June 2020

Best Wishes

For A Great Fourth Of July Holiday And All The Best To Our Friends And Neighbors North Of The Border For A Happy Canada Day On July First

Have Fun - Please Do Be Careful - Stay Safe!

244 years For Our Republic - 153 Years For Canada - 81 Years For Seashore

Goings On at Seashore -

Obviously as with every other locale on our planet the primary news is the pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). A 24 June 2020 museum update from Seashore indicated that the museum continues to be open to the public on Wednesdays and Fridays-Sundays. Quarantine restrictions are beginning to loosen and vacationers staying in lodging will be allowed back in the state beginning June 26, there is still not enough information available to share about exemptions for day-trippers from MA, NY and other states outside of NH and VT. The full list of the museum’s External (Guest) and Internal Policies will continue to be updated as state guidance and executive orders change, and will be posted to https://trolleymuseum.org/learn/bylaws-policies/covid-19-policies/ . The health environment and regulations are changing rapidly enough that I am not going to attempt to provide information beyond that and would recommend you watch for bulletins from Seashore and the Seashore website as to current information for what is occurring.
The Denver & Interurban Railroad’s Ft. Collins trolley system began operation in August of 1907 using a small steam switcher and some old coaches borrowed by its owner/operator the Denver and Interurban Railroad from its parent Class 1 steam road the Colorado & Southern Railway as the power plant wasn’t ready. Actual electric powered service got underway in December of 1907 with the power plant completed and the arrival of four 40-passenger Woeber Carriage Company double truck trolleys. Two 44 passenger cars from the Jewett Car Company were added at a later date. The system had three lines branching out from a downtown point at College Ave. & Linden St. Cars arriving and departing the intersecting point were scheduled, choreographed if you will, to exchange passengers and maneuver past each other by means of a loop at the intersection.

The trolley line’s initial operator, the Denver and Interurban Railroad, was an electric interurban railroad based in the state capital of Denver, CO some 59 miles to the south. The owner’s primary interurban route of 30 miles opened in 1908 and operated until 1926 from Denver to the community of Boulder, that had originally been settled as a gold mining community and later the home of the state university. The local street railway operation of our interest was not so successful from the interurban’s view. The system struggled from the start and light ridership made the operation untenable for a private operator and operations of our line were abruptly abandoned on a July night in 1918. A major cause of the closure, as with many systems owned by steam roads, was that in 1917 as part of the war effort the Federal
Railroad Administration took control of the steam road but not the subsidiary electrics which were left to their own minimal financial resources to stay afloat.

After the July 1918 closure there was a brief experiment with a bus equipped with flanged wheels. The White Motor Company proposed operating a 30 day trial with one of their buses equipped in such a manner. The ride was rough, loud, and smelled plus the poor roadbed resulted in many derailments with damage to the bus. Consequently the experiment was both unpopular and short lived.

The experience of the past eleven years had tempered any desire by any other operator to take over and the system was not in the best condition as the owners had foreseen the end for sometime. The rolling stock was felt not worth repairing and the track and overhead needed major rehabilitation. A proposal was floated to have the city buy the system and restore service. The proposal was approved by the city council and in early 1919 a public vote confirmed the purchase and a Ft. Collins Municipal Railway was formed. The Woeber-built rolling stock was not part of the transaction.

Four new Birney cars (Nos. 20-23) were ordered from the American Car Company. These arrived in late May 1919 and service started within a couple of weeks. A 5th Birney (No. 24) came from Cincinnati Car Company in 1920 and two second-hand Birneys built by American Car Company in 1922 were acquired from Cheyenne Electric in 1924 becoming Nos. 25 and 26. Around the end of the Second World War saw two more second-hand Birneys arrive from Virginia Electric Power replacing cars 24 and 25. Service varied from a 10 minute headway in peak times and 20 minutes at others.
By the late 1940s a bus line had been granted a franchise in the city, in some places, directly in competition with the city-owned trolley system and wanted to establish a city-wide system. As trolleys suffered major failures a bus was substituted and in early 1951 a six month trial replacement of the trolleys by busses was approved by the city council. The end came in late June 1951 when the last car was operated on the system. In late 1952 voters approved the actual removal of the system infrastructure from their city. At its closure the line was the last operating trolley system in the state and the last scheduled commercial Birney operation in North America.

The Fort Collins Municipal Railway Society, a 501c 3 entity, was formed in 1980 to complete the restoration of Car 21, restore a 1.5-mile portion of the line, and work with the public and city. Work on car 21 took seven years, while line restoration took almost five years. Rides on the restored trolley are now offered primarily on Spring and Summer weekends. For extra information Trolley Cars of Ft. Collins by E.S. Peyton & R.A. Moorman edited by Kenneth Jessen (1986) and Colorado Trolleys by Leland Feitz (1971) are good sources.

Ft. Collins EXTRA:

Jim Vaitkunas sent an email about the Ft. Collins article and included a couple of photos he took during a visit to Ft. Collins while attending the 2007 ARM fall meeting in Colorado Springs.
He noted that we might recognize Seashore’s President & CEO, (Chairman Emeritus) Jim Schantz to the left in the group photo.

For any who somehow don’t know him Jim Vaitkunas is Corporate Secretary, Assistant Ops Chief, Newsletter Editor, etc. of the Minnesota Streetcar Museum. Thanks Jim!

This Month’s Do You Recognize -

This month’s system was neither especially long (6 miles) nor wide (3 ft. narrow gauge), nor long lasting. The “home community” of our line (a town as of 1868 and city about 1889) had been served by a class 1 steam road since an initial narrow gauge line was constructed by a predecessor of the Class 1 around 1871 and converted to standard gauge in 1883. There was also a narrow gauge steam road, primarily a sugar beet hauler, after 1890. By 1903 local farmers and businessman were dissatisfied with both steam roads and hoping for more favorable rates with access to their own seaport. The idea was promoted to build an electric narrow gauge railway from the city to a harbor where goods and produce could be shipped via packet boat to a major port located some 100 miles to the north all the while avoiding both steam roads. In 1903 the “city name” Transportation Company was incorporated three local men and two transportation promoters.

The electric line opened in April of 1904 and began with some success. Equipment consisted of two trolleys, two box cars, and four flatcars. The trolleys served as passenger transport and also as motors to haul the box cars and flats. The company acquired a purpose-built passenger-carrying steam packet boat to operate between the company pier and the major seaport 100 miles to the north. This packet boat made an overnight run to the major port transporting local produce.

Unfortunately the only site for the line’s pier was exposed to the open ocean and the pier almost immediately seriously damaged by teredo worms (aka shipworms or the "termites of the sea") and further damage was inflicted by heavy seas in November 1904. The pier was repaired with timbers more suited to the job at a not insubstantial cost of $35,000 (approximately $1,020,000 of buying...
power in 2020). The line still managed to do a reasonable business but the Class-1 steam road soon reduced its freight rates to about one-half that charged by the Transportation Company. Faced with the decline in freight revenue the line moved towards passenger transport. However events were moving rapidly in the wrong direction. In 1905 the steam packet had to be removed from service for heavy repairs so the company was reduced to transporting recreational passengers over its six-mile line from the city to the pier. A shareholder dispute over payments between the two transportation promoters led to their indictment in August 1905. With these events as background a local bank attached a claim for $19,000 (another $600,000 in today’s money) and other creditors soon piled on with further claims. The line finally filed for bankruptcy with a receiver appointed in September 1905. The packet boat was sold and the remaining infrastructure became dormant for several years while the bankruptcy proceedings continued for six years.

During this period one of the streetcars was burned in 1909 while in storage. A new receiver was appointed in 1907 with orders from the court to dispose of the property. As a side note the packet boat, no longer involved in this property, ultimately burned off of Florida in mid-1918.

Finally after five-plus years of litigation between shareholders and one of the promoters the assets were sold to benefit the creditors. In April of 1911 the company was reorganized by a new set of local investors as the “city name” Railway and Navigation Company. The shops, power plant, and depot were renovated plus a new 1,700 ft. concrete pier was constructed. Also the port that had formally been named after one of the original promoters was renamed after to line’s home city.
Service resumed using the trolley that had not been destroyed and 10 flatcars. Flatcars were outfitted with seats when extra capacity was required for events being held at the ocean end of the line. Land adjacent to the pier was sold to a land development company and a company owned by the lead promoter of this round of investors acquired additional land near the pier and erected a tent city complete with boardwalks and running water. A baseball team was sponsored and a baseball park was built adjacent to the railway line near the pier. On May Day of 1912 the local citizenry put on a celebration to honor the officials of the Railway & Transportation Co. and celebrate completion of work at the pier. In December 1912, heavy storms destroyed 160 feet of the new pier. Faced with $40,000 worth of damage (another million dollars plus in 2020 money), the company took the bridge construction company to court to recover the losses for alleged faulty construction. Ultimately, the suit was lost and after failing in a search for new financing to rebuild the line, operations came to an end in October of 1913.

In 1913 the narrow gauge steam road was given permission by state regulators to haul sugar beets from the junction of the two lines, westward 3 miles on the electric's track, but this operation was short lived. In November a receiver was appointed receiver and scrapping of the line began. The Class 1 steam road purchased the rails, while the remaining rolling stock was sold elsewhere.

One last attempt was made in 1915 to promote development when a citizens group promoted the pier area for a new port for the large bay where it was located. Studies by the Army Corps of Engineers and a Congressional Committee ultimately decided that the costs associated with the need for a reinforced pier and several breakwaters because of the open ocean exposure were too great and an alternative site was chosen.

The roster is somewhat unclear. One source indicates that the initial operation started with two trolleys, two boxcars, and four flatcars with one trolley burned during the 1905 - 1911 closure and then the new company continuing with the one remaining trolley. Yet another source shows the initial line with four trolleys, one destroyed, and the second iteration
operating with the remaining three trolleys. Four boxcars and sixteen flats are shown during both periods. I have only been able to find images of two trolleys (Nos. 2 & 4).

(LOCATION HINT!) During the period between the cessation of operations by the Transportation Company and the startup of the Railway and Navigation Company a great opportunity for sightseeing traffic was missed. In early 1908 the United States Navy’s round-the-world cruise of the Great White Fleet visited the bay where our line’s pier (damaged at that point) was located.

The Library Committee held its first meeting in several months through a virtual Zoom meeting on 13 June 2020.


Issues discussed include:

- Ongoing scanning of large format documents such as mechanical drawings and blueprints.
- Constraints on on site library workshops and scanning because of COVID-19.
- Randy Leclair is going to analyze space size available in the Library to evaluate what may be possible under state and museum health regulations.
- Electrical work in the Conference Room.
Elections were held to fill three terms that will expire in 2023.

Lee Duncan opted to not run due to his involvement with the Curatorial Comm. Amber Tatnall has also asked to step down as a member due to workload, but will remain as a friend of the Committee and work on projects as possible.

Elections for terms expiring in 2023 -

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Karen Dooks was elected as Chair and Randy Leclair as Vice-Chair

It was decided that Committee meetings would be resumed as virtual (Zoom) meetings on a bimonthly basis.

It is hoped that the Wednesday Evening Workshops can be resumed near future. Amber Tatnall is going to evaluate this possibility.

Our community partner York County Community College is also closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Library Committee’s meetings on Saturdays (10AM - 2 PM) will be virtual meetings on a bimonthly basis.

Saturday - Workshops only (10AM - 2 PM) are still cancelled

The Wednesday Evening Workshops Are Cancelled - hopefully resumption in near future.

For further information/questions concerning the Library please contact Randy Leclair (207-641-9324 - text preferred) or Karen Dooks (781 799-5868).

By Karen Dooks, Chair
More than 1000 of the images are accessible online = https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_images/

Facebook page = https://www.facebook.com/groups/44932548777/

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 Library continues to upload material to the various sections of DigitalMaine - The DigitalMaine Repository is a partnership of the Maine State Library, Maine State Archives and community institutions around the state.

The uploads to the new documents area are quite fascinating as they allow you to literally leaf through the documents.

https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_museum/
https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_blueprints/
https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_images/
https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_documents/

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

A Glimpse Back at the Wason Manufacturing Company -

As many readers may remember the museum is extremely fortunate to possess a photographic collection from the Wason Manufacturing Company. This collection consists of 3000 negatives and their prints, documenting the cars built for railways around the country and the world. The collection dates from 1906 to 1938 and has sample photographs from every order completed during that time period.
One of the negative albums. The albums hold 100 3x5 negatives. The Library holds 30 albums.

The index to one of the negative albums, indicating the company, the kind of car, and the various shots (interior, side view, trucks, etc.), and sometimes the year and order number.

The mounted prints that correspond with the negatives in file drawers.

Scanning has been ongoing for several years with a number of the albums uploaded to the Library’s Facebook page, some to Digital Maine and also a portion of the scanned images.

I came across an article in the April 1896 Street Railway Journal concerning Wason and thought it might be of interest to readers.
The Works of a Large Car Company.

The Wason Manufacturing Company is one of the oldest establishments in the United States engaged in the manufacture of cars. It began with the building of freight cars by T. W. Wason in 1815. Car building of all kinds was then in its infancy and passenger work was only another form of coach or omnibus building. It is

and extends on both sides of the Connecticut Valley Railroad. It is about seventy acres in extent and the company occupies about seventeen acres. When the shops were built this land was supposed to be ample for all possible contingencies, but even this generous provision has not been altogether sufficient.

The works were laid out by Mr. Fisk, who with the general manager, W. H. Paige, made a study of most of the shops then in existence. Through the center of the plot of land runs a transfer

said that independence of his employer's political ideas was the turning point in determining Mr. Wason's career. He lost a good position, settled in Springfield, and taking a contract for a car on one of the local roads, now the Connecticut River road, had his business career settled. From 1846 when the firm was T. & C. Wason to 1853 when the firm of T. W. Wason & Company was established there were great improvements in the works. At that time, George C. Fisk became interested in the establishment, and for many years

works on a six foot outside track, the track upon it being forty-five feet in length. The three tracks for the table traverse the whole length of the grounds, a distance of more than 1,000 ft. Originally, as designed by Mr. Paige, this table with its engine and platform, which is seen in the center of the yard near the office building, was driven by a chain fixed at each end. Experience has shown that the chain was not necessary, and a simple bearing wheel running on the center rail and driven by a chain from a sprocket wheel on the engine shaft moves the table with the greatest accuracy and covers the seventy tracks which run at right angles across the works quickly and with great accuracy.

The building in front is that devoted to the offices, drawing room, reading room, store rooms and other departments intimately connected with the office work. The passenger erecting shop just behind the office is 177 ft. × 75 ft. The foundry is 170 ft. × 62 ft., and has a deck roof. Here are the 80,000 lb. Howe track scales, several cupolas capable of melting some forty tons per day. The wheel casing house is 40 ft. × 25 ft. The wheel capacity is about 100 wheels per day. The machine shop is 80 ft. × 45 ft., the lower story being devoted to heavy and the upper story to light work. Connected with the machine shop is a smith shop 100 ft. × 45 ft., and having an extension which is used as an iron room. This shop has twenty-six side fires. The paint shop beyond the erecting shop is 200 ft. × 62 ft., two stories high. The upper floor is devoted to upholstering, varnishing and trimming. One of the features of this building which was new at the time it was put up and which has been of material advantage ever since, was the fact that every piece of machinery rested on a foundation which

past has been the president and manager of the company, in which he has had forty-three years of continuous service. The company under its present name was organized in 1863. The old works were in the center of the city of Springfield and in later years became insufferably crowded. In 1871 H. S. Hyde and Geo. C. Fisk purchased a large tract of land at Brightwood, about two miles from Springfield. This tract of land is on the bank of the Connecticut

FIG. 2.—METHOD OF PUTTING PANELS IN PLACE.  FIG. 3.—SIDE VIEW OF VESTIBULE.
60 ft. × 15 ft. On the left of the engraving is seen a large new shop which has been erected more recently, an overflow from the original plot of land.

One of the points of interest about the works is the lumber yard to which Mr. Fisk has devoted a great deal of attention. In fact, the quality of lumber has been one of the hobbies of the company for years. Mr. Fisk, the president, having spent an unusual amount of time and a great deal of labor and expense in experimenting with various means for drying lumber and putting it in the best possible condition for use. He has also done much toward having timber of all kinds tested to ascertain its suitability for various purposes. In this matter he was one of the first men to demonstrate the usefulness of Oregon pine. His experiments in oak are numerous and he is constantly testing.

The Wason Manufacturing Company has been known for a great many years as the builder of a high grade of steam cars. The company has also for many years engaged in the manufacture of street cars, and if we remember rightly built for the West End road, of Boston, the first street car having a mower or raised deck roof. This was trussed from the corners of the car to the center of the roof in a most peculiar way. Apparently the builders expected that the sides of the roof would fall inward. It was a very handsome car for 1879 and attracted much attention. The extensive use of the bob-tailed car was carried so far and so completely covered with patents, that the company for many years after their introduction confined themselves exclusively to steam car work. However with the introduction of heavier cars and the demands made upon them, a few years ago re-opened the street car department and have been since that time manufacturing cars for street railway service. Recognizing the fact that workmanship was one of the three essentials for a durable street car, the president took unusual pains in organizing the department which is kept entirely distinct from the steam work.

The accompanying engravings show some of the special features of its standard car for electric railway work. The first feature that attracts attention is the careful and effective method employed for holding the pans, in position against the ribs while the glue is setting. This is shown in principle in Fig. 2, which also gives an illustration of the end of a standard car in the white. The method is to secure with several bolts at the level of the belt rail a heavy padded roll that fills the length of the side of the car. This is done after the panels have been tacked on. When this is in place a brace is put on at every rib, which hooks at one end under the rail, and at the other end is held fast by a screw clamp, as shown. Each panel is treated by itself, though the engraving both upper and lower panels have braces and clamps in position for the purpose of illustrating the principle. These were put in place to show the method, the panels window rail forms part of the framing of the car, and is secured to each post by three screws and is also gained in place.

The construction of the plate is another feature that should be noted in Fig. 5. Instead of being a single piece of wood into which the posts are mortised, it really consists of three pieces. One of these is the letterboard, another a thin plate occupying the usual position and having the posts mortised into it, and the other a wooden inside rail which is nailed on to the posts like the window panel or letterboard. These three pieces are glued and screwed firmly to each other and to the posts and form an exceedingly stiff, strong and entirely light member. The construction also appears in Fig. 4, which shows the inside of the end of the car and illustrates the exceedingly strong double corner posts which are used. The plate may be very properly considered as belonging to the box variety and is at the corner of the car, not only strengthened by the inner post, but reinforced by what would be termed the lintel of the vestibule, which continues from the inner post to the vestibule corner post. (See both Figs. 2 and 6.)

Coming to the corner posts, best seen on the outside in Fig. 2, we find that the upper members of the car frame at the corner and the vestibule are made into one piece by carrying the upper outside finishing strip entirely around the corner of the vestibule past the car corner, past the first window post in a single piece of bent wood. This long splice is also covered by the drip rail. The finish on the corner opposite the door is seen in Fig. 5. Incidentally it should be noted that these cars are finished with a door on one side only of the vestibule, a construction which in itself materially increases the strength of the car and at the same time gives a stronger support to the vestibule. The construction of the vestibule is best seen in Fig. 6. It is practically a prolongation of the car body, the upper part of it taking the raised roof and plates as integral portions. The great depth of the vestibule roof timbers with the way in which the posts are secured for them makes this practically as strong as any part of the car body. The end timber of what would be the platform is made in several strips and is supported by four platform posts, the usual fashion. The horizontal resistance to collision or butting is secured by an oak or hard pine platform floor 1½ in. in thickness, which is driven in solidly to take a bearing against the end sill of the car. The end sill itself is of oak measuring 8 in. × 8 in. It is the practice of the company to put these sills in of two 4 in. × 8 in. pieces laid horizontally. The object in doing this is to secure a perfect dryness of the wood. An 8 in. × 8 in. stick is seasoned with the greatest difficulty, while a 4 in. × 8 in. stick can be obtained readily perfectly dry. The result is that this made sill is stronger and stiffer than the solid stick.

The lower plate of the raised deck is a single piece of yellow Douglass fir (Oregon pine). The lightness of this timber and its strength make it peculiarly suitable for these long sticks which must, if possible, be both light, strong and stiff.

The iron work upon these cars is somewhat peculiar and very interesting. It is best seen by reference to Fig. 5, which shows the end of the car and side of the vestibule opposite the door. In Fig. 6, the method of putting on one of the corner irons and the window strap is shown, and in this figure the peculiar form of the corner panel iron is best seen. It has, in the form of a strap, a flat plate on the end of the car and a flange which turns up against the inner corner post. It is formed of a single piece of malleable iron. The other straps in Fig. 3 run around continuously, but at the inside angle of the vestibule are covered by malleable plates. The dash, or front of the vestibule, is a single plate of iron secured, as shown, under the corner of the car and taking a bearing against a casting which takes the truss rod. It gives a very firm support at the right place.

There may be doubts in the minds of some in regard to the theory of the platform, and whether it should be made just as strong as the car, some advocating its use as a mere buffer or breaking piece which shall give way before the car body is injured. With the vestibule however a large number of builders and experienced car users have reached the conclusion that it should be made as strong as the car frame itself, and if provided with a sufficient buffer iron
should stand all the hard usage to which the car can be subjected without absolute destruction. It is upon this theory that the Wason Company has designed and built its vestibules, and there seems to be no reason for doubting the soundness of its judgment in this matter. With a car which is to be carried on double trucks the additional end weight is not a serious matter, since its overhang is but small and it is easily carried without any tendency to galloping or pitching at any speed.

The finish of the vestibule without sheeting beneath the iron presents some advantages, and in case of a slight collision the dam-

FIG. 6.—VESTIBULE UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

age is much more easily repaired than when a considerable amount of splintered sheeting has to be taken off and replaced. In this respect however it is not theory, but the result of experience which must decide the question of the most desirable construction.
Some Miscellany -

The following is a link to a manuscript from the museum’s O. R. Cummings collection uploaded to digitalmaine,

This is a copy of an original manuscript loaned to ORC by the late Howard T. Moulton of Portsmouth, N.H. It was written about 1908 by Leonard Withington, at one time an editor of the Newburyport (Ma) Herald, but apparently never was published by the Atlantic Shore Line Railway or the Atlantic Shore Railway. A lot of historical research about the territory served by the trolley line is evident.

https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_documents/1/?fbclid=IwAR0ORv-bs-n0wknhmznYPwPxzRXpXgDx3lVpbImtJVK60OB3Z96C5zRJj_0

When you reach the document page click on with your cursor .

Flip the pages by clicking the < or > midway on each side of the page.

For anyone not used to moving in and out of a full screen display of a document either your escape (esc) key or clicking on will get you out of full screen.

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 .

Again have a great Fourth of July and a Happy Canada Day!

Ed Ramsdell, Editor

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