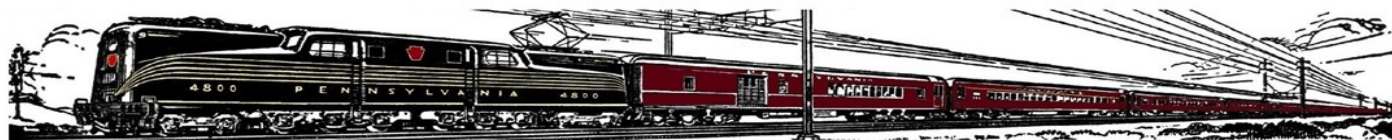


**LANCASTER
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1935-2023

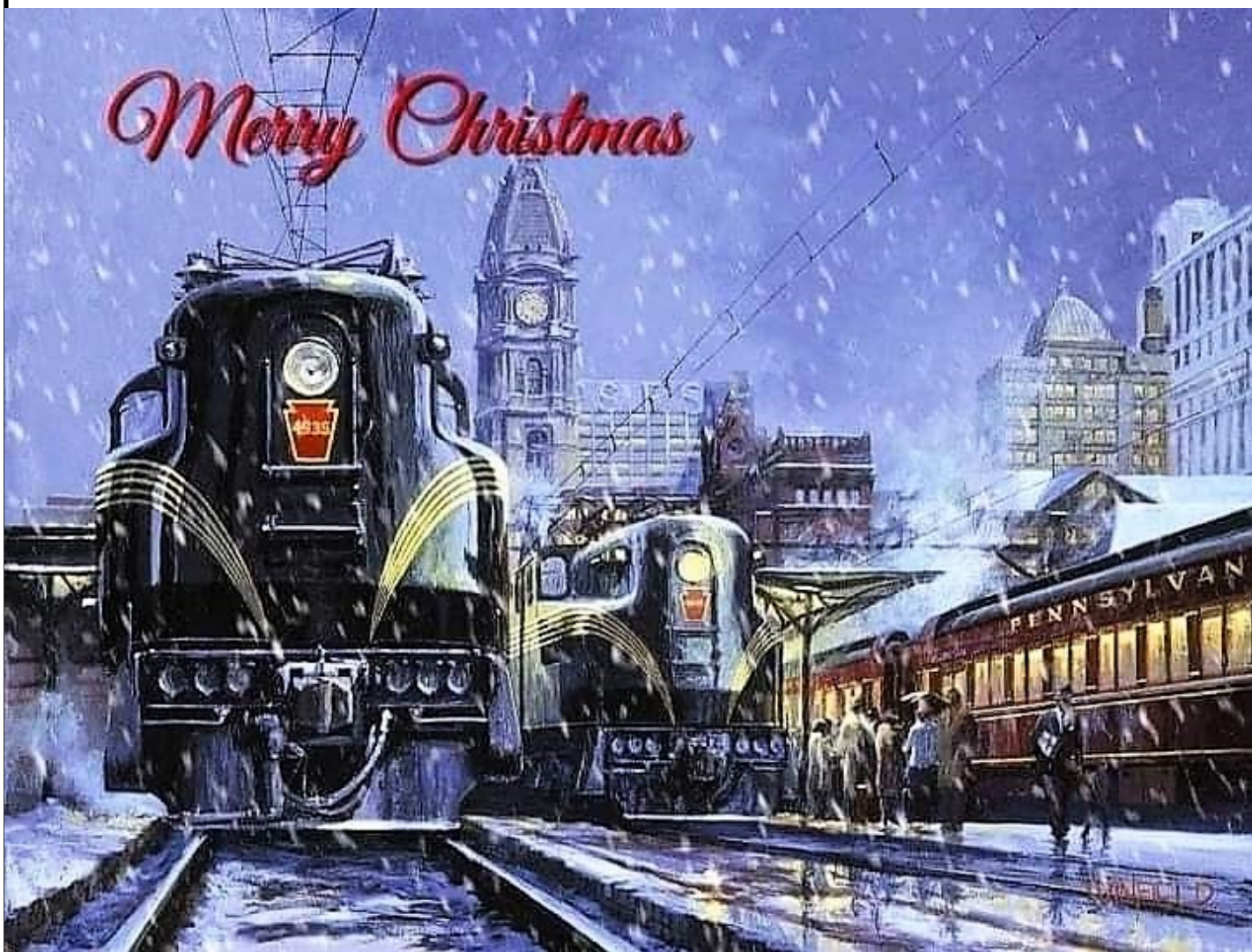


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Railway News Flash

By Steve Ferrell

Gathered from press releases and revised for this publication

Senator Chuck Schumer, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, New York Governor Kathy Hochul and other officials joined Amtrak and the Hudson Tunnel Project sponsor, the Gateway Development Commission in celebrating the start of the construction in New York of the Hudson Tunnel project. This also included the final phase of the Concrete Casing Project that will clear the way for the full construction of the Hudson Tunnel. A related topic: On November 6th, President Biden announced \$16.4 billion in funding for Northeast Corridor Projects

Amtrak has completed renovations at Wilmington (Delaware) Joseph R. Biden railroad station. An important hub on the Northeast Corridor, Amtrak has reached a tentative agreement with their more than 1400 locomotive engineers on a seven-year deal with 30% pay increases.

Amtrak has resumed service between New York and Albany on Thursday, November 16th after four days of disruptions caused by structural issues with a parking garage above its tracks in New York City.

New York's Second Avenue subway has received \$3.4 billion in federal funds toward completing a 1.8 mile and three-station extension of this subway line.

The Coatesville station project is well underway. This new station with ADA platforms is scheduled for completion in 2025. Amtrak is planning on making additional stops here and SEPTA is considering extending service on the Paoli-Thorndale line to Coatesville.

SEPTA and its bus and trolley transit workers approved a new contract. Unfortunately, they have yet to reach agreement with the Commuter Railroad Engineers who are threatening to strike. Thankfully, they have to go through many processes before a strike can occur.

The Strasburg Rail Road recently opened its new banquet and event facility, Lefever Hall. Seating 48 people, this facility is intended for small banquets, parties and seminars. The available packages include various food options. The hall has a large screen monitor for program presentation.

Union Pacific has plans for a major "Big Boy" tour in 2024. The 4-8-8-4 #4014 steam locomotive will visit all four corners of the railroads' 23 state system. This tour will include stops in Oregon, California, Texas and Illinois. Plan stops include: Chicago, Dallas-Ft. Worth, Houston, Salt Lake City, Portland Oregon, Nampa Idaho, and Roseville California.

The B&O Railroad Museum, who is restoring the Reading Company's T-1, 4-8-4 #2100, has announced that this locomotive will wear an American Freedom Train paint scheme reminiscent of the paint that a sister T-1 (2101, now operating on the Reading and Northern) during the 1975-1976 Freedom Train tour. The goal is to have it restored and operational by Spring of 2025.

Alstom plans to sell off assets and enact layoffs as a result of cash-flow problems. Many of its problems stem from the acquisition of Bombardier causing financial problems.

Mexican Railroads: the Mexican President stated that he will require freight rail operators to offer passenger service. Long distance rail travel has been long dormant in Mexico.

The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad has purchased a Bombardier DL535E from the White Pass and Yukon to use as a maintenance and rescue locomotive for this steam powered narrow-gauge railroad.

New Jersey wrapped an ALP45DP dual mode locomotive to honor a New Jersey based model railroading firm: Atlas Model Railroad Company. This joined other heritage wrapped locomotives in NJT's fleet.



PRR, PRSL & LIRR EVENTS IN DECEMBER

Source: Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society (permission of Christopher Baer, PRRHTS).

December 17, 1909 No. 120, first all-steel business car in U.S., outshopped at Altoona; only wood is in chairs and tables. PRR orders 25 DD1's from Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company for delivery by July 1, 1910.

December 13, 1924 PRR Board approves electrification of Philadelphia suburban lines and proceeding with agreement with city over terminal improvements.

December, 1929 PRR displays *new* company flag, a red keystone within a white keystone on a red field.

December 18, 1929 PRR Board authorizes \$1.03 million for cab signals on Pittsburgh Division .

December 12, 1934 First electric locomotive passes through rebuilt B&P Tunnel at Baltimore.

December 13, 1934 PRR signs revised contract with federal government for financing 57 production model GG1's at added cost of \$8 million to be transferred from electrification funds.

December 21, 1934 First Universal newsreel footage of a GG1 at speed near Wilmington begins being screened for a week at the Earle Theatre in Philadelphia.

December 29, 1934 PRR takes delivery of No. 4780, first of 28 "modified" Class P5a electric locomotive, from Juniata; has streamlined steeple cab derived from that developed for the GG1 and R1.

December 5, 1944 PRR begins one month of tests with borrowed N&W Class J 4-8-4 No. 610 in freight and passenger service on Fort Wayne Division; tests made at request of VP-Western Region James M. Symes, who is not impressed by performance of T1's and Q2's; makes 2 freight and 12 passenger runs at speeds up to 94 MPH; less power than a T1 at speeds over 42.5 MPH but better acceleration.

December 15, 1944 Bituminous Coal Research, Inc., the R&D organization of the coal industry, forms a Locomotive Development Committee, with representatives of the railroads, coal companies, and the American Locomotive Company and chaired by Roy B. White of the B&O, to develop a gas turbine-electric locomotive using powdered coal as fuel; thus retaining the railroad market for the coal industry in face of diesel threat.

December 14, 1949 PRR Board authorizes expenditure for 91 lightweight coaches, 165 lightweight sleeping cars and 3 recreation cars; also 8 each 6,000 HP freight diesels, 15 other HP freight diesels, 8 each 6,000 HP passenger diesels, 1 2,000 HP passenger diesel and 100 diesel switchers.

December, 1954 Employment at Renovo Shops falls to 424, down from 788 in fall of 1953 and 1,162 at peak in May 1951, as car maintenance declines and is shifted elsewhere; causes extreme economic distress in Renovo, which has few other employers.

December 15, 1959 Lehigh Valley Railroad signs new agreement with the PRR for the use of its tracks between Newark Jct. and Penn Station, reflecting the reduced level of service.

December, 1964 Dept. of Commerce orders 4 Class MP85 MU commuter cars, modified for high-speed running from the Budd Company; the cars are to act as test beds for determining conditions for high-speed running in the Northeast Corridor; they are packed with instruments and sensors but have no seats or other amenities; they therefore cannot serve as prototypes for revenue service cars.



One World Trade Center Observatory

A Ride With Me Steve Adventure

By Jim Donohue

Back in the spring, the Ride With Me Steve group rode up to Manhattan to visit the (new) One World Trade Center Observatory. Upon arriving, clouds were at the 20th floor level, preventing any kind of view from the tower. So a second trip was scheduled for October. As we approached Newark, New Jersey, the skies were very clear over the New York skyline and we exited for the PATH train to lower Manhattan.

We had 16 members for today's trip, so we rode the elevators to the 102nd story floor as a "group." The trip took only 47 seconds and we were fascinated by the "view" going up. On three sides of the elevator, a video shows New York City transforming as it looked from its 1700 unsettled land to the current skyscraper view.

We were all treated to the 360 degree view of New York City, the Hudson and East Rivers and the New York Bay out to the Atlantic Ocean. The clouds provided a great contrast that enhanced all of the views.



The iconic New York skyline from 102 stories up.



The view from the tower toward the East River.



Above: The Brooklyn Bridge.
Center: View of the Tower from the entrance.
Right: The Stature of Liberty, of course.



One World Trade Center Observatory, Part II - Lunch at Katz Delicatessen

No Ride With Me Steve is complete without lunch. Today, Steve selected the famed Katz’s Delicatessen. Katz is New York’s oldest deli and noted for its pastrami and corn beef sandwiches. Perhaps it is even more famous for the scene from *“When Harry Met Sally”* with Meg Ryan and Billy Crystal—filmed right there.

The trip to Katz’s involved two subway train lines. We were slowed down by the use of technology—using phone app maps to find the necessary subway entrances. We eventually did find Katz and were startled to see the waiting line outside—a good 20 minutes. Inside, chaos prevailed with more lines at each carving station and then finding seats at the crowded tables. But the sandwiches lived up to their reputation.



Above, left and center: “Lost in New York.”

New York City’s Finest to the Rescue



The Waiting Line to Katz’s. Their sign is in the distance

This is what the fuss was all about. Enough said.

Randy Lennon and Tim Boland resting on the way back to Penn Station.

Photo credits: John V. Smith and Jim Donohue



**Lackawanna
Railroad**

A coach or sleigh
Was once the way
Of reaching Home
On Christmas Day.
Now-Phoebe's right -
You'll expedite
The trip by Road
Of Anthracite.



'twas the night before Christmas...

... And this little miss asleep in a cozy roomette, her stocking hung high in great expectation, symbolizes the spirit you find aboard Pennsylvania Railroad's great East-West Fleet at this season of the year. Step into cars aglow with good cheer and good fellowship . . . glance at the array of beribboned gifts heaped high in racks and rooms. Stroll

into the Dining Car and enjoy the festive foods of the day . . . get a good night's sleep in a comfortable bed—arrive refreshed. And above all, enjoy the peace of mind that comes from knowing your train will get you there—conveniently, and at low cost. All aboard . . . to a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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- ☐ 12 full-color miniature billboards



Wine tasting on the Colebrookdale Railroad, the Secret Valley Line

By Steve Ferrell

While researching and looking for a new fall foliage train to take this year we were intrigued by the wine tasting train offered by the Colebrookdale Railroad, which has been running tourist trains on this branch line since 2014. The total cost for the trip was \$72 each, which included four wine tastings and a large wine paring snack plate for each rider, plus a small dessert tray for our group of four. The railroad, that began service in 1869, operates on the former Colebrook Branch of the Reading Railroad. This line ran passenger service until 1950.

We arrived at the Boyertown depot at 445pm for the 530pm train and were surprised to find a delightful and pretty trackside area. The Boyertown Station is a miniature replica of the former station and was the main attraction, with a courtyard of colorful lights, fountains, flowers and fall foliage decorating the waiting area.

We boarded by our car type. The train had a deluxe coach, a dining car, two lounge cars a parlor car, plus an open-air car. Our car was a classic 1920's lounge-dining car called the "Garden Café". We entered to find a beautifully decorated (with flowers and drapery) coach with tables for four on one side and two on the other (right) side. We found our table (#7 Donohue party). After taking our seats, the leading GP-38 in Norfolk Southern colors blew its loud horn and we started southward from the terminal. The line runs about 8 ½ miles south to the junction of the former Reading Main Line (Philadelphia to Reading) at Pottstown.



The boarding area and station at Boyertown

Leaving the yard, we passed a beautifully painted vintage GP9 decorated in Colebrookdale Railroad colors. This was listed as the line's primary locomotive. We then passed a dozen or so rail-bikes on the left. On the right side, we passed a few hopper cars. The line is still used for limited freight service. At select times these bikes-on-the rails can be rented for energetic folks to pedal along the line. We then traveled through a pristine valley with colorful fall foliage on either side. I noticed a few reconstructed historic buildings and an old restored water tower, plus there were open areas for picnicking.

Fifteen minutes after departure, the wine tasting began! The Ridgewood Winery of Birdsboro, PA provided the wine and pairing catering of this trip. They placed a food plate at each setting. It consisted of meats, cheeses, almonds and crackers and raisin; quite ample and tasty. We were told what type of food went with each type of wine. They gave us separate glasses for reds and whites. A young man started playing classical songs on his violin. He was very talented and appreciated by the riders. It had started to get dark outside, limiting our views of the scenery and foliage.

Wine tasting on the Colebrookdale Railroad, the Secret Valley Line

We glided along slowly at ten to fifteen miles per hour. We then sampled four different wines, two whites where were first dry and then sweet and two reds which were first dry and sweet. Further along, we passed a grade crossing and it was now completely dark. At the end of the line (in Pottstown) our locomotive stopped and began pushing the train back to Boyertown (with the conductor in the rear car to guide the engineer).

On the way back to Boyertown they served the last wine sample. This was a sweet red dessert apple wine that I thought would be excellent if served heated up. By that time, they had put a dessert plate at our table with four mini desert creations. Then they offered a glass of wine for \$12, which we all declined. Bottles of the sampled wines were also available for purchase.

About ten minutes before reaching the end of the trip, the train stopped suddenly dumped the breaks and came to a hard stop! We later found out that a group of teenagers had stolen one of the rail bikes and had pedaled out about a mile or so to that point of the line. Then unable to turn around on the single track they abandoned the bike at that point, which blocked our return to the station. Several of the train's crew members had to pedal the bike back to Boyertown before we would be cleared to continue. That took about 15 minutes and then we proceeded the final mile into Boyertown Station, arriving about fifteen minutes late. All and all a fun trip!



Interior of the *Garden Café Car*



Upon boarding, happily enjoying the elaborate *Garden Café Car*



One of the workhorses of the Colebrookdale an ex-NS, ex-Southern GP38-2. An ex-PRR GP9 pulls most of the excursion trains.

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Make check payable to: LANCASTER CHAPTER NRHS

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2024 Chapter dues \$20.00 – plus \$2.00 if you have a family member _____

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Total amount of check payable to Lancaster Chapter NRHS \$ _____

LAST DATE FOR RENEWING 2024 MEMBERSHIP IS APRIL 30, 2024!!

**DO NOT ADD YOUR NATIONAL DUES TO YOUR LANCASTER CHAPTER CHECK!
INCLUDE YOUR NATIONAL DUES NOTIFICATION LETTER FROM NATIONAL WITH
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Questions: Contact Helen Shaak 717-484-4020 – email hshaak@dejazzd.com

"INSIDE THE BACK PAGE"
UPCOMING LANCASTER CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

DECEMBER 18, 2023 - MONDAY, 7:30 PM CHAPTER MEETING AT CHRISTIANA FREIGHT HOUSE
10 RAILROAD AVENUE, CHRISTIANA, PA 17509

N.R.H.S. LANCASTER CHAPTER BANQUET
THE WILLOWS AT THE FIRESIDE TAVERN, STRASBURG, PA
NOVEMBER 17, 2023

N.R.H.S. President Tony White presented the Chapter's 2022 Service Awards. NRHS District 2 National Director Charlie Webb also attended.

Congratulations to:

- Martha J. Benner 60 Year Pin
 - Thomas E. McMaster 50 Year Pin
 - Adam J. Mattern 25 Year Pin
 - James R. Parmer 25 Year Pin
- Our guest speaker was Dan Cupper



NRHS President Tony White presenting the 2023 Service Awards to Tom McMaster. Left to right, Charlie Webb, Tony White, Tom McMaster, Tom Shenk and Kevin Feeney.



Above: Dan Cupper, Writer and Railway Historian, presenting "Riding a Freight Train, Pittsburgh to Harrisburg"



Above: Members enjoying the excellent meal at The Willows banquet facility. All photos: Steve Ferrell

Donations to the Chapter

Pete Rolleri: Framed Pete Lerro "Gateway to Gotham" painting.

Harold Weinhold: Locomotive Operating Manuals and Blueprints.

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LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., N.R.H.S.
DECEMBER 18, 2023 - MONDAY, 7:30 PM
CHAPTER MEETING
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