



CINDERS



MAY

2007



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Volume 68

Number 5

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

NEW!! NEW!! PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS WEBSITE ADDRESS: www.phillyNRHS.com

Third Mid-Month Storm Batters Region

April Nor'easter Causes Travel Woes

MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 18, 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, 9th Street above Locust
 (\$6.00 after 6 PM), Parkway garage, also 9th above Locust
 (\$5.75 after 6 PM), or Downtown Garage, Walnut Street east of
 10th (\$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 meeting on Friday evening, May 18, 2007, will feature a narrated slide program entitled **A Lehigh Valley Railroad Retrospective, 1960-1976**, presented by our own Frank G. Tatnall. Frank spent much time covering the LV, particularly within the confines of northeastern Pennsylvania, which this program will extensively cover. Enjoy the first generation diesels as well as the multiple paint schemes which adorned the second generation units. This program promises to be a treat for everyone present.

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, MAY 15, 2007 to Chapter Secretary Marie Eastwood at 215-947-5769.** The menu for May was unknown at presstime. **N0-shows will be responsible for payment for meals ordered!** *(Please note that meetings for the 2006-2007 year are scheduled in the Faculty Club, on the second floor of the Alumni Hall.)*

Looking forward, we've been requested by several members to have a Chapter Railroadiana Auction, so hold Friday, June 15, 2007 open on your calendar and gather some goodies for sale as well as load your wallet up to buy. We are currently holding some real gems to offer to our members.

For the past three months serious weather troubles have visited the Mid-Atlantic region—always at the midpoint of the month. The Valentine's Day storm on February 14 and the pre-St. Patrick's Day blow on March 16 were upstaged by a violent winterlike "nor'easter" which roared through on Sunday and Monday, April 15-16. Coastal states as far north as Maine were forced to deal with severe flooding conditions and—in some areas—a surprise snowfall. Residents living north and west of Philadelphia awoke on Monday morning to the almost unbelievable sight of snow on the ground, up to two inches in suburban areas and as much as eight inches in parts of Chester County! With temperatures slightly above freezing the snow quickly turned to slush, which was dutifully plowed off the roads by PennDOT and municipal trucks pressed into this late-season exercise.

The National Weather Service at Philadelphia International Airport reported total rainfall during the two-day storm of 5.1 inches, but other cities to the north fared even worse. New York City measured a near-record of more than eight inches of rain in Manhattan's Central Park, and some areas of northern New York State and New England were buried by up to two feet of snow. In addition to the high water which damaged homes and businesses in parts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, gale-force winds played havoc with electric service in many areas as large trees were blown down onto power lines. On Monday the intense storm caused the barometer at Philadelphia Airport to fall to 28.84 inches, even lower than that recorded in some hurricanes.

As might be expected, all forms of transportation in the region were disrupted to some extent by the storm, particularly on Monday. In the Philadelphia area many highways were flooded, including the usual suspects along the Schuylkill River (which fortunately rose to less than its expected crest), and Monday morning travel everywhere was slow. At the Airport, there was a large number of flight delays but few actual cancellations. Amtrak reported average 30-minute delays along the Northeast Corridor between Boston, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington due to flooding at some locations, and some trains were cancelled. Harrisburg service was seriously affected by a traction power failure, with several trains annulled or delayed west of Philadelphia. NJ Transit reported widespread delays both on its

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**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: \$37.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$16.00 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.

Cinders is published 11 times a year by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc. Correspondence regarding *Cinders* should be directed to the Editor at P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. If your *Cinders* is received damaged or incomplete, contact the Editor at the address shown below for replacement.

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

SEPTA Postpones P&W Centennial Celebration

The Centennial celebration for the original Philadelphia & Western Railway opening to Strafford on May 22, 1907, which had been planned for observance on Tuesday, May 22, will take place later this year, according to SEPTA sources.

The second phase of observances during 2007 which began with the festive Market Street Subway Centennial on Sunday, March 4 at 1234 Market Street, the P&W event is expected to feature ten commemorative panels on both 69th Street Terminal as well as the P&W. They will be erected in the Customer Service area of 69th Street Terminal when completed.

Chapter Members and SEPTA staffers John Calnan, Larry Eastwood and Harry Garforth, have worked to create both displays, with assistance from Joe Mannix, Jim Sparkman, Ed Springer and Bill Thomas, among others.

The P&W Centennial will not go unnoticed during May, however, as Railways to Yesterday, Inc. will operate a two-car Route 100 N5 car trip on Sunday, May 20, 2007. Complete ticket ordering information will be found in the Extra List on Page 7 of this issue of *Cinders*.

NRHS National Dues Facing Stiff Hike for 2008

NRHS members are potentially facing a 50 percent increase in basic National dues for the year 2008, according to information provided to directors at the Spring NRHS Board Meeting at Greenville, SC on April 22. Any increase is subject to Board of Director approval in Chattanooga, TN this August. National Director Larry Eastwood was unable to attend the Greenville meeting.

While complete details are not known at presstime, it is anticipated that basic National dues will rise from \$22.00 to \$33.00 per member. NRHS National management has blamed much of the increase on a declining volunteer base with the result that outsourcing to paid services is required. In addition, there are expected to be substantial surcharges, per member, to any chapter

Robert G. Bryans April 16, 2007

We regret to report to you the passing of Chapter Member Robert G. Bryans of Devon, PA on Monday, April 16, 2007, at the age of 78 from a rare form of cancer.

Bob joined NRHS in 1953 and received his 50-year NRHS pin in 2004. A graduate of Collingdale High School, he worked as a contract administrator, and oversaw Boeing Vertol's work on the V-22 Osprey Program when he retired in 1995. An Army veteran, Bob had also been employed by RCA and DuPont Company before becoming a Department of Defense employee in 1963.

While he was a relatively infrequent attendee at Chapter meetings, his family related that he thoroughly enjoyed train trips to the Southwest to visit his family.

A memorial service was conducted on April 23 at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church. Bob is survived by his wife of 40 years, Cornelia, and son Scott and daughter Elizabeth Laird. The Chapter extends its sincere condolences to the Bryans family.

which cannot remit renewals and funds on an electronic basis effective with the 2008 membership year.

As an example, membership records processing, which incurred serious meltdowns between 2003 and 2006, in spite of strong warning signs from some officers, is one major area. It appears that the membership database was more seriously damaged than originally believed, and should have been replaced then.

NRHS has contracted with Fernley & Fernley, a Philadelphia-based association management firm to handle membership records processing beginning this year, and NRHS financial records beginning in 2008, at a cost believed to be about \$70,000 per year, or \$5.00 per member.

Additional information will be hopefully available at the May 18 meeting, at which time the Chapter officers will invite discussion from the membership on our future involvement and relationship with NRHS.

PHILADELPHIA



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



**SEPTA
TRANSIT**

The countdown is on to July 1. Last month SEPTA held hearings on its plan to sharply increase fares and slash service, in order to close a looming \$129.6-million deficit in the proposed \$1.022-billion operating budget for Fiscal Year 2008. If there is no action in Harrisburg by the start of the new fiscal year on July 1, most of these painful measures will become reality, including the elimination of up to a thousand SEPTA jobs. As expected, there was strong opposition expressed at the hearings to fare increases averaging 31 percent and across-the-board service cuts of 20 percent, as laid out in a "Plan B" scenario. This plan presupposes no increase in State support, while alternate "Plan A" envisions a possible \$100-million boost in State funding with a lesser fare increase to generate the balance of \$29 million. SEPTA said that its overall cost base will increase by 3.15 percent over FY 2007, including wage increases of three percent, fringe benefits eight percent and materials and services 3.8 percent (partially offset by a decrease in fuel and utility costs of two percent).

There also was much negative testimony about SEPTA's "simplification" plan, an add-on proposal which among other things would eliminate paper transfers on City Transit, consolidate certain Regional Rail fare zones and charge rail passengers higher on-board fares whether or not the ticket office is open. DVARP in particular opposed this unrelated fare restructuring plan, which it said would produce no savings to SEPTA. Paul R. Levy, president of the Center City District representing downtown businesses, said in his testimony that SEPTA's funding predicament reminded him of the movie "Groundhog Day," in which the past is endlessly repeated. "We are going to have to keep coming back again and again," he said, "perfecting our message until we get it right—or better, until our elected representatives in Harrisburg finally hear it and they get it right." Janice Woodcock, executive director of the City Planning Commission, said that there is no justification for boosting fares more than 16.8 percent, representing the inflationary increase since fares were last raised in 2001. She also said that "SEPTA could simply chose to operate the system [at present service levels] until the money runs out." The SEPTA board is due to vote on the proposed fare and service plan at its May 24 meeting.

Substantially increased funding from Harrisburg seems to be the only salvation for SEPTA riders. The vibes from Harrisburg, however, are not encouraging. While there has been some talk about providing relief for all of the State's embattled transit systems, there has been no word of substantive progress. In an April 20 article the *Inquirer* reported that "funding for Pennsylvania roads, bridges and mass transit depends on political deals that have yet to be made." These deals may be structured around the revenue-raising proposals advanced by Governor Rendell (see March *Cinders*), which involve the possible lease of

the Turnpike to fund highway and bridge repairs and a new tax on oil companies to raise money for transit. But a number of other proposals are on the table, including an increase in the realty transfer tax and higher fees on rental cars, vehicle registrations and tire sales.

Oddly enough, the five candidates running for Mayor of Philadelphia in the May 15 Democratic party primary election have said relatively little about what they would do to address the ongoing SEPTA crisis. All say they would try to gain more funding for SEPTA but offer few details. One of the candidates, Congressman Bob Brady, also wants to restore Route 23 trolley service on Germantown Avenue, extend the Broad Street subway to the Navy Yard and build a subway under Roosevelt Blvd. into the Northeast. Candidate Tom Knox said he would push for bus rapid transit routes, improved bus stops and Broad Street subway extensions, while Michael Nutter wants SEPTA to be like the Washington, DC, subway system—"it's easy, it feels safe and it's clean."

"A SEPTA Crisis—the reasons for tepid transit support" was the title of an article published in the March 25 edition of the *Inquirer*. In it, Reporter Mark Bowden lays some of the blame for SEPTA's problems squarely at the feet of the SEPTA board and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. While mass transit "ought to be a clear public priority," writes Bowden, the 15-member SEPTA board has only two representatives from Philadelphia, where the vast majority of its transit riders live and work. Likewise, the DVRPC, which has great influence over how Federal dollars are spent in this region, gives Philadelphia only one vote on its 18-member board even though the City contains half of the region's population. For now, Bowden says, "We must look to a solution on the State level, and Pennsylvania is primarily a rural state...but it is also becoming increasingly suburban, and increasingly congested...Sprawling development in Montgomery, Chester, Delaware and Bucks Counties may eventually convert suburban politicians to the wisdom of moving people more efficiently." However, transit systems in the Pennsylvania get less of their operating funds from local sources (about 11 percent) than do systems in neighboring states which receive about 39 percent.

On Friday evening, April 20, the old Millbourne station on the Market-Frankford line was closed for good. Dating from the original Market Street elevated in 1907, Millbourne is the last of the historic wooden-platform el stations (it actually is at ground level) on the MFSE. After it is demolished a new station compatible with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will be built on the site, to open in about a year..... Another weekend shutdown of the Market Street el will take place May 18-21, with bus shuttles operated between 69th Street Terminal and the 40th Street subway station

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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The February 12 timetables for suburban Routes 100, 101 and 102 all contain photos of historic cars on their covers. The Route 100 Norristown High Speed Line celebrates its 100th anniversary on May 22, when in 1907 the Philadelphia & Western Railway began service out of 69th Street Terminal. The timetable cover features a P&W logo, as well as logos of later operators Red Arrow and SEPTA. The Route 102 Sharon Hill line also is marking the 100th anniversary of its extension to Collingdale, which opened on July 15, 1907, with the timetable showing emblems of Philadelphia & West Chester Traction Company, Red Arrow and SEPTA.

Several ADA accessibility projects are underway or planned at SEPTA subway stations. Elevator work has been completed at the 13th Street station of the Market-Frankford Line (see April *Cinders*), and elevators should be in service at the 8th Street station by September. New elevators at the Walnut-Locust station of the Broad Street subway are due to open next winter, and an elevator to the Juniper Street subway-surface station is planned.....The long-awaited communications based train control system in the subway-surface tunnel now is expected to be in full service by the end of this year, pending installation of new radios in the Kawasaki cars.....Construction is progressing on the extended platforms at the Route 100 Gulph Mills station.....The Norristown Transportation Center parking garage should be open by early fall.....SEPTA has begun an ad campaign for its new Pass Perks program, with posters appearing in many stations. The program even has its own website: www.septapassperks.org.....SEPTA has started experimental bus Route 150 between Plymouth Meeting Mall and the Philadelphia Park Casino. This is in addition to Route 50 operating between Frankford Transportation Center and the casino.



SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

New timetables become effective on most Regional Rail lines effective Sunday, May 6. Among the major changes is the start of hourly midday service during the week on the R5 Paoli-Thorndale and Lansdale-Doylestown lines, to accommodate heavy construction work. In an unusual shift of pull-pull equipment, one six-car trainset is removed from R7 Trenton service and assigned to R2 morning express #9212 from Newark, DE, to center city. (In the afternoon this set does not return to Newark but runs to Thorndale or West Trenton.) And with the new R8 schedule effective April 15 a half-hour separation has been created in midday schedules on the Chestnut Hill West Line and the nearby R7 Chestnut Hill East Line, instead of the former nearly identical times on the two Chestnut Hill lines.

The trackwork project on AMTRAK's Keystone Corridor will affect the R5 Paoli-Thorndale service, SEPTA's busiest commuter rail line. Funded by SEPTA, the project will give

its 22,000 daily commuters a smoother, safer ride than they experience today on deteriorating wood ties and jointed rail. Starting Monday, May 7, Amtrak's massive Track Laying System, a quarter-mile-long string of machines and tie-carrying flatcars, will begin working east on #1 track from Paoli to Overbrook as it installs new welded rail and concrete ties. This will require SEPTA to operate all inbound R5 service on the #2 express track, first from Paoli to Bryn Mawr, then after that work is completed from Bryn Mawr to Overbrook. Special platform extensions will be in place to allow passengers to access their trains. To minimize interference with the TLM track gang service will be cut from half-hourly to hourly during midday work periods, which necessarily will add about four minutes to the schedules. Amtrak will operate some of its eastbound trains on the #3 express track, the only track on this ex-Pennsylvania Railroad mainline governed by Rule 261 (signaled in both directions). During this period, none of the Paoli-side R5 trains will run through to Lansdale.

This is the first phase of a seven-month project that will see some 60 miles of welded rail and 85,000 concrete ties installed. This phase is expected to be completed in August, at which time the second phase will begin to renew the #4 westbound track from Overbrook to Paoli, with a completion date of sometime in November. Over the past two years Amtrak, with partial funding from PennDOT, already has rebuilt the #2 and #3 tracks with welded rail and concrete ties. The entire long-term program on the Paoli-Thorndale line, including improvements to the signal, communications and electric traction systems, two relocated interlockings and additional track and power distribution upgrades is budgeted by SEPTA at \$180.6 million.

On the R5 north side, extensive track and signal work will be in progress this spring and summer, requiring single-track operation during weekday off-peak periods. As a result, service frequencies will be reduced to hourly, with all midday trains operating to and from Doylestown. In addition, "Dale" interlocking at Lansdale is being rebuilt to allow parallel in and out train movements at the station, to be completed by September. This work has caused SEPTA to operate shuttle buses between North Wales station, Lansdale and points on the Doylestown Line on weekends beginning April 28-29. A special bus schedule leaflet was issued. Tie renewal and surfacing also will be carried out on the Mainline, following up last year's installation of a new bi-directional signal system between Glenside and Penllyn and new interlocked crossovers just north of Penllyn named "Gwynedd." The new high-level station at Fort Washington is nearing completion and North Wales station will get a high-level platform within the next year. A high-level platform is being built at the Cheltenham station on the R8 Fox Chase Line and the R5 station at Ambler is on the list to receive high platforms by 2010.

To meet growing demand for service on the Regional Rail system, SEPTA is adding 16 more cars to its order for new Silverliner V's, bringing the total order to 120 cars. At its April 26 meeting, the SEPTA board exercised a contract option for the \$29.8 million purchase, increasing the total price for the new Silverliner fleet to \$274.1 million. The cars will be assembled at the Philadelphia Navy Yard by the Japanese-Korean consortium of United Transit Systems, which won the original contract in March 2006. In recognition of the growing SEPTA ridership in Delaware, that State has agreed to fund the purchase of four of the new cars. Delivery of the first Silverliner V's is scheduled for December of 2008, with the entire order to be completed in 2010. By that time SEPTA plans to retire its 73 remaining Budd Silverliner II's and

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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St. Louis-built Silverliner III's, all of which were built in the 1960's. Ridership on the Regional Rail system has increased 17 percent since 2000 to about 110,000 daily passengers and is expected to continue to grow at a rate of more than three percent annually. Thus, the 120 new cars not only will replace the old cars but will allow for future growth in ridership, even though additional equipment will not now be needed for the seemingly dead-and-buried Schuylkill Valley Metro.

Looking beyond the Silverliner V acquisition, SEPTA soon will be faced with the need to replace its 231-car fleet of Silverliner IV's. Built by General Electric in the mid-1970's, the IV's are near relatives of NJ TRANSIT's Arrow II cars, which already have been retired. SEPTA is working on plans for a future purchase of additional cars, possibly to be dubbed the Silverliner VI. SEPTA plans to install mini-high-level platforms to accommodate handicapped passengers at the Overbrook, Villanova and Strafford stations on the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line, and at Chester on the R2 Wilmington line. The Federal Transit Administration has said that in Fiscal Year 2008 it will hand out nearly \$1.4 billion in "new start" capital grants to transit projects in 14 states. Since the FTA has disqualified SEPTA's proposed Schuylkill Valley Metro, the only project in Pennsylvania to receive funding will be the North Shore light rail connector in Pittsburgh (*Railway Age*).

In addition to the mid-April nor'easter, SEPTA experienced other problems on the Regional Rail system last month. Trespassers were seriously injured on two occasions, the first at 6:15 PM on Wednesday, March 28, when R6 train #6667 struck a female trespasser near Main Street in Norristown. Three following trains had to be turned back at Norristown Transportation Center. Then, at 3:35 PM on Sunday, April 15, R6 train #4221 struck a trespasser near Hunting Park Avenue in Philadelphia. Service to Norristown had to be suspended for a time, with two trains annulled and four others delayed—one for more than an hour. On the afternoon of Tuesday, April 17, the day after the big storm, SEPTA's audio-visual and public address network in the stations failed and the computerized Train View system which provides real-time train status information also shut down. At 5:30 PM on Tuesday, April 3, an overhead power loss on the Mainline between Wayne Junction and North Broad delayed numerous trains, even after power was restored a half hour later. A loss of signal power on the R3 Media-Elwyn line at 7:05 AM on Thursday, April 5, delayed 12 trains and knocked out the automatic protection at several grade crossings. A CSX freight train which went into emergency while moving through "Wood" interlocking at Woodbourne at 4 PM that same day delayed several R3 trains and caused #369 to be annulled out of West Trenton. NORFOLK SOUTHERN intermodal train 21E went into emergency at "Kalb" interlocking in Norristown at 6:48 AM on Thursday, April 19, delaying two R6 trains.



AMTRAK last month began the second phase of its \$4.5-million project to rebuild both tracks on the 4,154-foot expanded Pennsylvania bridge over the Susquehanna River between Perryville and Havre de Grace, MD. The work involves replacing the deck on

the century-old bridge with 3,184 new ties and laying about a mile of welded rail on the #2 track, which is the track on the east side of the bridge. Because only the #3 track will be available to handle trains in both directions, Amtrak issued a special Northeast Corridor timetable effective from April 14 through the first week in June, adding about ten minutes to the schedules of most southbound trains including Acelas. (Northbounds can't afford to be delayed because of their slots into New York's Penn Station.) During this period, most MARC trains destined to Perryville are turning at Aberdeen, with certain Amtrak trains stopping at Perryville station to accommodate MARC passengers. Similar work was completed on #3 track in September 2005.

A revised Keystone Service timetable was to be issued effective May 7, showing revised Harrisburg schedules affected by the trackwork project between Overbrook and Paoli (see above). AMTRAK also published a colorful folder describing the improved service on the 104-mile all-electric line. Every once in a while a Harrisburg train is seen without its normal AEM-7 electric locomotive pulling or pushing. In February, SEPTA Engineer and Chapter Member Rich Werner reported westbound train #605 with a cab car, four coaches and P42 diesel #190 pushing on the rear. The proposed site for the new Paradise station on the Harrisburg line, which would serve both AMTRAK and the STRASBURG RAIL ROAD, has been rejected by the Federal Railroad Administration due to non-compliance with the ADA. Planners are now investigating five alternate sites. The Strasburg still plans to install a turntable at the Leaman Place end of its line (Harrisburg Chapter).

Contrary to the position of the Bush Administration, AMTRAK President Alexander Kummant has come out strongly in favor of retaining its system of long-distance trains. In a letter to Congress, he said "Amtrak believes that a national system of long-distance routes should continue to be part of the fabric of a future rail network. We must continue to improve the efficiency of that network, and selectively adjust route or connect segments to corridors where market demands warrant. But while most of the future growth in service will be in shorter distance corridors, a basic network of interregional connections should remain in place." Amtrak has requested an increase in its annual appropriation for Fiscal Year 2008 beginning in October from \$1.29 billion this year to \$1.53 billion. On April 25 the Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee approved the Passenger Rail Investment & Improvement Act, which would reauthorize Amtrak and set funding over the next six years. Transportation Subcommittee Chairman Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey said, "After several gloomy years, the future of America's passenger railroad is bright. Our legislation will provide the necessary resources to bring Amtrak up to speed as a real alternative to taking a plane or driving a car" (*Railway Age*, NARP).

NJ TRANSIT has begun a \$47-million project to rebuild the Metropark station on AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor in northern New Jersey. Originally opened by Penn Central in 1971, Metropark became New Jersey's first park-and-ride station and now is the busiest non-terminal station in NJT's rail network, handling 14,200 NJT customers and 1,000 Amtrak riders on an average weekday. The project will include an expanded station building, longer and wider platforms and extended canopies, heated and air-conditioned platform shelters, improved lighting and a new public address system (*Trains*). AMTRAK has begun a new print ad campaign promoting its Acela service, using the tagline "Our cabins are always depressurized"

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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.....”The Ghosts of Duffy’s Cut” is a new film documentary about the mysterious deaths of 57 Irish laborers in 1832 while working on the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad in Chester County. The men are believed to be buried in a mass grave near Duffy’s Cut, along AMTRAK’s present Harrisburg mainline just west of Malvern. The Smithsonian Institution has bought the U.S. rights to the film, which is also the title of a book published by researchers at nearby Immaculata University. For more about the Duffy’s Cut project, telephone the University at 610-647-4400 ext. 3491.

The 18-month celebration of the 100th anniversary of AMTRAK’s ex-PRR station in Wilmington, DE, is underway (see June 2006 Cinders). Future events are listed on the website www.downtownwilmington.com (PRRT&HS).....AMTRAK has launched a new website called “Whistle Stop” (www.whistlestop.amtrak.com) as an outlet to share the “numerous, heart-warming stories it regularly receives from passengers.” Riders are invited to post their own stories of rail travel.....AMTRAK has nearly completed a program to equip some 440 food service cars, major stations and maintenance facilities with automated electronic defibrillators and oxygen dispensers for treating heart attack victims (NARP).....AMTRAK’s deputy chief engineer for maintenance, Bruce Willbrant, retired in March after nearly five decades of railroad service with the New York Central, Penn Central, Conrail and Amtrak. Over the years he has held numerous management positions, including chief engineer for Conrail (Amtrak Ink).



CSX
NS
OTHER ROADS

On April 24 CSX and the City of Philadelphia settled this long-running dispute over retaining the two pedestrian crossings at Schuylkill River Park in center city (see January 2007, August 2006 Cinders). In essence, CSX agreed to withdraw the lawsuit it filed against the City more than two years ago seeking to force the closure of the two crossings of its railroad at Locust and Race Streets, on the grounds of safety. The City has agreed to install automatic fence gates at the crossings, and CSX agreed to participate in construction of a new pedestrian overpass at 25th & Spruce Streets to access the proposed southern extension of the park, which is sandwiched between the river and CSX’s double-tracked mainline. A citizens group made up largely of nearby residents, Free Schuylkill River Park, was instrumental in pressuring both sides to reach an agreement, which includes a promise by CSX to cease parking trains loaded with odoriferous garbage in the area. One of the funding sources will be PennDOT, which has pledged \$1 million toward the project.

CSX has begun a project to lower its ex-Reading Trenton Subdivision tracks under three bridges in Northeast Philadelphia, to allow the passage of double stack container trains and multilevel automobile cars (Railpace). Currently, double stack traffic moving between Philadelphia and North Jersey must detour

over NORFOLK SOUTHERN by way of Norristown and the Morrisville Line. In the early 1980’s CONRAIL completed an undercutting project so that standard trailer-on-flatcar shipments could pass under these low-clearance bridges.....The *Inquirer* reports that the discovery of protected bald eagles in the area has halted the planned construction of a new \$150-million Philadelphia Regional Produce Market on former Navy Yard property in South Philadelphia (see April Cinders). The market would be adjacent to CSX’s Greenwich yard and an NS intermodal terminal.....A CSX train operating on the SEPTA-owned Stony Creek branch derailed in Norristown on April 12, forcing the closure of nearby streets.

As freight traffic levels recently have declined after more than two years of spectacular growth, several large railroads began to lay off employees. In March CSX idled about 300 workers. But when Billionaire Investor Warren Buffett revealed last month that he had become the largest shareholder in BNSF RAILWAY, stocks of all the other major carriers rose in Wall Street trading. Shares in CSX jumped 3.5 percent and NS stock advanced 4.2 percent. By month’s end their shares were valued at \$43 and \$53 respectively.....CSX reported last month that it had located 88 new facilities on its system and helped more than 50 other plants on its lines to expand. Customer investments totaled \$2.7 billion and are expected to generate over 150,000 new carloads of freight annually.

NS last month launched a new advertising campaign based on the slogan “Norfolk Southern: The future of transportation”.....In early March NS began operating over a new bridge at Fort Washington, which spans both the SEPTA Mainline tracks and the Route 309 Expressway which is being widened. For the past year Morrisville Line trains have used a steel shoo-fly bridge during construction of the new structure (see April 2006, December 2005 Cinders).....NS CEO Wick Moorman joined other top railroad executives last month in testifying before the Surface Transportation Board on the need to expand rail capacity to meet the nation’s growing demand for freight service. Moorman warned of a “looming transportation crisis” that could lead to gridlock by the year 2020 unless massive amounts of money are spent to increase the capacity of the American rail system. The executives again called for enactment of a 25-percent investment tax credit to help the large railroads meet the costs of heavy capital spending, while shortline representatives said they want Congress to renew the existing 50-percent tax credit that expires this year. Two Senators later introduced the Freight Rail Infrastructure Capacity Expansion Act, which would provide the hoped-for 25-percent tax credit to railroads investing in capital projects (*Traffic World*, NARP).

Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen have ratified a new labor agreement with CSX which makes them eligible for performance bonuses of six, eight and ten percent in 2007, 2008 and 2009 respectively (see April Cinders). The bonuses will be paid if the company meets its financial goals in those years, an option which members feel is preferable to wage increases resulting from the union’s national negotiations. The agreement covers 5,200 CSX engineers systemwide (*Trains*).....CSX was forced to detour several freight trains over NS through Pennsylvania because of a derailment in early March west of Pittsburgh. Even more detours followed the massive derailment near Oneida, NY, on March 12, which shut down the ex-CONRAIL Water Level Route through upstate New York for nearly a week. Many freights powered by their own CSX

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MAY 18, 2007: Grand opening of new front entrance at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: www.railroadmuseumpa.org).

MAY 19 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.

MAY 19: Steam excursion from Scranton to East Stroudsburg, PA and return in observance of Armed Forces Day, sponsored by Steamtown National Historic Site. Military equipment will be on display adjacent to the station at East Stroudsburg. Train leaves Steamtown 9 AM, returns about 5 PM. For information and reservations, telephone 570-340-5204 from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM daily.

MAY 20: Centennial charter on SEPTA's Norristown High Speed Line to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Philadelphia & Western Railway's first run on May 22, 1907, sponsored by Rockhill Trolley Museum. Special two-car N5 train leaves 69th Street Terminal at 9:45 AM, returning about 1:30 PM. Several round-trips to Norristown will be made, including runbys and photo stops. Fares: \$35 adults, \$20 children (12 and under). Order tickets from: Railways to Yesterday, Inc., P. O. Box 1601, Allentown, PA 18105-1601. Tickets will be held for pickup at the terminal. For information, telephone Gerhard Salomon at 610-965-9028.

MAY 20: "Otter Valley Limited" rare mileage excursion over Vermont Railway from Burlington to Rutland, VT and return, sponsored by Massachusetts Bay RRE. Special train originates at former Union Station in downtown Burlington at 10:30 AM, expected return to Burlington at 6:30 PM, with several photo stops and layover at Rutland. Fare: Adults: \$59, Children (12 and under) \$39. Optional box lunches available. Order tickets from: Mass Bay RRE, P. O. Box 4245-BV, Andover, MA 01810-0814. Additional information available by calling 978-470-2066 or E-mail to trips@massbayrre.org.

JUNE 1-3: "Penny Days" honoring the Pennsylvania Railroad, at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg. The Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society will participate. Noted railroad artists and photographers will display and sell their works. Special presentations, operating layouts, memorabilia and tours of PRR equipment will be featured. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

JUNE 2: Monopoly tournament during "Penny Days" at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, beginning at 10 AM. This official tournament will feature guest judges and prizes. Entry fee: \$20 per person, which includes admission to the museum that day. To register, send name, address, telephone number and entry fee to Monopoly Tournament, c/o Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, P. O. Box 125, Strasburg, PA 17579-0125. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: www.rmmuseumpa.org).

JUNE 22-23: Delmarva Chicken Festival at Federalsburg, MD. Diesel-powered train rides via Maryland & Delaware Railroad to Hurllock and return leave at 11 AM, 1, 3, 5 and 7 PM both days. For information, telephone Connie Parvis at 302-856-9037 (E-mail parvis@dpickicken.com).

JUNE 23: Special chartered train on Maine Eastern Railroad from Brunswick to Rockland, ME and return. Train departs Brunswick at 11 AM, returns about 6:30 PM. Fare: \$35 per person. Optional connecting motorcoach from Boston area, \$15 additional. Optional Rockland harbor tour during layover. For complete information, contact: Mystic Valley Railway Society, P. O. Box 365486, Hyde Park, MA 02136-0009; telephone 617-361-4445 or visit website www.mysticvalleyrds.org.

JUNE 30: Steam excursion from Scranton to Delaware Water Gap, PA and return sponsored by Steamtown National Historic Site, including visit to the town's annual Founders Day celebration. Train will leave Steamtown at 9 AM, returning about 5 PM, with three-hour layover at Delaware Water Gap. Fares: \$51 adults, \$46 seniors (62 and over), \$30 for children (6-16). Reservations may be made by telephoning 570-340-5204 from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM daily.

JULY 5-8: "Reading Railroad Days" at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, featuring tours of Reading equipment, special presentations and a large model railroad display. The Reading Company Technical & Historical Society will participate. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

JULY 7-8: "RailFest 2007" at Altoona, PA, sponsored by Railroaders Memorial Museum, featuring excursions over Norfolk Southern (ex-Pennsylvania Railroad) mainline, railroaders show and sale, special tours and historic equipment displays including newly-installed 105-foot turntable. Museum will be open 9 AM-6 PM both days. Excursions powered by Juniata Terminal's former PRR E8 diesel locomotives #5711 and 5809 include the "Capitol Tripper" from Harrisburg to Altoona and return, leaving Harrisburg Amtrak station at 7:15 AM July 7, and a "Gateway Tripper" extension from Altoona to Pittsburgh and return. The special will leave Altoona at 4:30 PM Sunday the 8th, arriving Harrisburg about 7:15 PM. In addition, the "Horseshoe Special" using the same equipment will make three two-hour round-trips from Altoona to Gallitzin via Horseshoe Curve on Saturday the 7th, leaving Altoona station at 10:20 AM, 12:30 and 2:45 PM. Three more trips will be operated on Sunday the 8th at the same times. Fares for the Horseshoe Curve trains are \$30 each and \$60 first class in lounge car **Warrior Ridge**. Fares for the long-distance trains vary, with most first class already sold out. To order, telephone 888-4ALTOONA or 814-946-0834 Monday-Friday 9 AM-5 PM (website: www.railroadcity.com). Mailing address is: Railroads Memorial Museum, 1300 Ninth Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602-2413.

JULY 20: Philadelphia Chapter annual Bill Wagner Summer Dinner, to be held at Main Street Café, Lancaster Avenue, directly across from SEPTA's R5 Berwyn station. Complete details in June *Cinders*.

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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locomotives moved over NS's Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Lehigh Lines, as well as via the SUSQUEHANNA, CANADIAN PACIFIC and CSX's own Trenton Subdivision through Philadelphia and West Trenton (Harrisburg Chapter, *Railpace*).....CSX has received the last of 102 ES44DC diesel locomotives ordered last year from General Electric. The 4,400-hp units are numbered 5400-5501 (*Trains*).

NJ TRANSIT has a new executive director, replacing George Warrington who resigned in January. He is Richard R. Sarles, Sr., 62, who had been NJT's assistant executive director for capital programs & planning. Previously, he had been a vice president at AMTRAK 1996-2002 in charge of the Northeast Corridor high speed program and had also served with the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (*Trains*)..... The NJT board last month approved a \$1.59-billion operating budget for Fiscal Year 2008, under which rail and bus fares will increase an average of 9.6 percent. River Line fares between Camden and Trenton will rise by eight percent. One plus for riders is a change in the start of the morning peak period from 6:30 to 7 AM. The agency's \$1.9-billion capital program also was approved, one feature of which is funding for design work on a new car fleet to replace the 230 Arrow III electric MU cars dating from the 1970's. NJT also plans to rehabilitate 99 Comet IV coaches and replace 42 more aging diesel locomotives.

On one weekend last month NJT altered River Line schedules to accommodate trackwork needed to extend late-night service out of Camden from 36th Street station to the Route 73 station. On a following weekend buses were substituted between those stations (see August 2006 *Cinders*)..... Burlington City has been awarded \$100,000 in State funds to help develop a so-called transit village around the Burlington town centre station. It is the 19th transit village in New Jersey designed to revitalize communities around mass transit stations.....New York State has purchased the Farley Post Office Building in Manhattan from the U.S. Postal Service, in which NJT will be the anchor tenant, diverting its trains away from AMTRAK's adjacent Penn Station.....NJT last month began a program to conduct aerial surveys of its rail lines in northern and central New Jersey, using a specially-equipped helicopter. The program will provide updated maps of the rail infrastructure.

On April 20, 1932, just 75 years ago, the first fully-air-conditioned long-distance passenger train, the Baltimore & Ohio's National Limited, made its inaugural run from Jersey City to St. Louis. Four days later, the Chesapeake & Ohio's Washington-Cincinnati **George Washington** debuted as a fully air-conditioned train. Actually, the first all-AC train, introduced in May 1931, was the B&O's **Columbian**, which ran only between Jersey City and Washington (*Trains*).....Part of the old Bethlehem Steel plant in Bethlehem will be demolished this summer to make way for a \$600-million casino development. Still, more than 20 buildings including the huge #2 Machine Shop will be preserved, as well as the 20-story-high blast furnace complex. It is hoped that a museum devoted to American industry will eventually be located in the historic steel property, and many display pieces have been saved. Among the artifacts removed before the demolition was a diesel locomotive—presumably one of the steel company's own switchers—and a fire truck, according to an *Inquirer* report.

Leroy Schantz Dietrich

March 24, 2007

We note with sadness the passing of NRHS Chairman Emeritus Leroy Schantz Dietrich of Springfield, Virginia on Saturday, March 24, 2007, at the age of 89, following an extended period of declining health.

Lee was affectionately known as "The Colonel" by NRHS officers and directors, for his long years of service, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, as a United States Air Force pilot. He was a native of the Lehigh Valley region of Pennsylvania, and maintained his membership through Lehigh Valley Chapter. He joined NRHS in 1937, and was to have received his 70-year NRHS pin this year.

Dietrich served the Society in a host of positions, following a number of years as president of the Washington, DC Chapter. He served as NRHS Senior Vice President from 1987-1996 and Chairman of the Board from 1996-2005. In addition, he served as Director, Membership Awards for more than a decade. His ongoing sense of humor served to liven up many National meetings and banquets.

A visitation is scheduled for Thursday, May 24, 2007 from 1 to 2 PM at the Jefferson Funeral Chapel, 5755 Castlewellan Drive, Alexandria, Virginia, with interment in Arlington National Cemetery at 3 PM.

This writer was privileged to have interacted with Lee at the National level for more than 20 years, and his counsel, friendship and humor will be long remembered.

--R. L. Eastwood, Jr.

Extra List (Continued from Page 7)

AUGUST 21-25: NRHS 2007 national convention at Chattanooga, TN, to be headquartered at Chattanooga Choo-Choo Holiday Inn located in former Terminal Station. Events include excursions on Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum mainline through Missionary Ridge tunnel, shop tour, night photo session, Civil War battlefield tour and annual banquet. NRHS members will receive the official convention brochure. Hotel rate for conventiongoers is set at \$89 per night. The Convention Committee's address is: Chattanooga Rails 2007, 2025 Zumbel Road, St. Charles, MO 63303-2723 (website: www.chattrails.com).

Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS RAILRODIANA AUCTION

Friday, June 15, 2007, 7:00 PM

Thomas Jefferson Faculty Club

1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia

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).



As time passes we often forget the "bigness" of the Pennsylvania Railroad. PRR's total of 125 J1 2-10-4's was nearly 50 percent of that type owned by all other North American railroads. In 1924, the Pennsy was operating 7,400 steam locomotives—3,335 of which were 2-8-0's. These Consolidations alone nearly equaled the New York Central's entire steam roster! (R. A. LaMassena).....Lima Locomotive Works outshopped its last Berkshire-type (2-8-4) steam locomotives in 1949 after having built 611 locomotives. Meanwhile, toy train manufacturer Lionel built "millions" of Berkshires by 1966! (Lionel-G. & T. Souter).....On May 3, 1939, the Pennsylvania Railroad announced that Altoona Works has turned out the first of 100 modernized P70 coaches for World's Fair (New York) travel – 50 are 84-seat versions for day trains along the New York-Washington corridor, and the other 50 have reclining seats for long-distance travel.....Another piece of the PRR slips away: CSX has received permission to abandon the Delaware Avenue extension from Milepost 6.27 to the end of track at MP 6.53 in Philadelphia. This effectively abandons old Pier 124 which was once a subject of the 1957 PRR calendar (*Arkansas Railroader*).

Speaking of coal dumpers, the last of these in the New Jersey-New York area is threatened. A developer wants to build a warehouse on the site of the former Reading Railroad Port Reading (NJ) facility and its McMyler coal dumper. We believe that the McMyler dumper (not operational) at Port Richmond is the last of this type in the Philadelphia area (NJ Transportation Heritage).....Attention film buffs and Reading fans: A movie production crew shot some night scenes at 31st Street & Girard Avenue (Park Junction) one night in November 1968. It was for a film called "The Last Man" with Oscar-winner Sidney Poitier, and also starred Reading Alco RS3 #471 and ten freight cars! Another bonus was that the film crew's dinner was catered by Horn & Hardart's famed Reading Terminal automat restaurant. It's possible that they may have enjoyed some of that delicious macaroni & chesse in the brown oval dish. Does any reader recall this film?? (*Reading Railroad News*).....Model Railroad Department: The Reading Company leased five Pullman 28-1 parlor cars for Philadelphia-New York service. They were named **Abigail Adams**, **Clara Burton**, **Jane Austin**, **Louisa Alcott** and **Molly Pitcher**. These cars were air-conditioned between 1934 and 1938, with Reading terminating the lease in 1942. Walther's markets this air-conditioned car type in HO gauge, under Item #932-10300 for the undecorated version (**Crusader**).

"More of our daily riders have formed commuter clubs and have rented air-conditioned private cars at a charge in addition to their regular fares. We now have a close relationship to 16 such clubs totaling approximately 1,750 members (Jersey Central Annual Report for 1956). (*Roy laughs and says "The 'socialist' public rail*

Fairmount Park Transit Company (A 1946 Snapshot)

President: Norman S. Alexander (also president in 1924)
Secretary/Treasurer: Elmer H. Strunk
Office: Fairmount Park
Miles of Line: 8.8 (on private right-of-way)
Gauge: 5' 2-1/2"
Cars: 29 motors, 30 trailers, 1 service motor, 2 work trailers
Shop/Barn: off Montgomery Drive in Fairmount Park, overlooking Reading Railroad's Belmont Junction
Amusement Park: Woodside, located at intersection of Monument, Ford Roads and Conshohocken Avenue. Park opened 1897, closed 1955
Last Public Run: September 9, 1946 – last regularly-scheduled open trolley car service in the United States

Source: Mass Transportation Director, 1945-46

Note: Internet-connected readers can search "Google" for "Fairmount Park Transit" for some nice photos, some color!

*authorities today do not favor a two-class system!!).....On September 24, 1955, meanwhile, the Jersey Central ended the use of steam with an excursion from Jersey City to Jim Thorpe using Camelback 4-6-0 #774. It was built in 1913 by Baldwin and was the last to be scrapped. The only surviving CNJ Camelback is #589 in the Baltimore & Ohio Museum in Baltimore (CNJ Historical Society).....A recent article indicated that train riders using Downingtown station only want three things: (1) a heated shelter, (2) a nearby coffee shop and (3) the pedestrian subway to be cleaned. A year-old study showed daily ridership (Amtrak/SEPTA) as follows: Downingtown 306, Paoli 1,200, Exton 563, Thorndale 355, and Malvern 550. That bastion of ruralism, Whitford, was not mentioned (*Daily Local News*).*

And You Thought SEPTA Has Financial Ills??? Chicago is still the beating heart of much of American industry, but its arteries, both road and rail, are increasingly clogged. Chicagoland's Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is looking at an empty wallet. Costs have grown three times as fast as revenues over the past five years. Last month, RTA released a five-year "strategic plan" (otherwise known as a plea for money) that calls for an extra \$400 million in annual operating funds and \$10 billion in capital spending. (*The Economist*).....Speaking of Chicago, the Rock Island's passenger train the **Twin Star Rocket** (linking the North Star and Lone Star states), joined the "Rocket" fleet in 1944. The 1,370-mile, 26-hour run between Minneapolis and Houston was the longest north-south passenger run in the United States. The train carried a parlor-lounge, sleepers and diner almost up to its final days (Bill Marvel).

The Delaware & Susquehanna Model Railroad Club has leased the former Atlantic City Railroad/PRSL station at Haddon Heights, NJ as a location for a layout and meetings. It is one of the nicest surviving depots in the area (**Crusader**).....Check out this website: www.rsme.org. It's all about the Reading (PA) Society of Model Engineers and their 15-inch gauge scale railroad that runs through the woods near Temple, PA. The model of the Reading Baldwin AS16 road-switcher is amazing! (NJ Transport Heritage).

Storm Batters Region

(Continued from Page 1)

rail and bus systems. No specific problems were reported on the freight railroads, but Norfolk Southern issued a warning that some shipments might be affected by flooding in certain parts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.

SEPTA took an especially severe lashing from the nor'easter. All service on the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line, which shares Amtrak's Keystone Corridor, had to be suspended early on Monday the 16th. At 5:33 AM the catenary wires fell on all three tracks at "Glen" interlocking, four miles west of Malvern, and 14 minutes later power was knocked out between Bryn Mawr and Paoli. Amtrak patrols found trees in the catenary at Frazer, Devon and Merion and a large tree fouling the #1 and 2 tracks at Villanova. After the right-of-way was cleared and electrical repairs made, power was restored at 12:20 PM to the #2 and 3 tracks from "Zoo" to Paoli and on #4 track from Paoli to Frazer, allowing the restoration of R5 service as far as Malvern. But until mid-afternoon westward trains could not make the station stop at Devon because of wires fouling the platform. Almost 50 R5 trains were annulled before service could be restored.

That same morning, Monday the 16th, downed trees south of Secane station disrupted catenary and signal power on the Media-Elwyn line. This forced the cancellation of all R3 service on the line, as power was not restored until 8:19 PM. Normal operations finally resumed the next morning. Power also was lost for a time at "Walnut" interlocking near University City station,

delaying several R1 Airport and R2 Wilmington trains. R7 train #712, the first train out of Trenton on Monday, struck a tree on #4 track along the Corridor and was terminated, its passengers transferred to following train #714. Altogether, SEPTA logged 216 weather-related delays, including 101 annulments, on this very stormy April day.

Flood warnings were issued systemwide for Sunday and Monday but these resulted in only spotty delays. By early Monday afternoon the notorious Assunpink Creek had risen high enough to flood the tracks used by SEPTA at Trenton station, delaying several westbound R7 trains. The next morning, eight SEPTA trains were delayed at Trenton by up to half an hour and one, #9720, was annulled, before the creek receded. Oddly enough, though, the usually flood-prone R6 line through low-lying Conshohocken ran with relatively minor problems in spite of the five inches of rain which fell on the Philadelphia area. Apparently, rainfall in the upstate Schuylkill River watershed was insufficient to bring the river to the high-water marks seen in several previous floods.

While most everyone enjoys an occasional April shower, no one is looking forward to a repeat of the nor'easter which struck the region in the spring of 2007.

--Frank Tatnall

Annual Bill Wagner Summer Dinner
Friday, July 20, 2007
Main Street Café, Berwyn, PA

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