January 2022

Goings On At Seashore -

A Strategic Plan Review and Discussion was held over Zoom this past Saturday (2/05/22). Throughout the entire day there a great amount of engaged, actively participating participants, which helped review and discuss the entire plan in just 6 ½ hours. The Board’s Executive Committee is currently working on revisions to the plan, taking into consideration everyone’s feedback, and will present a draft of the proposed revisions at the March Trustees meeting for review.

A new org. chart was issued in mid-January 2022

Upcoming Events:

Two dates to note on your calendar:

2022 Annual Meeting: Saturday, April 30, 2022
2022 Opening Day: Sunday, May 1, 2022
Last month’s railway company of interest received its franchise between its endpoint cities on December 12, 1912. On one end was Minneapolis the state’s largest city, adjacent to the state’s capital city, with the opposite endpoint being the small city of Anoka with about 4,000 population 15 miles to the northwest. In the latter part of the 19th century saw mills, wood working plants, and cooper shops-barrel makers were important to the community. After the mid-1880s the timber related businesses declined and a mix of business such as agriculture, shoe making and a state hospital came to the fore. Service began by the Minneapolis and Northern Railway Company on June 11, 1913 with five trips per day, however, due to the lack of a sufficient source of electrical power in the area initial operations were conducted with two 55 ft. McKeen gasoline motor cars, a 200 hp switch engine, also from McKeen, and borrowed steam engines. At the beginning it was announced the line had contracted to deliver 5,000 carloads of construction materials to dam sites.

The McKeens appear to have had ongoing problems and a steam locomotive was used to haul passenger coaches.

The line entered bankruptcy in 1914 with reorganization taking place in 1915. Now named the Minneapolis-Anoka-Cuyuna Range Railroad after its end points plus the optimistic addition of a mining region some additional 100 miles to the NNW. The addition beyond the original endpoints was never undertaken. The McKeen cars...
were apparently repossessed and steam pressed into service. A large hydroelectric dam was completed near the line in 1914 with electrification of the trolley system started in the summer of 1915 and actual electric trolley service begun on October 1, 1915 with seven round-trips a day. The reorganized company reached agreement with the local transit operator in the “big city” southern endpoint and that operator carried the line’s cars over its track into the city center. Another major connection between our line and the city operator was that the city operator, the Twin City Rapid Transit, had determined years before to build all of its own equipment in its own shops and ultimately built cars for other lines as well. With the arrival of a sufficient electrical supply to power our line the decision was made to electrify and to purchase cars from Twin City. Our line of interest purchased three streetcars from the local transit operator. All were designed and built at that company’s shops in the state’s capital city. They looked like the transit line’s regular streetcars, but were painted dark red instead of yellow and the interior layout was slightly different to accommodate the line’s particular mix of traffic.

A transit directory, published in 1918 indicates that our railroad operated 19.21 miles of rail trackage, owned seven motor passenger cars, one other motor car, four other cars, and one electric locomotive.

During the 1920s the cars ran hourly headways during rush hours and every two hours at other times. In the 1930s the two hour headway became standard throughout the day with an endpoint to endpoint travel time of 70 minutes. The line was profitable through 1924 but generally declining traffic combined with
the destruction of the large Pillsbury Lincoln Mill in Anoka brought on major financial problems resulting in bankruptcy and another reorganization in 1926. The line then began a general spiral of decline in business and the condition of the physical plant.

Freight continued as the line’s primary source of income throughout its existence. Freight service was not electrified until 1922. Passenger service ended in 1939 after a tornado destroyed a significant amount of overhead with buses being substituted. Electric freight trains continued running until 1943.

In 1943 the line was purchased by the Northern Pump Co., a company operating a defense ordinance plant near the southern endpoint city. Passenger service was resumed in late 1943 with three cars running over four miles of track between a connection with the city transit operator and the defense plant operated by our line’s new owners. At war’s end traffic rapidly declined to sporadic service at shift-change times at the plant, the main reason for the line’s existence. Passenger service was ended sometime in April 1948 with freight service continued by a regional class 1 railroad that had acquired the track.

The bus service introduced in 1939 between the endpoint cities continued until eventually purchased by a regional transit agency and survives to this day.

This Month’s Do You Recognize-

Our line of interest this month came into existence in 1911 through the consolidation of several lines serving its home state. The system’s interurban operation was centered on the state’s second largest city, a center for equine development, and forms a rough “X” with arms running north - south and east - west (the east - west arms both curve northward as they move away from the center point city). City service was provided in the state capitol, the center point city, and also the northern and eastern endpoints of the system as well as in one city not connected by the line’s interurban network. Service began in the center city with a
predecessor horsecar line in 1882 and electrified in 1890 with a new predecessor assuming operation. There had also been pre-1882 horse-drawn omnibus service. After a subsequent reorganization in 1899 the company became a subsidiary of the “city name” & Interurban Railway Company along with two other entities. By 1911 economic problems including the impact of early automobiles resulted in the company’s liquidation and the formation of a new company named after its home state. The new line saw success until the advent of the Great Depression. By 1926 buses were introduced on some routes.

The city that was the endpoint of the westerly leg of the system is the state capital and was reached from the center city in two steps - a line to approximately the midpoint in 1905 and a further extension to the endpoint by yet another affiliate in 1907. The endpoint of the northern leg, a rail hub and agricultural center, was reached in 1902, the eastern in 1903, and the southern in 1910 - a claim to fame for the southern endpoint was that a native son led the 1864 St. Albans, VT raid.

As part of the 1911 reorganization the new company issued a mortgage to secure a $7,500,000 30-year bond issue to retire debt of the predecessor companies, build a new hydroelectric plant, and made some $800,000 available for betterments to the property.

The predecessor lines of our 1911 consolidation purchased many cars from J.G. Brill, Brill subsidiaries and others over the early years. A major modernization program was
undertaken in the early 1920s. The system’s interurban lines were being operated with aging and heavy wooden interurbans weighing up to 38 tons per car. Our company’s search for a modern, lighter, attractive, and more efficient car had a major impact on the industry. In seeking this new lightweight interurban car the company approached, among others, a smaller midwestern manufacturer with demonstrated experience in lightweight design. In responding, the manufacturer developed a new lightweight design at one-third the weight that became that manufacturer’s most famous design.

The first order of 10 double-truck 40’ 3” cars was delivered to our line in 1922 and was part of a total of 14 of this design and 29 single-truck cars of the same general design were purchased by our line between 1922 and 1929. Headway on the interurban was reduced from 90 minutes to one hour. Two lightweight freight motors were also purchased from the same manufacturer. A few second-hand single-truck cars may have been acquired and used on the city lines of the center point city into 1938. There are also a few single-truck cars listed by the manufacturer as built for our company that may have gone to other commonly controlled companies. For a period of time our company was a property of Insull's Middle West Utilities Company. Overall the manufacturer sold some 400 of this design including 322 double-truck and 78 single truck. The last of this design was completed in December of 1929, all manufacturing effectively ended in 1931 and the manufacturer was liquidated in 1938.

Although the new design cars probably helped slow the traffic decline there was continuing loss of passengers to buses and private autos and the lucrative milk business was taken by trucks. Our company entered bankruptcy in early 1934 with all interurban service ending in January 1934. City service in the capital city had ended in early January 1934 due to a strike while city service in the center city lasted into 1938.
One other “impact” that our line had was that it has managed to feature in a somewhat large number of court decisions that are repeatedly cited as making case law. Decisions in the areas of discrimination between shippers, rules of evidence, and duty to provide safe environment and liability for mental injury for not providing such. None of these particularly “earthshaking” decisions but cases of first impression that manage to be cited repeatedly more frequently than one might think for a fairly small system in a medium sized state.

The next Library Workshop following is scheduled for February 12, 2022 (10AM - 2 PM).

Seashore Executive Director Katie Orlando recently announced that due to the COVID-19 community spread in all of the counties our staff and year-round volunteers live, masks are required again inside the Visitors Center (both floors), the Restoration Shop, Library, and all other indoor spaces on campus.

The next Library Committee Meeting with workshop following is scheduled for March 12, 2022 (10AM - 2PM).

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.

The Library Committee plans to attend the Amherst Railroad Show in January 2022 and sell duplicate books and subjects outside the library’s purview to benefit the Library.
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/

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.
A peek back in time - As we are enjoying a touch of winter the thought of snow plows came to mind. Here is a peek back 132 years ago for the state of electric snow plows as described in the 1890 (V. 6) of the Street Railway Journal.

Assumedly the wearing apparel, while very stylish in the illustration, would give way to fur robes and hats when in actual snow conditions.

This electric plow was said to outdo a standard plow with a 12 - horse hitch.
of the car, and may be raised or lowered at will. One of the main plows is placed diagonally across the car, one end being in front of the forward wheel on one side, the other coming out between the front and rear wheels on the other

Electric Snow Plows and Snow Sweepers.

The advice "In time of peace prepare for war," has been followed by the Thomson-Houston Electric Co. in preparing, for the winter campaign, the snow plow and broom, illustrated in the accompanying cuts. The snow broom built by the company and used in Boston last winter showed just what was needed in this direction, so that in the present apparatus are found all the improvements and changes which past experience has proved to be advantageous.

The details of the snow plow are: length over all, twenty feet; width, seven feet; height from rail to floor of car, three feet six inches. The trucks have four thirty-six inch wheels, in front of which are placed small shoes in advance of the main plow, which scrape
A peek back in time - ctd. - Now from 1900 (V. 16) of the Street Railway Journal. Snow plow technology a decade later.

1900

side at an angle of about sixty degrees. By placing the plow in this manner, a position is secured where the least oscillation occurs. The plows extend two feet beyond the wheels, and in addition each is provided with an extension by means of which a path of any desired width, depending upon local conditions, can be plowed out. The main plows are independent of each other and are controlled by levers placed on the car platform so that one or both can be used as circumstances require. They are kept at the proper angles by means of chains and iron rods, so arranged as to permit great freedom of movement in a vertical direction.

The motors which propel the car are of the consequent pole type, of twenty H. P., one being geared to each axle, by means of sprocket chains and chain gear wheels, and are capable of propelling a car at a speed of ten miles an hour. They are placed in a closed iron box. In circuit with the motors is a rheostat and reversing switch, also in a closed iron box.

The trolley arm is supported by a post placed in the centre of the car, which also carries a number of incandescent lamps. The car can be operated in either direction.

**THE SNOW SWEeper.**

The car for the snow sweeper is of the same dimensions as for the plow, with the same sized wheels mounted on three and a half-inch axles. The motors which drive the car are of fifteen H. P. each, geared directly to the axles. They are entirely independent of the motor for driving the brushes, being provided with separate reversing switch and rheostat enclosed in an iron box placed on the platform in easy reach of the operator. The motors for operating the brushes are placed on the car platform with the shaft parallel to that of the broom and connected to it by means of sprocket chains, so as to run at a speed of 200 revolutions per minute. The brooms, which are placed in advance of the truck, are two in number and are made in sections to facilitate taking apart and placing upon the drum to which they are fastened. On the platform of the car, on both sides are handles operating clutches, by means of which the brooms can be thrown in or out of operation. Levers are also provided for raising and lowering the brooms, thereby rendering it possible to operate them at any desired height. To insure the snow being thrown off the track the brooms are set at an angle of sixty degrees to the rail. The electrical connections are the same as found on passenger cars, the motors for propulsion being connected in multiple, but independently of the motors used for driving the brushes. The current is taken from the overhead conductor by a trolley supported on a post eight feet high, placed in the centre of the car. Around this post are grouped incandescent lamps, which are employed when the car is required for night service. Both the snow plow and broom are made for severe work, and have proved in previous tests to be fully capable of responding to every demand made upon them.
A Powerful Snow Plow

A description was published last month of the new snow plow brought out this season by the Taunton Locomotive Manufacturing Company, but the illustration given was of a plow built by the company for very heavy service. The accompanying engraving shows a correct view of the plow described last month. For convenience of reference some particulars of this plow are republished from the last monthly issue.

The plow weighs 5 tons without motors, and is thus somewhat lighter than the Taunton standard plow of last year. This reduction in weight has been secured entirely by dispensing with cast iron, especially in the shape of the two heavy counterbalance weights. The manufacturers have also substituted wrought iron and timbering for a large amount of cast iron used in last year's plow, and the noses are now raised and lowered by a chain, operated by worm and gear mechanism. The whole weight of the nose rests on the rail, although the height of the nose can be adjusted to suit any condition. This renders the plow especially valuable in light snows, and guarantees a clean rail under these circumstances. At the same time the shape of the nose and heavy oaken backing give sufficient strength for heavy drift work.

The wings are also a departure from former Taunton practice, and are believed to be an improvement, inasmuch as they dispense with the wing hinge pin, always difficult to keep in shape when the plow is sent against frozen ground or hummocks of ice. The nose is carried so far back on each side that the wheels are thoroughly protected, and the sides of the plow are also protected from snow without in the least interfering with accessibility to the running gear. The hood or overhang part of the roof has been practically taken away to make perfectly easy the manipulation of the trolley rope. The effective Taunton digger is applied to this plow, and, as now built, the manufacturers, who have had many years of experience in electric plow building, state that they can see no opportunity for further improvement in a plow for all-round single track work. The changes made this year, as stated, are not in design, but are mainly in the substitution of timber and wrought iron in place of cast iron. For ordinary work the excessive weight is not often necessary.
Snow Plows. Snow Sweepers. Track Scrapers.

COMBINATION PLOW, LOCOMOTIVE AND CONSTRUCTION CAR

COMBINATION PLOW

Combined Snow Plow and Construction Car. Strong enough for the heaviest work. With four motors, may be used as an electric locomotive when stripped for summer. As convenient as any construction car. Its great adhesion and high speed makes it valuable as an electric locomotive. We build single and double plows with movable wings. Plows of all standard types. Nose and Shear Plows.

SNOW SWEEPER

Two motors for propulsion; one for the brooms. Independent adjustment for each end of each broom. On Radial guides. Canvas wings prevent snow from flying. Drop forged sprocket chains. Complete housing and protection of men. We construct our brooms with a greater quantity of cane than usual. It is evenly distributed over the whole surface. The brooms are more durable and sweep cleaner than those of the ordinary pattern. Track scrapers of all kinds. These sufficient in many snow storms to do away with power sweepers.
Plow advancement notes also included mention of a number of rotary plows being sold in New England although no images.

I got somewhat behind the curve this month. Travel, blizzards, ice storms, and lethargy!

Regards,

Ed Ramsdell, Editor

*The Main Line*

TheMainLine@ramsdell.com
http://www.trolleymuseum.org