

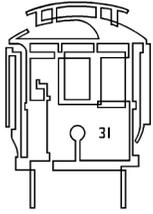


THE NEW ENGLAND ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Seashore Trolley Museum & National Streetcar Museum at Lowell

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July-September  
2020

# DISPATCH





# NEERHS

Seashore Trolley Museum  
& National Streetcar Museum at Lowell  
**PO BOX A**  
**KENNEBUNKPORT, ME 04046**  
(207) 967-2800 | [www.trolleyuseum.org](http://www.trolleyuseum.org)

## Mission Statement

New England Electric Railway Historical Society shares powerful connections between the past and present. We preserve knowledge, context, and resources for future generations by collecting, restoring, operating, and exhibiting significant public transit vehicles and artifacts.

## Membership

Connie Garland

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Membership Dues for 2020:

Student, Military, Disabled, and Senior (60+)	\$30
Regular Membership	\$35
Family Membership	\$60
Regular Plus 1 (single guest admission)	\$55
Sustaining Membership	\$75
Contributing Membership	\$120
Museum Patron	\$600
Museum Benefactor	\$1,200
Life Membership	\$1,000

Address Changes: Please notify the Membership Secretary, or the Museum office at the address above.

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# The DISPATCH

*The Dispatch* is published by the New England Electric Railway Historical Society for its members and friends. Any opinions expressed herein are those of the writers, and do not necessarily represent the corporate position of the NEERHS.

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The next issue of *The Dispatch* will be published in December. The deadline for submissions is November 1st. Please send your articles or photography to [director@trolleyuseum.org](mailto:director@trolleyuseum.org) for consideration.

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# From the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Katie Orlando

**S**eashore Trolley Museum continues to rally during the COVID-19 pandemic and has accomplished impressive feats this season. All volunteers and staff members are working cohesively to overcome the barriers the pandemic has brought upon the museum, including an anticipated budget deficit and limited operating days. We've turned what could have been a negative season into quite the positive season, tackling projects we've wanted to accomplish for years on days we are closed to the public. We have also brought in several new volunteers and new donors. They have helped us raise money for projects that were going to be delayed due to the pandemic, but these projects have moved forward with their support. Members have continued to give to the Annual Fund Campaign; this coupled with guests visiting us in higher than projected numbers have lowered our anticipated operating budget deficit.

In July, we celebrated our 81st birthday over whoopie pies and an inaugural ride on D.C. Transit 1304. A violent windstorm (derecho) knocked down a section of our overhead infrastructure on our main line, and thanks to over 98 donors who gave within 72 hours of the storm, repairs took place instantly and our museum didn't have to close to the public.

In August, we welcomed the Cotton Valley Rail Trail Club back to our second Speeder Day this season. Six speeders joined us and offered rides to our guests. Museum volunteers also celebrated the day by featuring a variety of our work equipment, including our new Providence & Worcester locomotive 150. This piece of much-needed equipment, in addition to a hi-rail crane and a hi-rail bucket truck, have joined our work fleet this season with thanks to donations from Track Department volunteers and an anonymous donor.

We hosted two groups of youth from the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, who spent two full days with us and helped us test our new school curriculum and hands-on activities, which we've spent all summer developing. We hosted Members Day on August 29 and provided on-line and in-person activities for over 70 members. Items from all categories of our collection were open and operating. Despite the inclement weather, we had a fun day! The highlight was the ceremony held to re-dedicate Riverside Car barn to the "John L. Middleton Jr. Riverside Carhouse." Thank you to the Middleton family and to the members who contributed to the new building sign honoring John.

In August, track work also continued in Fairview, Highwood, and the Shop lead. Our Overhead Department led permanent repairs to our main line infrastructure, as well as repairs to our main campus. Six new poles were placed. Special thanks to Private Power, LLC of Saco for helping us tackle this work. A shout out to James van Bokkelen, Peter Wilson, Rob Drye, Dana Kirkpatrick and Charlie Publicover for volunteering hundreds of hours in August alone to tackle these projects.

Pumpkin Patch Trolley will return for its 22nd season in September and October. The event will take place over nine days. We plan to remain open on Wednesdays and Fridays-Sundays from 10AM-5PM through October 31st. For the most up-to-date Events Calendar and to purchase Pumpkin Patch Trolley tickets, visit <https://trolley museum.org/events/>

Thank you for standing by the Seashore Trolley Museum during this uncertain time. We continue to get through this, together.



Top: Our new Facilities & Grounds Manager, Scott Roberts.

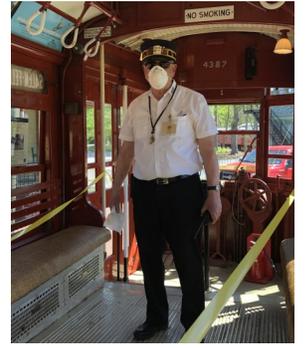
Bottom: Dedicated volunteer Brendan "The Colonel" Tirrell has worked hard this season keeping our trolleys clean and our flowers watered.



# Masks Required



Volunteers, members and guests have been masking up all season long on our trolleys, indoors, and when social distancing is not possible around campus. Thank you to all who have supported the museum at this time, and for always prioritizing safety #1!



# Visitors Center Renewal



Campus beautification efforts continue in 2020! Volunteers have worked hard this summer to repair sections of the Visitors Center's clapboard and wainscoting and are giving the building a fresh coat of paint. Earlier this year, a contest was held to determine the next generation color theme. The Atlantic Shore Line station colors won by a landslide. Help our volunteers finish the project by donating to the **Annual Fund Campaign** to contribute to the paint and supplies.

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# Main Line Overhead Work

In July, a violent windstorm (derecho) took out our overhead infrastructure in the section between Meserves and Tower 1. Quick-acting staff, volunteers and donors ensured that repairs were made timely and guest operations did not need to close down. A special thank you to Overhead Superintendent Rob Drye and all volunteers that took time off from work to help!



# Providence & Worcester 150

The Seashore Trolley Museum welcomes Providence & Worcester locomotive 150 to its non-accessioned work vehicle fleet. With thanks to our donors, 150 arrived in July and will play a star role in shifting our collection pieces in our carhouses and yards. The locomotive will also be available to bring back any fleet cars that get stuck on the main line in the rare power outage.

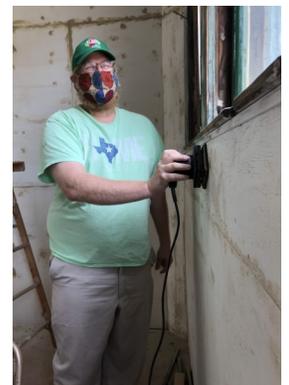


# John L. Middleton Jr. Riverside Carhouse Renewal

This season our Visitors Center Manager Sherri Alcock has been leading the effort to repair bad wood and repaint the front of Riverside. Work continues to address worn roof panels and to replace foundation panels. Over the summer, a fundraising campaign took place to purchase a sign for the building. Thanks to generous donors, on Members Day the building was re-dedicated the "John L. Middleton Jr. Riverside Carhouse." To support the work that continues on the building, donate to **Fund 944**.



With thanks to an anonymous donor and the McNeil family, volunteers and staff are nearly finished getting Tower C's first floor ready to be an exhibit area in 2021. Our Master Woodworker Seth Reed has restored each first floor window—despite their poor condition and the challenge, he was able to save each one! The exterior is also undergoing repairs to its roof and sections of copper are being rehabilitated. We would like to continue working on this project; the next step will be to restore all of the second floor windows. To keep the momentum going on this project, please donate to **Fund 987**.



# Tower C Renewal

No. 1304 awaits passengers during its first day of special public operation on July 4, 2020. JS



## Seashore Collection Spotlight: **WASHINGTON, D.C. PCC CAR 1304** By Jim Schantz, President & CEO

Very often with Seashore's vehicle collection two stories are intertwined: one the evolution and importance of the car to the transit system it served and the second being the bond – often over a lifetime – of a Seashore member's passion for the car and its heritage. So it is with the history of DC Transit PCC 1304 and my special interest in the Washington streetcar system.

Washington, like many other cities, once was served by a large number of separate streetcar companies. Over time these lines merged until by 1933 there was one company operating all streetcar service – Capital Transit. The system was widely admired for high quality infrastructure and the well-maintained cars. A technical challenge was that city officials and Congress would not allow overhead wires in the central area. So as was done in New York, London, Paris, Bordeaux, Budapest, and a few other cities, positive and negative power rails were placed in a conduit below the street surface and a “conduit plow” was mounted on each streetcar's rear truck to draw power from the rails. “Plow pits” were located at the edges of the wire-free district where an employee would insert or remove the plow and raise or lower the trolley pole. (There is now an exhibit on the conduit system and an actual plow inside 1304). Washington's cars were the only PCCs to feature conduit operation and also were unique in being one window shorter than typical PCCs due to tight dimensions in car houses and on transfer tables.

With the consolidation complete, Capital Transit found itself in need of new cars. It was an active member of the Electric Railway Presidents Conference Committee (PCC) which was developing fast and streamlined streetcars which could compete in comfort and performance with buses or automobiles. When the first PCCs arrived in DC in 1937, they were an instant hit with riders, so the company over the next seven years placed a total of 22 PCC orders, each for about 15 to 35 cars until reaching a total of 489. This made DC the fifth largest North American PCC operator after Toronto, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia. The Museum's car 1304 was part of Capital Transit's 11th order in 1941.

With the full fleet in hand, Washington became the first city to operate all base service with streamliners and the company was well respected. But its fortunes changed when Louis Wolfson bought the company in 1949 and became one of the least popular persons in the city. He cut service, raised fares, and drained the company's reserves with large dividend payouts. Labor unrest followed leading to a long strike in 1955. Congress became so disenchanted that they revoked Wolfson's franchise and launched a search for a new owner with the proviso that streetcars be replaced by buses within five years. A New York financier and owner of Trans Caribbean Airways named O. Roy Chalk took control and soon cars and buses were labelled “DC Transit” with seemingly incongruous wording next to the front door saying “An affiliate of Trans Caribbean Airways.”

The streetcar system was still in reasonably good shape and the amount of trackage on wide streets or private rights of way was ripe for enhancement and retention. Chalk tried to improve the fleet's image in hopes of convincing Congress to allow some streetcars to remain. He rebuilt one PCC with air conditioning (first streetcar in the world so equipped), comfortable seats, stainless steel skirting, and improved trucks. He named the car “The Silver Sightseer” and started to offer regular tourist service. Chalk adopted the bright paint livery featured on a demonstrator bus that GMC toured to major properties. The new colors, which 1304 also received, greatly modernized the appearance of the cars that wore them. But Congress was unimpressed, as peer national capitals such as London, Paris, and Ottawa had already moved to buses. Washington's last streetcar ran on January 28, 1962.

The streetcar fleet was in good condition (salt was not used on the streets due to the conduit system) and was retained and offered for sale. Eventually, Barcelona, Spain bought 101 cars, Sarajevo, Yugoslavia bought 74, and Ft. Worth bought 15. Sarajevo rebuilt 20 of the cars into ten 6-axle articulateds. Barcelona added a second headlight, a second trolley pole, and more skirting. Ft. Worth rebuilt the cars to double end and high floor to run in a private subway connecting Leonard's Department Store with parking. The ex-DC cars ran in these cities for years, but were retired years ago.

In 1961 General Electric bought car 1304—which was equipped with GE controls and motors—for use at its Erie, PA location to test autonomous-operation systems envisioned for rapid transit cars and 1304 was christened “The Car of Tomorrow.” After the testing program was completed, the car ultimately went to the Brookins Museum in Ohio in 1980.

My own interest in streetcars which eventually led to Seashore and particularly car 1304 was evidently congenital. Living in Buffalo at age two my mother sensed my interest enough to take me for a ride on the last day of streetcars in 1951. Thereafter I had to depend on family trips to cities such as Ottawa, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and especially Washington, to pursue my interest. We had family near DC and traveled there most years giving me the opportunity to pester my father for a streetcar ride. After we relocated to Boston, I became active in Seashore in 1962 starting what would be a lifetime of volunteer work and financial support. Just then DC was in the process of trying to sell its PCC fleet.

The late George Sanborn was negotiating with Chalk's staff in DC to acquire one or more cars from this very significant system, focusing his efforts on the Silver Sightseer, an ideal companion to Montreal Golden Chariot observation car No. 2. This dragged on for many months as preservation efforts near DC were being launched. Finally, as the National Capital Trolley Museum became viable, Chalk opted to give the car and several other historic cars to that group. Tragically, some months after the Sightseer moved to their Maryland site the car fell victim to arson and was destroyed.

Our preservation efforts then turned to obtaining a regular PCC from those still on the property in DC. George again handled negotiations and I, still in high school, offered to go to DC to pick a car out. To our great disappointment, 15 minutes before I was to leave for the flight to DC a call came in saying it was too late—all of the remaining cars were being scrapped!

This left us with a major gap in the National Collection, but we knew of no place to turn. Then nearly 20 years later in 1985 happenstance intervened: Seashore Corporate Secretary CC Clapp and late member George Burdick were in Ohio to visit the (now dissolved) Trolleyville USA/Gerald Brookins museum. Their guide, pointing to a very dreary looking 1304, said “That old Washington car doesn't fit our plans, we're going to scrap it.” CC and George quickly notified their fellow Seashore members and before long the car was on its way to Maine, to fill that unfillable gap. The late Fred Perry, then serving as General Manager and a long-time fan of DC PCCs, cleared a carbarn spot for 1304 so the car has never been stored outside since coming to the Museum.

Once in Maine restoration efforts began including removal of the remaining test gear inside; replacing the plywood and canvas roof; and sandblasting the very rusted external surface then priming it. Unfortunately, circumstances intervened to prevent application of final colors.



*From top to bottom: The only known photo of 1304 in service, still in the old paint scheme. The car is coming out of the short subway and underground station under DuPont Circle, built in 1949 and abandoned only 12 years later. Seashore photo collection.*

*At GE's plant in Erie, PA 1304 is “The Car of Tomorrow” being used to test automated control systems for rapid transit cars. John Shriver collection*

*1304 just after its arrival from Ohio in 1985 showing the effect of 24 years of outside storage. Bob Kelly*

*1304 reaches Talbott Park under its own power for the first time on December 3, 2011 JS*



*From top to bottom: A contemporary Washington Streetcar approaching Union Station as it runs along H Street NE on opening day February 27, 2016. JS*

*Sarajevo built 10 articulated PCCs each from parts of two cars. Foster Palmer collection*

*A lightly modified ex-Washington PCC running in Barcelona, Spain. Photographer unknown*

*The Ft. Worth rebuilds where barely recognizable from their Washington configuration. JS*

Some years passed before another group of volunteers came together to devote a concentrated week of work on the car each summer. This, supplemented by ongoing work, made real progress. The previously applied primer had deteriorated so the car was stripped to bare metal again. A new front stepwell was formed and installed and some of the typical PCC floor line rust under the motorman's seat and around the battery compartment was repaired by welding in new steel. Several pieces of new skirting were formed and installed. Two front door leaves were fabricated by a museum friend. The stainless-steel windows were removed along with the crank mechanisms and overhauled as necessary, including newly fabricated rubber seals. The interior was stripped and refinished. Missing seats were adapted from stock and stainless-steel stanchions rescued from Pittsburgh 1600 series PCCs by our friends at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum were fitted. Numerous seats were reupholstered. Missing shades and fittings around the motorman's seat were made from scratch and installed.

Considerable effort was expended to get the proper color paints and to reproduce the distinctive lettering inside and out. Our friends at the National Capital Trolley Museum, especially the late Ken Rucker, helped greatly with these efforts to ensure accuracy. The car was completely sprayed and lettered bringing to life the brilliant image of the car's Art Deco design seen so often in late 1950s photos of Washington streets.

Mechanical work included installing batteries obtained from Philadelphia and rebuilding then reinstalling the motor-generator set that provides low voltage to auxiliary circuits and drives the air compressor. But the biggest issue in returning the car to operation was restoring the control system after all of the undocumented changes made by GE in Erie. No wiring diagrams survived thus necessitating reverse engineering of the complex circuitry. Our expert electrical sleuth Gerry O'Regan was able to unravel almost everything over a period of many months and made the car operational in 2011. Sadly Gerry passed away suddenly before he had a chance to finish the job, but he made progress that would be very hard to duplicate.

The car was available for limited operation and on one occasion gave a unique experience to the American Public Transportation Association's Streetcar Committee as a side trip from meetings in Boston. Subsequently, as the car was readied for service on the day of a Seashore special event, a loud bang came from the direction of the motor generator set, and the car became immobile. Several years passed before we had an opportunity to devote shop resources to returning it to operation.

Assistant shop director Brian Tenaglia took the lead late last year and with remote help from several PCC experts solved the motor generator set problem and restored to full operation the two most complex parts of a PCC: the ABR (Acceleration and Braking Relay) brains of the car and the KM controller which maintains speed by controlling the resistance in the motor circuits. Other areas Brian tackled included bringing the batteries back into spec; improving air compressor performance and fixing air leaks; solving door performance issues; repairing the air brake valve; smoothing hand brakes; and generally servicing all mechanical equipment. This work made the car ready for its passenger service debut on July 4, 2020.

A few tasks remain such as reupholstering a seat back and cushion; repairing some paint failure on the ceiling; and making the backup controller operational. But the car is in its best shape since leaving Washington in 1961.

The car with its striking colors and comfortable ride will now be able to interpret a very different era of street railway operation for our guests. Along the advertising racks above the windows inside the car is an illustrated history of PCC operations in Washington and photos of the car undergoing its restoration. Thanks to all who worked on the project and to the donors who covered the full cost.

The project to restore the car attracted considerable interest among members and here is listing of those who did work on the car assembled from my (at times shaky) memory: CC Clapp, Danny Cohen, Donald Curry, Bob Hughes, Charlie Hughes, Bob Kelly, Fred Maloney, Conrad Misesk, Gerry O'Regan, Fred Perry, Bill Pollman, George Sanborn, Jeffrey Sisson and, John Shriver. In this year's final push, shop crew members carried the bulk of the effort with Brian Tenaglia taking the lead with timely assistance from Ernie Eaton, Dave Rogers, Bill Catanesye, and Heidi Schweizer. Experts from other museums who helped from afar: Jeff Hakner, Peter Hinckley, Karl Johnson, and Ken Rucker. My apologies to anyone I may have inadvertently left out after so many years.

An interesting footnote to this story is that streetcars are again running in Washington. On February 27, 2016 after a rather tortured development project, a modern streetcar line began operating from Union Station to Benning, giving a small taste of what could have been citywide had Congress not pushed streetcars off the District's streets 60 years earlier.



No. 1304 departs from the Visitors Center platform, August 2020. TG



Jennifer Hickey and her family have been members and supporters of Seashore Trolley Museum for years. Jennifer owns [Dandelion Art - Photos by Jen Hickey](https://www.dandelionart.org/seashore-trolley-museum-benefit).

When the museum was devastated by a windstorm last month that damaged our overhead infrastructure, Jennifer wanted to help. So, using her talents she started a fundraiser on her business page, selling five Seashore prints on canvas, including the one above, and all proceeds benefit the museum. Check out her art and support STM by making a purchase at: <https://www.dandelionart.org/seashore-trolley-museum-benefit>



Volunteer help is needed in our **Bus and Trackless Trolleys Department!** We're looking for volunteers with any level of experience, from none to expert.

Help is needed with general cleaning, painting, and skilled maintenance work. Bonus points if your "day job" is working on diesel buses and you can teach our current group of volunteers new skills!

Currently most of the work happens on weekends, but volunteers with knowledge and/or self-initiative are welcome any day of the week, year-round. Please send an email to [volunteer@trolley-museum.org](mailto:volunteer@trolley-museum.org) for more information or to get started.



## Life in the Age of Traction: **THE INFLUENZA PANDEMIC OF 1918** By James Tebbetts

*A masked police officer leads two men away from a C-Geary-California streetcar during the 1918 flu pandemic. After mask wearing became mandatory, police arrested 100 men on one day alone at this location. A century later, masks are the rule again, this time for the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo credit: Hamilton Henry Dobbin, published with permission from the California State Library.*

**E**urope was in its fourth year of the most horrific war the world had ever seen. America had managed to avoid involvement with the carnage for most of that time, but now was a combatant. Life had adjusted itself to the state of war and, indeed, patriotism ran unchecked as the national focus was on the fighting. All thought that they were safe at home while Europe tore itself apart.

But Americans at home were not safe, for an unexpected enemy was about to attack in the age of streetcar transportation.

On March 11, 1918, at Camp Funston, Kansas, one of the many army camps where troops were preparing to fight in the war, a company cook named Albert Gitchell reported to the infirmary with typical flu-like symptoms and was sent to bed. By noon 107 soldiers were sick and within two days it was 522, many gravely ill with severe pneumonia. Forty-eight died. It was the same at army camps and navy bases around the country. On the East Coast thousands of sailors were sick and within a week every state had been touched by it.

The sickness then died out as quickly as it had come. This turned out to be only temporary, for when the 89th division deployed to France, it brought the disease with it. It was American troops who helped spread a mutated and deadlier variant of the disease to the English, French, Germans and Spanish. In late March it was everywhere in France. By mid-April, the disease had spread to eastern Asia. By May the virus had reached Africa and South America. This made it a pandemic, an epidemic of worldwide proportions.

It took some time before medical workers succeeded in identifying the disease as the flu, but flu such as this had never been seen before. Unlike the known diseases that claimed the lives of the very young and the elderly, this one seemed to seek out the healthiest group, those in their twenties. It came to be known as the Spanish flu only because Spain was one of the hardest hit countries, suffering some eight million dead. The Spanish king himself almost died from it.

Returning troops brought the flu back to the East Coast of America.

On September 11th three people dropped dead on the sidewalks of Quincy, Massachusetts. The disease moved from Boston down the eastern seaboard to New York, Philadelphia, and beyond. In Philadelphia the flu killed 158 per 1000, in Baltimore 148 and in Washington 109. A somewhat macabre ditty spread across the country: "I had a little bird/Its name was Enza/I opened up the window/and in flew enza".

Despite the alarmingly rapid rise in flu cases and their resulting deaths, most officials failed to acknowledge the threat. Worse than that, with the ongoing focus on the war effort, the government continued to put people at risk. In September 13 million men were called to register for the draft, resulting in crowded schoolhouses, post offices and town halls. This was just the kind of concentration of people that fostered the spread of the disease. Meanwhile thousands turned out for liberty parades.

As the summer wore on, the flu spread westward across the heart of America, small towns being hit hard. The medical facilities were stretched to the limit, a situation made worse by the fact that the government had sent most doctors to Europe to help in the war effort. The doctors who stayed behind had to work almost around the clock.

The epidemic had become a national crisis. Finally government officials started to take action. All public meetings were banned in Washington, D.C. Schools and theaters were closed. The sick were quarantined. Stores could not hold sales. Funerals were limited to 15 minutes. In many localities it became law to wear masks in public. Congress appropriated a million dollars for the medical community to come up with the means to fight the disease. Researchers worked feverishly and managed to come up with hundreds of vaccines, but not one of them seemed to help. In the face of the onslaught, medical science had failed.

Twelve thousand people died nationwide during September, but October's toll proved to be much higher. On just one day in New York City over 800 died. Philadelphia suffered far worse, losing 10,000 to the disease. Wagons and carts hauled away the corpses to mass graves. Coffin makers could not keep up with the demand. The flu brought death to 195,000 in October. Farms, factories, schools and churches shut down as homeless wandered the streets, many of them children whose families had died. With a serious shortage of field hands to get the crops in, agriculture suffered a disaster.

Then, almost miraculously, the flu played itself out. In early November it had all but disappeared in Boston and the death rates in other eastern cities fell precipitously. Within a few days the war ended. In city after city thousands and tens of thousands of masked citizens turned out to celebrate the end of the war and, apparently, the end of the epidemic.

In the end some 650,000 Americans died of the flu and millions had been infected. Hardly anyone escaped being touched by it directly or indirectly through the death of a friend or loved one. Worldwide the toll was estimated to lie between 20 and 40 million and may have been higher. The Spanish flu struck with lightning speed, often killing its victims within just hours. So fast did the virus overwhelm the body's natural defenses that a secondary infection of pneumonia, the usual cause of death in influenza patients, simply had no chance to establish itself. The virus caused an uncontrollable hemorrhaging that filled the lungs, and patients would drown in their own body fluids.

What caused the flu and why had medical science been incapable of dealing with it? There had certainly been medical success stories as researchers developed vaccines for many of the known diseases such as smallpox, anthrax, rabies, diphtheria and meningitis. A certain level of complacency may have played a role in delaying an effort to fight it. Also most known pathogens were bacteria, not the much smaller virus with which science had little real experience. A mutated virus caused the flu. It would not be for several more decades before researchers would have the electron microscope necessary to even see it and even longer before they would fully understand how a virus behaves at the molecular level.

Perhaps having suffered as much as they did, people everywhere almost purposefully forgot the pandemic. It would seldom be remembered in the years to follow.

References: [http://www.ninthday.com/spanish\\_flu.htm](http://www.ninthday.com/spanish_flu.htm); [http://home.nycap.rr.com/useless/bubonic\\_plague/bubonic.html](http://home.nycap.rr.com/useless/bubonic_plague/bubonic.html); <http://www2.okstate.edu/ww1hist/flu.html>; <http://www-leland.stanford.edu/~uda/flu.html>; "The American Experience: Influenza 1918", [The American Experience](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/amex/influenza/transcript.html), WGBH Educational Foundation, 1998, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/amex/influenza/transcript.html>

## COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT: UPDATE

**A**ctions have consequences, but sometimes the consequences turn out to be good. *The Dispatch* has been publishing a series under the name "Seashore Collection Spotlight" to bring into view certain electric rail cars and buses that stand out for technological or historical merit and more. The ultimate goal is to find renewed interest in these pieces; to recruit either donors or volunteers who have interest in continuing preservation and restoration efforts.

The November-December 2019 *Dispatch* included a story about New York's Interborough Rapid Transit car 3352, the world's oldest steel rail car. Because of the publishing of that article, there was--and continues to be--a consequence: under extensive restoration work in the 1960's and early 1970's and 3352 being in storage ever since, with the uncertainty of the pandemic, the person who had done most of the restoration work back then saw the article and reached out to both the Museum Director and Shop Supervisor to assess the car's status and provide as much information as possible for the future benefit of the car.

Before and after the COVID-19 lockdown, Jim Tebbetts returned to photo, inspect, fix problems with 3352 itself, and develop a status report; during the lockdown he researched the *Electric Railway Journal* and other sources to capture thorough documentation. Inside 3352, much dirt, many parts from other rail cars and odd miscellaneous things had accumulated over the years and needed to be cleaned up and sorted through. Jim has also been closing up all the side windows and giving them a rehab and repaint along the way. Despite some serious problems that have arisen over the decades, 3352 is still sound enough to continue to hold.



No. 3352 in Central Car barn, 2020. JT

When *The Dispatch* article about 3352 was written, nobody expected that somebody would suddenly show up and give it care. The care will probably continue for a while.



*From left to right: Master Woodworker Seth Reed works on restoring a window for Tower C; Dave Rogers gets up close and personal to prep a truck for 4175.*

# From the **TOWN HOUSE SHOP**

By Randy Leclair

## **Maintenance Work**

We have greatly reduced the size of our operating fleet for 2020, and are being as strategic with funding as we can. Current fleet cars are 303, 4387, and 5821. Currently, 303 is running with a borrowed journal bearing – its original will be repaired in the off-season. Other recent maintenance items include a brake cylinder piston cup replacement in the 5821 and ongoing roof repairs to 4387.

Special/miscellaneous cars include D-1, Claremont 4, and 5106. Rob Drye has graciously helped inspect Claremont 4, saving the Society significant funds. D-1's magneto has been re-installed and now runs quite well. 5106 is awaiting roof repair.

We have recently begun going through the new-to-us Providence and Worcester GE 25-ton locomotive 150. We'll need to replace its batteries before it can enter service (Fund 821).

## **Restoration Work**

**Portland-Lewiston Interurban** Narcissus's replacement-replacement sill has been milled by the supplier in Connecticut, and looks amazing. Seth Reed continues to work on getting the interior ready for installation (Fund 816A).

**Lexington & Boston 41** has its control wiring about 80% finished and is awaiting installation. We have identified Lyons Industries in Pennsylvania as the vendor to build new axles for the car (Fund 754).

**Nagasaki 134's** second vestibule is in the process of being rebuilt (Fund 773).

**Boston & Maine 500** entered the shop recently for a thorough review and refreshing. We are aiming to get the car back in running condition (Fund 539).

**DC Transit 1304's** charging circuit has been repaired again, and much more of the other circuits have been either repaired or adjusted. The car is in mostly usable shape, but it still has intermittent faults in both its control circuitry and its dynamic braking system (Fund 870).

**Toronto 2890's** journal bearings in one truck are not seating correctly. As this goes to press, we are removing the bearings and cleaning up axle surfaces; the bearings will be rebabbitted and installed at a later date (Fund 865).

**Bay State Street Railway 4175** has had its conduit completely installed, its air piping hooked up and mostly leak-free, and its second motor cleaned and tested. Wiring bundles are in process of being built and run into the conduit. We are preparing to put the trucks under the car. Our goal for this year's work plan is to get it on its trucks and movable, with as much under-floor things installed and working. (Fund 528).

**Eastern Mass 4387's** gear cases have been repaired and its roof caulked (Fund 672).

## **Miscellaneous**

David Jagger of Jagger Mills/Jagger Spun in Springvale ME is working with us to provide wool waste for our various bearings. This mill is noteworthy due to its location on the former Atlantic Shore Line as well as its quality of its products [it is one of the few blending mills of its type left in the world, and supplies such companies as SmartWool (socks) and Agawam (mittens and hats)]. We're glad to be using the product.



# TALBOTT PARK: A DESTINATION FOR ALL CARS

EG

By Herbert Pence

**O**ur Seashore Trolley Museum is built on a foundation of seminal events. One of these events is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. For it was in 1995, a major milestone was reached in our museum's infrastructure history. This event also had a positive impact on the Operations Department. At the north end of the mainline, toward Biddeford, a loop was completed. As with so many projects at Seashore, the completion was the culmination of many years of arduous work. The Talbott Park Loop was finished and dedicated.

From its 1939 beginning, the founders of Seashore planned for a demonstration railway. The idea that exhibits would stand silent was not in their minds. Part of the reasoning was where, after leaving Biddeford, Car No. 31 found a home. Forced to leave Biddeford, due to a promise made to its Rotary Club, the founders searched for a suitable storage site. One was found on Log Cabin Road, Kennebunkport, which happened to be on the Atlantic Shore Line's former right-of-way. For the sum of \$5.00 per year, No. 31 was parked near where the museum's entrance is located. *Note: The Federal minimum hourly wage in 1939 was \$.25.*

Eventually owning the former ASL right-of-way to the Biddeford city limits, members envisioned operation over the approximately two-mile route. In the meantime, our mainline was slowly extended northward. In 1988, it ended two rail lengths north of Gregoire's Crossing. Previously, members of the Talbott Family donated a 30-acre patch of land to Seashore, for the purpose of building a loop.

With a destination in hand, plans were made to extend the mainline and construct a loop. Seemingly the simple laying of track, two switches and building a platform would not take much time. What was required was the designing of the infrastructure (overhead and track), blasting of ledge, securing rail, preparing the road bed, hanging contact wire and raising money to pay the bills. Today, it takes about five-minutes for a streetcar to pass Gregoire's Crossing, climb the hill, enter the loop and stop at the Talbott Park platform. The volunteer staffed line extension and loop building took seven years!

As anyone involved in a major project soon finds out, money is its life blood. A. V. Johansson boomed a great kick-off through the loop's goal posts with a \$20,000.00 contribution. It was the first of thousands of dollars in project financing. Two funds were established to assist in paying for the Loop: Buy-a-Tie program and the Main Line Extension Fund. On Dedication Day, there were paper certificates for people who contributed \$50.00 or more to the funds.

Seven-years of volunteer labor yields hundreds of stories. The acquisition of materials alone produces an evening of tales. Let's start with the rail itself. Most of the running rail on the mainline is 85 lb. Starting at the existing rail at Gregoire's, a compromise joint was installed to accommodate Luxemburg 1984 rolled 85 lb. rail. At the top of the hill, older 85 lb. rail was used to the loop turnouts. Running rail in the loop is 115 lb. and the guard rail is 132 lb., both heat treated. All of this rail came from the MBTA's Riverside Line that was rebuilt in 1973-1976.



*From top to bottom: Boston Red Line crane 0551 of 1911 hoists a bundle of new ties for use on the loop. A large crew is on hand as a section of straight track is spiked to provide a storage/passing track and as the beginning of any future extension toward Biddeford. The cab of 0551 with a track crew member at the controls as a fellow member looks on. Rail spiking under way along the new straight track using a pneumatic spike driver.*

*Photos submitted by Kevin M. Chittenden*

The name Cook Junction is not readily familiar. It was located on the Riverside Line; just outbound from the Route 9 underpass in Newton. Today, there is a traction power sub-station on the site. At Reservoir, there were two loops for reversing car direction, inbound and outbound. All were used in the 1950s during the Boston and Albany Railroad's Highland Branch's rebuilding into the MBTA's Riverside Line and since removed.

The MBTA loops were built to a 50-foot radius. With the land space available and the opportunity to accommodate streetcars with longer wheelbase trucks, the rail was rerolled to a 60-foot radius. Unfortunately, even with that improvement, some of our longer wheelbase cars are unable to negotiate the park's curve.

On Seashore's 49<sup>th</sup> birthday, July 4, 1988, the track extension commenced. To write it was an uphill slog would be an understatement. There was the initial design, modified as construction progressed. The first task was to remove vegetation, brush and trees. Trees were chain sawed down, stripped of branches and removed. Once the ground was bare, more ledge was revealed.

As with any outdoor Maine construction, work took an annual winter holiday.

A huge piece of ledge had to be broken up. Neighbor Stu Giles owned a business which provided blasting services. His expertise guided Seashore's efforts. Seashore volunteers drilled eighty holes in the ledge. A dynamite stick was placed in each. The whole works was wired for electrical detonation. After a quick look around, Chuck Griffiths was given the honor of setting off the detonation.

You can imagine the noise, dust and vibration of the detonation. The smile on Chuck's face lasted for days! Once the ledge had been reduced to manageable pieces, it was removed. Jim Hamlin provided grading service for the loop.

When it came time to lay ballast, the initial thought was to use an army of wheelbarrows. To ease the workload, a 50-ton former Pennsylvania Railroad Co. hopper car was secured. Coupled to D-1, the pair made quick work of ballast distribution. Then, the tamping and surfacing began.

When laying track, there are many, needed opportunities to check track gauge. This is especially true when building curves. Allowance must be made for easing the 4' 8 1/2" gauge to accommodate the fixed trucks of the streetcars. Up in the sky is contact wire or overhead. Without it, our streetcars are hard pressed to move. The complicated Talbot Park installation was designed and installed under the supervision of Fred Perry. For volunteer workers, such work is all part of the continuing education offered by Seashore.

The dedication day was an opportunity for local politicians to become familiar with Seashore. Unfortunately, the day being at the height of the campaign season; few accepted our invitation.

Somehow paper in various forms is always needed at openings. What is an opening without a bursting banner? Mike Peters created the banner stretched across the track, near the platform. Mike also prepared the certificates presented to volunteers who performed the backbreaking labor of building the Loop.

Before the grand opening, there were a number of trips over the new trackage. During construction, handcars made the circuit. Finally, with the blessing of Peter Wilson, Mike Peters made an unofficial trip using single ended Montreal No. 2. It was, in fact, an insurance trip, to ensure all was in order for the official opening.

The big day arrived on October 7, 1995. In order to properly dedicate the Loop, a parade of streetcars travelled up from the Visitors Center. The Master of Ceremonies was Jim Schantz, our President and CEO. First in line and the banner breaker was No. 31. Being Seashore's "Mother Car," it has been used to dedicate all major track extensions. No. 31 was followed by Twin Cities Rapid Transit (Minneapolis – St. Paul) No. 1267, motored by Doug Anderson. The car's placement was intentional, as Doug had been promised a major role in the dedication. For many years, Doug had promoted a loop, as a means to turn the streetcar his grandfather had operated. And, now single-end cars as, No. 1267, No. 1030, No. 2 and all PCC cars could return to the Visitors Center controls first.

As we volunteer and work in a historic setting, it becomes hard to reflect on what changes have occurred over 25-years. In 1995, Mike Peters installed Windows Version 6.0 on the office computer and arranged for a donation of a Hewlett-Packard Laser Jet printer. A night in the bunkhouse cost \$1.00. One-hundred Seashore members enjoyed the Members Day evening turkey dinner at the Christ Church in Kennebunk. Reaching back 100-years, in 1895 the groundbreaking of the United States' first subway was celebrated. Two years later, the Tremont Subway came into being.

Little is more traditional in railroad circles than a golden spike ceremony at a track project's completion. With a used spike from the Wilmington and Western Railroad, contributed by Henry Dickenson, the Talbott Park Loop project was declared finished. As Track Superintendent Peter Wilson and Roger Tobin pounded the "gold spike" into place; few noted it was made of copper!

Much information is packed into our demonstration railway. Talbott Park represents the Trolley Parks, so prevalent six-decades ago. Conductors and docents use time at the park to talk about the impact of trolley parks on street railway companies and the social impact on society. Seashore's guests receive a quick tutorial on how typical families lived in tenements without running water, in crowded cities full of noise and filth. And on weekends how the trolleys gave the city dwellers respite. Not being completely altruistic, the companies generated revenue on an otherwise slow business day. Families discovered pleasant places to live and the suburbs were born.

Forgotten names of trolley parks in New England come to life. Trolley parks such as: Pine Island Park (Manchester, NH), Riverton Park (Portland, ME), Canobie Lake Park (Salem, NH), and Cape Porpoise Casino (ME), become places of visitor interest.

A number of by-products were produced by the creation of the Talbott Park Loop. The most obvious was to establish a destination for visitors. No longer did the demonstration ride peter out in the pine wilds of southern Maine. Here was a proper park and destination. The eternal dream of some members to operate to Biddeford was parked. Unexpected relations with local organizations took place. For example, hikers and bike riders are accommodated. After riding a streetcar to Talbott Park, they may hike or ride to the property of the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust. The design of the loop provides a stub track for holding disabled cars and a place to stage extra cars for special events.

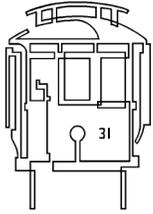
If little else was achieved, the Talbott Park Loop extension proved, once again, given sufficient monies and volunteer labor, Seashore can fulfill any dream.

*Thanks for historic information assistance to: Peter Wilson, Jim Schantz, Ed Dooks*



*From top to bottom: Diesel locomotive D-1 provides motive power to position a hopper car of crushed rock ballast to be spread on the loop track. Ballast is spread from the hopper car as it is slowly moved ahead. The multiple tamper forces ballast under and around the ties to cause the stones to interlock with one another and to allow rain to drain away prolonging the life of the ties.*

*Photos submitted by Kevin M. Chittenden*



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