March 2019

For those in distant places - Spring seems to actually have arrived here with snow melting, showers, and the sunlight actually having warmth in it. Now if the weather will just cooperate inland and upcountry with warm days and freezing nights so the maple sap will flow in quantity all will be well!

Also, The Main Line has crossed another threshold as this is edition number one of volume 11.

**Goings On At Seashore**-

It’s that time again: As hard as it is to believe the NEERHS Annual Meeting is four weeks away (27 April) and one week later (4 May) is Seashore’s opening day for the season.

This all means that things are getting into high gear readying things for both Annual Meeting and opening day. This of course leads to the need for volunteers - as we all know this stuff doesn’t just happen. There is an ongoing (Year-Round) need for Town House Shop Volunteers to assist in both restoration of the collection an the ongoing maintenance of the Museum’s operating fleet. If it was done in the era of the electrics, Seashore’s town House Shop does it now: welding, machining, woodworking, electrical, upholstery— just some of the skills required to take restore, maintain, and even build these precious vehicles. Restoration projects rely on volunteer labor to complement and supplement the efforts of restoration employees.

Please contact Restoration Shop Director, Randy Leclair, at shop@neeerhs.org for more information, or to express your interest.
The predecessor of the current line this month was the Omaha Horse Railway Company, incorporated by an act of the Nebraska Territorial 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 the Omaha and Council Bluffs Railway and Bridge Company was incorporated by the then Nebraska State Legislature.

The proposal was to build a bridge and railway connecting the Omaha in the recently admitted state of Nebraska with the city of Council Bluffs, Iowa across the longest river on the continent (The Missouri). 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 the Omaha
Motor Railway was formed when the Omaha Horse Railway and the Omaha Cable Tramway Company were consolidated under the leadership of Samuel D. Mercer. The last horse car route in the city ceased operation in June 1895. In 1898 the Omaha Street Railway, 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 Omaha's Trans-Mississippi Exposition. By 1902 all of the electric-powered railways were consolidated in the

Omaha and Council Bluffs 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). The newly organized Omaha and Council Bluffs 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 including the Omaha Street Railway Company and the Council Bluffs Street Railway Company. A wealthy local banker Gurdon Wattles bought the railway and bridge company along with several competing local lines and merged them into the Omaha Traction Company in the early 1900s with the company continuing to use the railway & bridge company brand.

The Omaha 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 Omaha Traction Company starting in 1902. That early effort faded within a year, however, the banker formed the Omaha Business Men's Association to continue fighting the prospect of losing the city's open shop status.
Wattles 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 organs, the Omaha Bee and the Omaha Herald. 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 for the National Guard, which sent 1,800 troops. Governor Robert Cochran declared martial law and ordered the streetcars to stop running. After the governor intervened Wattles 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 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 DePorres Club, a central group in Omaha’s civil rights movement. The youth-led organization targeted the railway for its segregation practices and poor service to the Near North Side 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.

This Month’s Do You Recognize -

Our 36.5 mile line-of-interest was an affiliate of an approximately 30 mile interurban directly to its north. Both lines, although operated independently, were ultimately controlled by the same eastern-based management company. Our line was built in 1902, much earlier than its northern neighbor’s 1910 beginning, and also closed some eleven years earlier.

Our line of interest was completed between two large cities in the same state that were already used to local electric car service. In October 5, 1902, a total of 36 miles and a 2-mile branch were opened. The interurban, named after the endpoints, was

promoted by a major eastern investment banking firm. Later that same year it was renamed for the area along an inlet from the Pacific where most of the state’s population resides as an Electric Railway Company in conjunction with control passing to another eastern management company. The endpoint city systems were under common control.

The line was physically one of the best lines of the earlier built and one of the first third-rail lines. It was blessed with flat territory with minimal obstructions passing through a prosperous
agricultural area. Operation was over private right-of-way utilizing third-rail except in the urban areas where street running required overhead catenary. Before the advent of significant auto and truck competition the company’s prospects appeared outstanding and, in fact, early earnings reports reflected this reality.

Brill and Cincinnati provided a fleet of fairly standard wooden arch-window cars of the period with some 10 by Brill in 1902 and couple more from Cincinnati in 1910. Also included were some open-end observation parlor cars. In 1903 Stevenson Car Co. and St. Louis Car Co. (1907-10) supplied a number of trailers with rear observation deck - later years some were motorized. The two Cincinnatis were the last new purchases.

Starting as early as 1906 a large number of second-hand cars were obtained for suburban service, primarily from lines under common control as well as some home-built. The line never had any modern equipment, but the old wooden cars, usually run in multiple units, were capable of high speed. Freight traffic came from various manufactory and agricultural sources as well as the company’s own coal mine. This traffic was handled using home-grown box and freight motors although the line's revenue came mostly from passenger service.

The road was hard hit by automobile and bus competition for the passenger traffic plus trucks cutting into the express and lighter freight business. By the mid-20’s the management
firm, that had initially extended funds to help with growing losses, became less enamored with the company’s prospects and, in fact, probably the prospects for the industry as a whole.

The line it was taken into receivership in 1928, and was abandoned at the end of December of that year. Other lines around the country controlled by the same management firm certainly were sustained and allowed to hang on longer but for whatever reason this line with seemingly some further potential was terminated very quickly. Its northern commonly-controlled neighbor was allowed to survive until the eve of World War II.

The Library Committee most recent meeting was on March 9, 2019.

In Karen Dook’s absence Vice-Chair Amber Tatnall Chaired the meeting.

Vice Chair Tatnall reported on the ongoing process of outfitting the Arundel House facility to support the immediate needs of the library particularly the ability to accept and process the ongoing donations of books and whole collections to the library.

She also submitted a budget proposal to accomplish this outfitting including furniture, computer assets, and a large scanner. The budget was discussed at length and subsequently approved by the Committee.

Amber further reported that a new work study at York County Community College is doing additional work under Amber’s supervision to rescan some of the Wason Collection photos where prior scanning had proved unsatisfactory.

Editor’s note: Since the meeting she has also been involved in ongoing extensive cleaning, painting, and organizing the Arundel House in preparation for the outfitting.
Note: There will be a book sale to benefit the Library on Annual Meeting Day. Volunteers are needed and should contact Karen Dooks (781 799-5868).

Meetings & Workshops

April Meeting and Workshop: April 13, 2019 at 10 AM at STM Library

Amber Tatnall, Vice 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.

Did You Know? A Smidge of Seashore History

Folks in Little Hocking, Ohio during the mid-20th Century were able to visit their doctor and receive their pharmaceuticals in what is now one of Seashore’s most beautiful and prized vehicles.

With the mid 1940’s end of streetcar service in Wheeling, West Virginia there was at least one curved-side streetcar, built for Wheeling Traction Company by Cincinnati Car Co. in 1924, spared from the scrap heap, albeit somewhat uniquely.
It was moved to Little Hockings, Ohio, about 100 miles down the Ohio River. I suspect it went by truck rather than barge although I don’t know that for a fact. There, it became a doctor’s office and pharmaceutical dispensary.

The car’s body was donated to the Museum by the doctor’s daughter in 1957 some years after his death.

Seashore’s 1924 No. 639 is a Cincinnati curved-side and one of few survivors of hundreds of curved-side cars and represents the standard model that once ran in the Midwest and South.

Who Cares?

The following probably falls in the “who cares?” bin. Since I was already running a day behind in getting The Main Line out the door I noticed a distraction in a “today’s happenings” list that in addition to April Fool’s Day noted that it is also the anniversary of the 1871 opening of the Brill Tramway by the 3rd Duke of Buckingham. This Brill is in the UK so no at least direct connection with the J.G.Brill Co. I took a look at Wikipedia and found the following:

The Brill Tramway, also known as the Quainton Tramway, Wotton Tramway, Oxford & Aylesbury Tramroad and Metropolitan Railway Brill Branch, was a six-mile rail line in the Aylesbury Vale, Buckinghamshire, England. It was privately built in 1871 by the 3rd Duke of Buckingham as a horse tram line to help transport goods between his lands around Wotton House and the national rail network. Lobbying from the nearby village of Brill led to its extension to Brill and conversion to passenger use in early 1872. Two locomotives were bought but the line had been built for horses and thus trains travelled at an average speed of 4 miles per hour. In 1883, the Duke of Buckingham planned to upgrade the route to main line standards and extend the line to Oxford, creating
the shortest route between Aylesbury and Oxford. Despite the backing of the wealthy Ferdinand de Rothschild, investors were deterred by costly tunneling. In 1888 a cheaper scheme was proposed in which the line would be built to a lower standard and avoid tunneling. In anticipation, the line was named the Oxford & Aylesbury Tramroad. Although the existing line had been upgraded in 1894, the extension to Oxford was never built. Instead, operation of the Brill Tramway was taken over by London's Metropolitan Railway and Brill became one of its two north-western termini. The line was rebuilt in 1910, and more advanced locomotives were introduced, allowing trains to run faster. The population of the area remained low, and the primary income source remained the carriage of goods to and from farms. Between 1899 and 1910 other lines were built in the area, providing more direct services to London and the north of England. The Brill Tramway went into financial decline. In 1933 the Metropolitan Railway became the Metropolitan line of London Transport. The Brill Tramway became part of the London Underground, despite Quainton Road being 40 miles from London and not underground. London Transport aimed to concentrate on electrification and improvement of passenger services in London and saw little possibility that routes in Buckinghamshire could become viable passenger routes. In 1935 the Brill Tramway closed. The infrastructure was dismantled and sold.

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
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http://www.trolley museum.org
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.

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 1267 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. Fathers’ 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 Charlot,” will be featured.

July 5th-8th: 80th Anniversary Celebration

Friday, July 5th: Speakeasy-themed Game Night at the Museum, and 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!

Sunday, August 11th: Sunday August 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/Arunalet/ 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 dog prizes and more!

September

Sunday, September 8th: Grandparents’ 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 car barn 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
Adults (60+): $10.00
Children (0 – 15): $9.50
Children (0 – 2): Free!

Become a Member

Individual Membership: $15
Family Membership: $60
Student/Senior/Military: $30

Seashore Trolley Museum is Dog-Friendly!

For more information, the most up-to-date schedule, and to purchase tickets, please visit trolleymuseum.org