

# PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER NRHS

## OCTOBER 2016



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Volume 77

Number 9

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

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

## SEPTA Weekday Schedules Set to Resume October 3

In a very late breaking development, SEPTA was set to announce that normal weekday schedules shown in the June 19 Regional Rail timetables would resume on Monday, October 3.

In making the announcement, SEPTA cautioned there could be some adjustment in consists on trains during the first couple of weeks, but that things would improve as more Silverliner V cars come back on line – at a pace of about 15 cars per week.

## MEETING NOTICE:

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2016**

Room 121, Randell Hall (access through Main Hall main entrance, 3141 Chestnut Street – just east of 32<sup>nd</sup>) Drexel University, (three blocks from Amtrak/SEPTA/NJ Transit 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station (*In the event meeting is relocated to another room, notice will be posted beside the grand staircase inside entrance to Main Hall*)). In addition to being easily accessible to all public transportation, there is generally plenty of parking on Chestnut Street right in front of Main Hall – pay at the kiosks.

**MEETING START TIME: 7:00 PM**

On Friday, October 21, 2016, Philadelphia Chapter will host Rail Historian with a slide presentation, *Riding the Reading to Bethlehem*, a potpourri of views up and down the Bethlehem Branch. A tour of the line between Reading Terminal and Bethlehem in the time frame from 1930 to 1970 is covered. Steve is a retired Abington School District history teacher, and later operated the model building firm, Stewart Hobbies. Come out and you may see some views you haven't seen before.

## Meeting Cancellation Notice

*In the event of an extreme weather or transportation emergency on a Philadelphia Chapter meeting date, 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.*

## AMTRAK Announces October 29-30 2016 Autumn Express Excursion

Amtrak has announced its 2016 Autumn Express excursion, to be operated October 29 and 30, 2016 from New York Penn Station, NY and Newark Penn Station NJ to Harrisburg, PA and return using some rare mileage not covered in quite a number of years.



The trip will cover the former Lehigh Valley Railroad, including a trip through the famous Musconetcong Tunnel, opened in 1875. After crossing the Delaware River into Pennsylvania, the Express will follow the Lehigh River to Allentown before rolling through the scenic farm country of eastern Pennsylvania. The train will cover the former **Queen of the Valley** route through Reading to Harrisburg. Regular passenger trains operated over this line until June, 1963.

After changing direction at Harrisburg, the Express will operate eastbound over Amtrak's Keystone Corridor. After a photo stop at the Amtrak station in Lancaster, we'll follow the route of the PRR's Blue Ribbon Fleet through the New York and Pittsburgh subway at Zoo Tower in West Philadelphia. Rejoining the Amtrak Northeast Corridor, we'll make a high speed return to Newark and New York.

The special will depart New York-Penn at 8:00 AM, and Newark-Penn Station at 8:30, with return to Newark planned for 6:10 PM and New York at 6:30. Tickets are \$149 per adults and include a boxed lunch in a souvenir tote bag as well as a commemorative pin. Additional food selections will be available for purchase in an Amcafe on board. Seating is limited.

A commemorative 2016 Amtrak Autumn Express long-sleeve thermal tee-shirt will be available by visiting special website: <http://amtrak.bnr.corpmmerchandise.com/AmtrakExpress2016>.

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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*

#### CHAPTER OFFICERS (Elected)

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**2016-2017 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:** Effective September 1, 2016, \$20.00 per person, which covers Philadelphia Chapter dues through December 31, 2017. (NRHS National membership dues for 2016 and 2017 are \$50.00, billed directly by NRHS). NRHS chapters bill their members separately for Chapter dues, which is done annually in November. The donation requests for Philadelphia Railfriends are mailed during November via separate mailing from November *Cinders*. Anyone interested in becoming a member of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS should forward remittance in the amount of \$20.00 to Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Please be sure to include name, valid mailing address, telephone number and E-mail address, as applicable. Remittance should be made payable to **Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS**.

**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 ANY E-MAIL ADDRESS** so our records are complete.

*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 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **EXCHANGE newsletters should be sent to:** R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353, or by electronic mail to [ayrestower@comcast.net](mailto:ayrestower@comcast.net).

## About This Issue of *Cinders*

This issue of *Cinders* is, without a doubt, the most challenging that I have done in my 45 years as editor. Finalizing our October 21 program, getting details on the October 29-30 Amtrak Autumn Excursions, securing information on SEPTA's Rail Rodeo on October 15 have proved extremely challenging. Delivery of this issue to the printer, originally scheduled for Tuesday, September 27 had to be postponed until Thursday, September 29. Topping that off, SEPTA was set to announce on September 29 that the June 19 weekday Regional Rail schedules would resume on October 3.

**Because of the difficulty in getting information about the SEPTA Rail Rodeo to us, SEPTA has kindly extended the deadline for registration for Philadelphia Chapter members until Monday, October 10, by which time everyone should have their issue of *Cinders*. See SEPTA Rail Rodeo on Page 5.**

As a result, members will find items of importance scattered throughout this issue, and we urge you to examine and read every page of this issue thoroughly to insure you have not missed anything. Please accept our apologies if things don't appear where you would expect to find them.

R. L. EASTWOOD, JR., President and Editor

## PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS Board of Directors Meeting Autumn, 2016

**Tuesday, October 11, 2016  
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**

**Passenger Services Conference Room  
Amtrak 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station  
(If meeting is at alternate location, note  
Will be posted on Conference Room door)**

### If your *Cinders* Arrives in Bad Condition

If your *Cinders* arrives damaged or with pages missing, contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or [ayrestower@comcast.net](mailto:ayrestower@comcast.net) and a replacement copy will promptly be sent to you. The incidence of damage has been greatly reduced through the use of envelopes for mailing each issue, although there is an additional cost involved.

## WILLIAM R. HODSON September 7, 2016

It is with sadness that we record the passing of Philadelphia Chapter Member William R. Hodson, of Telford, PA on September 7 at the age of 72. Bill joined Philadelphia Chapter in 1996, his membership spanning 20 years.

Bill was a graduate of Philadelphia's Central High School, received a BS in electrical engineering from Drexel University and an MS in electrical engineering from the University of Maryland. He worked for 27 years as a staff engineering consultant for Leeds and Northrup in North Wales. He later worked for Honeywell in Fort Washington, following which he started his own consulting business. Hodson had 11 U. S. patents issued to him as an inventor.

Active in his community, he served as an officer on his daughter's Home & School Council, served on the Franconia Township Planning Commission, also serving for a period of 24 years on that township's Zoning Hearing Board. Highlighting his interest in railroads and their history, he was a board member of the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society. He was a longtime member of the Christ Covenant Church in Harleysville, where funeral services were held on September 17, where Bill served on the church council.

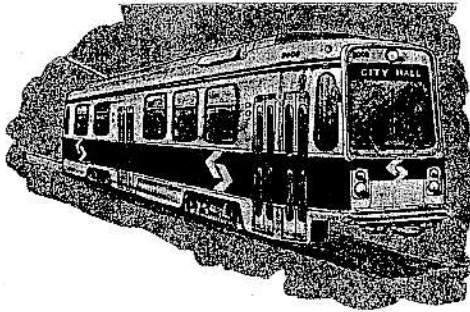
Bill is survived by his wife of 47 years, Donna, his daughters Wendy Grube and Pamela. Philadelphia Chapter extends its sympathy and condolences to the Hodson family, and expresses our thanks for having shared Bill with the rail history community over the years.

# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

## SEPTA TRANSIT



**The news contained in this column is updated through September 25, 2016. Events after that date will appear in November.**

So far not much is being said publicly about SEPTA's negotiations with Transport Workers Union Local 234 on a new contract for the 5,000 workers on the City Transit Division. But it's certain that talks are or soon will be underway, since the current contract expires on October 31..... SEPTA is concerned about a victory the trucking industry won in a lawsuit against the New York Thruway, in which the truckers complained that some of their tolls were being spent on projects unrelated to the Thruway. If a similar suit were filed against the Pennsylvania Turnpike and it were decided in the same way, it could threaten the \$450 million in annual payments that the Turnpike makes to PennDOT under Act 89. Some of these funds are paid out to transit agencies for capital projects, and have made possible SEPTA's current rebuilding campaign.....Broad Street and Market-Frankford Line riders can now use credit or debit cards to buy "quick trip" single-ride tickets at 18 selected stations. They will be available from kiosks at all stations on these lines by October 17.

SEPTA reported a small operating surplus for Fiscal Year 2016 ended last June 30, the 17<sup>th</sup> consecutive year in which the Authority has achieved a balanced budget.....The Broad Street subway carried an additional 10,000 riders during the four-day Democratic National Convention in July. The main events were held at the Wells Fargo Center in South Philadelphia .....SEPTA has sold 10,982 of its new Key farecards, which can be used on all city and suburban transit routes. SEPTA hopes to launch the Key Cards on Regional Rail sometime next year.....Around 40,000 photo cards for seniors should be mailed out in late October to those who have registered and had their pictures taken.....Trolleys returned to Route 15 Girard Avenue on September 4 after a summer-long track renewal project.

## SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



The new Crum Creek viaduct at Swarthmore opened for service on September 5, on time and under budget. Work to install track and string catenary over the bridge was completed in late August, so that service through to Elwyn could be restored after a nearly three-month outage. Shuttle bus service between Swarthmore and the four stations south of the work site was provided while the bridge project was underway. The new bridge was built on the footprint of the old structure, which had been in service since 1895 and was in extremely deteriorated condition (see June, September *Cinders*)..... SEPTA has taken advantage of the suspension of rail service on the Cynwyd line during the current equipment shortage (see separate article) to build high-level platforms at the Bala and Cynwyd stations.

SEPTA has received a Federal grant of \$1.6 million for improvements at the Lawndale station in Northeast Philadelphia. The funds will be used to construct a pedestrian underpass beneath the CSX Trenton Line and SEPTA's paralleling Fox Chase Line, which will eliminate the present surface walkway across the two tracks. Another \$4-million is included in the grant to expand and improve the busy Wissahickon Transportation Center which serves 11 bus routes and is near the Regional Rail Wissahickon station.....Final design work for the new station at Ardmore has been completed (see July *Cinders*) ..... The *Intelligencer* newspaper in August published a story on Dorothy Malampy, who for 24 years has served as ticket agent at the Levittown station. Dorothy, age 89, reports for work every weekday at 4:30 AM!

Last month law enforcement officials said that the terror suspect who set off bombs in the Chelsea section of

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Manhattan, injuring 29 people, carried the bombs from his home in Elizabeth, NJ, to New York on board an NJ TRANSIT train. The suspect, a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Afghanistan, also placed a bomb in a trash can at the Elizabeth station, but it failed to detonate. He was quickly captured in a shootout with police in Linden, NJ. As a result, transit agencies in New York and North Jersey increased security around their properties. SEPTA maintains constant security and continues to remind riders to report any suspicious packages or activity ("See something, say something!"). On Wednesday, September 7, a report was received at Suburban Station that "something was going to happen" to train 3526. The train was stopped at Swarthmore station, an unattended box was found on board and removed by local police. Nothing was reported regarding the contents of the box.

Another possibly dangerous situation was reported last month, when several new Samsung Galaxy Note 7 smartphones exploded due to overheated lithium-ion batteries. Samsung issued a recall notice and airlines took steps to insure passengers had the phones turned off. Transit agencies in New York and New Jersey issued notices riders to turn off the phones when boarding trains, but SEPTA apparently has not yet issued any warnings.

A truck fire on Hulmeville Road near Langhorne disrupted West Trenton service for a time on Friday afternoon, September 2. Several trains were delayed for up to 40 minutes and some passengers were shuttled by bus around the area. Then, early on Friday afternoon, September 23, train 830 bound for Fox Chase, filled with smoke in the tunnel just north of suburban Station. The train, made up of four Silverliner IV cars, was halted and the 50 passengers evacuated back to the station. The train was annulled, the cause of the smoke located and the train then was able to deadhead to Wayne Electric shop. After a heavy rainstorm on the morning of Monday the 19<sup>th</sup>, the pedestrian tunnel at Overbrook station was flooded, and had to be pumped out. This was done within an hour.



## AMTRAK

AMTRAK last month signed a \$1.8-billion contract with Alstom to build 28 next-generation high-speed trains for the Northeast Corridor. The new trains, to be built to Alstom's "Avelia Liberty" design, will be capable of reaching speeds of up to 186 mph and could enter revenue service in 2021, replacing the present Acelas. Alstom will build the trains at its Hornell (NY) shop. They will be paid for out of the \$2.45-billion loan from the U.S. Department of Transportation to Amtrak announced by Vice President Biden on August 26, which also will be used for track and infrastructure improvements on the NEC (see September Cinders).....AMTRAK issued a new system timetable effective September 9, but it is available only online. No paper copies have been made available (see May Cinders).

AMTRAK was forced to suspend service on the Northeast Corridor late Sunday evening, September 18, because of the discovery of unexploded bombs in a trash can at the Elizabeth

(NJ) station (see above). During the morning on Monday reduced or "modified" service was operated to and from New York as a result of the continuing police investigation. NJ TRANSIT passengers also experienced delays on the Corridor. Scheduled operations were resumed around 10 AM.....A male trespasser was struck and killed by southbound Acela #2121 around 3:30 PM on Thursday, September 15 at Glenolden station. Delays to Amtrak trains ensued but were lessened when #1 track was reopened for reduced speeds just after 4 PM. SEPTA was forced to annul five Wilmington-Newark trains until it was allowed to resume service around 5:45 PM.

AMTRAK tested a new Siemens Charger diesel locomotive on two round trips between Philadelphia and Perryville, MD, on Monday, September 12. Numbered 4604, the unit was facing south and an Amtrak ACS-64 electric was on the north end of the test train. One run was delayed due to downed catenary wires at "Ragan" interlocking south of Wilmington just before 2 PM. The Charger locomotive also made a trip to Boston and return before being sent to Washington to have its special Northeast Corridor equipment removed. It then was returned to Chicago.....NARP reports that the continuing resolution being considered by Congress to fund the government beyond the September 30 budget deadline will include special provisions for AMTRAK. Some changes were needed due to passage of the FAST Act last year, with Amtrak to receive \$235 million for the Northeast Corridor and \$1.155 billion for the national network/



## CSX, NS OTHER ROADS

NORFOLK SOUTHERN continues to turn out diesel locomotives in heritage and other special paint schemes. The latest to be released is rebuilt DC-to-AC conversion #4002, class AC44C6M, carrying another version of its prototype "mane" scheme: a horse's mane on gray flanks with a Tuscan red stripe outlining it. This unit has a black nose as compared with #4000 and 4001 which have blue noses. There will be 18 AC44C6M rebuilds, #4000-4017, but apparently not all will have special paint schemes.....Railpace reports that local fans were surprised on June 27 when two of CSX's "Executive" F40's were seen on a local freight at Yardley bound for Woodbourne yard. Normally these units are used exclusively on the railroad's executive train. Apparently a deadheading inspection train was laying over and it was decided to use the ex-AMTRAK units on the local freight.

Governor Christie has signed a bill requiring that NJ TRANSIT hold public hearings and provide notice of the hearings before instituting any reductions in rail or bus service. NJT was criticized last year for eliminating some late-night trains without hearings.....NJT had to suspend service on its

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Atlantic City line the morning of Friday, September 23, between 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station and Pennsauken, reportedly due to some sort of power failure at or near 30<sup>th</sup> Street. A number of AMTRAK Northeast Corridor trains also were delayed up to 30 minutes during that time.....The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania at Strasburg has been accepted as an official affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. Very few railroad museums have received this honor.....Progress Rail, a unit of Caterpillar Inc., has changed the name of its Electro-Motive Diesel subsidiary to Progress Rail Locomotive, Inc. But its products will continue to be marketed and sold as EMD products, and the EMD logo will continue to be affixed to its locomotives (*Trains*).

### Important Phone Numbers

**CINDERS** lists below the telephone numbers which should be used to report suspicious sightings, emergencies or other conditions affecting rail operations, including trespassers, vandalism, fires, defective equipment, etc.

<b>AMTRAK</b>	<b>800-331-0008</b>
<b>CSX</b>	<b>800-232-0144</b>
<b>CONRAIL Shared Assets</b>	<b>800-272-0911</b>
<b>NJ TRANSIT (NJ only)</b>	<b>800-242-0236</b>
<b>NORFOLK SOUTHERN</b>	<b>800-453-2530</b>
<b>PATCO Transit</b>	<b>856-963-7995</b>
<b>SEPTA</b>	<b>215-580-8111</b>

### NJ Transit Issues Safety Advisory on Samsung Galaxy Note7

Following safety concerns raised by Samsung about its Galaxy Note7, NJ Transit is strongly urging all customers not to use or charge the mobile device on board trains, buses, light rail vehicles or in stations and facilities. "We are asking our customers who have the Galaxy Note7 to simply turn it off before entering an NJ Transit facility or boarding a vehicle," said Interim Executive Director Dennis Martin. "Because of the uncertainties surrounding this device, we are issuing this precautionary advisory to ensure the safety of all our customers."

The Samsung Galaxy Note7 has been the subject of numerous accounts of the batteries bursting into flames. Both Samsung and the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission are urging owners to power down these devices and stop charging or using them.

"NJ Transit is urging our customers to do the responsible thing and heed the manufacturer's advice to power down the Galaxy Note7" said Gardner Tabon, Chief of NJT's Office of System Safety. "This is especially critical when riding a transit system along with hundreds of thousands of others." NJ Transit has not had any reported cases of a Samsung Galaxy Note7 becoming a fire hazard. In February 2016, NJT restricted customers and employees from using, charging, storing or transporting hoverboards following similar fire safety concerns.

## AMTRAK Announces October 29-30 2016 Autumn Express Excursion

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Shirt orders are being accepted through October 9, 2016, and will NOT be available for purchase on the train.

Tickets will go on sale on Monday, October 3 at 10:00 AM. To book this trip, visit the Amtrak website, and go to the "Buy Tickets" tab:

1. Select One-way
2. Enter New York-Penn Station (NYP) or Newark, NJ (NWK) in the "From" box.
3. Enter "Autumn Express - Excursion Train, PA (AXP) in the "To" box.
4. Select October 29 or 30, 2016 as the Depart Date
5. Select the number of Adult or Child passengers. Maximum of 8, please.

Tickets on the 2016 Autumn Express are non-refundable. They are valid for sale October 3-28, 2016, and valid for travel on October 29 and 30, 2016. They are valid between New York-Penn Station, NY (NYP) or Newark, NJ (NWK) and Autumn Express-Excursion Train, PA (AXP). Tickets are \$149 each for adults, and include a boxed lunch, tote bag and a souvenir pin. Up to two (2) children ages 2-12 may accompany each adult at half the adult fare. Children and infants must travel with an adult who is at least 18 years of age. Special excursion trains are eligible to earn Amtrak Guest Rewards points, but are not available for redemption travel. The Amtrak 2016 Autumn Express excursion fare is not combinable with any other discount offer or passenger type.

### PROGRAMS NEEDED!

As we enter our new program year, Philadelphia Chapter is seeking presenters with programs that would be of interest to our members. All months in the year 2017 are currently available. Please contact President Larry Eastwood ([ayrestower@comcast.net](mailto:ayrestower@comcast.net)) or Program Director Harry Garforth ([hgarforth@comcast.net](mailto:hgarforth@comcast.net)) for details (phone numbers on Page 2). PowerPoint programs preferred but we can deal with slides.

### SEPTA Rail Rodeo at Fern Rock

SEPTA will hold its annual Rail Rodeo at Fern Rock Car Shop on Saturday, October 15, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The event will include subway train and diesel equipment displays as well as subway train rides, as well as shop tours. There will be hands-on equipment demonstrations (including destination, sequencers and public address test equipment) Attendees will also find Mobile Positive Train Control (PTC) display and model train displays. Also included will be family entertainment, to include games, music and food. Associated with the Rail Rodeo will be an equipment display of Regional Rail equipment at the Fern Rock Transportation Center Regional Rail station.

Because of a delay in our receiving this information, SEPTA has extended the original October 3 deadline to register for the lottery to Monday, October 10, 2016 for Philadelphia Chapter members only. To register, search SEPTA 2016 Rail Rodeo on the internet, or visit the *Trains Magazine Newswire* website for a link.

## "An Amazing Excursion"

By Bob Janssen

*(Editor's Note: Bob Janssen has been a member of Baltimore Chapter, NRHS for 72 years, having joined in 1944. He has over the years main-tained meticulous records on excursions he's ridden, including equipment consists, meals, hotel stays, etc. Bob is 91 years of age, but, in spite of some vision impairment, still churns out these articles from the past. This article is on a Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS excursion from Philadelphia's Reading Terminal to Maybrook, NY, Sunday, October 14, 1956. We thank Baltimore Chapter for their permission to reprint this piece!!—THIS TRIP TOOK PLACE 60 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH!!)*

On Saturday, October 13, 1956, I got up at 5:30 AM and took the 6:12 AM 19 bus from Carney and transferred to a 13 bus on North Avenue and rode over to Charles Street. I walked down to Penn Station and purchased a half-rate ticket to Philadelphia. I then read until the **Morning Keystone** came at 7:41 AM. I found Frank Tosh and Howard Spies in a lower level seat near the front of the train. I sat with Frank. Howard got off at 30<sup>th</sup> Street. We reached Philadelphia at 9:17 AM and walked down to the Robert Morris Hotel, but they had no available rooms.

After Don Flayhart arrived from the **National Limited** and checked in, he went with us to the Adelphia Hotel where we were able to get a nice double room. Our room even had a TV (remember, this was 1956!). Then the three of us shopped around downtown for phonograph records, greeting cards and old postcards. Frank looked up Henry Mercur in Lit Brothers right after we had lunch in Dewey's.

Then, Frank was going to check out the Brill photo collection, so Don and I checked bus schedules and decided to take the El to Frankford and rode the Route 66 trolley coach to City Line. At the loop, a Neibauer bus was loading for Trenton, so we took it and rode up through Bristol and Levittown. We walked around downtown Trenton and went in the Capitol. It was a beautiful sunny Fall day, we next took a Trenton Transit "T" bus to the Pennsylvania Station and sat around for about 50 minutes until the 4:59 PM **Clocker** left for Philadelphia.

We got to 30<sup>th</sup> Street station at 6:36 PM and took the subway to 13<sup>th</sup> Street and met Frank at Reading Terminal. Then we all ate in the Horn & Hardart's at 15<sup>th</sup> & Market. Frank then went out to Henry Mercur's home while Don and I went to the Keystone Post Card Collector's exhibition in the Benjamin Franklin Hotel. We chatted with some of the collectors and bought a few post cards from Samuel Hoffman. We then returned to our rooms and I got to bed at 10:45 PM.

We arose at 7:00 AM on Sunday morning, checked out, and had breakfast in a little restaurant on 12<sup>th</sup> Street across from Reading Terminal. Then we checked our bags in the Terminal and boarded the Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS special train. Frank and I took seats across from Don Flayhart and John Eicker. Later, Joe Maloney and his two boys and Ed Wilsey joined us. I noted that NRHS Chairman Edward and Mrs. Hooper were also aboard.

The train consisted of two Reading Fairbanks-Morse TrainMasters, 13 coaches, a diner and a baggage car. We pulled out at 7:45 AM, EST and went up the Bethlehem Branch to

Bethlehem, where 200 more passengers from the Lehigh Valley Chapter's sales boarded, making a total of 750 aboard. We went over the Central of New Jersey to Easton, the Pennsylvania Railroad to Belvidere, and then up the Lehigh & Hudson River to Maybrook, NY, arriving 20 minutes late at 12:50 PM.

We had eaten lunches purchased from Union News men aboard the train. I led Frank, Don and John out of the railroad yards through some bushes and past some barking dogs, to a back street and came out just as my Aunt Betty and Uncle Dick drove by looking for us. They took us to a supermarket where we purchased some food for supper, visited the fire department, and left us at the railroad YMCA.

Our special left at 2:00 PM EST and came over the New Haven, Erie, Lehigh & New England, New York, Susquehanna & Western and Reading, reaching Philadelphia about 30 minutes late at 8:15 PM. I don't think that was too bad considering the extensive itinerary and number of carriers involved and experiences on other fantrips. Don and John got off at North Broad Street, but Frank and I had to get our bags so we stayed on back to Reading Terminal, which we reached at 8:15 PM.

After Frank and I picked up our bags, we took the subway to 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station and made the 8:36 PM Sunday-only train with a few minutes to spare and were surprised to find Don and John in the first coach. So, we hadn't lost any time in going for our bags. I slept until we reached Baltimore at 10:00 PM. It was chilly out. I just missed a #13 bus and had a long wait until the next one. Then I had another long wait for a #19 bus and reached home at 11:45 PM.

*(While some of the riders' names may be unfamiliar, Don Flayhart, who passed away in March, 2016, was a long-time Chapter member, and Joe Maloney is NRHS Vice President today. It should be mentioned that Bob Janssen was a longtime Baltimore & Ohio Railroad employee. —RLEjr)*

## 2017 Dues Bills in Preparation

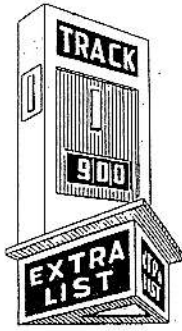
Philadelphia Chapter members may expect to see their Chapter dues bill notices during the last half of October. Members are reminded that their 2017 dues bills from the National Railway Historical Society will be mailed separately at an as yet unannounced date. Philadelphia Chapter members will receive a separate mailing from their normal **Cinders** mailing.

The dues level for Philadelphia Chapter membership has increased for 2017 from \$18 per member to \$20 per member, the first increase in Chapter dues since 2010. This nominal increase is prompted by paper cost increases for printing, postage adjustments and other ongoing costs in operating our Chapter.

Each year, we tell you that your dues cover the basic cost of printing and mailing of **Cinders** as well as our meeting room at Drexel University. However, the Chapter depends on the generosity of our members to cover costs such as our storage site in Willow Grove, and our property and liability insurance policies, all of which seemingly increase each year.

Members are urged to promptly submit their dues remittance for 2017 at an early date.



**Tuesday, October 11, 2016:**

Regular monthly meeting of Harrisburg Chapter, NRHS, Hoss's Restaurant, 743 Wertzville Road, Enola, PA. Optional dinner at Hoss's 5 PM, business meeting and program start at 7 PM. Program will feature Steven Goehring with multimedia talk on "Riding Harrisburg Trolleys: Then and Now".

**Saturday, October 15:**

SEPTA's 2016 Rail Rodeo & Exhibition at SEPTA Fern Rock Shop, 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Nedro Avenue, Philadelphia. Regional Rail will have a display at the Fern Rock Transportation Center. Registration deadline was October 3. See article elsewhere in this issue.

**Friday, October 21:** Regular monthly meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 121 Randell Hall, of Drexel University Main Hall, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 7:00 PM. Presenter expected to be Steve Stewart with a slide program. Steve is a retired Abington Township history teacher and former owner of Stewart Hobbies HO train firm. See details on Page 1.

**Saturday & Sunday, October 29 & 30:** Amtrak Autumn Excursion from New York Penn Station and Newark Penn Station to Harrisburg, PA and return via Lehigh Line and former Reading East Penn, return via Amtrak Keystone Corridor. Complete details on Page 1, this issue.

**Saturday & Sunday, October 29 & 30:** "Two Rivers Steam Special", Worcester-Putnam, CT-Groton-Old Saybrook-Essex, CT to Goodspeeds and return, operating over three railroads with diesel and steam power, sponsored by Mass Bay RRE. For complete information, contact Mass Bay RRE by mail at P. O. Box 1810, Andover, MA 01810, by telephone at 978-470-2066 or visit website: [trips@massbayrre.org](mailto:trips@massbayrre.org).

**Saturday, October 29:** Fall Foliage Train Excursions on Lycoming Valley Railroad from Williamsport area to Muncy and return on 1-1/2 hour trip. Tickets \$10 per person. Trains operate at 11:00 AM and 2:30 PM. For full details and to order call Lycoming County Visitors Center, at 1-800-358-9900. Tickets are non-refundable.

**Sunday, October 30:** The Great Pumpkin Express on the Lycoming Valley Railroad, from Williamsport area to the airport in Montoursville and return, one-hour trip. Trains operate at 12 Noon, 2:00 and 4:00 PM. Tickets: \$10 per person. Contact Lycoming County Visitors Center at 1-800-358-9900 for complete details.

**Through October 30:** "Bridges of the Reading Railroad" at the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum, 500 S. Third Street, Hamburg, PA 19526. Many different photos and models of the RDG bridges. Museum hours are Saturdays, 10 AM to 4 PM and Sundays, Noon to 4 PM. Admission: Adults \$7, seniors (65+) \$6, children (5-12) \$3, children 4 and under free. RCT&HS Members Free. Complete details on Page 7 of June *Cinders*.

**Saturday, November 5:** Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley Chapter, NRHS will hold its 7<sup>th</sup> annual Sentimental Journey Slide Show at Mountain Top Hose Co., 1 Lehigh Street, Mountain Top, PA, adjacent to Solomans Gap. Doors open at 9:00 AM for

coffee and donuts, presentations run from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Admission: \$25, which includes buffet lunch. Make checks payable to "L&WV Chapter" and send to: Ed Philbin, 36 E. Coal Street, Pittston, PA 18640-1553. See separate article this issue.

**Friday, November 18:** Regular monthly meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 121 Randell Hall, of Drexel University Main Hall, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 7:00 PM. Program will be another of Dale W. Woodland's excellent PowerPoint presentations, subject to be announced in November.

**Saturday, December 3:** The annual "Bryn Athyn Train Wreck" talk and walk, hosted by the Old York Road Historical Society at the Pennypack Ecological Historic Trust meeting room, 2995 Edge Hill Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006. Lecture by Chapter President Larry Eastwood. Reservations are required and details will be in November *Cinders*.

**Friday, December 16 (third Friday):** Regular monthly meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 121 Randell Hall, off Drexel University Main Hall, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 7:00 PM. Program will be Chapter Member Kevin Feeney, subject to the announced in November..

## Philadelphia LCL.....

In our July issue, we reported on the passing of Chapter Member **Richard Barben**, of Westmont, NJ. From West Jersey Chapter, we have learned that Dick passed away on June 14, 2016. Unfortunately, there is no additional information available to us regarding services, etc.....Also from West Jersey Chapter, longtime WJ Member **Ronald A. Paul** passed away on July 26, 2016, at the age of 79. Ron served for many years on the West Jersey Chapter board of directors, and was chapter secretary. Services were held in Pitman, NJ on Monday, August 1.....Reading Company Technical & Historical Society founding member **John F. Stoudt, Jr.** of Reading suburb Lincoln Park, PA, passed away on September 1, 2016 at the age of 66, from Alzheimer's disease. A member of Zion Evangelical Congregational Church in Mohnton, John was a longtime employee of the Township of Spring streets department, as well as a member of the Lincoln Park Fire Company. His interests included buses, trains and trolleys.

## Amtrak's "Great Dome" to Return on "Adirondack"

In an announcement made on September 23, Amtrak informed the riding public that its "Great Dome" would return once again this year on the **Adirondack** between Albany, NY and Montreal, QC, Canada from September 29 through November 1. Car #10031-**Ocean View**, the last full-length dome in regular service, will make its annual six-week appearance again. The car will operate northbound from Albany on Train #69 on Thursdays, Saturdays and Mondays, returning south on #68 from Montreal on Fridays, Sundays and Tuesdays. Passengers riding the **Adirondack** will be able to enjoy the dome at no additional cost.

The dome car's visit is in partnership with the New York State Department of Transportation and the National Park Service's Trails and Rails program. The **Ocean View** was built for Great Northern Railway's **Empire Builder** in 1955 at Budd Company's Red Lion Plant in Northeast Philadelphia.

## Silverliner V's Are Coming Back!

### SEPTA Promises Full Service by Early October

By Frank Tatnall

The summer lull ended with Labor Day. Ridership on Regional Rail returned to somewhat normal levels and, as a result, the absence of those 120 Silverliner V's taken out of service in early July became even more noticeable. Potentially dangerous cracks had been found in the truck assemblies of the cars, forcing SEPTA to pull the entire fleet. The main culprits were the steel equalizer beams, which transfer the weight of the carbody to the trucks, and the seats or "feet" which attach the beams to the truck frames. There are four equalizer beams on each car.

No one can accuse SEPTA of not going all out to help meet its customers' needs, as it brought in a fleet of cars and locomotives from other agencies. By mid-September these included 26 cars from Maryland's MARC system, an eight-car NJ Transit push-pull set complete with ALP-45 locomotive, and five new Amtrak ACS-64 electric motors as well as a five-car Keystone trainset. During the week of September 19, the following ACS-64's were seen in service on SEPTA: #612, 624, 644, 645, 657 and 659, but these are often rotated back to Amtrak. There is an unsubstantiated report that SEPTA is considering the purchase of some of the MARC cars which are now excess to that agency's fleet, and could help deal with the longer-term issue of growing ridership on the Regional Rail system.

Since early July a series of "interim" schedules have been issued for all lines except Cynwyd to maximize the use of SEPTA's existing fleet, as well as the borrowed cars and locomotives. (Cynwyd passengers continue to be bused to and from 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station.) With each schedule change more trains were added—one of them especially welcomed by riders on the Paoli-Thorndale line. Effective Tuesday, September 20, train #9561 **Great Valley Flyer**, which runs express from 30<sup>th</sup> Street to Paoli, was returned to service, with a set of MARC coaches and cab car.

By the second week of September SEPTA thought it was well on its way to repairing the Silverliner V's, after 18 cars were released from the shop fitted with new equalizer beams and the feet that join the beams to the truck frames. But it was soon discovered that the heads of the steel pins securing the beams to the truck frames were 1/32<sup>nd</sup> of an inch too wide, causing friction that could lead to possible failure. Engineering the repair of the cars is the responsibility of the builder, Hyundai-Rotem, which has contracted out the fabrication of the replacement beams. (Some of the 480 new beams are being manufactured by PennFab, Inc. in Bensalem.) SEPTA has a warranty on the cars from Rotem, which holds the builder liable for the costs of repair under a so-called "liquidated damages" clause. But it's unclear whether SEPTA will be forced to shoulder the cost of leasing the MARC, NJT and Amtrak equipment, which is around \$1 million per month and rising. Lost passenger revenues may not be recoverable.

Finally, on Tuesday, September 20, the first re-built Silverliner V's emerged with newly-repaired trucks, and were soon in revenue service. SEPTA said that 14 cars had received the new equalizer beams with the correct pins installed, and again were

ready to roll. It was hoped that the refitting program could be cranked up to a point where 15 cars are returned to service each week, and that all 120 cars could be back on line by mid-November.

But the immediate target date is October 3, when the system would return to a full weekday schedule of 788 trains as shown in the June 19 timetables, utilizing the available Silverliner V's as well as an expanded fleet of leased equipment, SEPTA's own push-pull cars, and the 40-year-old Silverliner IV's which have been performing admirably during the current equipment crisis. These aging General Electric-built MU's have earned a well-deserved shopping!

One of SEPTA's efforts to deal with the reduced number of trains hasn't fared as well. That is the recent plan to operate supplemental bus service during rush hours from busy close-in stations such as Jenkintown, Elkins Park, Fox Chase, Chestnut Hill East and Chestnut Hill West to Fern Rock Transportation Center and return, between Ivy Ridge and Suburban Station, and between Swarthmore and AT&T station on the Broad Street subway. Ridership on the buses has been well below estimates and the service may be discontinued.

Meanwhile, by late September three trains made up of MARC cars and hauled by Amtrak ACS-64 locomotives were in weekday service. At least one of them, seen operating on the Paoli-Thorndale line, was still a true "Frankentrain" (as employees have dubbed it), consisting of ACS-64 #624, six MARC coaches and SEPTA cab car #2408. Other MARC sets have been operating to Newark, DE, and Trenton, and sometimes on the West Trenton line. The NJT train is in Trenton service and the Amfleet set is operating on Bryn Mawr locals. SEPTA's 45 push-pull coaches also are heavily utilized and apparently at least six of its seven AEM-7 locomotives and the lone ALP-44 are seeing almost daily use. A few MARC coaches have been seen interspersed with SEPTA cars on the push-pull trains.

One major concern for SEPTA management has been the sharp drop in Regional Rail ridership since the Silverliner V crisis began. No doubt this is the result of fewer and more crowded trains and daily on-time performance which has fallen into the 50-60-percent range. An additional irritation for riders is the vexing problem of annulled trains, caused by a prolonged shortage of engineers and exacerbated by the hours of service rules. This is especially true on weekends. Some regular riders, possibly encouraged by low gas prices, have found alternate ways to travel, while others have switched to SEPTA's own bus, trolley or rapid transit lines. SEPTA General Manager Jeffrey D. Knueppel told the *Inquirer* last month that "I feel for every person that's upset on the platforms." He added that the initial problems encountered in repairing the Silverliner V's would not prevent SEPTA from returning to full service next month.

SEPTA's figures for July show that Regional Rail ridership was down by 20.9 percent compared with the same month in 2015, and in August ridership declined by 10.1 percent. According to an internal SEPTA analysis, passenger revenues were about \$5 million less than budgeted for the two months, or 21 percent and 13.1 percent respectively, but another estimate put the revenue loss at \$7.7 million. (The City and Suburban Transit Divisions were off only slightly as compared with the year-ago period.) It is expected that once RRD service returns to normal levels SEPTA will launch an all-out effort to recapture its lost customers.