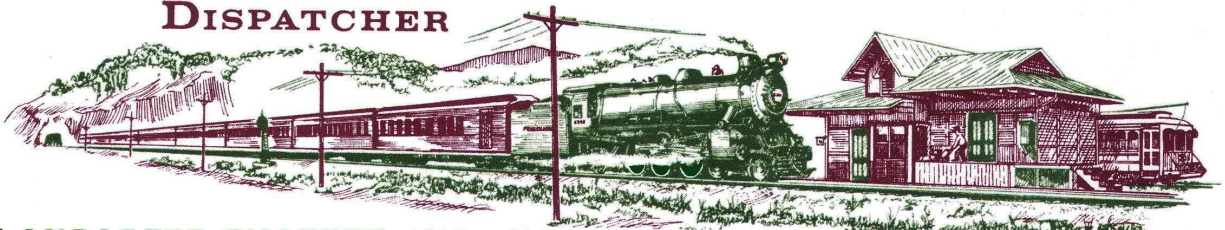


LANCASTER
DISPATCHER

1935 - 2020



LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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AUGUST 2020

The cover of the Reading Railroad Magazine features a black and white photograph of a ferry boat. The ferry is filled with passengers and is carrying a large train car. The train car has a sign that says "PHILADELPHIA". Above the ferry, there is a diamond-shaped logo with the text "Reading lines". The main title "Reading Railroad Magazine" is written in a large, stylized font. Below the title, it says "ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE READING COMPANY". At the bottom of the cover, there is a silhouette of a person looking out at the water. The text "OFF TO THE SHORE." is written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the very bottom, it says "Vol. I AUGUST, 1926 No. 12".

Reading
lines

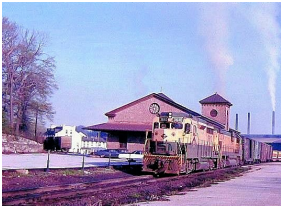
Reading Railroad Magazine

ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE READING COMPANY

PHILADELPHIA

OFF TO THE SHORE.

Vol. I AUGUST, 1926 No. 12



THE POWER DIRECTOR

“NEWS FROM THE RAILROAD WIRES”



AMTRAK SELECTS DEVELOPMENT TEAM TO PARTNER IN GRAY 30TH STREET STATION REDEVELOPMENT

Financial negotiations and project scoping underway

PHILADELPHIA, June 18, 2020, Amtrak MEDIACENTER – Amtrak has selected Plenary Infrastructure Philadelphia (PIP), a team with international expertise to form a master development partnership via ground lease for the renovation of William H. Gray III 30th Street Station. The key team members who will design, build, finance, operate and maintain the station include Plenary Americas USA Ltd., one of the largest dedicated, public-private partnership developers in North America, who has partnered with Gilbane Building Company, Johnson Controls Inc. and Vantage Airport Group Ltd. “Gray 30th Street Station is the third busiest station in our national network and this partnership underscores Amtrak’s commitment to deliver on its vision of a world-class station experience for all travelers, the station as a grand gateway to Philadelphia and a tribute to honor the lifetime of service Congressman Gray provided to Philadelphia and Pennsylvania as a tireless advocate for disadvantaged communities,” said Senior Executive Vice President Stephen Gardner. “While this is certainly a challenging time, the redevelopment of Gray 30th Street Station is part of a core set of essential projects and strategic objectives across all the different dimensions of the company that are critical to our long-term strategy and success, and we are continuing to advance those projects.”

The historic station is nearly 100 years old and serves more than four million Amtrak customers and more than eight million combined SEPTA and NJ TRANSIT rail commuters annually. The master development partnership will restore and highlight the historic fabric of the majestic station, while heightening the level of customer experience by introducing new amenities, reinvigorating the structure’s retail and commercial potential, improving and expanding existing office space and enhancing transit and pedestrian traffic flows.

The Amtrak Board of Directors approved the designation of PIP following a competitive, open procurement process with a rigorous technical and financial review. PIP was selected based on their proposal and successful record of project delivery, extensive experience with complex mixed-use properties and adaptive reuse of historic buildings, and approach and commitment to engaging Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (“DBE”), community hiring, and workforce development strategies during all phases of the redevelopment. The group was selected from a pre-qualified short list of teams following a Request for Qualifications in 2018.

AMTRAK: DELIVERING A NEW STANDARD OF TRAVEL

WASHINGTON, June 19, 2020, Amtrak MEDIACENTER – Amtrak is leading the way by setting a new standard of travel with enhanced safety and cleaning measures. In an effort to simplify and safeguard the travel experience, several cleaning, contact-free and convenience measures have been implemented into every part of the customer journey — from time of booking to the moment of arrival.

With a full-time medical director and public health and safety team who have been on the front lines throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, we have studied, analyzed and made improvements to the Amtrak travel experience – from beginning to end – for the safety and health of our people and travelers.

Amtrak continues to evaluate current practices and launch new initiatives to support personal safety. For more information, follow Amtrak on social media, sign up for Amtrak Guest Rewards and visit [Amtrak.com/coronavirus](https://www.amtrak.com/coronavirus) to stay updated on the latest news and important information on our services.

Amtrak Guest Rewards:

Coupons: We have paused coupon expiration through September 25, 2020.

Points: We have paused point expiration through September 25, 2020.

Tier Status: For members with tier status, status will be extended for an additional year, through February 28, 2022.

Lounge Access: Amtrak Guest Rewards® World Mastercard® holders have lounge access through August 31, 2020.

Travel Flexibility: We are waiving change fees on all existing or new reservations made before August 31, 2020, including reservations booked with points.

Learn More: Read more about the important Amtrak Guest Rewards updates we have made in response to COVID-19.

When You Book:

Trip flexibility: Amtrak is waiving all change and cancellation fees for reservations made by August 31, 2020. This includes reservations booked with points. To modify a reservation, log in to your account, go to ‘Modify Trip’ on [Amtrak.com](https://www.amtrak.com), or find your reservation from your account on the home screen in the Amtrak app. A fare difference may apply to your new itinerary. If you want to cancel your reservation without a fee, you must call 1-800-USA-RAIL and speak with an agent (not available via [Amtrak.com](https://www.amtrak.com) or the Amtrak app).

Limiting bookings: We are limiting bookings on most trains to allow for more physical distancing in seating areas. Individuals traveling alone may use the seat next to them for personal belongings, while friends and family members will easily find seats together.

Private rooms: Offered on many routes, a private room is the perfect option for customers seeking privacy and space on a short trip and added comfort and amenities when traveling overnight.

Enhanced Station Procedures:

Station Arrival: Except for the Auto Train, customers are encouraged to arrive 30 minutes before departure and 60 minutes if in need of ticketing and/or baggage assistance. Priority boarding will be discontinued and boarding procedures will be adjusted at stations in Washington, DC, Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York Penn Station.

Enhanced cleaning protocols: Amtrak has enhanced cleaning frequency and retrofitted protective plastic barriers where necessary. Commonly used surfaces in stations such as door handles, counter tops, seating areas and Quik-Trak kiosks are cleaned with EPA-registered disinfectants.

Physical distancing: Signage has been displayed at our busiest stations to indicate safe distances in high traffic areas. In addition, protective plastic barriers have been installed at customer counters at our busiest stations.

Facial coverings: Amtrak requires all customers and employees wear face masks or an alternative facial covering while in stations.

Contact-free travel experience:

Amtrak App: The Amtrak app makes contact-free travel easy. Customers can book, board, check train status and access information from the convenience and safety of a mobile device. Amtrak encourages boarding with eTickets, which conductors scan from the Amtrak app.

Cashless service: Amtrak is accepting cashless payments only.

Seamless gate service: To reduce crowds at departure boards, Amtrak app users can now receive gate and track information via push notification at select stations.

Onboard:

Facial coverings: Amtrak requires all customers and employees wear face masks or an alternative facial covering while on trains or thruway buses. Facial coverings can be removed when customers are in their private rooms or seated alone.

Enhanced cleaning protocols: We have amplified the cleaning process by

disinfecting highly touched surfaces.

Limiting bookings: We are limiting bookings on most trains to allow for more physical distancing in seating areas. Individuals traveling alone may use the seat next to them for personal belongings, while friends and family members will easily find seats together.

Reducing exposure: All non-safety materials have been removed from seatback pockets.

Handwashing: Available in each car's restroom, Amtrak strongly encourages washing hands thoroughly with soap and water.

Contactless movement onboard: To move between cars, customers can use an "automatic door open" button with their foot.

Upon arrival: When the train is approaching a destination, conductors will make announcements regarding where and when customers can disembark to minimize door crowding.

Food & beverage:

Café service: When Café service is available, seating in the café will be closed and offered as carryout only. Customers can bring items back to their seats or private rooms.

Physical distancing: For customers placing orders in the café, signage and markers promoting physical distancing leading up to the café counter have been added.

Protective barriers: For added protection, protective plastic barriers are being installed at café countertops.

Flexible dining: Amtrak is temporarily offering flexible dining service on all long-distance routes (except Auto Train) and encouraging customers in private rooms to opt for room service.

Dining and lounge seating: Dining and lounge seating will remain available on select long distance routes with physical distancing protocols in place.

AMTRAK CUTTING FREQUENCY OF 'SILVER STAR' & 'SILVER METEOR' AS OF JULY 6

WASHINGTON, June 22, 2020, By Bob Johnston, Trains News Wire - Amtrak will alternate service on its two New York-Miami trains running on different routes through the Carolinas as of July 6, a move it attributes to COVID-19 pandemic ridership drops and a preview of the company's still mostly undefined plans to cut virtually every long-distance route to triweekly service this fall.

The *Silver Meteor* will leave New York Monday through Thursday, and Miami Sunday through Wednesday, while the *Silver Star* will operate Friday through Sunday southbound and Thursday through Saturday northbound. The new arrangement means connections to and from the west on the *Capitol Limited*, *Lake Shore Limited*, and *Cardinal* won't be possible every day. For now, the daytime New York-Savannah, Ga., *Palmetto* running on the *Meteor's* route remains daily.

Cross-Florida travel and service to South Carolina's state capital, Columbia, will occur on different days around weekends. Trains News Wire discovered that southbound coach seats on the *Meteor* were sold out departing Washington, D.C., on both June 18 and 19, while the *Star* was also sold out on June 19. Sporadic sellouts occurred on both trains in May as Amtrak enforced 50% coach capacity protocols.

In May, combined ridership on the *Silver Star* and *Silver Meteor* rose from April even though each train didn't operate every day owing to CSX trackwork south of Richmond, Va. Together, the two trains racked up 7.2 million passenger miles generating \$1.4 million of revenue, compared with 5.2 million passenger miles and \$2.4 million in revenue for all Northeast Corridor trains between Boston and Washington.

SENATORS SEEK MORE DETAILS ON AMTRAK SERVICE, JOB CUTS

In three letters, 16 senators ask specifics of costs justifying end of daily long-distance service, criteria for its restoration

WASHINGTON, June 29, 2020, By Bob Johnston, Trains News Wire — Sixteen U.S. Senators have pushed back against Amtrak's plan to reduce 12 daily long-distance trains to triweekly departures and cut its workforce by 20%. In three separate letters to President and CEO William Flynn sent late last week, the lawmakers strongly hinted they were unwilling to grant the company's request for an additional \$1.475 billion in fiscal 2021 without

obtaining more details that explain how costs and revenues would be affected by the reductions.

The inquiries by nine Republicans and seven Democrats — representing Montana, North Dakota, West Virginia, Colorado, Nevada, Wisconsin, Mississippi, and Indiana — follow proposed Amtrak oversight legislation recently passed by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Among recently added "managers amendments" to the "INVEST in America Act" before a floor vote are directives ordering Amtrak to maintain existing long-distance frequencies throughout the next fiscal year; provide ticket-selling and baggage-handling capability, not just agents, at 15 stations where Congressional appropriators had already demanded personnel be rehired; and ensure food service is available to all passengers and remains unchanged until a proposed Food and Beverage Working Group issues recommendations.

A letter obtained by *Trains News Wire* penned by U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), chairman of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, asks to see what data Amtrak is using to justify long-distance reductions and the benchmarks that will trigger a specific plan for reinstating daily trains.

"We would like to ensure that reductions in frequencies for long-distance routes do not unnecessarily extend beyond the COVID-19 crisis," it says.

U.S. Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont.), who is up for re-election this year, and his six bipartisan co-signers say Amtrak's proposal "raises serious doubts about whether a realistic plan exists for fully restoring service in a timely fashion." Triweekly service, his letter adds, "will eliminate thousands of points of connection and dramatically reduce the utility of Amtrak as a transportation provider, irrevocably hurting hundreds of communities and small towns already devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic." The Daines letter, like Wicker's, asks about metrics Amtrak will use to decide when daily service would return, but also wonders what Amtrak considers "adequate funding" that the company says it will need to restore frequencies.

Fellow Montana U.S. Sen. Jon Tester and Democrats from West Virginia and Nevada found the negative effects of reduced service and connections to rural communities such as Havre, Mont.; Elko, Nev.; and Prince, W. Va., "particularly egregious when Amtrak's long-distance [trains] provided double the revenue of state-supported routes or the Northeast Corridor in May." It also asks for conditions and timelines for restoring daily service, as well as "the costs associated with the reduction and resumption of service."

Asked about the upcoming cuts in a *Washington Post* livestream interview Monday morning, Flynn did not address cost or revenue impacts but said the Oct. 1 date was chosen because winter "is the time we have the lowest level of ridership on the long distance network. Then we will be evaluating those trains and other indicators, and our ability to restore service on a service-by-service plan as we come into the spring and ... into the summer, which is the highest level of ridership.

"We're looking at bookings and level of ridership; we'll just have to look at where we are in terms of COVID-19 and the pandemic — God forbid there is a second wave. And we also want to understand Amtrak's financial condition, and just broader level demand for Amtrak and air services, for example." He said the company would "certainly" be communicating its criteria and plans for restoring long-distance service "to the representative committees and very interested members on Capitol Hill."



AMTRAK AND PENNDOT TO RESTORE ONE DAILY ROUNDTrip TO NEW YORK FOR KEYSTONE SERVICE

PHILADELPHIA, July 1, 2020, Amtrak MEDIACENTER — In coordination with state partners at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, beginning Monday, July 6, Amtrak is partially restoring full-length Keystone Service (New York — Philadelphia — Harrisburg) with one roundtrip between Harrisburg and New York in response to anticipated increased demand. Keystone Service train 640

will operate through to New York and train 653 will originate in New York and operate through to Harrisburg.

Modified Keystone Service includes nine weekday roundtrips and six roundtrips on weekends. Aside from the one additional roundtrip being

added to New York, other Keystone Service trains will continue to temporarily operate between Philadelphia and Harrisburg only. Pennsylvanian (Pittsburgh – Philadelphia – New York) service was previously fully restored in June and includes one daily roundtrip operating normally between New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Amtrak continues to take extra steps to keep train travel safe, including limiting bookings to less than half of capacity to maintain ample space for physical distancing onboard trains. All trains will be reserved to allow for physical distancing. Ticketing is now available on Amtrak.com, on Amtrak mobile apps or by calling 800-USA-RAIL.

“We are dedicated to doing everything possible to return service safely. We want everyone to feel comfortable as they navigate this new normal,” said Amtrak President and CEO Bill Flynn.

APPROPRIATIONS BILL WOULD BLOCK AMTRAK SERVICE REDUCTIONS

WASHINGTON, July 9, 2020, Trains News Wire - Amtrak and public transportation would receive at least \$26 billion in emergency aid under the fiscal 2021 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development funding bill proposed by the House Appropriations Committee — but the money for Amtrak would be tied to a requirement that the passenger railroad cannot discontinue or reduce frequencies on any of its routes. In a press release, Jim Mathews, CEO of the Rail Passengers Association, said the bill shows “Congress is really listening to Americans and recognizing the critical role passenger rail and public transit have always played in economic resilience.” The bill would allocate \$2.05 billion for Amtrak as part of its core appropriation, maintaining the \$1.3 billion for long-distance trains, while the emergency provisions would include \$5 billion for the Northeast Corridor and \$3 billion for the national network.

AMTRAK RELEASES FY2019 SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

WASHINGTON, July 15, 2020, Amtrak MEDIACENTER – Amtrak released its FY2019 Sustainability Report that showcases company performance against year-over-year sustainability goals and highlights sustainability projects across Amtrak’s regions and operations. In FY19, Amtrak achieved all energy, fuel, recycling and emissions targets with the support of more than 18,000 employees.

“Traveling on our electrified system in the northeast corridor emits up to 83% less greenhouse gases than driving and up to 73% less than flying. Across our national network, Amtrak is 47% more energy efficient than driving and one third more efficient than flying,” said Amtrak CFO Tracie Winbigler. “These numbers speak for themselves; Amtrak is fundamentally the better transportation option for those looking to reduce their environmental impact.”

Every year, sustainability and climate resilience work expand to encompass new projects, more departments and more ambitious commitments to ensure long-term operations. This year, executive leadership included a new corporate goal in the FY20 annual operating plan to “develop and implement a climate resilience strategic plan.” Since 2015, Amtrak completed several vulnerability assessments to anticipate future conditions. We have already begun amending business practices and design standards to protect our rail assets and lessen the disruption to Amtrak’s customers and employees from acute events and in anticipation of long-term climate shifts.

Highlights from the report include:

- > Reduced company greenhouse gas emissions by 20% since 2010 and lowered emissions by 4% in FY19.
- > Prepared for the new Acela fleet, which will be 40% more energy efficient than the original Acela train sets.
- > Reduced locomotive idling time.
- > Recycled an estimated 437 tons of clean paper and cardboard and more than 34 tons of seat cushions, fabrics and other materials keeping them out of landfills.

Building on Amtrak’s mission to provide efficient and effective intercity passenger rail mobility, Amtrak awarded a contract to Siemens for new Tier 4 locomotives. The first of 75 locomotives will go into service in 2021. The new locomotives are more fuel efficient and have lower pollutant emissions compared to older technology, leading to significant reductions in the fleet’s

overall environmental impact. In addition to purchasing more fuel-efficient locomotives, Amtrak also incorporated sustainability into end-of-life considerations for the Amfleet 1 and Acela passenger car refreshes. Several significant waste streams were removed from landfill destinations and recycled, e.g., foam, seat covers, carpet and light bulbs. Incorporating sustainability has been successfully applied to all other fleet refreshes.



CSX BEGINS REBOUND FROM HISTORIC TRAFFIC DECLINES

Even with signs of recovery, second-quarter earnings drop sharply

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., July 22, 2020, By Bill Stephens, Trains News Wire — CSX Transportation’s earnings dropped sharply in a yo-yo second quarter that included unprecedented declines in traffic volume and revenue, followed by a strong rebound.

“Wow. Where do I start in talking about this quarter?” CEO Jim Foote asked in his opening remarks on the railroad’s earnings call Wednesday afternoon. “This was the most disruptive quarter I have experienced in my career, with both the fastest decline in volumes followed by one of the most rapid increases in volumes in the company’s history. Reacting to those extreme swings — while dealing with the pandemic — has been and continues to be challenging.”

The railroad’s traffic volume fell 20%, the largest quarterly decline in CSX history and almost twice as severe as the declines during the Great Recession, Foote says. All of CSX’s business segments were affected by the pandemic: Coal volume fell 44%, merchandise traffic was down 22%, and intermodal sank 11%.

That translated into deep declines in key financial measures. For the quarter CSX’s operating income fell 37%, to \$828 million, as revenue slumped 26%, to \$2.25 billion. Earnings per share fell 40%, to 65 cents.

CSX’s operating ratio rose 5.9 points, to 63.3%, despite a 19% reduction in expenses.

Now traffic is up about 25% compared to the low point of May, when North American auto assembly plants were shut and finished vehicle traffic all but dried up. “Boy are we happy to see the volumes recover from the May trough as the economy strengthens,” Foote says.

The trends are encouraging, he says, but it’s still too early to accurately predict the ultimate shape of the recovery, due to lingering uncertainty over the durability of the economic rebound and the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic’s spread.

The railroad’s key operating metrics generally improved during the quarter. Train velocity was up year-over-year, yard productivity rose, and fuel efficiency improved. Terminal dwell rose slightly.

Carload trip plan performance was 80.5%, down slightly from the first quarter but 6.1 points above the second quarter a year ago. Intermodal trip plan performance was 94%, down 2.2 points from the first quarter but up from 89.9% a year ago. The bulk of the deterioration came in June as volume ramped back up quickly and there was a delay in recalling furloughed employees.

CSX dropped road train starts in line with the steep volume declines that began in March. But in April the railroad began moving its tonnage on fewer but longer trains, which cut train starts more deeply than the volume decline. Even as volume has rebounded to within 7% of pre-pandemic levels, road train starts remain 17% lower than they were in March.

Jamie Boychuk, executive vice president of operations, says CSX has fundamentally changed its network.

“Our auto network, which practically disappeared throughout the COVID period, has come back strong, and we are moving it in a different way than we ever have,” Boychuk says. “We are mixing the auto network with our manifest and in some areas with our intermodal network. And reducing those train starts ... is going to be a good lasting effect as we move forward.”

CSX has recalled hundreds of train and engine employees from furlough amid the volume recovery. “We’ve got a good number of employees still on furlough and we want to find work for them,” Boychuk says.

The railroad’s employee count in the second quarter was 12% lower than a

year ago.

"In difficult times, strong companies adapt — and that's exactly what we have done," Foote says.

Mark Wallace, executive vice president of sales and marketing, says he's encouraged by the rebound in domestic intermodal volume in June, which was driven by retailers restocking store shelves and ongoing strong e-commerce sales. International intermodal is looking up, too, he says, thanks to shipping lines restoring cancelled sailings from Asia and elsewhere.

Carload traffic tied to the industrial economy is coming back more slowly, Wallace says, and coal volumes will remain challenged.



NS SELLS NORFOLK HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

NORFOLK, VA., June 25, 2020, Trains News Wire - Norfolk Southern has sold its headquarters building in Norfolk, Va., as it prepares to relocate to Atlanta. TowneBank, based in Suffolk, Va., and the Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters have completed purchase of the Norfolk Southern Tower, with each planning to occupy 10 floors of the 21-story building. Terms of the deal were not disclosed; TowneBank's name will go on the building, the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot* reports. NS, which has been in the building since 1988, will continue to occupy some space in the building through 2021. The railroad announced in December it would move its headquarters to Atlanta.



NORFOLK SOUTHERN HEADQUARTERS BUILDING IN NORFOLK, VA.



NEW ENGLAND'S PAN AM RAILWAYS FOR SALE

BILLERICA, Mass., June 29, 2020, By Bill Stephens, Trains News Wire — New England regional Pan Am Railways is for sale.

The privately held company, owned by 78-year-old Tim Mellon and other investors, has enlisted BMO Financial Group to assist with a potential sale transaction, according to multiple railroad industry sources.

Pan Am officials did not respond to a request for comment.

Industry observers say there will be considerable competition to buy Pan Am, which operates on 1,700 route miles and is the largest regional railroad in North America.

"I would expect that everyone is going to be interested in it," says independent railroad analyst Anthony B. Hatch.

Before the pandemic, interest in short line and regional railroads had been increasing as financial firms — including global infrastructure funds — joined traditional shortline holding companies in bidding for railroads that have gone on the block. And that has translated into higher valuations for railroads as investors seek long-lasting infrastructure that can offer a combination of stability and growth.

Despite changing traffic patterns in New England, Pan Am has been profitable every year since it was founded in 1981 as Guilford Transportation Industries.

The system stretches from the Albany, N.Y., area to Maine and includes trackage of the former Maine Central, Boston & Maine, Portland Terminal, and Springfield Terminal railroads. A haulage agreement with a trio of Irving short lines — Eastern Maine Railway, Northern Maine Railway, and New Brunswick Southern extends Pan Am's reach into northern Maine and Saint John, New Brunswick.

Pan Am and Norfolk Southern in 2008 formed a joint venture called Pan Am Southern that consists of 437 miles of rail lines and trackage-rights routes, including the B&M main line between Mechanicville, N.Y. and Ayer, Mass., that provides NS access to the Boston area via its so-called Patriot Corridor. Pan Am's Springfield Terminal subsidiary operates the Pan Am Southern, which also includes the north-south route Pan Am uses between White River Junction, Vt., and its branches in Connecticut via Springfield, Mass.

In the event of a sale, it's unclear whether a new owner could simply step into Pan Am's shoes in the Pan Am Southern or if NS would buy Pan Am's stake in the joint venture. An NS spokesman declined to comment.

Pan Am connects with three other Class I railroads — CSX Transportation, Canadian National, and Canadian Pacific — and 14 short lines.

Potential acquirers include shortline holding companies such as Genesee & Wyoming, OmniTRAX, and Watco. G&W already has a major presence in New England through its four railroads in the region, which include Pan Am connections New England Central, Providence & Worcester, Saint Lawrence & Atlantic, and Connecticut Southern.

Infrastructure funds could emerge as buyers, as well, Hatch says. Notable deals last year included Brookfield Infrastructure Partners taking G&W private, as well as First State Investments acquiring shortline holding company Patriot Rail & Ports.

Also possible suitors: CN and CP, both of which have said they are interested in buying adjacent short line and regional railroads. CP just completed its acquisition of Central Maine & Quebec, which connects with Pan Am in Maine.

"We know the Canadians are looking to grow by offline acquisitions," Hatch says.

But CN has reportedly passed on the opportunity to bid on Pan Am.



PORTAL BRIDGE PROJECT ADVANCES WITH COMMITMENT FOR FEDERAL FUNDING

TRENTON, June 22, 2020, Trains News Wire - The project to replace New Jersey's infamous Portal Bridge has received a Federal Transit Administration commitment to fund nearly half the project, state officials said Friday. New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy wrote on Twitter that the bridge will "enter into its engineering phase with FULL federal funding." *NorthJersey.com* reports that, in a letter to NJ Transit CEO Kevin Corbett, the FTA said it had elevated the \$1.8 billion project to the engineering phase, making it eligible for \$766.5 in federal funding. The letter also said NJ Transit must submit a revised financial plan and demonstrate the ability to cover a cost increase or funding shortfall. The state and Amtrak have already committed to funding shares of the project. The announcement comes a week after Murphy met with President Donald Trump, after which Trump tweeted that he had given the project "authorization to proceed". Mechanical problems with the more than century-old bridge have sometimes led to significant delays for NJ Transit and Amtrak trains on the Northeast Corridor.

NJ TRANSIT TO PURCHASE EIGHT ADDITIONAL DUAL-POWERED LOCOMOTIVES

NEWARK, NJ, July 15, 2020, NJ Transit Press Release – The NJ TRANSIT Board of Directors today approved the purchase of eight additional ALP-45A dual-powered locomotives manufactured by Bombardier Transit Corporation for a cost of approximately \$70.5 million. The new locomotives will allow NJ TRANSIT Rail Operations to retire some locomotives in the fleet to increase mechanical reliability, improve on-time performance, provide operational flexibility and promote a more sustainable planet for the future.

This new order for eight ALP-45A locomotives is in addition to the 17 approved at the December 2017 Board of Directors meeting, bringing the total number of new ALP-45A dual-powered locomotives approved in recent years to 25. "This important purchase aligns squarely with our recently released 10-Year Strategic Plan and 5-Year Capital Plan. Improving service reliability and the customer experience are among the chief goals in both plans," said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin Corbett. "These new locomotives are far more environmentally-friendly and will provide additional flexibility to operate on both electrified and non-electrified tracks. Additionally, these locomotives

will reduce the average age of our fleet, which ultimately results in improved reliability and on-time performance, and reduces service interruptions for customers.”



NEW JERSEY TRANSIT BOMBARDIER ALP-45DP
RAILWAY AGE PHOTO

These new dual-powered locomotives join hundreds of new rail cars and buses the agency has ordered since 2018 to modernize the fleet and replace older equipment, including the purchase of 17 additional dual-powered locomotives, 113 new multilevel rail cars, and, joining our fleet this year, 119 new cruiser buses and 110 new articulated buses.

The ALP-45A locomotives will replace some of the older PL-42AC series diesel locomotives in NJ TRANSIT's fleet. The locomotives also feature upgraded diesel engines and an after-treatment system to meet the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Tier IV emissions requirements, further reducing the locomotive's emissions when operating in diesel mode. By contrast, even if overhauled, the PL-42's EMD 710 diesel engine cannot be upgraded to Tier IV.

Additionally, the ALP-45A's can take advantage of operating in electric mode whenever overhead catenary is available, which is more cost-effective and environmentally-friendly than diesel operation.

Replacing a Tier I locomotive with a Tier IV locomotive can result in an estimated emissions reduction of 52.0 NOx tons annually which supports NJ TRANSIT's goal of a reduced carbon footprint.

Other benefits of the ALP-45As are self-rescue capability by changing power modes, redundancy by having two engines instead of one, improved diagnostic capabilities and an upgraded pneumatic system. The ALP-45A locomotives are designed to operate push-pull passenger train service on both electrified and non-electrified lines at speeds of up to 125 mph in electric mode and up to 100 mph in diesel mode. The locomotives will meet the current EPA Tier IV requirements, reducing emissions compared to the locomotives to be replaced when operating in diesel mode, and producing no emissions when operating in electric mode. The ALP45As offer an increase in horsepower, acceleration and available head-end power over the locomotives they will be replacing.

NJ TRANSIT expects delivery of the first ALP-45A locomotive from today's order to be in the first quarter of 2022.



FULL RETURN STILL UP IN THE AIR FOR SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL LINES

PHILADELPHIA, July 5, 2020. By Mike Denardo, KYW Newsradio — While city transit service is back to pre-pandemic levels, SEPTA has only partly restored Regional Rail service. It may be a while before those lines are back on their original schedules.

In the past week, SEPTA brought back at least hourly service to all but the Chestnut Hill West and Cynwyd regional rail lines.

While buses, subways and trolleys are fully restored, SEPTA general manager Leslie Richards said many commuters who would normally ride the rails to Center City are still working remotely. The agency continues to monitor the demand for regional rail service.

"There's still a lot of unknowns," she said. "Whether they'll be expected to come in five days a week or maybe a few days a week. And so the way that they use our system will be quite different than before the pandemic."

According to Richards, some employers told SEPTA they won't be fully reopened until the fall or later, so the demand for service isn't back to normal. If there's a second wave of the virus, service may be reduced again.

"This virus will be around for quite some time and may, as we move forward,

also require us to take some steps back," she admitted.

THIS MONTH ON THE PENNSY

PRR, PRSL & LIRR EVENTS IN AUGUST

Aug. 3, 1904 - "BELL" Tower placed in service at Bellevue, Del.; four-track system completed between Grays Ferry and Bellevue on Maryland Division, including track elevation through Chester and freight duck-under at northern entrance to Edge Moor Yard.

Aug. 20, 1909 - First prototype Class DD-odd two-unit 2-B+B-2 650 volt, D.C. electric locomotive No. 3999 outshopped from Juniata Shops for use between Sunnyside Yard and Manhattan Transfer.

Aug. 1914 - Lower deck cabins removed from New York ferry *Pittsburgh* to increase vehicular capacity from 2 to 4 lanes; *Chicago, Newark, New Brunswick, Philadelphia and St. Louis* rebuilt on same plan by 1917.

Aug. 1, 1919 - Wildcat strikes of 250,000 shopmen begin over failure to reach national agreement.

Aug. 7, 1924 - PRR announces it now operates 40 motor trucks in LCL (Less Than Carload) service over 1,412 miles, up from 602 miles last spring; all LCL service in N.J. converted to truck.

Aug. 26, 1929 - New "HARRIS" Interlocking placed in service at north end of Harrisburg station.

Aug. 26, 1934 - GE and Baldwin deliver the first experimental Class GG1 2-C+C-2, 4620 HP electric locomotive No. 4899 for testing as a more powerful replacement for the P5a; design based on New Haven's 0350 Class; the rather awkward original striping and lettering scheme is the work of a General Electric employee.

Aug. 16, 1939 - Eastbound *Trail Blazer* makes last trip to New York World's Fair station; thereafter, terminates at Penn Station.

Aug. 23, 1944 - Test Dept. issues report of performance of two prototype 4-4-4 Class T1's on Altoona Test Plant; sets record of 6,100 HP; develops tractive effort equal to three K4s's at 85 MPH; on basis of these tests, management decides to proceed with production models.

Aug. 1949 - Budd RDC prototype demonstrator No. 2960 tested on Delmarva Division.

Aug. 29, 1954 - Last PRSL steam locomotive operation in Atlantic City with No. 1678.

Aug. 1959 - General Electric Company submits report on replacing PRR electric locomotives and MU cars with modern equipment; options range from purchasing 75 new 5,400 HP rectifier-type passenger locomotive similar to the New Haven EP-5 "Jets," with 75 GG1's replacing 91 P5a's to purchasing an additional 25 passenger and 50 freight electrics to replace the 91 P5a's and the oldest 75 GG1's; also 203 modern MU cars to replace the 265 oldest MP54's.

Aug. 1964 - This month, PRR operates a record 351 unit coal trains totaling 2.46 million tons.

Aug. 23, 1967 - Solari automatic train information boards placed in service in entry and exit concourse levels at Penn Station - New York.

CHRISTOPHER T. BAER, HAGLEY MUSEUM AND LIBRARY VIA PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, PRRT&HS - USED WITH PERMISSION

NOTICE

DUE TO EVER-CHANGING EVENT CANCELLATIONS DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS, THE "TIMETABLE" SECTION OF THE NEWSLETTER IS SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

FOR LANCASTER CHAPTER NEWS, SEE "INSIDE THE BACK PAGE"



Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania

**300 GAP ROAD, ROUTE 741 EAST
STRASBURG, PA 17579
WWW.RRMUSEUMPA.ORG
717-687-8628**

Saturday & Sunday, Aug. 15-16, 2020 - Model Railroading Days
Sunday, Aug. 30 – Saturday, Sept. 5, 2020 - Reading Railroad Days
Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020 - Railroad Heritage Day - PRRT&HS participating.
Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020 - Railroading Merit Badge Workshop
Saturday, Sept. 26, 2020 - Members Day
Sunday, Oct. 4, 2020 - Garden Railways Tour
Saturday, Oct. 17, 2020 - Trains & Treats
Saturday, Nov. 7, 2020 - 1940s Swing Dance
Saturday & Sunday, Nov. 7-8, 2020 - Trains & Troops
Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020 - Railroading Merit Badge Workshop
Saturday, Dec. 5, 12, 2020 - Home For The Holidays
Saturday, Dec. 5, 12, 2020 - Christmas With The Conductor Parties



**STRASBURG RAIL ROAD
301 GAP ROAD, RONKS, PA 17572
WWW.STRASBURGRAILROAD.COM
1-866-725-9666**

Various through Saturday Nov. 14, 2020 - Wine & Cheese Train
Sunday, Aug. 2, 30, 2020 - Locomotive No. 90 In-Cab Experiences
Sunday, Aug. 9, 16, 2020 - Locomotive No. 475 In-Cab Experiences
Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020 - Bonnie & Clyde Great Train Robbery
Sunday, Aug. 23, 2020 - LO&S Motorcar No. 10 In-Cab Experiences
Friday-Monday, Sept. 11-14, 2020 - Day Out With Thomas, Percy, Mavis, and Rusty
Friday, Oct. 16, 2020 - Photo Event 2020, "Return of the Plymouth"
Friday & Saturday, Oct. 16-17, 2020 - Photo Event 2020, "Steam Strikes Back"
Saturday, Oct. 17, 2020 - Jesse James Great Train Robbery
Friday-Sunday, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2020 - Day Out With Thomas, Mavis, and Rusty
Various Nov. 21 - Dec. 24, 2020 - Santa's Paradise Express
Friday & Saturday, Nov. 27-28, Dec. 4-5, 2020 - Christmas Tree Train
Various Dec. 4 - Dec. 23, 2020 - Santa's Christmas Trolley
Dec. 4, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 2020 - The Night Before Christmas Train
Saturday, Feb. 13, 2021 - The Long John Limited
Friday-Sunday, April 2-4, 2021 - Easter Bunny Train



**AGE OF STEAM ROUNDHOUSE MUSEUM ACQUIRES
RARE STRASBURG RAIL ROAD STEAM LOCOMOTIVE**

SUGAR CREEK, OH., July 16, 2020, Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum Press Release (Edited) - The Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum in Sugar Creek, Ohio, is happy to announce that it was the high bidder for an unusual "Camelback" steam locomotive in a sealed-bid

auction held on July 15, 2020, at the Strasburg Rail Road in Pennsylvania. The amount of the winning bid was not disclosed.

A rare Camelback type of locomotive, #1187 is a former Philadelphia & Reading Railroad 0-4-0 steam switcher constructed in 1903 that was

specially designed to burn the smokeless anthracite "hard coal" found in deposits across the eastern part of Pennsylvania. It was the last Camelback steam locomotive in regular Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) service, and is one of only three such Camelbacks still in existence, all the others having been scrapped and melted down by the mid-1950s.



**READING NO. 1187 AT STRASBURG RAIL ROAD, JUNE 16,
2018 - PHOTO BY BEN KRANFELD**

"The addition of this historically significant locomotive to the museum's collection was important due to our founder Jerry Joe Jacobson's long desire to acquire, restore and display it at the Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum," stated Executive Director

Noel Poirier. "We are ecstatic and proud to honor Mr. Jacobson's legacy by successfully acquiring #1187."

Because of the special firebox construction needed by these Camelbacks to burn anthracite coal with its lower heating value than found in other types of coal, the engineer had to sit and operate his engine in a cab mounted on top of the boiler instead of being attached in its usual location at the back end of the boiler. It was this hump-back appearance resembling the desert-dwelling animal that gave rise to the Camelback nickname of those steam locomotives having this unusual construction.

The fireman shoveled coal into the huge firebox in the usual manner, but from his own small, open-side cab located where the locomotive's larger cab was normally located. Therefore, engineer and fireman had to work in two separate locations on the same engine, a situation that could be dangerous during the operation of the locomotive. Perched in his cab located atop a Camelback's hot boiler, the engineer roasted during the summers, and working in his open-air cab during the winters, the fireman froze. (Article courtesy of Bill Seigford)



**WANAMAKER, KEMPTON & SOUTHERN
42 COMMUNITY CENTER DRIVE
KEMPTON, PA 19529
WWW.KEMPTONTRAIN.COM
610-756-6469**

Friday, August 14, 2020 - Tropical Wine & Cheese Train
Friday-Saturday, Sept. 4-5, 2020 - The Great Kempton Train Robbery
Friday, Sept 18, 2020 - Flavors of Fall Wine & Cheese Train
Saturday, Oct. 3, 2020 - Harvest Moon Special
Sunday, Oct. 4, 2020 - WK&S Pink Ribbon Express
Saturday, Oct. 17, 2020 - Oktoberfest Beer & Bratwurst
Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 18, 24-25, 2020 - Pumpkin Patch Train
Sunday, Nov. 1, 2020 - Bow Wow Express
Friday, Dec. 4, 2020 - Story Time with Mrs. Claus
Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 5-6, 2020 - Santa Claus Express



**WILMINGTON & WESTERN RAILROAD
2201 NEWPORT GAP PIKE - RT. 41 N
WILMINGTON, DE 19808
WWW.WWRR.COM
302-998-1930**

Aug. 28, Sept. 25, Oct. 30, 2020 - Brews On Board

Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2020 - Railroad Summer Camp
Saturday, Aug. 8, Oct. 10, 2020 - Wine & Cheese Express
Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020 - Princess Express
Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020 - Journey Back In Time - PRR Doodlebug
Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020 - Cocktails & Chocolate Local
Saturday, Sept. 19, 2020 - Oz Express
Saturday, Sept. 26, 2020 - Paranormal Express - PRR Doodlebug
Saturday, Sept. 26, 2020 - Piedmont Prospector - PRR Doodlebug
Friday, Oct. 9, 16, 23, 2020 - Hayride Express
Various, Oct. 10 - Nov. 8, 2020 - Autumn Leaf Special
Thursday, Oct. 29 & Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020 - Terror in the Train Yard
Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020 - Halloween Express
Sunday, Nov. 1, 2020 - Shakespeare, Poe & Fiends
Friday, Nov. 6, 2020 - Paranormal Express - PRR Doodlebug
Saturday, Nov. 7, 2020 - Salute to Veterans
Sunday, Nov. 15, 2020 - Ice Princess Express
Various, Nov. 27-Dec. 23, 2020 - Santa Claus Express
Friday, Dec. 4 - Friday, Dec. 18, 2020 - Holiday Lights Express
Sat., Dec. 19 thru Wed., Dec. 23, 2020 - 'Twas the Night Before Christmas
Saturday, Dec. 26 - Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2020 - Holiday Lights Express
Sunday, Dec. 27, 2020 - Holiday Spirits Train



COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD AWARDED \$176,470 GRANT TO FUND A MULTIMEDIA EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

BOYERTOWN, PA., June 23, 2020, By Holly Herman, The Reading Eagle (Edited) - The National Endowment for the Humanities awarded a \$176,470 grant to the Colebrookdale Railroad tourist attraction to create a multimedia educational program on the history of the railroad.

Colebrookdale Railroad provides a 9-mile ride through scenic cliffs and valleys from Boyertown to Pottstown.

The tourist attraction closed in March following the outbreak of the coronavirus. A reopening date has not yet been determined.

The grants were available to help educational and cultural programs recover during the pandemic.

Nathaniel Guest, executive director of the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust, said the train will reopen but not immediately when Berks and Montgomery counties move to the green phase Friday.

"We are being cautious," Guest said. "We will not only survive, we will thrive."

The grant will fund salaries and supplies to create a virtual and onsite Rails of Revolution program to educate children in grades three to eight.

"We are humbled and honored to receive NEH funding to support our humanities work and keep our education and humanities staff employed during this difficult time," Guest said.

Guest said the railroad is partnering with Cornell University to translate the project into multiple languages.

He said the grant also will support the expansion of summer restoration internship positions.

The grant was one of 317 awarded amounting to \$40 million.



EAST BROAD TOP TO WELCOME GUESTS BACK IN MID-AUGUST

ORBISONIA, Pa., June 19, 2020, Trains News Wire – For the first time since 2011, the narrow-gauge East Broad Top Railroad in central Pennsylvania will offer public passenger-train rides August 13-15.

The reopening of the National Historic Landmark coincides with the 260th anniversary of the founding of the town of Orbisonia

and its twin borough, Rockhill Furnace, home to the company's general offices, machine shops, and roundhouse. It also coincides with the 60th anniversary of the first reopening of the EBT on Aug. 13, 1960, when it began running public steam-train rides after a four-year hiatus following its official abandonment as a coal-hauling line in 1956.

The community's Homecoming celebration will consist of a parade, handicraft and food vendors, and more. Local activities will be coordinated by the Orbisonia-Rockhill Furnace Volunteer Fire Company and the Orbisonia Lions Club. It was to commemorate the community's bicentennial in 1960 that the railroad was reopened the first time.

East Broad Top ran tourist trains each summer and fall season from 1960 to 2011, when the owner, Joe Kovalchick, closed it in order to seek a secure, long-term future for the operation. It was his father, Nick Kovalchick, who saved the railroad from scrapping in 1956, even though the family was in the scrap business. Earlier this year, Joe Kovalchick sold the bulk of the property – 27 miles of main line plus the shops, yards, offices, six steam locomotives, and freight and passenger rolling stock – to the nonprofit EBT Foundation Inc. The foundation was organized to revive, restore, preserve, and operate the railroad.

For the August event, EBT will operate open cars pulled by a diesel switcher. Two Baldwin 2-8-2 steam locomotives are under repair, Nos. 14 (built 1912) and 16 (built 1916), with an eye toward steaming them up for the 2021 season. Other historic EBT equipment will be on display during the three-day celebration.

EBT Foundation Inc., will sell joint tickets that include a train ride, tour of the shops and roundhouse, trolley ride at the adjacent Rockhill Trolley Museum, and ice cream. The railroad has announced that tickets are expected to go on sale Monday, June 22 at the website eastbroadtop.com. With reserved tickets, the number of people on the property at any given time will be limited in deference to COVID-19 pandemic and public health considerations. In addition, EBT plans to regularly clean and sanitize its cars and bathrooms. Kovalchick family members expected to attend the event include Joe Kovalchick and his wife Judy, and Joe's sister Millie. As a young girl, Millie dedicated the first train in 1960, and EBT engine No. 12 (Baldwin 1911) is named after her.

Since the sale to the EBT Foundation Inc., in February, the railroad has stabilized buildings, begun the overhaul of equipment, cut brush, and rebuilt track, all in conjunction with volunteers from the Friends of the East Broad Top. The group has held two official work weekends, one in March and one this month, to provide significant help to the foundation's staff.



TIOGA CENTRAL RAILROAD PASSENGER TRAIN WILL NO LONGER OPERATE DUE TO CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTION

WELLSBORO, PA, July 17, 2020, WETM-18 TV, Elmira, NY - The Tioga Central Railroad passenger train says they will no longer be operating. This is due to the restrictions put in place because of the coronavirus.

All passenger operations are postponed until further notice. Reservations and ticket purchases cannot be made at this time.

This railroad operates scenic excursion trains over the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon.



JULY, 2020 CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

The Regular Chapter Membership Meeting of the Lancaster Chapter, National Railway Historical Society was held at the Christiana Freight Station, Christiana, Pa. on Monday, July 20, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Tom Shenk with 14 member's present. President Tom Shenk led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES: President Tom Shenk asked for a motion to approve the March Chapter Membership Meeting Minutes. Steve Himpsl approved the motion and David Stambaugh seconded the motion. The March Membership Minutes were approved as printed in the Lancaster Dispatcher.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Richard Rutledge gave the Treasurer's Report for

the months of March, April and June.

CHAPLAIN: Tom Shenk reported on behalf of the chapter, Helen Snyder passed away on June 28, 2020 she was 89 years old. Tom also reported Helen Shaak fell and broke her ankle. Helen is recovering at home and doing therapy. Helen Shaak sent a thank you card to the chapter for all the cards, thoughts, and prayers she received when her son Buster passed away. Helen also thanked everyone who sent her cards, when she broke her ankle.

DONATIONS: Steve Himpls announced chapter members Nelson and Jay Strubel donated the following items to the chapter : 20 Railroad Books, 81 Railroad DVD's, 15 Slide Trays (at 80 slides each), 35 Boxes of Slides, 72 copies of The Wheel (from November 1946-to April 1953) from Conestoga Transportation Company, Wood Ticket Agent Box, Washington State, 1360 PRR Number Plate Reproduction. Thomas Fluck donated: 10 Electric Battery Lanterns, 1 Railroad Book. Pete Roller toured the Christiana Freight Station and donated \$20.00. Tom Shenk donated an American flag to the chapter to be used when we have Chapter Membership Meetings downstairs.

CHRISTIANA FREIGHT STATION REPAIRS: The entrance door on the Gang House was replaced by Steve Himpls. The Christiana Freight Station deck was stained by Tom Shenk and some deck boards were replaced by Glenn Kendig. Also, the spouting and some toilet repairs were made. Steve Himpls painted the wheels of the caboose and did regular maintenance on the caboose.

UPCOMING DATES: The Monday, August 17, 2020 Chapter Membership Meeting will be held at the Christiana Freight Station and NOT at the Strasburg Rail Road as previous years. If anyone would like to purchase Strasburg Rail Road tickets(\$5.00) you may purchase them at the Monday, August 17, Chapter Meeting at the Christiana Freight Station or you can mail a check payable to the Lancaster Chapter NRHS and mail to Tom Shenk at 11 Marquis Court, Lititz, Pa. 17543. If you plan on going to the Strasburg Rail Road, be prepared to pay for parking this year. Also, there will NOT be the Annual Chapter Picnic that is usually held in September. Instead, Tom is looking at a possible train ride on the Harrisburg, Lincoln & Lancaster Railroad, at Stone Gable Estate, Elizabethtown, Pa. on Saturday, September 19 (more information in next month's newsletter). There will NOT be the Vendors and Craft show this year that usually is in October. Tom Shenk announced we are still planning on the Annual Chapter Banquet for Friday, November 20, 2020. The banquet will be held at Kreider's Banquet Center, Manheim (Enck's Catering). Tom reported we have 3 NRHS members who will receive 25 year pins. They are: Rosalee Kurtz, Joseph G. Shannon, Daryl L. Witman.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Tom Shenk reported the Christiana Historic Marker for the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad will be placed at the Stone Arch over Pine Creek. The plaque will be placed and an announcement will be made when it can be viewed.

ADJOURNMENT: The Chapter Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. for an 8mm Rail Fan film.

Respectfully submitted by Donetta M. Eberly, Secretary



**LESS THAN CARLOAD SHIPMENTS
LOCAL AND NATIONAL NEWS**



NOT FOR LONG - MG TOWER ON MAINLINE WEST OF HORSESHOE CURVE TO BE RAZED

ALTOONA, PA., June 27, 2020, By William Kibler, Staff Writer, Altoona Mirror - Some artifacts of the past are preserved through lots of effort and special funding, holding places of honor in their communities, which call attention to them, like Altoona does to the former Pennsylvania Railroad master mechanics building that houses the Railroaders Memorial Museum.

Other relics survive accidentally, escaping annihilation without being noticed much, so the when we spy them, we nod in satisfaction that the prevailing powers haven't taken them yet, as when we see the flash of a barely legible "PRR" on a rusting gondola while driving past a train yard.

The MG, for "Middle Grade," Switch Tower along the mainline tracks about 2 miles west of the Horseshoe Curve is that kind of relic — but it's destined to soon be gone.

"We have put the demolition out to bid and are awaiting responses," Norfolk Southern spokesman Jeff DeGraff said in an email, after the Mirror was alerted to a post on a rail-themed Facebook page. "Depending on the costs submitted, we will evaluate how we move forward."

The decision to demolish "is based on safety concerns of having and needing to secure unused and deteriorating buildings," DeGraff wrote.

The company hasn't received any comments or feedback on the demolition proposal, he added.

Local railroad aficionados, however, have thoughts about the impending demolition.

"It's unfortunate," said Jared Frederick, a history instructor at Penn State Altoona.

But it's hardly surprising, as switch towers are "dinosaurs of the railroad industry," said Dave Seidel, founding member of the Horseshoe Curve Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.



PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD "MG" TOWER IN THE 1940S.

The Pennsylvania Railroad built the tower during World War II next to an "interlocking" to help handle heavy rail traffic swelled by wartime-material production and troop travel, said Joe DeFrancesco, executive director of the railroad museum.

Despite four parallel tracks, the lines were at capacity, and the railroad needed to eliminate holdups by switching trains, allowing faster ones and those with higher priority to get around slower ones and those with lower priority, DeFrancesco said.

The tower isn't a feasible candidate for preservation because of its inaccessibility, a long way from a public road, according to DeFrancesco.

"It's not a tourist attraction by any means," Seidel said.

Moving the building would be difficult and expensive, DeFrancesco said.

The railroad could let the tower stand, with no need for maintenance, except "maybe to keep a roof on it," Seidel said, when asked why the company couldn't just refrain from demolition.

"But my opinion is based on nostalgia," Seidel said. "(That) has no place in the (company's) bottom line."

It's on NS property, and "it's their right to do with it what they wish," DeFrancesco said.

The tower is a "unique piece of industrial architecture," soon to be another of the lost "remnants of the PRR's massive imprint," Frederick said.

Those losses began with the PRR's merger with the New York Central Railroad to create the Penn Central in 1968, according to Seidel, who worked as a clerk, then in the classification yards of the PRR, beginning in 1965 and ending in 1968, following the merger.

"I'll never forget standing on the bridge at 17th Street (in Juniata, a bridge that has since been demolished) and watching them cave the roof in at the East Altoona roundhouse," Seidel said. Down below were store rooms with oaken file cabinets full of blueprints from the steam era that would be "invaluable today for historians," Seidel said.

"Now, we're 50 years down the road," he said.

Former railroad museum board member Al DiCenso has seen MG Tower "a hundred times," having ridden on the mainline in locomotives because of a

contact he had with the railroad long ago. "It's not your typical PRR interlocking tower," DiCenso said. In contrast to the slightly ornate MG Tower, the usual towers were of "rather spare" design, DiCenso said.

"I'm disappointed," he said of the plans to raze. "But I don't see any practical means of saving it."

"You preserve what you can preserve," DeFrancesco said. "Some things are beyond reach."



RESTORATION OF READING 2100 RECEIVES BOOST FROM READING & NORTHERN

PORT CLINTON, PA., July 3, 2020, Trains News Wire - American Steam Railroad, which is restoring Reading T-1 4-8-4 No. 2100, has received a notable assist in its efforts from the Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad, which is restoring sister locomotive No. 2102. While visiting the Reading & Northern shops in

Port Clinton, Pa., to inspect the progress on 2102, the American Steam group received the gift of a new fire door casting, courtesy of the R&N and its owner, Andy Muller. The cast iron piece, weighing more than 130 pounds, was made by a local foundry near the Port Clinton shops. American Steam says it will save the group money and resources that can be used on other aspects of the 2100's restoration.

"The Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern believes in supporting groups like these, to continue to educate the public about railroads," Mike Fisher, general manager for RBM&N passenger operations, said in a press release.

The railroad's history of helping with preservations includes assisting with operation of Central of New Jersey 0-6-0 No. 113, the Colebrookdale Railroad in Boyertown, Pa., the Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society's visit with Nickel Plate Road No. 765 in 2015, and National Railway Historical Society chapters in eastern Pennsylvania.

PHOENIXVILLE RAIL STUDY SHOWS \$350M IN ECONOMIC BENEFITS

PHILADELPHIA READING and POTTSVILLE
Beginning Sunday, November 14th, 1948

Reading Railway System

PHOENIXVILLE, July 12, 2020, by Evan Brandt, Montgomery Media — The results of a new study show more than \$350 million in economic benefits over 30 years from the return of passenger rail service into Philadelphia.

And the fact that a similar study is now underway in Reading raises at least the possibility that stations in between — like Royersford, Pottstown and Birdsboro — could be included in the service.

Because the study, undertaken under the auspices of Mayor Peter Urscheler's task force, looks specifically at Phoenixville as part of a federal grant application, other communities are not included, said consultant Barry Cassidy.

That does not mean that they cannot undertake similar studies as part of a broader effort.

The fact that the Berks Alliance has undertaken one for Reading is a good example of that, Cassidy said.

"We are happy to receive such a glowing assessment of the benefits of restoring passenger rail service to Phoenixville," Urscheler said in a release about the study.

Phoenixville is eyeing the future increased property values of a town with a commuter train station as a way to generate revenues to fund the construction of a station and parking garage and thus leverage the grant. Phoenixville recently submitted a grant application for \$3,131,700 to the Federal Railroad Administration to conduct planning and purchase land for the station and a 350-space parking garage and right of way for the Starr Street, Bridge Street intersection.

A public hearing for that grant application was held last month.

Smart Growth America, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit, undertook the formal "Benefit-Cost" study under very specific parameters set by the U.S. Department of Transportation, said Michael Rodriguez, who conducted the study.

The largest benefits derive from property value appreciation, travel time savings and productive time for passengers using the train instead of auto. Further, many benefits result from the reduction of 409.4 million vehicle-miles traveled over 30 years, including reduced traffic congestion, air pollution and wear-and-tear on the heavily used Route 422.

The group is working with both AMTRAK and SEPTA and will decide on which operator, or both, once the study has clarified the cost and track availability.

Capital costs estimates come in at about \$130 million, with subsequent operating and maintenance costs, and that number would surely rise should the line extend to other stations.

One major cost obstacle to extension is the Black Rock Tunnel, located near the Schuylkill River off Dayton Street, behind Block Rock Cemetery.

Built in 1835 for the old Reading Railroad, the tunnel is only the third constructed in the U.S. and is the third oldest still in use. It is also narrow, with only one set of tracks traveling through.

One of the biggest hurdles for returning passenger service to the Schuylkill River valley is the fact that the rail lines are now owned, and heavily used for freight, by Norfolk Southern.

Sharing those tracks with passenger trains creates a scheduling headache as it is, managing the bottleneck at the Black Rock Tunnel only makes that headache bigger.

The solution of making the tunnel itself wider comes with a large cost and the larger question of who pays for it.

Pushing service upstream of the tunnel will likely require equally creative financing by the communities that also hope to benefit from hosting a station, Cassidy observed.

He said if rail service is returned, it may well happen in stages and that the Phoenixville effort is willing to work with other communities with a serious interest in doing the hard work necessary to find funding for extending it.

THIS MONTH'S BANNER PHOTO

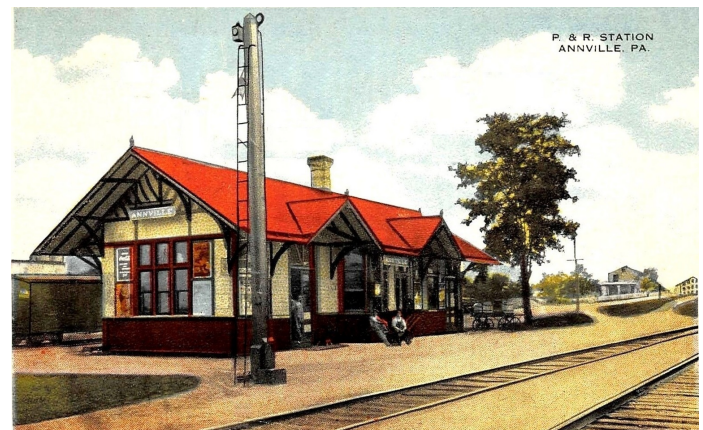
Reading GP30 No. 3610 passes the Phoenixville, Pennsylvania passenger station on May 6, 1972. Phoenix Steel Corp.'s three smokestacks rise above the train.



OPERATION LIFESAVER REMINDS YOU...

Be aware that trains cannot stop quickly.

THE POSTCARD RAILROAD - ANNVILLE, PA.



"INSIDE THE BACK PAGE"

UPCOMING LANCASTER CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

AUGUST 17, 2020 - **MONDAY, 7:30 PM** - CHRISTIANA FREIGHT STATION, CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SEPTEMBER 19, 2020 - **SATURDAY** - TRAIN RIDE ON THE HARRISBURG, LINCOLN & LANCASTER RAILROAD AT STONE GABLE ESTATE, ELIZABETHTOWN, PA. MORE INFORMATION NEXT MONTH.

NOVEMBER 20, 2020 - **FRIDAY** - ANNUAL CHAPTER BANQUET AT ENCK'S BANQUET & CONFERENCE CENTER AT KREIDER FARMS, 1461 LANCASTER ROAD (RT. 72), MANHEIM, PA 17545.

THE FOLLOWING LANCASTER CHAPTER ACTIVITIES ARE **CANCELLED THIS YEAR**

ANNUAL CHAPTER PICNIC IN SEPTEMBER - SUBSTITUTE TRAIN RIDE ON SEPTEMBER 19

VENDOR & CRAFT SHOW IN OCTOBER

THE 2020 NRHS FALL CONFERENCE (JOHNSON CITY, TN) AND 2021 NRHS SPRING CONFERENCE (RALEIGH, NC) ARE CANCELLED, AS WELL AS THE 2020 NRHS CONVENTION DUE TO THE HEALTH PANDEMIC.

2021 NRHS CONVENTION - DATE AND LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED
OCTOBER, 2021 NRHS FALL CONFERENCE - RONKONKOMA, NEW YORK

NINETY-THREE YEARS AGO THIS MONTH - AUGUST 1927



LANCASTER CHAPTER BOARD of DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT:	TOM SHENK	717-560-1186	TSHENK@NRHS1.ORG
1ST VICE PRESIDENT:	HAROLD SHAAK	717-484-4020	HSHAAK@DEJAZZD.COM
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CHAPLAIN:	CELL PHONE	717-683-3053	

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., N.R.H.S.
 CHRISTIANA FREIGHT STATION
 10 RAILROAD AVE., CHRISTIANA, PA.
 MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2020
 STARTING AT 7:30 PM**

**LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC.
 NATIONAL RAILWAY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 10 RAILROAD AVENUE
 CHRISTIANA, PA 17509-1416
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