January/February 2019

Editor’s note - As I mentioned in December’s issue I had to be away for part of January and into February. Consequently my ability to get the January 2019 *The Main Line* published anywhere close to time was nil. So here we have our first two-month issue in ten years (hopefully a unique event). I do realize that no one is on tenterhooks waiting for *The Main Line* to appear but we promised it as a monthly and regret missing one. OK, enough of that, on with January - February.

**Goings On At Seashore**-

A big event in January was the annual Amherst Railway Society’s Railroad Hobby Show on the 26th and 27th at the Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds (The home of The Big E) in West Springfield Massachusetts. More than 20,000 people attended the Show. As usual Seashore had a presence at the show with a table for the museum and two additional tables sponsored by the library committee.
Seashore Executive Director Katie Orlando chatting with Seashore Trustee Randy Stahl and member Howard Betts.

Lots Of Good Stuff!

Seashore Library Tables at the show with lots of great books as well as miscellaneous small items such as tie clips, insulators, and ash trays that had been donated along with the books. Very young aspiring rail fans were allowed a free selection from a collection of past years’ calendars.

Staffers at the tables were Edward Dooks, Karen Dooks, Randy Leclair, Herb Pence, and Mark Sylvester. Herb and Randy helped Karen in setting up and organizing the books. RJ, Christina, and Donna Perkins helped in packing up the books at the end of the show and Darrell Arndt helped with the stevedore work of loading them into the truck.
Do You Recognize-

Last Month’s Do You Recognize -

Last month’s line was originally to be named after the Massachusetts state’s capital of Boston and two of its western suburbs, Stoughton and Canton, as the Stoughton, Canton and Boston Street Railway. The founders were Charles A. Stone and Edwin S. Webster who had studied electrical engineering together at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and upon graduation went on in 1890 to found, with the help of seed money from their respective parents, a utility holding firm named the Massachusetts Electrical Engineering Company. The utility company began as an electrical testing lab and consulting firm with initial activity concerning hydroelectric power generation. The name was changed to Stone & Webster in 1893. Within a few years the firm became known for its operation of streetcar systems across the United States.

Our particular system was initially proposed in 1897-98 under the name discussed above but by the time of its chartering in July of 1899 by a syndicate including Stone & Webster the name had been altered to reflect the name of the location of a meteorological observatory, Blue Hill, some ten miles south of Boston and also the location of a public reservation of some six thousand acres purchased by the state in 1893.

The Blue Hill Street Railway did not extend into the Boston but rather initially connected with carriers extending out from the core and then reached arrangements for them to operate its cars to and from points within the capital.

The line ultimately was approximately 15 miles in length and suffered from at least a couple of oddities that proved detrimental over the line’s lifetime:

Initially the line was split into three sections by its inability to receive permission to cross two railroad lines. Finally in 1900, a year after startup, the Railroad Commissioners permitted a crossing of one of the railroads at grade but continued to refuse the
second crossing. The crossing at grade required the cars to be pulled across by horses, no overhead allowed across the railroad tracks. Finally in 1902 a new stretch of private right-of-way and a trestle across the railroad were constructed and the line became a single entity. Expansion continued through new construction and merger during the early 1900s. Although within less than ten years of construction several branches were reduced to morning and evening workmen’s runs to connect with steam trains to and from the capital.

A second somewhat unique feature of the line’s construction was that it was started from the furthest suburb and built towards the city. Normal practice was to build outward from the ends of lines from hub so that the new lines had the benefit of immediate traffic from the core. The suburbs where the Blue Hill originated were relatively small population-wise so it was basically impossible for the line to generate any meaningful commuter trade into the city. Consequently the line never generated truly significant year-round traffic and in fact the major traffic was during the too-few summer months when people fled the city on day trips to the Blue Hill Reservation.

As with seemingly most all street railways, a disastrous carhouse fire struck in early 1909 destroying the carhouse along with the 16 open and five closed cars therein. Replacement cars were ordered from the Wason Manufacturing Company plus second-hand cars built by Wason and Jackson & Sharp acquired from various other systems. The line never was able to pay dividends to its investors and its bond interest payments were covered by monies acquired through Stone & Webster. Finally in 1917 the utility holding company sold its controlling interest in the line to a local businessman who was involved with a couple of adjacent street railways. He was no more successful than the holding company and in 1919 several creditors and the trustee for the bondholders sued for receivership. Finally in February of 1920 a massive snow storm stranded the cars still operating when the power station ran out of coal and it was all over. In March the Receiver asked the court’s permission to foreclose the mortgage and sell the property for junk. As a final insult the carhouse built in 1909 burned and destroyed the entire fleet in storage but fortwo cars and these were subsequently scrapped. The corporation was formally dissolved by the legislature in 1931.
As a side note the Blue Hill Observatory mentioned at the beginning has continued measurements on a daily basis since the day it first opened in 1885, making the observatory one of the oldest continually active weather and climate monitoring stations in the United States.
This Month’s Do You Recognize -

The predecessor of the our line this month was a horse railway company incorporated by an act of the territorial (pre-statehood) legislature in 1867. By the late 1870s the line had 18 miles (29 km) of track, 10 cars, 70 horses, 20 employees and 495,000 passengers annually. In 1886 a street railway and bridge company was incorporated by the then state legislature.

The proposal was to build a bridge and railway connecting the largest city in the recently admitted state with a city in an adjoining state across the longest river on the continent. The proposal for a combined wagon and railway bridge over the river was accepted by the Congress and the secretary of war in 1887. The line was among the earliest major electric street railway systems in the nation and was given a guaranteed monopoly for streetcar service in the two cities. In 1887 a “Motor Railway” was formed when the original horse railway and a competing cable tramway company were consolidated under the single ownership. The last horse car route in the city ceased operation in June 1895. In 1898 one of the street railways, later acquired by the
railway and bridge company, ordered new cars, and repaired, refurbished older cars and made other improvements in the amount of $100,000 (roughly $3,000,000 in today’s money) in anticipation of a trans-river multi-state exposition. By 1902 all of the electric-powered railways were consolidated in the railway and bridge company with the consolidated company being sold to a New York City-based syndicate for $4,000,000 ($116,000,000 today). A newly created street railway company bought the railway and bridge company in 1902, taking a hundred year lease on the city’s rails, also acquiring other local transportation franchises, including the street railway companies in both cities.

A wealthy local banker bought the railway and bridge company along with several competing local lines and merged them into one traction company in the early 1900s with the company continuing to use the railway & bridge company brand.

The Traction Company was the focus of some dark days as the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees attempted to unionize workers in the Traction Company starting in 1902. That early effort faded within a year, however, the banker formed a business men's association to continue fighting the prospect of losing the city's open shop status.

The banker resisted any unionization within his businesses and the city. When workers struck in early September 1909 he quickly hired strikebreakers from across
the country to cross picket lines. He further provoked unionizers by publicly refusing arbitration in two of the city's business community's newspapers. Starting September 19, 1909 mobs rioted in the downtown streets destroying streetcars, terrorizing company officials and attacking strikebreakers. The banker kept the strikebreakers on, hiring others from eastern United States cities to come in until the strikers agreed to his terms. The riots continued through September 23, 1909, eventually subsiding to the pressure of the strikebreakers.

In April 1935 the fragile truce broke causing a long, violent strike. The company hired strikebreakers from Brooklyn and several other Eastern cities. Within days the company rolled out heavily protected streetcars, complete with windows covered by heavy wire and armed guards on board. While the cars attracted few passengers they initially encountered little resistance. The company resisted calls for arbitration from the City Council and continued employing strikebreakers. In early May violence broke out, with workers' attacking the streetcars and strikebreakers by rifle attacks, violent beatings and bombings.
across the city. In June further riots broke out with mobs' burning streetcars and looting. There were two deaths. The city government lost control of the violence and called in the National Guard, which sent 1,800 troops. The Governor declared martial law and ordered the streetcars to stop running. After the governor intervened the banker agreed to arbitration and a number of agreements were made with workers' representatives. However no substantive changes were made and strikebreakers stayed on the job. The violence ended, court cases ensued, and the situation slowly faded.

In 1943 in what might be considered necessity given enlightenment the company began training women as streetcar operators after many of its male drivers were called into military service during WW II. The women were even paid the same wages as their male counterparts.

Yet again in the late 1940’s the company came under the spotlight of unwanted attention as it became the target of a general boycott called by the central group in the city’s civil rights movement. The youth-led organization targeted the railway for its segregation practices and poor service to the minority neighborhood. This was four years before the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

The system had thrived through the 1920s, survived the labor unrest, and enjoyed a resurgence during World War II but in the aftermath of the boycott the automobile and urban sprawl proved to be a one-two knockout combination. The company junked its streetcars in favor of buses with the last ceremonial ride coming on March 5, 1955.

The Library Committee most recently met on January 12 and February 9, 2019. The discussions continue to focus on the use of the recently acquired Arundel House facility in the near term while looking forward towards the requirements of a permanent archival/library facility. Intermediate to the long term goal the Committee is looking at additional storage space with the construction of a new large, multipurpose exhibit/office facility on the property, currently under discussion, being probably 5 to 6 years in the future. The
temporary storage need arises as the Arundel House facility is not structurally robust enough to handle the requirement that the great weight of the collection present.

Library Committee elections were held at the February meeting. Karen Dooks, Randy Leclair, and Mark Sylvester were reelected to the Committee. Amber Tatnall was elected to fill a vacant seat on the Committee. Amber Tatnall was also elected as co-Chair of the Committee.

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<th>NEERHS Library Members for 2019</th>
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Meetings & Workshops

March Meeting and Workshop: March 9, 2019 at 10 AM at STM Library

Contact Karen (781 799-5868) to make arrangements for work at other times.

Karen Dooks, Chair

Please remember when sending donations for the library to note that it is for Library Development – Fund 951.

Seashore Library On-Line Resources -

A library resources page originally developed by Amber Tatnall dealing with useful and interesting resource material including among other things links to some three decades of the Street Railway Journal and the Electric Railway Journal on line is located at:

http://virtual.yccc.edu/seashoreTrolley

or this handy tinyurl works as well: http://tinyurl.com/zwhndoe
The Main Line - Availability

If you are not on our direct distribution list and would like to be please drop a note to TheMainLine@ramsdell.com.

Events

The Annual Meeting scheduled for April 27, 2019 @ 11:00 am - 5:00 pm and Opening Day is May 4, 2019 @ 10:00 am - 5:00 pm!

Check https://trolleymuseum.org/events/ for information and events throughout the year.

The First Powered Trams/Trolleys In Various Capital Cities

As usual looking through some pictures gave me an idea or actually a question. When did the first mechanically powered (non-animal powered) trams/trolleys start in the capitals of various nations and what was the power? Here is London and Paris from our files and also the amazing UK internet resource of the Tramway & Light Railway Society site:

London -

Some may be aware that the steam tram designed by London civil engineer John Grantham in 1871, is regarded as the first steam tram in regular service on a British tramway. The tram, constructed during 1872/3, was first shown in steam to the public in Lambeth in March 1873 with a further demonstration in November 1873 over the tracks of the London Street Tramways Company in Vauxhall Bridge Road. This was not totally successful due to lack of steam power. The car was transferred to a site at West Brompton and was demonstrated on a 350 yard track there in May 1874. It spent the next two years in demonstrations and testing. It entered regular service from 1st August 1876, thus becoming Britain's first steam tram. Continuing to run until 1890, although for the last year it had been towed as a trailer.
After retirement it saw use as a shed for some period of time - apparently the worldwide fate of old trams. John Grantham died in July 1874, aged 66, and never saw the true success of his system. He was posthumously awarded the Howard Medal by the Council of the Society of Arts. The mechanism was constructed by Merryweather & Sons of Greenwich, manufacturers of steam fire engines and the body built by the Oldbury Railway Carriage & Wagon Works Co. Ltd. The car was 27 feet 3 inches long and 6 feet 6 inches wide, weighed 6.5 tons including fuel and water. It carried 44 passengers on longitudinal seats, 20 inside, 24 on top, but could hold 60 or more including standees. The normal running speed was 10 mph. It ran 8 return trips per day (40 miles) and consumed on average 220 pounds of coke.

In the early 1880s a small number of trams powered by compressed air were trialled on the Caledonian Road tramway. Unfortunately it took significantly more coal to run the compressors than to power a steam engine. In 1881 the North Metropolitan Tramways Co. conducted a one month test of a Beaumont Compressed Air Locomotive Company vehicle.

Next, in 1885, the North London Tramways Company operated 25 Merryweather and Dick, Kerr steam engines hauling long-wheelbase Falcon Engine & Car Works trailers, until its liquidation in 1891.
Somewhat late in arriving the electric trams were first introduced to London in 1901 but rapidly gained in popularity and rapidly replaced the other forms of powered tram. The last tram ran in the capital in July 1952.

Paris -

Paris like London passed through a series of propulsion methods for their tram system.

The Compagnie Générale Des Omnibus (CGO) built some self-contained compressed air trams. Tests of these took place on 7/8/1894 between Vincennes and Boulevard de la Villette. A full service from Cours de Vincennes to Saint Augustine began on 17/9/1894. This route was designated TAD (All CGO bus and tram routes had letter designations, with trams starting with 'T').

The trams were 4 wheel cars with a (standard) 1.90m wheelbase. They were single ended with a rear curved staircase giving access to a top deck which had a roof but open sides, the upper deck front being closed and flat. There was a warning bell fitted to the top of the driver's canopy.

In contrast with the London experience these cars ran in Paris and Nantes for over 30 years.
Steam was also present in Paris tram propulsion with the first prototype Serpollet car in Paris was tested by the Tramways de Paris et du Département de la Seine in 1893. Serpollet cars were tested by the Compagnie Générale Des Omnibus in 1895 and then used on route TI from 23rd June 1897. The last Serpollet steam tram to run in Paris was on 12th November 1913.

The first prototype examples of the competing Purrey steam tram were tested by the Compagnie Générale Des Omnibus in 1897 on the route from Auteuil to Boulogne and then Louvre to Boulogne and from 1899 Louvre to Sèvres, being compared with Léon Serpollet's steam cars then in use. From 1900 onwards the Purrey steam cars were progressively introduced on various routes. In total 50 double-deck cars were built from 1900 and 36 single-deck cars added from 1904.

The last Purrey steam trams ran in Paris on 13th June 1914.

Electric powered trams arrived on the Paris scene around 1900 although tests were made as early as 1888 with accumulator (battery) cars. From 1901 the Compagnie Général Parisienne de Tramways set about electrifying the routes. In the suburbs overhead wire was used, but in the central area they first chose to use accumulators, with the trams able to run on both systems. After 1910 the use of accumulators ceased and the Paris inner city tracks were re-laid with conduit. The last traditional electric tram ran in Paris in 1938.
2019 Season Events!

May

Saturday, May 4th: Opening Day! Admission for Maine residents is $2.07; children 15 and under are free. Out-of-state guests celebrating “May The Fourth Be With You Day” by dressing in Star Wars gear also get in for $2.07! Special cars in our Maine collection will be displayed.
Saturday, May 11th: Minnesota Day. To honor Minnesota’s statehood anniversary, car 120 will be featured and celebrated. Residents of Minnesota get in free!
Sunday, May 12th: Mother’s Day. Mothers’ admissions are free! Behind the Scenes Shop Tours will be offered at 11AM and 1PM.
Saturday, May 18th: Armed Forces Day. Active duty military personnel and veterans’ admissions are free!

June

Saturday, June 1st: Business Member Appreciation Day, Seashore’s business members will be featured. All guests will get one chance to win door prizes donated by our business members!
Saturday, June 8th: Superhero & Royalty Day! Dress as your favorite superhero, or as royalty! Special activities will be set up around campus.
Sunday, June 16th: Father’s Day. Father’s admissions are free! Behind the Scenes Shop Tours will be offered at 11AM and 1PM.
Thursday, June 20th: West Virginia Day. To honor WV’s statehood anniversary, car 639 will be featured. Residents of WV get in free!
Friday, June 21st: New Hampshire Day. To honor New Hampshire’s statehood anniversary, car 38 and City of Manchester will be featured. Residents of NH get in for $6.03! (NH children 15 and under get in free).
Saturday, June 29th: First Responder Day. To show our appreciation, first responders’ admissions are free!

July

Wednesdays in July: Ice Cream Night! Join us from 5PM-7PM for ice cream sundaes and a trolley ride! Admission is only $7/person; children 2 and under are free.
Monday, July 1st: Canada Day! Canadian residents’ admission is half off. Montreal car 2, our “Golden Chariot,” will be featured.
July 5th-8th: 80th Anniversary Celebration
Friday, July 5th: Speakeasy-themed Game Night at the Museum, 7PM.
Saturday, July 6th: Model Railroad Layouts! Trolley Parade at 1PM.
Sunday, July 7th: Model Railroad Layouts! Book signings, readings.
Monday, July 8th: Model Railroad Layouts! Massachusetts Day! Admission for MA residents is half off!
Sunday, July 14th: Moxie Day! Experience a Moxie Invasion!
Sunday, July 20th: Daniel Tiger Comes to Seashore! Take a trolley ride to meet Daniel Tiger, son of Daniel Striped Tiger from the PBS series Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood. Pre-purchase tickets online.
Saturday, July 27th: Connecticut Day! CT cars 303, 838 and 1160 will be featured. Admission for CT residents is half off!

August

Wednesdays in August: Ice Cream Night! Join us from 5PM-7PM for ice cream sundaes and a trolley ride! Admission is only $7/person; children 2 and under are free.
Saturday, August 3rd: Teacher Appreciation Day. To show our appreciation, teachers’ admission is free today! All teachers will receive a free chance to enter to win door prizes!
Saturday, August 10th: International Day. International visitors admissions are half off. Cars from our international collection will be featured!
Saturday, August 11th-13th: Meteor Shower Viewing. Visitor Center field. 9PM-12AM. Free admission for members.
Thursday, August 15th: Chamber Business After Hours, 5PM-7PM.
Business members from both area Chambers (Kennebunk/Arundel/ Kennebunkport and Biddeford-Saco) will be joining us for an evening of great food, beverages, and trolley/pump car rides!
Saturday, August 17th: Dog Appreciation Day. Dogs are welcome every day at the Museum, but today we will have special door prizes and more!

September

Sunday, September 8th: Grandparent’s Day! Grandparents’ admissions are free! Behind the Scenes Shop Tours will be offered at 11AM & 1PM.
Saturday-Sunday September 21st, 22nd, 28th & 29th: Pumpkin Patch Trolley. Ride a trolley to the Seashore Pumpkin Patch to pick out a pumpkin to take home and to play fun family games and activities! Pre-purchase tickets online.

October

Saturday, October 12th: Members Day. Members have the opportunity to ride and operate special cars in our collection and participate in special workshops!
Friday-Saturday October 18th-19th & 25th-26th: Ghost Trolley, 7PM-9:30PM. Prepare to be scared! Take a ride down Seashore’s haunted track if you dare to our carbarn of terror, but beware of the Ghost Trolley! Pre-order tickets online.
Sunday, October 27th: Trolley-ween! The last day of our regular operating season! Participate in our “ghost hunt” for a chance to win a free 2020 family membership! Costumes are encouraged.

Regular Admission
Adults (16 – 59): $12.00
Children (6 – 15): $9.50
Children (3 – 5): $5.00
Children (0-2): Free!

Seashore Trolley Museum is Dog-Friendly!

For more information, the most up-to-date schedule, and to purchase tickets, please visit trolleymuseum.org
Let me know your thoughts, suggestions, criticisms, etc. *The Main Line* exists to share and exchange information and ideas from and about your NEERHS Library.

Ed Ramsdell, Editor

*The Main Line*

TheMainLine@ramsdell.com

http://www.trolleymuseum.org