August 2021

**Happy Labor Day**

- Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)
  Founded in Indianapolis in 1892 as the Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employees of America

- Transport Workers Union of America (TWU)
  Founded in 1934 by subway workers in New York City.

**Goings On at Seashore —**

**Members’ Day** was August 14, 2021 - Nearly 200 members and supporters were in attendance and and were treated to rides on D.C. Transit PCC 1304, a dedication ceremony for Lexington & Boston No. 41 aboard the Golden Chariot, visiting the SOAC cars and the 0600s, bucket rides in the new to us hi-rail bucket truck, Pump Car rides, and several other activities.

SOAC’s open for display

Seashore volunteer and SOAC fan John Benoit hosting the SOAC display (from Seashore Facebook page)

Lexington & Boston 41 dedication and ribbon cutting (from Seashore Facebook page)
Upcoming Events:

Daniel Tiger Visits Seashore - September 11 @ 10:00 am - 5:00 pm ($12)

Daniel Tiger Visits Seashore with Maine Public Television! Take an adventure to Seashore Trolley Museum on September 11th and 12th for a socially distanced meet and greet with Daniel Tiger, from the PBS KIDS series Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood.

Hop on a trolley shuttle to Highwood Carhouse to meet Daniel and Seashore’s very own Biddeford & Saco Car 31 to visit and to take socially distanced photos with Daniel and this special trolley car. Enjoy other activities around the Museum campus, including Maine Public Television’s fun activity tent, story time on a trolley, coloring, and other family activities!

Guests can also visit the regular Museum exhibits and displays, as well as ride trolleys on Seashore’s private 3-mile round trip heritage railroad!

See all museum events @ https://trolleymuseum.org/events/

An Avian Extra-

Nature has provided Seashore with an interesting, although unfortunately, temporary extra wildlife feature. The multiple deluges over the past couple of weeks have created a temporary water feature encircled by the loop track at the visitors’ center. Several small shorebirds decided to stop over for a few days and more have followed. These are quite small - one is just
visible to the right of 4387 as a speck at the tip of the shadow of the plantings in the center of the loop. As we do not usually enjoy a small lake in this location these birds were not familiar to museum staff and volunteers.

Being better at trolley identification than bird spotting there was some question as to species. It seemed some variant of sandpiper or plover was the most likely. A query to the Seashore Facebook page has brought an identification as spotted sandpipers and a visit to my “Stokes Field Guide of Birds for North America” appears to confirm such.

These creatures seem to have no aversion to humming motors, screeching wheels, pounding compressors, and the like. Perhaps they have existed out along the less populated sections of the main line or maybe they are just acclimated to noisy humans in general.
Do You Recognize?
Last Month’s Do You Recognize-

Our railway company of interest this month, Lancaster and York Furnace Street Railway Company, was a relatively small operation of twelve and a half miles and as one of the company officials remarked that “our line started no-where and ended no-where”. There wasn’t any community along the line that was more than a few houses at a crossroads. The line was named after two purported endpoints but actually it didn’t really serve either of them. It was commonly known as the Pequea Trolley after the name of scenic Pequea Creek that it paralleled for a portion of its route. The Lancaster and York Furnace Street Railway Company started about four and a half miles southwest of Lancaster, PA and came up slightly short of York Furnace, PA. The actual community of York Furnace is across the Susquehanna River. The Susquehanna being some 464 miles long and holding the distinction of being the longest commercially non-navigable river in the United States.

The trolley was promoted by a local entrepreneur, Frederick Shoff, as part of his scheme to develop the small scenic community of Pwquea into a summer resort. The line ran from a small university (then normal school) to Millersville along a scenic route to the proposed resort community. Such entertainment as swimming, boating, fishing, exploring dramatic rock formations, and a cave with 2,000 feet of passages and caverns that maintained a brisk 38° temperature in summer was available. An added attraction was a miniature steam train.
that carried visitors into the York Furnace Park. The park is slightly south of the end of track for our trolley and across the Susquehanna from the actual hamlet of York Furnace.

The trolley line was famed for traveling through some of the most picturesque scenery in the entire area with its creek and rugged gorge although it was also famous for its somewhat casual track work that induced bouts of mal de mer, cows frequently blocked the tracks, and low voltages requiring patrons to help push cars up hills.

Towards the southerly end of the line there was a branch that left the main line and climbed out of the creek’s gorge to transport attendees at an annual religious camp meeting at Rawlinsville Camp. This branch, technically operated by a commonly owned line, the Lancaster and Southern Railway Company, only operated for the annual approximately ten day duration of the camp meeting.

The line purchased its electricity from the Colemanville Water and Power Company. The power company had a steam and water power station that supplied power for the street railway company and also provided electricity to the village at the endpoint of the street railway. The plant was built in 1905 and locally owned until it sold to the street railway company in 1911. The plant’s output was apparently barely adequate as the village experienced dimming lights when a car was climbing a grade and sometimes trolley patrons had to debark and provide shank's mare motive power to assist their car up a grade.
Summer patronage of our line by fishermen and vacationers was quite good but summer simply wasn’t long enough and the rest of the year saw very limited traffic. The line was never financially successful. It and it’s jointly controlled power company and branch line to the camp meeting all ceased operation for a short time in 1916 due to financial suits. These immediate problems were overcome or at least deferred and the line struggled on until the last car ran on October 15, 1930. The line was one of the few that remained independent of the Conestoga Traction Company headquartered in Lancaster.

This Month’s Do You Recognize -

Opening in 1909 our electric interurban railway of interest was constructed for some 54 miles between a county seat, now the fourth largest city in its home state, and a smaller city to the west, that city actually named after a transportation feature within its borders. At this city our line made connections with a railway running to the second largest city in the state, yet another county seat. Through cars were operated under a trackage agreement as was the steamship connection mentioned later so our line never actually owned track into the largest city included in its name.
Prior to 1909 several unsuccessful attempts had been made to build an electric interurban connecting these points. The sum total of these efforts was the construction of some 1.5 miles of track within a single village. In 1905 a new railway was chartered combining the earlier attempts with new Canadian owners taking control in early 1906. Finally on September 3, 1908 a section of the road was opened from the origin city to a point just west of the village that had earlier seen the 1.5 miles of track, Albion, and in November it reached the endpoint for connecting onward to the “big” city.

The first equipment came in 1908 from Niles Car Co. in the form of 15 52 ft. passenger cars (Nos. 201-215) and two express motors (Nos. 301-302) and 1908 also brought two line cars (Nos. 100 and 101) from Mcguire-Cummings. Six 51 ft. passenger-baggage combines (500-506) arrived from Cincinnati Car Co. in 1909, along with a rotary plow (No. 103) from the Russell Car and Snow-Plow Company. A freight-motor (No. 303) apparently came in 1916 and a sweeper in 1918. There were numbers of trailers, flats, and service cars. The new railway could not reach the downtown of its origin city because a major steam road would not grant permission for a diamond crossing its tracks. Eventually in 1910 the states public service commission took action and authority for the diamond was granted. Although thousands of passengers were drawn to the fast local service and cheaper fares compared to the competing steam roads the line had defaulted on its mortgage bonds and was placed in receivership in 1909. In 1911, Clifford D. Beebe purchased the line and made it part of the commonly managed "Beebe Syndicate." Service was extended 30 miles over the tracks of the connecting railway to make connections with a leased steamship providing a 40 mile ferry service to a provincial capital some . This service ended in 1914. The Beebe Syndicate was severely overcapitalized and ultimately placed in
receivership with Beebe retiring. Large portions of the syndicate’s holdings were sold in foreclosure in 1917. By the end of 1917 with its Beebe ties severed our road was again in financial trouble. The railway emerged from reorganization in the spring of 1919 under local ownership, primarily businessmen from its origin city. In the process its name was reversed and redesignated from railway to railroad - (X, Y, & Z Railway to the Z, Y, & X Railroad). Freight business continued to expand and helped the railway's bottom line. However, passenger and freight traffic declined through the 1920s with the closure of connecting lines and increasing competition from improved highways. Our line’s last cars ran on April 30, 1931.

The first completely onsite Library Committee meeting in over a year was held on September 4, 2021. A combination onsite and virtual meeting had been held on July 10, 2021 with wholly Zoom meetings held over the past year. The primary discussion of the September 8 meeting centered on potential workshop and meeting dates as well reorganization priorities of the library workspace to aid in catching up with materials that arrived during the closure. The business meeting was followed with working on reorganization of material in the library and a cleaning session. Workshop activity will now be able to start moving forward.

The next meeting of the Library Committee is scheduled for November 13, 2021. Materials will be distributed.

Workshops are scheduled for Saturday, October 9, 2021 and December 11, 2021. Saturday - Workshops only (10AM - 2 PM) are still cancelled. Updated information will be forthcoming.
The Library Committee’s meetings on Saturdays will be held on a bimonthly basis on the odd months. Updated information will be forthcoming as available.

The Wednesday Evening Workshops are still cancelled - hopefully resumption in the 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

Links:

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 on line resources:  https://virtual.yccc.edu/c.php?g=238406&p=3225494&preview=7b52901d1f51db2b76cb2a141ca8589c

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.
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.

Regards,

Ed Ramsdell, Editor

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http://www.trolleymuseum.org