



CINDERS

JULY 2025



IN THIS ISSUE

This July, 2025 issue of *Cinders* will contain a mixed issue content of news and other items occurring during July and August. We expect to mail it during the first week of August

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS, by Frank Tatnall.....Pages 3-6

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Number 7

Newsletter of the

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Chapter Website: www.nrhsphiladelphia.org

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 WEBSITE: For current Chapter information, as well as vintage views of Chapter trips and activities, visit website: www.nrhsphiladelphia.org

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2024-25 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: Effective September 1, 2024, \$25.00 per person, which covers Philadelphia Chapter dues through December 31, 2025. (NRHS National membership dues for 2025 are \$50.00, billed directly by NRHS.) NRHS chapters bill their members separately for Chapter dues. Donation requests for Philadelphia Railfriends will be mailed during October, 2024-5 via separate mailing from *Cinders*. Anyone interested in becoming a member of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS should forward remittance, payable to **Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS** in the amount of \$25.00 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.

ADDRESS CHANGES: Send to Editor Emeritus at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. (Include your **CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBER** and **E-MAIL ADDRESS** so our records are complete.) Beginning in early 2023, we effected electronic delivery of *Cinders* to those who elect to receive same.

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 reastwood2@comcast.net.

NRHS Recognizes Ten Members With Service Anniversaries and Pins

A total of ten Philadelphia Chapter members have been awarded NRHS membership pins and certificates in 2025, the largest number so recognized in recent years.

60-Year Members

David L. Briggs, Citrus Heights, CA 95621-7787

Tom E. Halterman, Doylestown, PA 18901-5277

Patrick E. Purcell, Bennington, VT 05201-2279

Kurt Wegelius, Newtown, PA 18940-2810

50-Year Members

Wayne N. Blattner, Royersford, PA 19468-3035

Christian J. Bradley, Pikesville, MD 21208-2152

Robert I. Oliphant, Libertyville, IL 60048-5274

Robert E. Young, Harleysville, PA 19438-2022

25-Year Members

Michael J. Gavaghan, Lansdale, PA 19446-6545

Lorett O. Treese, Concordville, PA 19330-1008

Pins and certificates have been mailed to each member during the month of July. The Chapter thanks and salutes each member for their loyalty and support. Their membership over the years has indicated their contribution to the strength of Philadelphia Chapter.

WANTED!!

**Members are invited
to submit short railroad or
traction history articles (up to one
page) for publication in *Cinders*.**

Please contact:

**R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor
with complete details on articles to
Post Office Box 353,
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353**

About This Issue of *Cinders*.....

This July, 2025 issue of *Cinders* will carry miscellaneous articles that have come to light. The articles will appear in no specific order, but simply as they are received. The only exception will be Frank Tatnall's column, *Philadelphia Express*, which will appear on Pages 3-6.

We had a completed article written about the proposed Union Pacific-Norfolk Southern merger, which has had to be completely rewritten because of late information released by UP and NS jointly on July 29 which based on information released by the two corporations on that Tuesday. More information will be contained in our September, 2025 issue, which we expect to issue in advance of our Thursday, September 18, 2025 meeting.

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.

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

(Members may wish to photocopy and or clip this notice and keep a copy in your wallet as you are out watching or riding trains. Please send corrections to the Editor.)

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

Lancaster Chapter Member Fred Kurtz Passes at 88

Lancaster Chapter, NRHS has announced the passing of their member, **Frederick B. Kurtz** of Lititz, PA on Sunday, June 22, 2025 at the Veterans Hospital in Lebanon, PA. Fred was 88 years of age. Born in Memphis, TN on August 25, 1936, he was the beloved husband of Rosalee, with whom he shared 68 years of marriage.

At the age of 19, Fred enlisted in the United States Air Force serving his country from 1955 to 1957. Fred retired as quality control inspector for the Federal Government, a career marked by his dedication to detail and commitment to excellence. He was an active member of NRHS for many years, combining his interest in trains, history and community.

Fred will be deeply missed by his wife, Rosalee, daughter Anne Wilson and sons Frederick, Jr. and James Roy Kurtz. Funeral services were held on Tuesday, July 1 at Conestoga Valley Church of Christ, 2045 Horseshoe Road, Lancaster, PA, with full military honors at Conestoga Memorial Park. Contributions were accepted in Fred's memory to his church.

ROSS ROWLAND

July 19, 2025

(From the Railfan & Railroad Staff Philadelphia Chapter has learned of the passing of Steam Entrepreneur Ross Rowland on Saturday, July 19, 2025)

Steam preservationist and entrepreneur passed away on July 19, 2025 at the age of 85 years, following a brief battle with cancer. Rowland made his money in the commodity trading market, but his true passion was steam railroading, and in the 1960's and 1970's he was responsible for some of the biggest steam-powered spectacles of the preservation era. Through his High Iron Company, he operated excursions across the Northeast and Midwest using an eclectic fleet of steam locomotives, including Nickel Plate Road 2-8-4 #759, Reading Company 4-8-4 #2101, and Canadian Pacific 4-6-2's #1238, 1278 and 1986. In 1969, Nickel Plate #759 led the *Golden Spike Centennial Limited* to mark the 100th anniversary of the completion of the First Transcontinental Railroad.

That tour planted the seed for an even larger one a few years later, when Rowland helped lead the ambitious *American Freedom Train* tour in 1975 and 1976. Over two years, three steam locomotives (Reading #2101, Southern Pacific 4-8-4 and Texas and Pacific 2-10-4 #610), along with a few diesels pulled a 26-car exhibit train featuring artifacts from U.S. history to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. More than 7 million people visited the train in all 48 states, and tens of millions more watched it pass trackside.

After the *American Freedom Train*, Rowland teamed up with the Chessie System to run a series of excursions behind former Reading #2101 in 1977 and 1978. When locomotive 2101 was damaged in a roundhouse fire, Rowland was compensated with Chesapeake & Ohio 4-8-4 #614, which returned to service in 1980 to lead the *Chessie Safety Express*.

In November 2024, Rowland sold C&O 614 to RJD America, a private company that plans to restore the locomotive to operation. In June, the locomotive was moved from its longtime home in Clifton Forge, VA to the Strasburg Rail Road, where work on it has since begun. Rowland was along for the ride.

WORKING TOGETHER





FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA System

As Cinders goes to press in late July, SEPTA's fate is still up in the air. The do-nothing Legislature in Harrisburg still had not approved a Statewide budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year that was due on July 1, let alone acting on SEPTA's urgent request for an additional \$213 million to see it through the year. Pennsylvania currently provides about \$1 billion in annual funding for SEPTA, but that is now deemed inadequate. The recent lapse in Federal COVID relief funding to SEPTA is one reason for the present budget crisis.

As a result of the State's inaction, final planning is underway to make painful service cuts starting August 24, along with an average 21.5% increase in fares effective September 1. A hiring freeze also will be put in place. As reflected in the new budget approved by the board on June 26, systemwide service cuts will amount to almost 45% and include the total elimination of service on some 50 bus routes, 16 routes shortened, and service reductions or reroutings on many surviving lines. Two trolley lines, the T1 (10) and G (Girard Avenue) would be converted to bus operation. There would be a complete shutdown of service on five Regional Rail lines beginning next January. These are Chestnut Hill West, Cynwyd, Paoli-Thorndale, Trenton and Wilmington-Newark, which are especially vulnerable because SEPTA currently pays AMTRAK around \$65 million a year for the necessary trackage rights to operate them. The full-blown train cancellations offer "the quickest way to save the most money," in the words of one SEPTA official. There would be no Regional Rail, Metro rail or bus service after 9 PM. New schedules reflecting the proposed cutbacks will be completed in July and sent to the printer on August 8. A second set of schedules also will be printed showing virtually full service in the event the needed funding is approved.

Even if there is a last-minute deal in Harrisburg to grant all or some of SEPTA's funding requests, the proposed service cuts could not be immediately reversed. One reason is that in early August unionized train and bus operators begin picking their new assignments for the fall, and despite a possible infusion of funding later that month it still would take some time for the workers to go through a second "picking" procedure. As a result SEPTA in late July began posting notices of the service cuts and fare hikes at more than 3,000 bus and trolley stops in the city and suburbs, as well as at Regional Rail stations. Base transit fares will rise from the current \$2.50 to \$2.90.

SEPTA of course is not the only transit agency that will suffer from insufficient State support. While SEPTA is by far the largest, there are 32 other fixed-route systems in Pennsylvania, most of them also hurting for funds due to inflation, fewer Federal dollars and flat subsidies from Harrisburg. Some agencies have already cut service or raised fares. Pittsburgh Regional Transit

has adopted a 2026 budget calling for a 35% reduction in service. But many of the smaller agencies are in rural districts and do not have sufficient "clout" with their Republican legislators who continue to resist any efforts to increase transit funding unless an equal amount is earmarked for highways and bridges.

As part of the general effort at SEPTA to cut costs, all employees working remotely from home have been instructed to return full time to their designated in-person work locations, effective September 15. Currently, managerial and administrative employees are allowed to work remotely one day a week, more than 2,000 of them now utilizing that benefit. The end of remote work is seen as an important symbol in SEPTA's current fight for increased State funding.....SEPTA reports its highest-ever customer satisfaction scores, according to the most recent quarterly customer survey on safety and security, cleanliness, service reliability and other performance indicators.

SEPTA has ended free weekend and holiday parking at all of its open lots and three garages. Effective July 7 the regular weekday fees of \$2 in lots and \$4 in garages are now charged seven days a week. SEPTA said that this is another step to generate additional revenue during the present funding crisis.....In yet another attempt to gain more revenue SEPTA has made it clear that it is cracking down on fare evaders who jump turnstiles or squeeze through gates at subway-el stations and elsewhere. SEPTA has said that more than 7,400 people have been arrested and criminally charged for theft of services in the past year. Police officers posted at stations are enforcing the crackdown. Each violation carries a fine of up to \$300.....A 17-year-old girl was shot and wounded in the leg on Tuesday afternoon June 24 at the Cecil B. Moore station on the Broad Street Line in North Philadelphia. Surveillance video showed two men arguing on the northbound platform before the gunshot was heard. The victim was taken to the hospital for treatment.

SEPTA has closed the center city trolley tunnel from July 11 to August 11, a longer period than normal for the annual "tunnel blitz." But SEPTA plans to forego the usual closure next year when the city will have numerous large events in connection with the much-hyped 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia. During the closure period crews will make numerous repairs to the tunnel infrastructure, including flushing out drains, repairing or replacing overhead wire, performing heavy cleaning of stations and repair and maintenance of the entire tunnel signal system. While the project is underway all subway-surface trolleys will be rerouted to the 40th & Market station for connection with "L" subway trains.

Aside from the funding issues described above, most of the news in recent weeks concerning Regional Rail involved service disruptions. Going back to Thursday, June 19, a powerful

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 3)

thunderstorm roared through the Philadelphia area, felling trees on PECO power lines and on SEPTA catenary wires. Service had to be suspended that evening on several lines, including Paoli-Thorndale. Friday morning's commute was described as "choppy" by a SEPTA spokesman, and was marked by continuing train delays and cancellations. Several lines were completely shut down for a time. A Manayunk-Norristown train was halted that morning after it was struck by a fallen tree branch, its passengers being evacuated. The line remained out of service into the evening. Then, on Tuesday the 24th extreme temperatures led to an epidemic of switch failures systemwide, with numerous train delays reported.

Next came a serious blockage of the Main Line in Lansdale, but not as the result of any action by SEPTA. Rather, it was the result of a pickup truck with two teenagers in it speeding down Broad Street around 3 AM on Tuesday, July 1, then going around the lowered crossing gates and crashing into the side of a moving PENNSYLVANIA NORTHEASTERN freight train. (PN freights use SEPTA tracks during off hours to serve customers near Warminster and elsewhere.) The teens were critically injured. SEPTA's Lansdale-Doylestown service had to be suspended north of Glenside until that afternoon.....Wilmington-Newark service was suspended for at least two hours on Thursday afternoon, July 3, after an AMTRAK train struck and killed a trespasser. SEPTA service resumed around 3:30 PM.

West Trenton service was suspended during the afternoon rush hour on Tuesday, July 8 after a tree fell during a storm, damaging the catenary and blocking the track. Inbound train #6345 was terminated at Meadowbrook station. The entire rush hour service on the line was cancelled until the tree could be removed and the wire repaired. Then, on Friday morning July 18 inbound West Trenton train #3501 was traveling between Fern Rock and Wayne Junction shortly before 7 AM when a pantograph became ensnared in the overhead catenary, damaging the wire. This knocked out power on one of the two main tracks, reducing this busy railroad to a one-track operation, which obviously led to serious delays on several lines. After the fallen wires were safely grounded, passengers on train #3501 were transferred to a rescue train around 8:35. Delays to all service in the area persisted until the disabled train was removed and the catenary repaired, allowing normal service to be restored in time for the afternoon rush hour.

A failure of signal power at three interlocking plants between 30th Street and Suburban Stations at around 6:20 AM on Tuesday, July 22, forced a total shutdown of service in the area for more than an hour. This affected all Regional Rail lines during the morning rush. Power was restored around 7:40 but delays of 40-60 minutes persisted for much of the morning, and the Cynwyd line did not operate. During the outage SEPTA staff people were dispatched to help stranded riders use the Market-Frankford or Broad Street subway lines to reach center city.

In another reminder that much of SEPTA's MU car fleet is a half-century old, there has been another fire in a train of Silverliner IV's. It is reminiscent of the February 6 fire in a Wilmington line train at Crum Lynne, when all passengers were safely evacuated (see February *Cinders*). This time, around 11 PM on Tuesday.

July 22, the two rear Silverliner IV's in an unoccupied train at Paoli station burst into flame, issuing clouds of black smoke, but local fire companies were quick to respond and the blaze was fully extinguished within two hours. Both SEPTA and AMTRAK suspended service through Paoli for about three hours. The train's conductor was taken to the hospital suffering from smoke inhalation and one firefighter was treated at the scene. The disabled train was later towed to the Frazer shop four miles to the west. (The seriously damaged car was #114).



Heavy rains, windstorms, high heat and other horrors of nature plagued AMTRAK in late June and much of July, causing thousands of train delays and cancellations—not just in the East but virtually nationwide. A random visit to the Internet during that period would almost always reveal numerous train delays, cancellations or detours, due largely to the weather although a frequent cause for the problems was listed as "equipment unavailability," meaning that Amtrak did not enough serviceable cars or locomotives to operate a given service.

Even the Northeast Corridor was not immune to weather interference, but one very unusual delay not related to the weather occurred early on Monday morning, June 23. A NORFOLK SOUTHERN freight train derailed a locomotive and three empty freight cars in "Perry" interlocking at Perryville, MD as was crossing over onto the NS Port Road branch that diverges from the Corridor toward Harrisburg. Amtrak service was restored by 8:30 AM but several Amtrak trains had to be cancelled and some were delayed. Two Acelas, #2107 and 2152, were among the trains that did not operate that morning. To make matters worse, Amtrak was forced to impose speed restrictions on the NEC that day due to the near-100-degree temperatures.....That same day, June 23, witnessed a truly scary failure on the Corridor, when northbound Regional train #94 broke down in a tunnel just north of Baltimore station. Passengers were trapped in the train for over an hour with no air conditioning or electricity, on a day when the ambient temperature was at or near 100. A rescue locomotive finally pulled the disabled train back to the station, where the passengers who wished to continue their trips were put aboard following train #176.

Heavy rains in June and July presented a major threat to AMTRAK, the commuter agencies and freight railroads throughout the region. One example was Amtrak's Keystone Service, which was suspended between Lancaster and Harrisburg for several hours on Monday, July 14 due to flooding. High heat also was a continuing factor in forcing Amtrak to impose speed restrictions on passenger train operations, especially in the Northeast and Midwest. These high 90's and even 100-degree heat levels are seen as dangerous because of their possible effect on rail alignment, catenary support and other facilities. Operations on the Corridor are often delayed by heat, as they were in late June and mid-July, adding yet another problem when slower required speeds often cause trains to arrive late at their final terminals. This can mean that the time needed to turn the trainset may cause an outbound train using that same trainset to be delayed (*Trains*).

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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This related problem caused some scheduled trains to be cancelled, for what AMTRAK likes to call "equipment unavailability." It should be noted though that one of the reasons certain Acela schedules were and are being cancelled is a shortage of serviceable trains, due to the advancing age of the present 25-year-old cars. In late June Amtrak cancelled several Corridor trains, including Acelas, between Boston and Washington, the standard reason given being that shown above. Making matters worse, the heat can affect overall timekeeping, one example being on Monday, June 23, when only 34 of 136 trains operated on time (*Trains*).

Speaking of Acelas, the long-running online discussion of the new Acela II Avelias continued through the summer. Some self-appointed authorities were recently speculating that the long-delayed trains—many of which are stored at various locations including 30th Street Station and Olean, NY—might be gradually phased in starting perhaps in late July or August. But there still has been no official announcement from AMTRAK on the subject—even though most if not all of the 28 Acela II trainsets have been completed by builder Alstom at its Hornell (NY) shop. Evidently, compliance with Federal safety standards is a major reason for the now almost four-year delay in introducing the new high-speed trains.

AMTRAK in June submitted its annual report and proposed Fiscal 2026 budget to Congress, essentially reflecting the number earlier proposed by the Trump Administration. The Amtrak request mirrors the Department of Transportation's position that Amtrak should receive the same funding of \$2.427 billion as last year, but with a shift of some of the money from the Northeast Corridor to the national network. Amtrak's annual report again suggests that it's very possible that the railroad can achieve "operating profitability" by 2028 (*RPA, Trains*).....AMTRAK's inspector general has released a report that suggests it develop a new strategy to more effectively deal with the needs of passengers with disabilities (*Trains*).....The first of the 83 new Airo trainsets to be built by Siemens in Sacramento, CA, has been released, and will be moved to the test facility at Pueblo, CO, for final evaluation. The new trains are intended to replace aging single-level cars now used in the Pacific Northwest and in regional services along the East Coast (*Trains*).



CSX,
NS,
OTHER ROADS

NJ TRANSIT's board of directors last month approved the agency's Fiscal Year 2026 operating budget of \$3.16 billion and capital budget of \$1.7 billion. One important source for the operating funds, \$470 million, is the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, and on the capital side the money comes from several sources including \$768 million from the Federal Transit Administration. Only 31 percent of the operating budget is collected from passenger fares.....In mid-July the NJT

board approved its new contract with the rail engineers union, already approved by the union members. The agreement came after the engineers went on a brief strike in May (see June *Cinders*).

NJT was another carrier that found itself suffering from bad weather over the first half of the summer. The line most affected was probably the North Jersey Coast Line, where service was suspended on June 19 and 20 because of downed trees on the tracks that damaged the catenary. Service also was disrupted on the Princeton Dinky Friday, June 20, due to a fallen tree in the overhead wires, and at least one New York-bound Corridor train, #3720, that morning had to be blanked due to "equipment unavailability" caused by the Coast Line shutdown.

CSX reported at the end of June that it was nearing the halfway mark of the very costly and disruptive tunnel clearance project in Baltimore (see February *Cinders*). The \$566-million project, which also includes clearance work at certain overhead bridges, will lower the floor in the 8,700-foot-long, 130-year-old tunnel by about two feet, to allow passage of double-stack container trains. But while the work continues at least 16 of the railroad's daily long-haul symbol trains must be diverted around Baltimore, some of the routes requiring use of trackage rights over NORFOLK SOUTHERN lines. CSX expects the tunnel work to be completed in September or October.

CSX got in the national news when it handled a special train carrying some 100 pieces of military equipment—tanks, armored vehicles and some large weapons—to be used in the massive parade in Washington on June 14 to mark the 250th birthday of the U.S. Army. The train had originated on BNSF at Fort Cavazos, TX and was interchanged to CSX at Birmingham, AL, which delivered it to the Army at Jessup, MD. On the point of the train was specially-painted CSX ES44AH locomotive #1776, the "Spirit of our Armed Forces" (*Trains*).

PennDOT has approved \$55 million in funding for freight rail projects around the State. One of them undoubtedly will be welcomed by many city residents, that being \$13.1 million to rehabilitate and improve CSX's crumbling viaduct above 25th Street in South Philadelphia. Hopefully, this will finally do the work that people living in the area have been seeking for years, mainly to stop chunks of concrete from falling on the street below and sometimes landing on the tops of parked cars. Also among the grants is \$455,000 for improvements on eight EAST PENN RAILROAD bridges on the Octoraro, Perkiomen, Lancaster Northern and York branch lines (*Trains*).....Transport Workers Union members have ratified a new contract with CONRAIL for its New Jersey and Michigan operations (*Trains*).

The Port of Philadelphia, a State agency, is buying 152 acres of land along the Delaware River from NORFOLK SOUTHERN for \$90 million. This is property known as Mustin yard that once was part of the old Philadelphia Naval Base but was taken over by CONRAIL and now seems ideal in the port's planned expansion. More capacity here is definitely needed to stay competitive for handling the growing volume of import container traffic, which PhilaPort says will create thousands of new jobs.

There's a lot of online talk about the recent rumors that UNION PACIFIC will eventually plan to merge with NS. But of course such a plan would take years to finalize and would need to

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overcome heated opposition from shipper groups and competing railroads. NS now publicly acknowledges that merger talks with UP are "advancing." While the railroads no doubt will say that a single coast-to-coast railroad would improve transcontinental service, just the need to obtain governmental approval alone would be a challenge. CSX meanwhile said that it is not now engaged in any such talks but would do so if a merger would allow it to serve customers better and grow profitability for its shareholders.

Eight tank cars left the track when a NORFOLK SOUTHERN branch line freight train derailed on Friday, June 13 at Bear, DE, just south of Wilmington on the old Pennsy Delmarva line. This is located on the short section of the branch still owned by NS, most of the railroad south of Porter having been sold to the DELMARVA CENTRAL RAILROAD. No one was injured but the derailed cars blocked the parallel Porter Road until they were cleared (*Action News*).....Former AMTRAK CEO Richard Anderson has been named the new chairman of the NS board. He succeeds Claude Mongeau, the former CEO of CANADIAN NATIONAL, who recently resigned as NS chairman.

NS has unveiled the latest addition to the lengthy list of Heritage locomotives which honor its many predecessor railroads. This handsome unit, SD70ACe #1080, resplendent in the colors and logos of the Delaware & Hudson Railway, emerged from Altoona's Juniata shop on June 5 as NS's 20th Heritage unit since 2012On July 11 Alco-built PA4 #190, a former Santa Fe and D&H unit which was restored to operating condition over a period of many years, made its first passenger run out of Scranton since being acquired by Genesee Valley's DELAWARE-LACKAWANNA RAILROAD. The locomotive is now dressed in the colors of the old Nickel Plate Road, the favorite line of retired Railroader Doyle McCormack who rebuilt the unit in Oregon before selling it to DL. The July 11 trip was the first time the handsome PA had actually hauled a train since 1978 (*Trains*).

A groundbreaking ceremony for the new roundhouse at the Strasburg museum was scheduled for Tuesday, July 29 (see March *Cinders*). This is a significant step in the seven-years-long process to build an appropriate display site for some of the historic steam locomotives now displayed outdoors at the museum. Eci Construction of Dillsburg, PA, has been awarded the contract by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission to build the six-stall, 16,000-square-foot roundhouse and exhibit hall.

PATCO is proceeding with a six-week-long project to finally give its stations a deep cleaning for the first time in years, scouring the accumulated filth and grime from the stations. "The conditions on PATCO are close to a crisis level at this point," said John T. Hanson, CEO of the parent Delaware River Port Authority. "There needs to be a pause so we can reset the system." One of the problems has been the increasing number of homeless people using stations and nearby concourses as de facto shelters,

engaging in open drug use and other unwelcome behavior. The cleanup campaign began July 14 and will continue through August 29 with alternate stations closing between midnight and 4:30 AM. Train service during those periods will be every two hours. Then starting September 1 PATCO will suspend all "owl" service over the entire line between midnight and 4:30 AM for the next six months. Normally the line carries only about 25 passengers per hour during the overnight time period, so the service cuts will have minimal effect on ridership. An agreement has been made with the City of Philadelphia for cleaning the surrounding concourses while PATCO will clean the 8th & Market, 9th/10th & Locust and 15th/16th & Locust stations.

If your *Cinders* Arrives in Damaged Condition

If your *Cinders* arrives damaged or with pages missing, contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or reastwood2@comcast.net and a replacement copy will be promptly sent to you. The incidence of damage has been virtually eliminated through the use of envelopes for mailing each issue, although there is an additional cost involved.

Bryn Athyn Post Office (ex-Reading) Station Heavily Damaged in July Storm (See photos on Page 7)

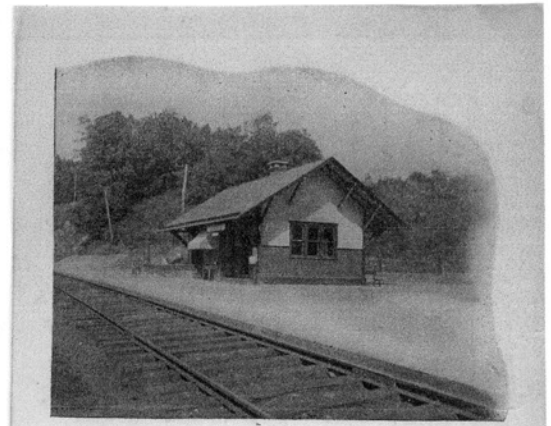
During the recent heavy storm that created serious damage throughout the Delaware Valley during the middle of July, the former Reading Railroad Newtown Branch station at Bryn Athyn was heavily damaged due to falling trees.

The former station building, built in 1902, later expanded, is owned by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) and leased to the United States Postal Service, is presently unusable because of the damage and will require extensive repairs.

Mail for customers with Bryn Athyn addresses is being transferred to Huntingdon Valley Office in Bethayres until arrangements can be worked out to repair the post office structure to make it usable again as a Post Office.

Until repairs can be made to the Bryn Athyn Post Office Building at 999 Feters Mill Road in Bryn Athyn, customers are required to drive to the Huntingdon Valley Post Office at 830 Welsh Road where their mail is being held. All retail sales functions are being conducted at Huntingdon Valley until repairs can be effected at Bryn Athyn.

SEPTA has indicated that the umbrella shed over the former station platform will be removed as part of the rebuilding project is completed. No timetable has been set for restoration and service to Bryn Athyn customers is restored.

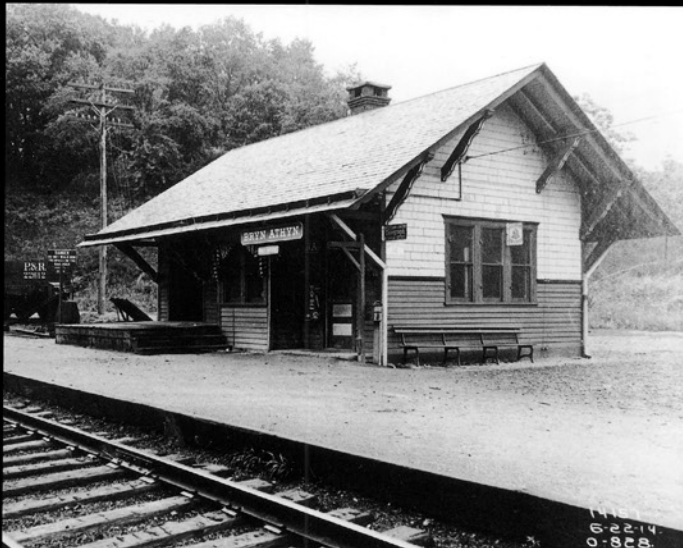


Bryn Athyn, Pa., Station.

Above, Left: Photo taken by Michael Kolesnik, retired SEPTA manager of Bryn Athyn Post Office building and platform umbrella (which will be removed), July, 2025; **Above, right:** postcard view of Bryn Athyn Station (date unknown) before building was expanded; **Below:** Commemorative postcard and cancel issued by R. L. Eastwood, Jr., April 9, 2002 on 100th Anniversary of Bryn Athyn Post Office—photo was a Reading Railroad photo taken on June 22, 1914

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the United States Post Office at Bryn Athyn, PA 19009, which was established on April 7, 1902. For virtually its entire history it has been housed in the railroad station built by the Philadelphia & Reading Railway in 1902. Charles E. Carr is the Postmaster at this office on occasion of its centennial. Card produced by R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Huntingdon Valley, PA. from Philadelphia & Reading Railway photo.

Bryn Athyn Station/Post Office - June 22, 1914





Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern to Create America's First Transcontinental Railroad

- *Transaction to transform the U.S. supply chain and economy; strengthen domestic manufacturing; and preserve union jobs*
- *Two legendary railroads enter agreement to combine in stock and cash merger, creating a combined enterprise of over \$250 billion*
- *Transaction values Norfolk Southern at an enterprise value of \$85 billion and is expected to unlock approximately \$2.75 billion in annualized synergies and deliver substantial long-term value for Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern shareholders*
- *Positions railroads to continue accelerating technological advancements promoting greater freight competition*
- *Companies to host conference call and live webcast on July 29 at 8:30 a.m. ET.*

OMAHA, NE, and ATLANTA, GA, July 29, 2025 – Union Pacific Corporation (NYSE: UNP) and Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC) today announced an agreement to create America's first transcontinental railroad. These legendary companies will seamlessly connect over 50,000 route miles across 43 states from the East Coast to the West Coast, linking approximately 100 ports and nearly every corner of North America. This combination will transform the U.S. supply chain, unleash the industrial strength of American manufacturing, and create new sources of economic growth and workforce opportunity that preserves union jobs.

Under the terms of the agreement, Union Pacific will acquire Norfolk Southern in a stock and cash transaction, implying a value for Norfolk Southern of \$320 per share based on Union Pacific's unaffected closing stock price on July 16, 2025¹, and representing a 25% premium to Norfolk Southern's 30-trading day volume weighted average price on July 16, 2025. The value per share implies an enterprise value of \$85 billion for Norfolk Southern, resulting in the creation of a combined enterprise of over \$250 billion.

"Railroads have been an integral part of building America since the Industrial Revolution, and this transaction is the next step in advancing the industry," said Jim Vena, Union Pacific Chief Executive Officer. "Imagine seamlessly hauling steel from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Colton, California and moving tomato paste from Huron, California to Fremont, Ohio. Lumber from the Pacific Northwest, plastics from the Gulf Coast, copper from Arizona and Utah, and soda ash from Wyoming. Right now, tens of thousands of railroaders are moving almost everything we use. You name it, and at some point, the railroad hauled it."

The Union Pacific Transcontinental Railroad will connect people, strengthen communities, and build a stronger, more competitive America. Both railroads envision every union employee who wants a job in the combined company will have one.

Together, the companies aim to be the safest railroad in North America and deliver the service customers rely on with operational excellence. The combined company will deliver faster, more comprehensive freight service to U.S. shippers by eliminating interchange delays, opening new routes, expanding intermodal services, and reducing distance and transit time on key rail corridors. A more truck-competitive solution, the Union Pacific Transcontinental Railroad will decrease highway congestion, reducing wear-and-tear on taxpayer-funded roads. Today, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern invest approximately \$5.6 billion annually in infrastructure, innovation, and network expansion.

"Norfolk Southern, like Union Pacific, is a railroad integral to the U.S. economy, with a storied 200-year legacy of serving customers across 22 states in the eastern half of the nation," said Mark George, CEO of Norfolk Southern. "Our safety, network, and financial performance is among the best we've had as a company, as is our customer satisfaction. And it is from this position of strength that we embark on this transformational combination. We are confident that the power of Norfolk Southern's franchise, diversified solutions, high-quality customers and partners, as well as skilled employees, will contribute meaningfully to America's first transcontinental railroad, and to igniting rail's ability to deliver for the whole American economy today and into the future. Union Pacific is a true partner that shares our belief in rail's ability to deliver for all stakeholders simultaneously, and we are excited for our future together."

"This combination is transformational, enhancing the best freight transportation system in the world – it's a win for the American economy, it's a win for our customers, and it's a win for our people," Vena said. "It builds on President Abraham Lincoln's vision of a transcontinental railroad from nearly 165 years ago and advances our Safety, Service and Operational Excellence Strategy. I am confident this historic transaction will enhance competition to benefit customers, communities, and employees while delivering shareholder value."