Bay RRE by phone at 978-470-2066, E-mail to [massbayrre@comcast.net](mailto:massbayrre@comcast.net) or send stamped, self-addressed envelope to Mass Bay RRE, P. O. Box 4245-BV, Andover, MA 01810-0814.

JANUARY 5,6,12,13,19,20,26,27: Keystone N-trak Model Railroad Club Open House at new location, basement auditorium of Burholme Baptist Church, 905 Cottman Avenue (PA Route 73), just west of Rising Sun Avenue, one block east of SEPTA's R8 Ryers station. Open Saturdays 12-4 PM, Sundays 1-5 PM. Admission free, with donations appreciated. For information, telephone 610-792-0696 or visit website: [www.keystonentrak.us](http://www.keystonentrak.us).

THROUGH JANUARY 6, 2008: "A Brandywine Christmas" at Brandywine River Museum Chadds Ford, PA, again featuring a large operating "O" gauge model railroad. Museum is open daily (except Christmas Day) 9:30 AM-4:30 PM (until 6 PM December 26-30). Admission: \$8 adults, \$5 seniors (65 and over) and children (6-12). For information, telephone 610-388-2700.

JANUARY 25: Railroad Film Night at National Canal Museum, 30 Centre Square, Easton, PA, beginning at 7:30 PM. Steam and electric locomotives will be featured in program presented by NRHS Media Director Mitchell Dakelman. Admission: \$6 per person. For information, telephone 610-559-6613.

THROUGH APRIL 2008: "Spanning Centuries: Railroad Bridges of Pennsylvania" exhibit at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, including historic photos, blueprints and artifacts. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: [www.railroadmuseumpa.org](http://www.railroadmuseumpa.org)).

## Chelten Hills Model RR Club Schedules Open House Dates

In an item received just a bit too late to include in the Extra List to the left, Chelten Hills Model Railroad Club has advised us of the dates of their annual open house.

The club has scheduled the following dates for their open house: January 5 & 6, 12 & 13, 2008, with snow date scheduled for January 19 and 20. All shows run from 12 Noon until 4 PM at the Club House, located in the old Ogontz railroad station at 8000 Old York Road in Elkins Park.

Information is available by calling 215-635-9747. Admission is free, but donations will be gratefully accepted.

## SEPTA Transit Store Issues DVD

SEPTA's first-ever DVD release, *Transit: Lifeblood of the Community*, is now available at the Transit Museum Store, located in the lobby of the SEPTA headquarters at 1234 Market Street.

The title refers to a promotional film issued by Philadelphia Transportation Company in 1951 to illustrate how vital public transportation is to a large metropolitan area. It also offers a look at activity in the shops, and functions such as maintenance, telephone information, scheduling and revenue operations. Of course, there are many vintage vehicles to be seen. It is in color, with narration and music, and was transferred to digital format directly from the original 16mm print.

Offered as an extra is a slide show presentation featuring an interesting variety of never-before-seen images of trolleys, trains and trackless trolleys in and around Philadelphia during the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's. Included are a few shots of Reading and Pennsy/Penn Central MU's in various paint schemes. The total running time is approximately 35 minutes.

This DVD is priced at \$19.95, with a 10 percent discount available to all NRHS members. Contact the Transit Museum Store at 215-580-7168 for more information.



"Set of trains, nothin'! I want an authentic model of the Reading's Crusader!"

Holiday Season at the Reading Railroad Magazine, December, 1956

# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 6)

such as the date of the first formal fantrip in the U.S., operated by RRE on the Hoosac Tunnel & Wilmington on August 26, 1934, not on August 24 as stated in the book. But Reading is not merely quibbling—he points to such weaknesses as the lack of cross-referencing among articles, an example being the piece on the New Haven Railroad which mentions several notable figures including Charles Mellen, J.P. Morgan and Patrick McGinnis, but fails to direct the reader to the biographies of those men contained elsewhere in the *Encyclopedia*. In addition to listing a host of factual errors, such as misspelling the name of the legendary Rogers E.M. Whitaker (“E.M. Frimbo”), Reading asks why the “distinguished committee” from the R&LHS compiled a list of only 130 “significant railroad books” rather than, say, 200 books, when the list occupies a three-and-one-half-page appendix at the end of the volume followed by a page and a half of unused white space. He also questions the editors’ judgment in profiling the Southern’s imperious President D.W. Brosnan while omitting his famed successor W. Graham Claytor. While we recognize the monumental achievement represented in the *Encyclopedia*—as Reading says, “Nowhere else in the present-day industry, or hobby, will you find so much railroad information between two covers”—we also commend him for having the courage to highlight certain shortcomings in the book.

**I Extend my Best Wishes to All Chapter Members and Friends for a Safe and Joyful Christmas Season, and a Prosperous New Year!**  
**--Frank Tatnall**



*This cartoon is courtesy of F. Paul Kutta*

Cartoon by Webster in the N. Y. Herald-Tribune  
“The Thrill That Comes Once in a Life-Time”

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