



TWO BELLS

The occasional newsletter of the
Operations Department of the
Pennsylvania Trolley Museum

June 2010

<http://ptmops.org>

Operations Schedule
Museum Calendar
Operating Policies & Procedures
Operating Orders
Operations Department Forms



PTM photo

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What's Inside?

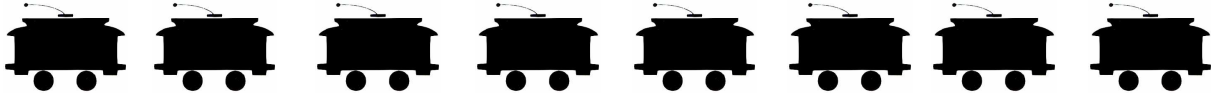
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Dennis F. Cramer - Editor

Please join me in welcoming several new operators to the department. Look for them on the schedule and give them the help, courtesy and security they need now so they can help us as we continue to grow.

Some Points to Remember

On the front page of this issue is a photograph of Pittsburgh Railways Company 4398 as it sat for many years in the back of the shop. We used to tell visitors that some day, the car would be restored and they would be able to ride in the only other example of a Pittsburgh lowfloor car the museum owned. At that point in time, we were using PRCo 3756 on our demonstration line that had no loops. Every operator learned the intricacies of back poling from up the Arden Valley, across the highway to Richfol Shelter. The loops were completed in 2004 and long distance back poling became a distant memory. Now the image on the front page is a distant memory, thanks to so many dedicated members. I do not want to name any specific people as I know it was a true group effort with many trying moments. Very shortly we will begin training operators to use this car and be able to point with pride to our visitors what can be done when dedicated individuals come together to help preserve the “Electric Era”.



Learn to operate this car! Watch for information coming soon concerning operator requalification.



PTM photo

Staying Safe

Safety is the number one priority of the Operations Department. Operating the cars in a safe manner to help preserve them is crucial, as is giving the speech at the beginning of the ride about the open windows and staying seated. Knowing how to interpret the signals, radio communications and crossing the highway are of equal importance. Guiding passengers on and off the cars and around the grounds takes vigilance on your part. This is all part of staying safe.

But what about you and your operating crew? How do you stay safe and sane?

We have all been there. We arrive at the store 5 minutes before the tour is to begin, get the visitors organized, introduce ourselves and begin our tour at quarter past the hour. No sooner do we get to the car barn and the store calls to send up a few more passengers. We tell them where we are and greet the new arrivals. At half past the hour we lead our group over to the service car and board. The store calls and asks you to hold the car for some more passengers and you do so.

So far everything is normal and acceptable. The store is not harassing you or trying to make your job more difficult. They are working to make it an enjoyable experience for our visitors. The store will not call you once you have left to pick up passengers on the way back from McClane.

Once you return to Richfol after the complete ride, explain to the late comers that another tour will begin in the store at quarter after the hour. That will give the operator of the just completed trip over 10 minutes to get down to the store and it gives you, the conductor of the most recent trip, almost 30 minutes to relax. Do not overtax yourself or your fellow crew members. No one expects you to be on your feet all day long. You are important to us and we want you to enjoy your day interacting with our visitors and giving them the best experience they can get at any trolley museum anywhere!

We Need Your Help

The Operations Manager has been sending out a call for operators on an as needed basis to avoid filling your in-box. There are approximately 80 persons receiving these calls for volunteers. What many of you may not realize is that out of those 80 persons, more than 25 of them are already doing their part in working in the shop, working on the track, the overhead, signals and maintaining the grounds. That takes us down to 65.

Out of those 65, easily 15 or more live more than a days drive away from the museum and cannot get here on a regular basis. That leaves us with approximately 50 operators to work the museum.

Not counting fair week, there are 90 operating days between Memorial Day and Labor Day. That equates to 180 shifts. If each one of us signs up for 4 shifts over the next three months, we can all sleep easier at night knowing there will not be a threat to close the museum on random days with no notice to the public. This would be devastating to our reputation.

Beyond Labor Day there are almost 65 operating days. The season does not end with the fair. The museum is “us” not “them”.

The second two-thirds of the 2010 operating season is going to be exciting. We have 4398 just about ready to go into service, New Orleans 832 is close to returning to service and progress on the open car is moving along very nicely. On top of that we will have a new classroom addition to the carbarn by the end of summer and shortly after that, the floor and apron of the carbarn will be paved!

What more could you ask for? Take a look at the openings on the website, write your name on the sign-up sheet in the substation or give the museum a call. We certainly appreciate everything you do for the museum and encourage you to participate as much as your schedule allows. We need your help!