



## TWO BELLS

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

September 2015

<http://myptm.info/>

Operations Schedule  
Operating Policies & Procedures  
Operating Orders  
Operations Department Forms  
Log In Required



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Dennis F. Cramer - Editor



## Those Were the Days -- In Some Places They Still Are

The peak of the electric trolley era was 1918, the War to End all Wars ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of that year with a treaty signing in Versailles. The automobile was now becoming firmly established in the American way of life and glory days of the trolley industry were beginning to come to an end. It was also the peak of the trolley park in the United States. By 1919, there were 1000 amusement parks around the country and most of them were operated by trolley companies. Carousels, picnic grounds and bandstands were many times located next to a pond or lake where visitors could take a boat ride or go for a swim. The attendance numbers were quite impressive for many of these parks and the trolley companies did a swell job in getting their patrons to and from these idyllic retreats, usually located near the end of the line. Unfortunately, many of those parks became victim of the same thing that did in the trolley companies: the inexpensive automobile.

Jim Futrell, historian for the National Amusement Park Historical Association, lists eleven trolley parks remaining in the United States. They are Seabreeze Amusement Park (1879) in Rochester, NY; Dorney Park (1884) in Allentown, PA; Lakemont Park (1894) in Altoona, PA; Waldameer Park (1896) in Erie, PA; Kennywood Park (1898) in West Mifflin, PA; Midway Park (1898) in Maple Springs, NY; Canobie Lake Park (1902) in Salem, NH; Camden Park (1903) in Huntington WV; Oaks Amusement Park (1905) in Portland, OR; Clementon Park (1907) in Clementon, NJ; and Quassy Amusement Park (1908) in Middlebury, CT. He states Clementon Park was not owned by a trolley company but was at the end of the line of one. The PTM definition includes parks owned by trolley companies, but he included the park in an article written by Beth J. Harpaz for the Associated Press in 2010 so I included it here.

Wikipedia includes Lake Compounce (1846) in Bristol, Ct and Lakeside Amusement Park (1907) in Denver, CO. Even though they appeared to be served by trolley companies, I could find nothing directly tying them through ownership.

“As destination and regional parks try to outdo each other with huge rides that cost millions and as a result have to charge larger admissions, the value of local trolley parks remains family-friendly,” said Tim O’Brien editor at large for Funworld magazine, the official publication of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. “And they are every bit a part of the community as the local banks and mom and pop grocery stores. Trolley parks are true pieces of Americana.”

Of the parks listed above, there are four in Pennsylvania. These parks were heavily patronized by locals for years and when the new theme parks began in other parts of the country, Pennsylvania missed out on some of that, so patrons just kept going to their favorite local parks. These four parks are jewels from our past.

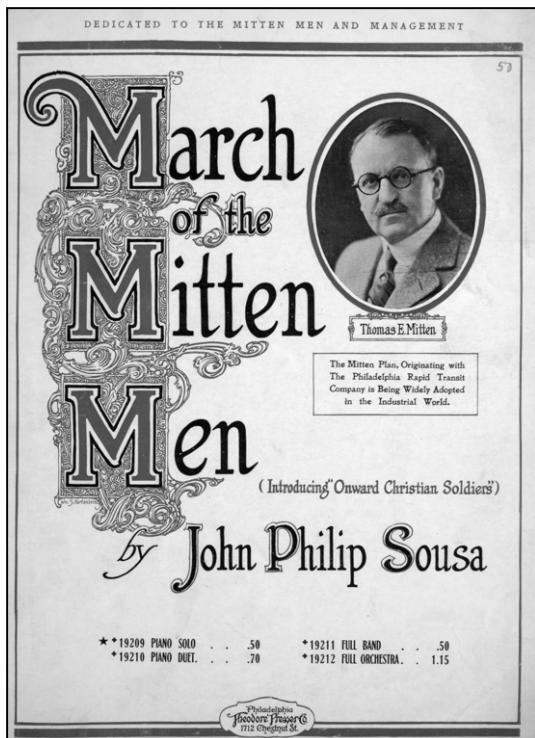
Of those trolley parks that no longer exist, Willow Grove outside of Philadelphia is the most famous. The park, opened in 1896, was served by the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Co. (PRT) and later Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) Route 6 streetcar line. Streetcar service to the park ended in 1958. PCC cars were used on Route 6 beginning in the 1940s. After the loss of trackage for the route 309 expressway, Route 6 was cut back to a loop and terminus at Cheltenham and Ogontz Avenues at the city line. The park closed in 1976 and the shortened Route 6 service was operated by SEPTA until 1986.



Collection of DF Cramer

Willow Grove was the place to go to hear music, especially band music. All of the greats performed there regularly. Harold Hill could have been talking about Willow Grove when he introduces the song "Seventy-Six Trombones" in "The Music Man."

"And you'll see the glitter of crashing cymbals,  
And you'll hear the thunder of rolling drums,  
                 the shimmer of trumpets - Tantara!  
And you'll feel something akin to the electric thrill  
                 I once enjoyed  
When Gilmore, Liberati, Pat Conway,  
The Great Creatore, W.C. Handy and John Philip Sousa  
All came to town on the very same day."



Gillmore was dead before the park opened, but many of those band leaders and many famous orchestra leaders performed at “The Music Capitol of America,” Walter Damrosch and his Orchestra was the first in 1897.

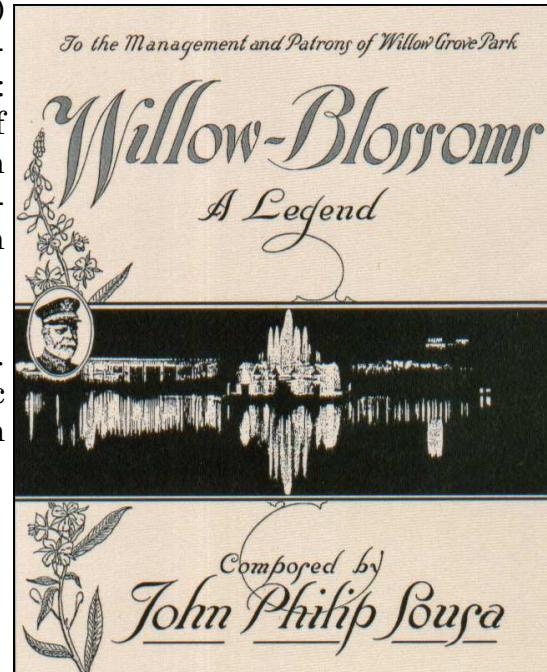
But just as this was the time of the trolley and amusement park, it was also the time of the band. Between 1850 and 1918, bands flourished in America. By the turn of the twentieth century, there were over 20,000 bands in America. For the Sousa Band, Willow Grove was their summer home, performing 2,751 concerts between 1901 and 1926. They typically played four concerts a day. In 1926, they performed 228 concerts in 57 days. It is estimated that over 100,000 people heard the band’s last performance at Willow Grove in 1926.

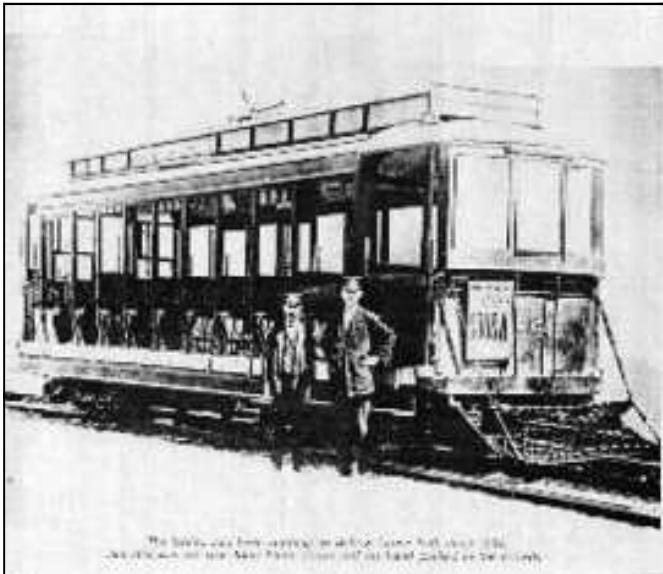
Willow Grove was known as the park with morals. Men were required to wear coats and ties and women wore their finest dresses. The band shell seated four thousand and another five thousand could be seated outside on pavilion benches.

Obviously Sousa made a lot of money with his connection to Willow Grove (many years more than a thousand dollars a day) and wrote two pieces for the park, their management and the parent trolley company: “Willow Blossoms” (1911) and “The March of the Mitten Men” (1923). The Mitten Men was composed the same year as PRT’s largest order ever to the Brill Company which include our 5326.

This was a very different time in America. The more you can learn about the Electric Era, the more you can help our visitors gain an insight to this fascinating time.

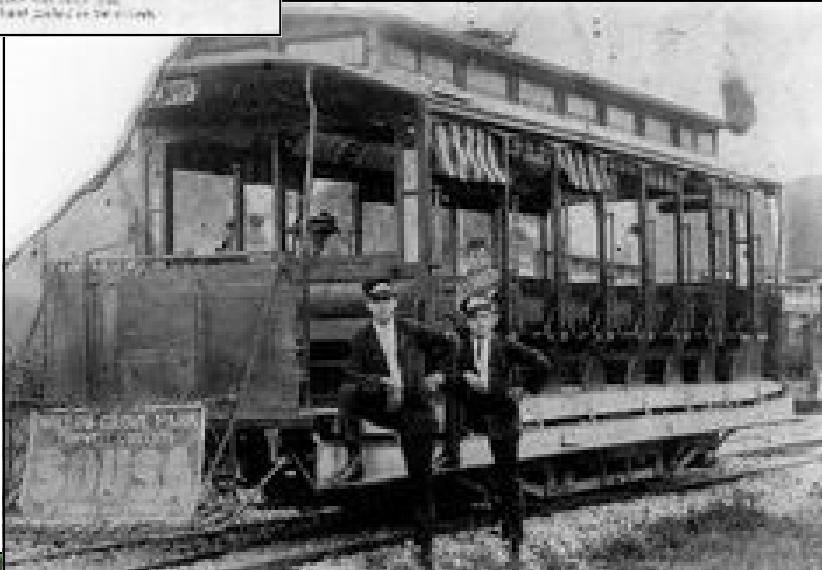
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Summer is here you may be looking for a place to keep cool, have fun, shop and prevent bullying.

Collection of Willow Grove Park



Collection of John O'Donnell



Armstrong Concert Band performs Willow Blossoms at 1998 Trolley Fair

Collection of DF Cramer

**PTM Operations Department  
Monthly Passenger Car Usage Report  
July, 2015**

<b>Car</b>	<b>Dates Utilized</b>	<b>Miles</b>	<b>2015 Total</b>
<b>14</b>	2,3,6,7,8,9,11,13,15,17	122	832
<b>66</b>	5	26	198
<b>78</b>	9,11,14,15,16,17,18,22	122	426
<b>N832</b>	16,21,24,27	88	325
<b>1711</b>	9,17,31	24	186
<b>1758</b>	2,3,7,12,13,14,18,19,20,24,25,26,27,28,30,31	336	628
<b>2227</b>	23,26	44	144
<b>2711</b>	5,10,24,26,28,30	54	280
<b>3756</b>			
<b>4004</b>			148
<b>4145</b>			
<b>4398</b>	4,5,8,10,12,17,20	130	594
<b>5326</b>	28	6	12

June total:	952
2015 total:	3773

### Friend Me

Those two words have become synonymous with Facebook, but have you considered the application to the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum. How many friends and neighbors have you told about the museum, or even invited them down to take a ride. Many of you do this regularly and even jockey positions with your colleagues here to operate while your friends are on board.

When was the last time you asked them to consider joining our museum, or at least invited them to one of our Open Houses? We tell our visitors regularly, or least we hope you do, about the myriad opportunities there are for volunteering at PTM. Why not encourage your friends to do the same. Bring them down on a day you are not scheduled to work and give them a private tour, introduce them to Lynne or Scott and show them what goes on behind the scenes. Support your museum, invite your friends.

**Pumpkin Patch Trolley – October 9-11, 16-18, 23-25**  
**Pennsylvania Arts & Crafts Christmas Festival – October 16-18, 24-25**  
**Santa Trolley – November 27-29, December 5-6, 12-13**  
**Trolleys & Toy Trains – December 4 & 11**