

2019-2020 Yard Operations Report

2020 Annual Meeting - Seashore Trolley Museum – July 25, 2020

Submitted by Dan Vardaro & Jeff Bennett – Yard Operations Coordinators

This report begins from May 2019, when your current Yard Operations Coordinators, joined by Rich Pascucci in 2019, took over management of the department due to the resignation of the previous Yardmasters. Yard Operations is a small but critical function within the Museum, primarily charged with managing the storage and movement of rail rolling stock around the property, and works to support not only Railway Operations but also the Restoration Shop, Track, Overhead, and Facilities. This work has grown much more complex in recent years due to the ever-growing collection, the condition of the physical plant in yards, and the needed facilities improvements taking place on the campus.

The sudden change of leadership, combined with the impact Fairview Carhouse construction, meant that we started the 2019 season facing a considerable uphill battle. With track access to Fairview cut off, a large amount of rolling was (and still is) stored in inconvenient locations, most notably blocking Highwood yard. In addition, after years of heavy use, the motive power used for Yard Operations was in dire condition. And finally, several large events were on tap for the 2019 season which would require nearly all of the public areas and barns to be opened up.

During May and June, efforts were undertaken to support the Shop's 2019 fleet preparations, including gaining access to Car 2 in Riverside and positioning PCC 1304 for work later in the year. The first major project, in late June, was the movement of several rapid transit cars out of Highwood Yard. Our first large crew worked for two days to move many cars back into the Central and Fairview yards to allow



Shifting Washington PCC 1304 in Spring 2019.

access to Highwood barn, just in time for the Museum's 80th Anniversary Trolley Parade. Further work took place during the Anniversary Weekend to free up additional cars for the event.

In August, the next major project was moving Nagasaki car 134 out of Central Carhouse to allow for restoration work to begin. Central Yard has become increasingly crowded due to the work on its eastern neighbor, and another large crew of volunteers worked for most of a weekend to gain access to the car and move it to the Shop. This work required the movement of

thirteen other cars in order to reach Nagasaki 134. Thanks to their hard work, the car was able to be moved out in time for a major educational program centered around it.



Oshawa Rwy. 300 in Highwood Yard during the 80th Anniversary weekend.

During these projects, we suffered some mechanical setbacks. Two of the operating rapid transit cars, used to move others, suffered failures which left them unserviceable as tow vehicles. Locomotive 300 also suffered a significant failure in its control system, placing it out of service. Fortunately, thanks to a generous donor and the work by Brian Tenaglia, Dave Rogers, Bill Catanseye, and Rob Drye, 300 received considerable

Shop attention for the first time in nearly 25 years, and was returned to service (running on all four traction motors!) later in the fall. This locomotive still needs major work to reach a state of good repair, but it is now available for movement of heavy rapid transit rolling stock. During the season, the Shop also performed a major servicing on Boston plow 5106, another critical piece of motive power for Yard Ops, the Track Department, and even special events such as Pumpkin Patch. We are grateful to the Shop employees, volunteers, and donors who have made this work possible. Much of what happens “behind the scenes” at Seashore would not be possible without 5106 and 300 up and running.

Following the Track Department’s efforts to reconnect the Fairview Barn tracks, we were able to store one car in the barn for the winter, despite additional work being required to complete the track and overhead in that area. PCC 5 was moved out of the shop and onto Highwood track 1 in mid-November, after we undertook what may become an bi-annual for the time being – moving several rapid transit cars back into Highwood Yard for winter storage! (In spring 2020, we are grateful to the assistance of Brian Tenaglia, Jake Foley, and Mark Sylvester for again cleaning these cars back out of Highwood prior to the delayed season opening.)



Moving Newark PCC 5 into new storage in Fairview Carhouse, November 2019.

Major plans were in place for Spring 2020, focused on continuing the clean up of the Central and Fairview barn areas, but the COVID-19 pandemic put these efforts on hold for now. We will

continue to look for opportunities to continue that work in 2020, but for the time being, efforts will be focused on working with small crews to support moving cars to the Restoration Shop for work, and in keeping the public areas of the railway open for Operations to continue. We are also giving particular focus to making restricted fund cars accessible for Shop employees.

The Yard Ops team is very appreciative of the support of donors who funded much needed work on plow 5106 and locomotive 300. We are eager to see work on these vital cars continue, and also look



Rapid Transit cars in winter storage in Highwood Yard. Current constraints require much of this equipment to be moved into Highwood Yard to gain access to Fairview Carhouse.

forward to the arrival of Providence & Worcester 150, a 25-ton GE diesel switcher. Placing P&W 150 in service alongside 300 will give us considerable flexibility to undertake some of the major equipment shifts necessary to complete the trackage and overhead into Fairview Barn, as well as clearing the stored equipment in Central Yard and the Well. Most of these moves, which will need to take place during the off-season, will require moving many heavy rapid transit cars around the property, including possible storage on the Main Line at some times. We have been reluctant to do this until the Museum has at least two locomotives capable of moving these cars in order to avoid any equipment becoming stuck due to a locomotive failure.

A large core of instructors and senior operators stepped up to support Yard Ops in 2019, and approximately 15 were requalified for the Yard following participation in major shifting work. We plan to continue this program for operators previously Yard qualified in 2020, with the understanding that due to COVID-19 we will attempt to keep most work crews to a minimum size. We will attempt (conditions permitting) to expand training to interested operators new to Yard Operations in 2021.

Finally, we are exceedingly grateful to the many members who answered our calls for help in the last year. We had assistance during the last year from well over 25 members, including: Brian Tenaglia, Rich Pascucci, Todd Glickman, Jeremy Whiteman, Scott Hooper, Tom LaRoche, Rob Drye, Bob Perkins, Donna Perkins, Eric Gilman, Jack Coyle, Jake Foley, Marty Wisnewski, Chester Gabriel, Dave Kornechuk, Jim Brumingham, Robbin DiPierre, Chuck Griffith, James von Bokkelen, John Petillo, Fred Hessler, Derek Carter, Chris Kelleher, Denise LaRoche, Chris Randall, Mark Sylverster, and Steve Cappers. Our apologies to any members left off of this list! We could not have managed any of this work without so many of our fellow members stepping up to help.