

TROLLEY FARE

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Best of the Best

By Scott R. Becker, Executive Director

I am very pleased to announce that the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum was honored in the “Best of the Best People’s Choice Awards” event on November 9 by the Observer-Reporter for Best Museum and Best Local Attraction! This is the first year of this award program and it was wildly popular with over 400,000 votes being cast and 650 people attending the awards ceremony. These awards recognize all the effort our volunteers and paid staff that work so hard to ensure our visitors have an enjoyable experience at the Museum.

In continuing with the Best of the Best themes, one of the best parts of being associated with the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum is working with the many wonderful volunteers we have. One of those

who was extra helpful over the years was Charlie Fife. Charlie passed away on December 28 at age 74 after a long illness. I was introduced to Charlie by Bill Fronczek in 2000 when Fife Moving and Storage was planning a new facility adjacent to our Museum on North Main Street. Fife Moving had been started by Charlie’s father many years ago and was affiliated with Global Van Lines. Charlie expressed interest in helping the Museum and his company went on to provide donated storage space and moving services from his old facility on West Chestnut Street and later at the new facility at the Museum. This included his son Paul moving trolley parts and equipment from all over the United States as well as storing snow sweepers BVT 1 and M37, our horse car and the Mod-



el T Ford in his new storage building while we were building the Trolley Display Building. Charlie even hosted a special Trolley Display Building fund raising event as well as numerous PTM Board and planning

meetings at his then new offices. In 2001 Fife Moving & Storage was honored at our Annual Banquet and Charlie would go on to be a very active volunteer. He served as PTM's President, Trustee, trolley

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1 Museum Road, Washington Pennsylvania 15301

Phone: (724) 228-9256

Fax: (724) 228-9675

Email: ptm@pa-trolley.org

Online: patrolley.org

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Mission Statement

The Mission of the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum is to communicate the story of Pennsylvania's Trolley Era to a diverse audience through the preservation, interpretation and use of its collection of electric railway and railroad equipment, associated artifacts and photo/document archives, to ensure that visitors have an enjoyable and rewarding educational experience.

operator, tour guide, and even Santa. He also donated his pop and candy machines and stocked them for a number of years. Perhaps he was best known for his enthusiastic sale of tickets (photo at left) at the Fairgrounds Platform during the Washington County Fair and the PA Arts & Crafts Christmas Festival as seen in the photo on page 2! Please see the rear cover which features many photos of Charlie at work at the Museum. He was always good for a joke and was just a great person to be around. I feel blessed to have known him and he will be missed!



Charlie Fife as Santa Claus in 2007. Photo by Scott Becker

As reported by Bernie Orient in the last Trolley Fare, the rehabilitation of Crane Car M283 is complete! This historic and useful car was donated by the Port Authority of Allegheny County in 1988. Since that time it has performed many projects around the Museum and clearly needed some serious attention. This project upgraded a number of key components and its overhaul makes this car very reliable and a great display for many years to come. The project included taking nearly-identical trucks from the Museum's side dump car M551 (a 1922 product of Difco), shipping them to Lyons Industries, a commercial rebuilder of railway trucks, located in Ebensburg, PA.

Lyons completely rebuilt those trucks including new side frames and bolsters. At the same time, four 40-horsepower traction motors from M551 were shipped to Swiger Coil Systems in Cleveland for overhaul. Swiger, a Division of Pittsburgh-based Wabtec, generously donated the overhaul of these motors. While this work was being done by outside vendors, M283 was brought into the Maintenance Shop where it received lots of attention by our dedicated volunteers, including a rebuild of the cab's roof and extensive rewiring. There were significant metal repairs on the crane's tub and the re-

sistance grid banks were re-engineered and totally rebuilt. This overhaul cost over \$101,000 using donated funds and over 1,700 volunteer hours spanning some 18 months. Particular thanks go to the 20th Century Electric Railway Foundation, Swiger Coil Systems, Washington County Community Foundation, Fairbanks-Horix Foundation, Hartman & Hartman, project managers Larry Lovejoy and Bernie Orient and to the many volunteers and individual donors who made this important project possible. M283's former trucks will be placed under car M551 as time permits so this useful car can also go back into service.

Thanks to Bruce Wells and Bernie Orient, we helped refurbish Pittsburgh Railways PCC 1719 (later PAT 4007), which has been on display for many years at the Bethel Park Historical Society as a Port Authority car. BPHS contracted to have the car repainted in Pittsburgh Railways colors and Bruce was able to represent the Museum at their opening on October 8. Final graphics and the trolley pole delivered to them by Bernie Orient will be applied in the spring.

Behind the scenes work continues to build Trolley Street. Trolley Street will be run from our main trolley line at Enterprise Wye around the north side of the Trolley Display Building and connect to track going to Redman Wye. This will allow Wexford Station to once again have trolley service to it as well as making our East Campus more visitor friendly. In support of this important project we are pleased to announce that a number of grants have been received to purchase track materials and overhead trolley wire materials. We thank the Allegheny Foundation, Rivers of Steel Heritage Area Mini Grant, Fairbanks-Horix Foundation, First Energy Foundation, and the Tom E. Dailey Foundation for their support! Please note that the Mini Grant funding was provided by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Environmental Stewardship Fund, administered by the Rivers of Steel Heritage Corp. We intend to begin construction of Trolley Street in 2018. Please stay tuned for more developments.

In the years after the Museum opened in 1963, many of its visitors came because they had experienced streetcars first-hand and wanted to relive those memories. That still happens today, but more and more visitors experience streetcars, and the trolley era, for the first time during their visit to the Museum. The last quarter is a special time of year, bracketed by Pumpkin Patch Trolley at the beginning and Santa Trolley at the end. Although the

Museum makes memories for many of its visitors throughout the year, this season is especially important for young and old alike. There's nothing like seeing children enjoying the Museum whether it's picking and decorating a pumpkin or seeing Santa or our wonderful Toy Train and Lego displays! Parents and grandparents also enjoy it as they watch

their children or grandchildren enjoy the Museum and take photos for future memories. Special thanks go to all our wonderful volunteers and paid staff who work so hard to make this possible! We have a nice group of events planned in 2018 and I look forward to seeing you at the Museum!



From the Front Platform

By Bob Jordan, President

“The Wild Ride is Really Getting Interesting”

In the last issue I tried to bring you up to speed on the inner workings of the Museum, its management structure, and how we are posturing to handle the rapid growth and progress we're inflicting on ourselves. Nothing ever stays the same and change is the operative word. I'll come back to the planning side later, but first let me tell you about some of the current physical changes.

One important improvement has little to do with long term and a lot to do with staying in business and being able to serve our visitors when things happen that we can't control. Two Santa seasons ago we lost an entire day of our biggest event when commercial power failed. We set about to, shall we say, insulate ourselves from that ever happening again. Initial concepts were for a small backup generator to keep the store open, but the way became clear to be able to power the entire West campus when Sylvan Easler of Alternative Power Sources donated a 55KW unit capable of doing just that. All we had to do was install it, but that's not as easy as it sounds. You'll see photos and more details elsewhere in the issue. As it stands now as I write, the final major step of inserting the change-over switch into the incoming power feed has occurred and if need be the generator could be started and brought on line manually. Fully automatic

start up and changeover is about two weeks away and it should be fully functional before we open for the season. Much thanks to many people who have contributed time and energy to this project, not the least of which is Dennis Bockus for design and oversight. To clarify, the generator will not supply trolley power, but it will keep everything else including the shop running. Backup trolley power will still be from a manual start-up of B-73, but it too has been made more reliable with the entire fuel system being reworked; thanks to the Victaulic Corporation for making a major donation of more than 25 new 2" couplings and seals identical to the originals. Thanks also to First Lady Mary Jordan for many hot greasy hours of cleaning away the gunk and squeezing in and contorting to install couplings where I couldn't even reach.

Getting back to the future, another major development is just one signature (mine) away from reality. Eaton Crouse Hinds is donating 2.8 acres of land for our new access road into the East Campus and dirt will fly this coming Spring making that a reality. Almost simultaneously the girder rail has been bent for Trolley Street and will be heading back to PTM where Dan and Larry continue to prep street switch components for installation into Trolley Street, construction of which will also start this Spring.

On the strategic planning front, we have had several very productive meetings with the Carnegie Science Center exploring ways we can work with them and take advantage of their expertise to develop interactive and educational exhibits with heavy emphasis on STEM as it relates to the growth of the transportation industry through the Trolley Era and beyond. In case you're new to the buzzword, STEM is an acronym for Science Technology Engineering and Math. Also, along that line, work is progressing on a fully functional beta model of an interactive Trolley Simulator which should be ready in April. The simulator is being developed by a Pittsburgh company, The Magic Lantern, and is being sponsored by Highmark. It will give the "operator" a realistic experience of actually operating a Pittsburgh low floor streetcar and will initially be installed in our present visitor reception area with



Repairs to B-73 that will improve reliability as back-up power for the trolley operation. Photo by Robert L. Jordan

eventual relocation to the new Welcome and Education Center at the East Campus.

Our capital campaign is progressing nicely. The steering committee has been convening regularly along with key advisors and we're now strategizing how to implement a phased construction approach toward completion in a timely manner while the donations catch up. We are now on the cusp of "going public," which in fundraising parlance means we're approximately at the 80% level and need that last public push to get it over the top. Practically nobody wants to take the risk and be the first to donate to a major project, but many are willing to

jump on the bandwagon once they know it's going to be a reality, and that's where we are. If you haven't already done so, or even if you have, now's the time to get on board, get out your checkbook, and be ready to help the little trolley that could get over the top and continue the wild ride down the other side! Please remain seated while the car is in motion, keep your heads, arms, and various appendages inside the car, and watch for approaching trains and runaway baggage carts when exiting. Thank you for riding with us. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please feel free to contact me, Bob Jordan, directly. network@pa-trolley.org

Visitor Services Report

By Madelon Cline

People all around the world celebrate the coming of the New Year in different ways. New York City has its ball drop to a countdown, Dubai hosts a magical fireworks display and the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum parks its Santa Trolley away for the winter. As all the trolleys settle down for their long winter nap, volunteers and staff members look back at the 2017 season at Pennsylvania Trolley Museum and also begin preparing for the New Year.

The Museum saw 31,260 visitors come through its doors in 2017. A large majority of those visitors came during our events that are hosted throughout the year. 2017 kicked off its event season with Bunny Trolley and Daniel Tiger. Summer brought the Museum the Car Show and the Park n Ride to the Washington County Fair. As summer faded away, the Museum still had two of its oldest events to host, Pumpkin Patch Trolley and Santa Trolley.

Pumpkin Trolley rolled around just as quickly as the leaves turned orange. Volunteers worked hard putting together our Pumpkin Patch and decorating the Museum. Because of the hard work of our volunteers, those who visited during Pumpkin Patch Trolley were trolley immersed in fall decor. Many visitors also caught a glimpse of Christmas as the trolleys shuttled people to the Pennsylvania Arts and Crafts Christmas Festival at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Once again, Trax Farms was the Museum's supplier of the wonderful pumpkins, hay bales, mums and cornstalks.

Once the falling leaves turned to snow, volunteers took on their role of Santa's helpers decorating the Museum for the 2017 Santa Trolley. The Jolly Man himself arrived at the end of November and stuck around until the middle of December when he needed to head back to the North Pole. Guests enjoyed four weekends of holiday cheer. Hot cocoa and cookies warmed the bellies of the guests who decided to brave the weather on the 'No Horse Open Sleigh' (aka the Rio De Janeiro open car 1758). This optional ride was well received and an exciting new attraction during Santa Trolley.

The Museum hopes to keep the No Horse Open Sleigh a tradition during Santa Trolley, weather permitting.

As it is now January 2018 and the weather has been steadily dropping below zero, Museum staff and volunteers are preparing for our new season. Bunny Trolley will be held March 23-25 & 30-31. Then Daniel Tiger, from the hit PBS KIDS series "Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood," will be joining the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum for his special weekends on May 11-13 & May 18-20. If you are not available during those dates, join us for a regular visit during our spring hours. We will be open to the public April-May, Saturday-Sunday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The Museum will be closed on Easter, but open on Memorial Day. Want to use the Museum as your next meeting or party space? The Museum is currently accepting rental bookings for birthdays, graduation parties, group visits and more. Please email vsm@pa-trolley.org for more information!

It was a great year at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum and everyone at the Museum is really looking forward to all of the new and exciting things that 2018 will bring! The Museum wants to thank all of the volunteers who help the Museum in so many ways. Also, big thanks to all of our members who show support by visiting us throughout the year. The Museum will see you all soon!



John Swindler operating 4398 during Pumpkin Patch Trolley.
Photo by Tom Pawlesh

This year, I'm planning a few changes for Pittsburgh Points. As you know, this column keeps the reader informed of current goings-on in the western Pennsylvania transit scene. We will continue to do that, but I'd also like to add a few new elements to the forum. I'm planning some historical topics, along with a few other twists along the way, while continuing to keep you up to date on the day-to-day.

Winter in Pittsburgh can be a trying time. Nowadays, we seldom experience the same degree of three-month long cold and snow that our forefathers did, but the winter thus far this year has had its fair share of bitter cold and moderate snowfalls.

This got me thinking...how did Pittsburgh Railways handle old man winter? As one who didn't come onto the scene until well along into the public sector era of operation, the planning and thought process that must have gone into snow removal intrigued me. Knowing the Railways produced detailed plans for almost everything, I began to explore some of the resources in our Miller Library.

The company published a guide to snow removal for its employees – we have a copy of the 1963 edition, which would be the last one prior to the Port Authority takeover. The book runs to about 80 pages and includes several large (and heavily annotated) fold-out maps of the system.

From perusing the pages, I found that winter weather management began with the Road Operation Department and the Traffic office – these were the men employed by the company to oversee service preservation (for a Museum comparison, think of a much more complex version of a PTM dispatcher). Their office Downtown was the nerve center for the transit system, as they were in regular contact with trolley and bus operators, street supervisors, barn foremen, car house dispatchers, customer service, etc. The Traffic office was responsible for taking the system's pulse and had to respond when things began to go awry. Not only did the dispatchers have to keep an eye on the streets, it was also their responsibility to monitor weather forecasts and keep up to date with current reports. When the flakes began to fly, it was the Traffic office that set in motion the choreography of keeping the system moving.

An excerpt from the book reads:

“Upon reliable forecast of snow or sleet which would impair transit operations, or if such weather conditions should develop without previous forecast, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Road Operation, acting through the Chief Traffic Dispatcher or such other supervisory employee as he may designate, to carry out such of the following measures...”

The first contact in this case was the Superintendent of Car Houses and Garages, who was to make sure the salt buses were ready for operation. These were pre-war model buses from 1940-42 that were no longer assigned to passenger duty. The company cut a hole in the floor near the front of the bus and installed a salt spreader in the opening. A long, sloped trough was constructed atop the seat frames on the passenger side, with a hopper in the rear where the salt was loaded (in 80 pound bags). In 1963, there were 16 salt spreader buses working the system during a storm; as you can probably guess, they were assigned primarily to the hilly areas on the routes.

The garage boss was also responsible for making sure that tire chains were applied to the buses assigned to the routes with steep grades. The car house supervisors were to make sure the life guards chains were raised and locked on any trolleys leaving the barn. For units already out on the road, a Route Foreman would see that this procedure was carried out. Way Department crews were assigned to clean switches and clear snow from car house yard tracks. Power and Incline workers made sure that electric switch heaters were turned on.

The company also had contacts with towing operators in the city that they would work with to remove stalled or stuck automobiles from the tracks. Of course, perhaps the most visible element of a trolley company's winter weather arsenal was the snow sweeper. In the early '60s, Pittsburgh Railways still employed a fleet of more than two dozen of these venerable cars, some of which came from the 19th century and the predecessor operators. The sweepers were primarily assigned to those routes that were predominately street-running in nature, and were typically called out whenever the forecast was predicting a snowfall of six inches or more.

Each sweeper was assigned a particular route to work, and the crews had instructions to call in from the company telephones (strategically located throughout the system) every 30 minutes. This way, an open line of communication was kept between the crews on the street and the Traffic dispatchers, keeping supervision apprised of current conditions. If the situation deteriorated and the crews were struggling to keep up during a major storm, the sweepers would be told to concentrate on main, trunk corridor routes, and some parts of the system were simply abandoned. The 21 Fineview, perhaps Pittsburgh's most famous car line, was typically abandoned during a storm due to its notorious geography. Any hardy souls from Television Hill would have had to hike to Perrysville Avenue.

The sweepers were run by regular trolley operators; a provision in the union contract mandated that Transportation Department employees were guaranteed the work. Of course, they got paid extra time for the task. Incidentally, the current labor agreement continues to spell out this rule, but it's been many years since a sweeper made any trips in the South Hills.

Along with the 27 sweepers that were out prowling the streets at the time, the Railways were still using a few "snow scrapers." These were venerable high-floor cars, which had long since finished out their days collecting fares and had been converted to winter duty. The scrapers, as the name suggests, were fitted with a plow device and were assigned to routes with private right of way. In 1963, three were based at South Hills, with one each at Keating and Craft Avenue. The Museum's own M200, when initially converted to a work car in 1940, was a snow scraper. It was converted into its current configuration as a tow car in 1955 following the Homewood Shop fire which was ignited by its predecessor.

Sleet and ice could also cause major headaches during the winter months, as a coating of frozen water on the overhead wire formed a perfect insulator between the trolley wheel and the traction current. To combat this scenario, the cars would be equipped with special "sleet cutter" trolley wheels. The same size and shape as a regular wheel, the sleet cutters were specially designed to create a rough surface as the

wheel rotated along the wire. With each pass along the line, the sleet cutters would knock the thin layer of ice loose, and effectively keep the wire clear.

Each car carried a sleet cutter wheel on board, and often times during a storm a Route Foreman, Power Department employee or Car House worker (depending on the location) would apply the wheels. The car would stop, the pole would be hooked down and the regular trolley wheel taken off and replaced with a sleet cutter. This was a relatively quick and simple process, and was made even easier by the placement of special wooden towers at the loops and car house offices. Temporary platforms could also be placed in busy loading zones if required (e.g., North Side, Oakland and East Liberty).

During sleet and ice events, it was also common practice to order out additional trolleys known as "road openers." These were extra cars that ran in between regular service to keep a higher number of wheel passes along the wire and keep it from freezing up to the point of disrupting service. Road openers were often used along lines with longer headways or that didn't run full time to make sure they would be passable whenever the storm subsided.

This isn't meant to be a full history of snow fighting in the era of Pittsburgh Railways, but a mere peek into the operation. Do you have recollections of Pittsburgh trolleys in winter? E-mail me your comments and memories at ctwalker87@gmail.com or write me, Chris Walker, in care of the Museum's address. 



Pittsburgh Railways sweepers ready for winter at Ingram Car House.

Photo from the collection of Jack Demnyan

It was reported in October that following the August 22nd accident at the 69th Street Transportation Center in Upper Darby, when an arriving Norristown High-Speed Line train ran into an unoccupied car parked in the station, the maximum authorized speed on the Norristown High-Speed Line was reduced from 70 to 55 miles per hour. The order was issued on Thursday, September 21 and took effect on Monday, September 25. A confidential source said the speed limits were reduced specifically due to concerns about slippery rail conditions and added that in the coming weeks, foliage from trees would exacerbate the problem of slippery rail. Forty-two passengers sustained non-life-threatening injuries. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which is reviewing the crash, has issued a preliminary report stating that it had been raining lightly that night and there had been warnings of speed and slippery rails issued shortly before the accident. The operator had tried to brake his train, but it had slid through a red signal at the Gulph Mills stop, forcing him to reverse the car back to the platform. A passenger on the train who has now filed a lawsuit against SEPTA in connection with the crash said the train overshot the Bryn Mawr platform as well. This was not mentioned in the NTSB's preliminary report.

On November 1, at the height of the morning rush-hour, a school bus collided with a Route 11 trolley on Woodland Avenue between 56th and 57th Street. The small bus was not carrying any students at the time of the accident. Six trolley passengers, the bus driver were taken to a local hospital for treatment. Regular trolley service was not restored until about 9:30 a.m. Route 15 trolleys returned to Girard Avenue on Sunday September 17 after the completion of the summer trackwork project. During the weekend of September 16-17 and the weekend of September 23-24, Route 101 Media trolleys were replaced with buses so trackwork and other unspecified maintenance could be performed.

From late Friday December 1 through 4 a.m. Monday December 4, buses replaced Route 101 trolleys between 69th Street and Media for maintenance reasons. SEPTA advised its riders to allow 15-20 additional minutes of travel time and to look for signage at the rail stations giving bus times and directing them to bus boarding locations. One reason mentioned for the rail shutdown was paving in Media.

Operators Gary Mason and Dave Musgrave have decorated Callowhill Depot car 9104, which will operate on Route 10, and 9055, which operates

out of Elmwood Depot and serves Routes 11, 13, 34 and 36. Mason, who has been adorning his trolley with holiday decorations since 1993, and Musgrave are behind the festive tradition, and have been known to decorate their trolleys with "hundreds of lights, yards of garland and tons of ornaments" in order "to make the season brighter for their passengers," a SEPTA spokeswoman said. It didn't take long for passengers to start sharing images of the festive trolleys on Twitter. The streetcars join some of SEPTA's already decorated cars along the Market-Frankford and Broad Street lines, which were given the holiday treatment for SEPTA's Santa Express on November 24. In addition PCC car 2733, on display on the lower level of SEPTA's headquarters in center city, was also decorated for the season.



*Car 2733 on display at the station level of 1234 Market Street.
Photo by Bill Monaghan.jpg*

On Saturday morning September 16 about 11 a.m., an eastbound Market-Frankford Subway-Elevated train derailed just south of the Spring Garden Station, with the first car turned almost completely perpendicular to the tracks. The cause was not immediately known but the train was traveling through a crossover when the rear section of the car came off the track. A SEPTA spokesman said he had no information of reported injuries, although initial on-site reports from paramedics indicated roughly 30 people were on the train and had been evacuated as soon as the power had been turned off. SEPTA described the incident in a tweet as "equipment issues" and said shuttle buses were operating between Eighth Street and Berks Street Stations. SEPTA spokesman Andrew Busch said that he believed the train was not speeding; rather, "it would have been going very slow there because it's on a crossover and because it's so close to a station."

On Monday December fourth SEPTA managers, elected officials, community leaders and ad-

vocates from the disabled community met to celebrate the completion of the Market-Frankford Line's 40th Street Station Improvement Project, which included the installation of two new elevators that provide direct access from the street to the subway line. Some 187,000 riders use the Market-Frankford Line each day, with nearly 7,000 traveling through 40th Street Station from the street as well as bus Routes 30 and 40, which connect with trains at this point. Funding for these improvements came from money generated from Act 89, Pennsylvania's comprehensive transportation funding law, which was passed in November 2013 to provide a long-term, dedicated funding source for capital improvements to transportation across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

An October 6 announcement indicated that a SEPTA Quick Trip ticket could now be purchased from any station on the Market-Frankford Line or the Broad Street Line. This is a crucial change. When these one-way paper tickets were introduced in 2016, they could only be used at the station where it was purchased. Now, anyone can buy two tickets from any transit location and use them at any other station. As an example, previously if you had bought a one-way ticket from Erie Avenue Station and took the Broad Street Line to Girard Station, you had to buy another one-way ticket back from Girard Station to return to Erie Avenue. Now two single-ride tickets can be bought and used anywhere on the rapid transit system. Another new feature is that these single-ride Quick Trip disposable tickets can be purchased with debit or credit cards instead of cash. The cost of a ticket is \$2.25 each. They are not valid on buses or for transfers; they can't be reloaded like a SEPTA KEY Card can and they are valid only for the same day on which they were bought.

On Sunday October 22, SEPTA debuted a new express bus service on Roosevelt Blvd. operating between the Frankford Transportation Center and Neshaminy Mall every 10 minutes during rush hours and every 15 minutes during the rest of the weekdays, Saturday and Sunday. While the 10-mile route basically follows the Route 14 Roosevelt Blvd. local bus, it makes far fewer stops. Route 14 buses serve more than 80 stops while the new Direct Bus will make only eight, reducing travel time for riders from 47 minutes to about 30. The designated express bus stops are the boarding or departure points for almost 50 percent of the local bus riders. Painted dark green, with a lime green stripe at wheel height, the express buses are seen by SEPTA as a testing ground that could be expanded. Not only is it a better alternative for the 12,000 peo-

ple who use the Route 14 bus each day, it is hoped that it may eventually expand SEPTA's ridership by nearly 2,500 a day in the next year and a half. Operating both the express service and the local Route 14 bus will cost an additional \$1.9 million a year, but SEPTA did not have to purchase additional buses. The 11 buses used for the service were repurposed from the authority's existing fleet. Express bus stops are at the Frankford Transportation Center, Cottman Avenue, Rhawn Street, Welsh Road, Grant Avenue, Red Lion Road, the Neshaminy Interplex and Neshaminy Mall. Septa is allowing free transfers between the express and local bus routes.

According to SEPTA General Manager Jeff Knueppel, the authority is in the midst of a two-year review of its bus service that may lead to significant changes in operations. Knueppel admitted that the growth of ride-sharing services such as Uber and Lyft is contributing to the need to institute changes. Between the fiscal years 2014 to 2016, there has been a significant shift in the region away from public transit, particularly buses, to the ride-share services. Local bus ridership by linked trips in fiscal year 2016 was 114 million, the lowest it had been since 2003. SEPTA reported that the authority's 123 bus and trolley routes lost about 4.4 million ride trips, which mirrors shrinking bus ridership nationwide, according to the American Public Transportation Association. Compared with 2013, the last full year SEPTA operated without ride sharing competition, the 2016 ridership loss is even more significant. The more than 161 million ride trips on both buses and trolleys dropped about 14 million compared with ridership three years earlier.

To honor the 125th Anniversary of the start of electric trolley service in Philadelphia, SEPTA's had Kawasaki LRV 9043 "wrapped" for the occasion. A media event and brief ceremony with this special vehicle was held at Elmwood Depot on the morning of December 15, 2017. 



*Celebrating 125th Anniversary car 9043 at Woodland Shop.
Photo by Bill Monaghan*

Our primary efforts over the past month have focused on the backup generator project. The electrical contractor RKES has kept the project moving at a steady pace and done some extracurricular work as well. This includes drilling four 3”x 6” holes in the precast concrete base for bolting the generator down as well as replacing wiring to the picnic sink outlets that was in the path of construction.

In the west substation you will now find some new equipment bolted to the wall.

First is an Asco automatic transfer switch. This switch senses a loss of power supplied by West Penn. If the power is off for a timed duration, the switch starts up the generator and once it’s up to speed, transfers the West Site’s power feed over to the generator. Once commercial power is restored, the switch restores itself to normal operation and



Early Saturday morning December 9, Larry Lovejoy and Dan Bower unload the emergency backup generator onto the awaiting foundation. Photo by Bob Jordan

Trolley Maintenance

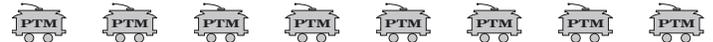
October began with cars 66, 4398 and 1711 in the shop. We still had use of track 22 south so we attended to a loose window on car 66, then removed the center door that sustained the August 16 linkage-pull-apart damage. I decided that the original design of lag bolts to hold the linkage to the door had outlived its effectiveness. The door end of the linkage is a round bar fixed at each end by a casting with two bolt holes. These were lag-bolted into the edge of the sliding door. The crank arm of the air operated door motor connects to this rod with a sliding yoke. Over the years the lag bolts work loose and are replaced with longer and thicker ones. In one door leaf the wood had cracked vertically precluding any more fastener enlargement. My solution was to fashion rectangular channels that fit over and beyond the damaged edge area and were attached to the side of the doors by six wood screws. Furthermore restoration and woodworking expert Bruce

shuts off the generator. You will also find a cabinet housing a soft start circuit to limit inrush current to the rectifier transformer and the circuit panel for this is under construction.

In addition, conversion of lighting at the west site to LEDs continues with Denny Bockus leading a crew of miscellaneous volunteers. So far, just about every light fixture has been converted resulting in substantial savings in the power bill dept.

As always, I would like to thank the volunteers who made this progress possible:

Denny Bockus, Bill Fronczek, Larry Lovejoy, Jeff King, Laura Wells, Kevin Zebley and the author.



Dennis Bockus works on the substation connections for the automatic generator transfer switching. Photo by Bob Jordan

Photo by Bob Jordan

By Bernie Orient

Wells notched out the damaged edge and placed a short section of steel bar with threaded holes to match the old brackets into the relief. Then he clamped pieces of melamine material to the sides as forms and floated in an epoxy filler-adhesive and allowed it to cure for a day or so. The final reinforcement was a door-length steel strip fabricated to match the 1/8” thick “factory” edge but of 3/16” thick material. The original castings were then machine-screwed through the strip and into the embedded bar stock. All of this had to be confined to the narrow area of the door that remains in the car body when closed, thus invisible, the hallmark of repair work.

We also noticed the bottom edges of the doors, which had a “T” shaped bar section screwed in across the width to guide the door in the bottom track. The doors were supported at the top by two rollers each. The T-sections were worn near the end

where the doors meet when closed, probably ground down by road dirt trapped in the bottom track. This allowed a lot of in-and-out movement which probably contributed to the unsightly gouge in the door surface across much of the width, caused by rubbing on the pocket on the car body where the doors vanish when opening. We machined six-inch long pieces of ABS plastic to a shape that closely fit the track plus held the doors away from the car body pocket edges where the gouging had occurred. The ABS material is slippery, impact resistant, black and inexpensive, hence sacrificial. All of this work required many hands and skills and we were quite fortunate to have all available for the repair. It will be interesting to see how long-lived the modifications will be.

Late in the day on September 27 Pittsburgh Railways 4398 developed a problem eerily reminiscent of that experienced with Pittsburgh Railways 4145 a few years ago. This caused considerable consternation as 4398 was the assigned front runner for Pumpkin Trolley. The #1 wheel set spun under power so freely on the rails that the only way to move the car was to cut-out the 1 and 3 motor pairs. We got the car in late in the day and quickly spotted the problem of a missing brush in #3 traction motor which was the non-spinning mate to the #1. The repair was quick and simple working inside the car through a floor hatch. In fact I rechecked all of the motor brushes which appeared to be of adequate length. We serviced the controllers while the car was in the shop and once again midway through the event. Two of the event cars had problems on the next-to-last day, with PST 14 losing a trolley rope necessitating a quick trip on the roof as the wayward pole snagged a signal contactor just clear of Museum Road, and PRT 5326 losing enough balls from one of its folding step mechanisms to bind the door action. The car (5326) was actually serving out an extended tour of duty as a front window had failed the week previous but it was decided to tape it up and finish out the event. The window has been restored and will be available when the car is readied in the spring. As of this writing we've gathered enough step shafts, bearings and springs for multiple car repairs when the next need arises. Hopefully the step install will go smoothly.

The repaired #3 traction motor was installed in one of the M551 trucks on October 4 and the truck was moved to the Founders' Car House. The truck was the former M283 rear truck, and however designated it fits nicely with Rio 1758 on either track 11 or 12 in the car house. The downside of this re-

lationship is that if 1758 is moved to the TDB the truck must accompany it. This activity was in the midpoint of a very busy but warm day that included a nine-car shift culminating with 66 in the center position on track 21, 1711 behind that and 4145 on track 22. Removal of the truck and motor cleared the way to bring PTC 8042 to the Restoration shop. Further work on the trucks will be accomplished either back on track 22 or in the shop annex when time permits.

Pittsburgh Railways PCC 1711 was in for heater duct repairs, sander re-installation and wheel shunt repairs. In the fall each year and then in the spring we configure the dampers, patches and thermostats in the PCC cars from vent to heat and vice versa. The air ducts under 1711 had multiple patches and leaks and possibly would not contain enough airflow to cool the electric strip heaters inside the baseboards. We did an adequate job on the left side and will tackle the right side as we slip into 2018. A really nice by-product of the duct repair was a spanking new box cover under the voltage-regulator section. This eliminated the need and use of tacky rubber bungee cords used to keep the posted vintage cover in place. The sander, as reported last issue, was irreparable from a derailment but was reinstalled for appearance purposes. We replaced two steel wheel shunts and we're now in the midst of replacing the front track brake carriage. Separating the massive magnets took most of a day and manhandling the unwieldy and heavy carriage was also challenging as we had to tilt and maneuver it under the truck and to the shop floor. We have a better replacement carriage, installation-ready; however the unique closed-end tension springs could not be salvaged. Presently the car has been interned in the Founders' Car House until we can have new springs wound.

PATransit PCC 4004 was in the shop for parking purposes mainly but we tackled the loose door leaves, an item on the deferred maintenance list. The bottom pins had worked loose in the linkage and the holes in the aluminum housings that held the pins had greatly worn. Over a three week period we removed the leafs, separated the bottom bushing holder, fabricated and welded in new bottom pins and machined the housings and installed durable bronze bushings. Somewhat emboldened by our door repair success I decided to replace the truck shock absorbers, several of which had been leaking and contributing to the oil-on-the-floor situation. Although Eric Weinbrenner got the first front one changed out in short order, the remainder got progressively difficult. The bottom pins on the

rear shocks were hopelessly frozen in the support brackets. The brackets were bolted to the truck frames but access to the bolts was blocked by the shocks. I resorted to the Sawzall to cut each pin in two places then remove shock and bracket. This clever tactic was suggested by John Habak, our south-of-the-border restoration and electrical tech, and it worked swell. At times, late in life, an obvious solution is not so obvious while being centered in a situation. Machinist Ray Hatfield bored out the embedded cut ends and fabricated new pins. Following a 12-car shift on November 22 we got 4004 over the main pit and completed the installation job plus adjusted the air thermostats for winter use.

The main objective of this recent shift was to move Pittsburgh Railways 3756 into the shop for extensive maintenance as discussed by the Collections Management Committee at its September meeting. This directive, and our assignment, was to make as many repairs as possible before June 2018 to allow this car to join the roster with our other 13 fine operating cars in regular service. Wiring repairs and air tank replacements are underway and frame and body repairs will begin in January. For now the car is up on jacks in the center position on

track 21. As with the nature of maintenance work, the results will be mainly invisible. Stand by for a painfully detailed report next issue. Although we've gotten pretty far into the demo phase I'll just write a separate article for the next Trolley Fare.

The maintenance team did a rare service call to the TDB on November 8 to prepare Boston Elevated 3618 center dump car for duty. Previous to this I replaced a failed finger and tip in one of the controllers plus serviced the other one. The car has not been used for hauling rocks for quite a while, possibly for the track 22 renovation, but does move around, so to speak, with occasional realignments in the TDB and for parades. It was used for its intended purpose to deliver and spread ballast for the tie replacement exercise near Yanavich in November.

I mention car shifts a couple of times in this article. Naturally we need to bring in the cars we want to care for plus move the ones finished to the car house or TDB. Each car move averages 20 minutes, and it is virtually impossible to just move one car. So multiple moves can eat up a lot of shop time. Fortunately Brett Freithaler is normally part of the Wednesday crew and he excels at car shifting. Other workers that take care of shifting are Katie Imler, Bob Powischill and Armand Latour. 

Car Restoration

By Bruce Wells

West Penn 832 continues coming down the home stretch toward the June 1 rollout in conjunction with the 2018 Western Pennsylvania Trolley Meet which we will host since it is an even numbered year. Those familiar with Trolley Meets and read these pages know that last May we traveled east to represent PTM at the Bi-annual East Penn Trolley Meet, held for the first time at the Allentown Fairgrounds, and had a great time. My gang look forward to hosting and having West Penn 832 ready to run through the ribbon!

Test runs of the car have gone smoothly but we have discovered that the power going to the motors is not quite right. This is not a problem for operating the car but will require some changes to the wiring already installed. So, it should not prevent us giving dedicating the car and offering rides on June 1. The key is connecting up the distinctive hand brake, trimming out dash panels, installing interior woodwork, making destination signs and applying lettering and graphics.

Speaking of lettering and graphics we were lucky to catch Kim Freithaler at a slightly less busy time at the Holidays and she has done a great job applying the numbers and letters to the outside of the car as shown in these photos. You might recall reading



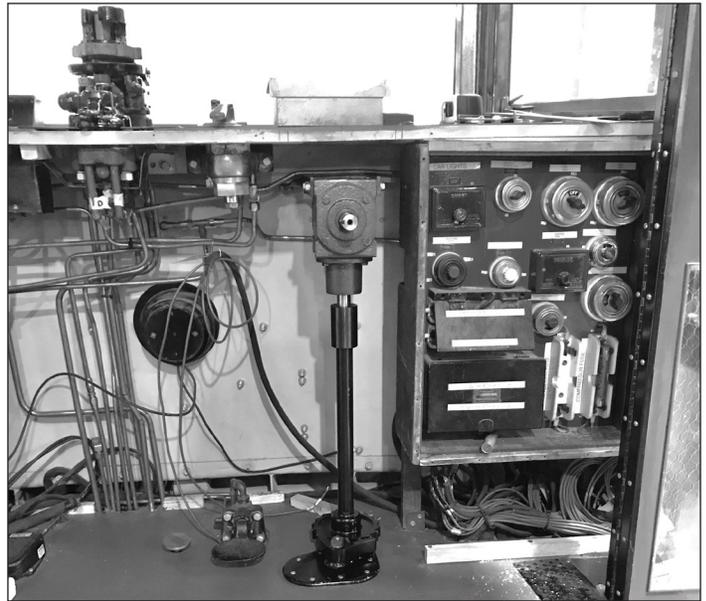
that Kim (Brett's Mom) (Brett volunteers in the shop and Ops) applied the emblems and numbers to Red Arrow 66 after its extensive painting and rehab a couple years ago. Photos by Bob Jordan.

Progress on the interior of 832 continued with fabrication and installation of the replica handbrake mechanisms. Arthur W. Ellis (Artie) took handbrake parts obtained from generous member Dennis Lavendar, who operates a locomotive parts business in Ohio. The parts were a bit oversize for the job and Art spent considerable time tooling up our milling machine to machine the parts down to size. Art also machined floor plates that better matched the originals and fitted up the ratchet dogs that holds tension on the chain.

In early December Art installed the first unit on the #1 end that included the new right angle drive gearboxes obtained by Dave Hamley and Jack Sutherland a few years ago. He purchased couplings to adapt them to Dennis's original parts, custom fabricated strap metal to anchor the gearbox to the frame of the dash and voila the completed unit. He also prepared CAD drawings for the aluminum castings (shown atop the dash in the photo) that serve the dual purpose of capping the access hole for the mechanism and provide a socket for the original fare registers. The next step is to make connections between the shaft and the brake rod under the car and Art Rizzino is helping to locate lengths of the proper chain.

Two items that Jim Ott, Jack Sutherland, Barrie Baker and John Habak fitted up for the interior are the motorman seats. Cushions were reupolstered to match the rest of the seat cushions and the framework was restored. To mount the seats in the car steel plates were cut to which the frames were attached. This allows the seats to be mounted to the floor without concern for piercing underfloor piping used by the brake system.

Finally, this quarter saw the start of rebuilding of the front platform on Philadelphia 8042. Keith Bray, who built and installed the ceiling panels for West Penn 832, has been contracted to perform structural work. Work started November 5 and our crew has been hard at it removing fixtures and controls. 



Artie Ellis completed fitting and installation of the #1 end handbrake in early December. Photo by Arthur W. Ellis



Artie obtained and adapted this indexing fixture for the milling machine so that the handbrake floor ratchets could be recut for a better fit on West Penn 832. Photo by Arthur W. Ellis



Keith Bray working on PTC 8042 11-15-17

Photo by Scott R. Becker.



Jack Demnyan cleans PRT 5326 for Pumpkin Patch Trolley.

Photo by Scott R. Becker

October started out with the usual preparations for our Pumpkin Patch event that included the annual Pumpkin Parade held annually in Houston, PA. For the event a parade float was set up on Doug Zebley's antique truck in addition to our usual entry, Ralph Ciccone's 57 Rambler station wagon.

This preceded by the unrelated but timely painting of Loco 89 with a shiny coat of orange paint. Logos and lettering are awaiting application while considerable effort has been expended reinstalling the windows.



On September 30, Laura Wells and her crew including Jeff King and Kevin Zebley applied Omaha Orange paint to Loco 89.

Photo by Her Dad.



Houston Pumpkin Festival Parade float and the parade crew of Ralph Ciccone, Jeff King, Bruce Wells, Don Bailey, Laura Wells, and Sarah Wells.

Photo by Scott Becker

October 6 we attended the dedication ceremony for the Bethel Park Historical Society's new home in the Schoolhouse located on South Park Road just east of the Library line. The PCC car on display there for many years was repainted for the occasion and we have supplied the necessary graphics to augment its new Pittsburgh Railways paint job. I will be going back in the spring to help create its proper appearance and apply new vinyl decals.

A major focus in the track work area was a tie replacement project from Yanavich to Arden. In the days prior to Pumpkin Patch Trolley the crew consisting of Larry Lovejoy, Kevin Zebley, Tim Sheffield, Laura Wells, Sarah Wells and Dan Bower worked on the emergency replacement of ties in this section of the streetcar line. In this process 25 ties were replaced and the line was ready for the special event operations.

The next significant track news came October 28, Dan Bower and Larry Lovejoy loaded a flatbed trailer full of the best girder rail we had on hand, to go to South Eastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority to be bent into various curves for the Trolley Street project. Sorting and picking out the rail consumed major portions of the three weekends leading up to this with Larry spending additional time on the weekdays.

Following Pumpkin Patch the cross tie replacement continued beginning on the weekend of November 4 & 5 and extending up to the start of our Santa Claus event. During the weeks between the emergency tie replacement and the much needed work on the equipment was needed. Removing the badly leaking oil cooler from the air compressor, replacing batteries and generally servicing equipment such as the tamper, air compressor, tie extractor, installing a new muffler on the tamper, replacing bad and failing hydraulic hoses on the tamper (one small hose failed while finishing up the first pass of work in October). Upon inspection defects were found in a number of the other hoses.

Saturday November 4 was the first day of the major portion of the tie replacement project and newly out shopped crane car M283 was loaded with ties, tools, etc. Operations were short turned at Yanavich to allow crews to perform the work. November 4 & 5 saw the removal of 114 bad ties and the insertion of 114 new ones in the course of the two days. This was in addition to the 25 new ones done in October.



At the dedication of the Bethel Park Historical Society building on October 6.

Photo by Bruce Wells



Sunday the track crew included Kate Imler, Dan Bower and Armand Latour 11-4-17. Photo by Scott R. Becker



Laura Wells, Kevin Zebley, Larry Lovejoy and Tim Sheffield are seen inserting ties along the track from Yanavich to Arden Mines Loop Photo by Sarah Wells

On the weekend of November 11 & 12 all the new ties were straightened up, and all of the tie plates were installed. This was followed by a first pass with the tamper. On Sunday all of the gauge was corrected where needed, and then all of the new ties were spiked. The following weekend new ballast was spread using Boston Elevated 3618 and then the tamper applied its magic to the entire project area.

Crew for the tie replacement project included, Dan Bower, Brett Freithaler, Katie Imler, Armand Latour, Larry Lovejoy, Vaughn Neill, Tim Sheffield, Laura Wells, Sarah Wells, Doug Zebley and Kevin Zebley. During the time in between weekends Larry Lovejoy did a lot of preparation work. Dan Bower and Dave Hamley have worked on repairs to the equipment.

Work on the new entry road for the east site got a great boost with the acquisition of fill from a construction site behind the County Hospital. This fill will be enough to eliminate a hole left after the site was originally filled. It will provide enough fill to get our new roadway up to North Main Street constructed when work begins next Spring. 



November 29 found the crew from Fleher Construction, LLC working to pile neatly the fill they provided from a construction site on Old Hickory Ridge Road where a county building is being rebuilt for use by the Washington Soil Conservation District. Photo by Bruce Wells



Sarah Wells demonstrates her best teacher crowd control techniques, directing incoming visitors to queue up for the next Santa Trolley Run on December 2, with Jim Herrington and Doug Zebley waiting for their next Yuletide Shuttle run. Photo by Bruce Wells



Long time Port Authority Executive Director Bill Millar tries his hand at the controls of 4004 on a December 14 visit to PTM. Photo by Bruce Wells

Remembering Charlie Fife



PTM President Charlie Fife at the ceremony dedicating the US&S signal installation
Photo by Scott Becker



Charlie Fife selling tickets at Fairgrounds 2010.
Photo by Scott R. Becker



Charlie Fife stocks snack machine. *Photo by Scott R. Becker*



Charlie + Ginny Fife at Museum Fund Raiser for West Penn 832.
Photo by Scott R. Becker



Charlie Fife receives honorary membership on Sept 8, 2017.
Photo by Scott R. Becker



Charlie Fife received \$7,500 check presented to the Museum by J. Barry Stout during the 2007 Roast.
Photo by Edward H. Lybarger