



Vol 15

THE MAIN LINE



No 6

*The Monthly Bulletin
of the New England Electric Railway Historical Society Libraries*

August 2023

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 —

Member's Day was on August 19th. Events included:

- A tour of the New Model Railroad Building was led by Katie Orlando, Executive Director.



Framing and roof structure from main floor.



Touring the partial second floor.



View of Visitor's Center from second floor.

- A rare chance to ride the City of Manchester. Pre-purchase tickets and an on-a-the-day-of raffle with proceeds to the City of Manchester restoration.



The City of Manchester - Parlor Car - Briggs Carriage Company (1898)
A beautiful example of Briggs' artistry

- A Ceremony was held at Talbott Park to Honor Donald Curry.



Connecticut Co, open No 303 - J. G. Brill Co. (1901) operated as a special car to the ceremony - Connecticut Co, closed No 1160 - John Stephenson Car Co. (1906) ahead was operating in regular service



While 303 and 1160 were at Talbott Park a group of Revolution Rail's railbikes arrived at the Biddeford siding. After 1160 departed they followed returning to their origin at Arundel station. The ceremony attendees on 303 departed sometime later to the Visitor's Center.

- A very tasty cookout was held at Tower C with hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie dogs, sides, dessert and assorted beverages. Proceeds raised benefit the Family Play Area.
- Long time member and current Library Committee member Leo Sullivan gave an extremely interesting Photo Presentation entitled "Trolleys of Southern Maine" in Visitors Center Exhibit Room. A particularly entertaining session as there was a lot of discussion with a quite knowledgeable audience.



- At 1:30PM a very informative update on the Rapid Transit Collection was led by Phil Tshlis, Trustee and member of the Rapid Transit Committee in the Visitors Center Exhibit Room.
- At 2PM a Fairview Carhouse behind-the-scenes tour was led by Devon Hubner, Parts Warehouse Manager.
- All day Library Committee Transit Book Sale, Visitors Center Exhibit Room.



Librarian and Library Committee Chair Karen Dooks at the Library Book Sale table in the Visitors Center Exhibit Room.



Upcoming Events:

Grandparent's Day. Sunday, September 10: Grandparents' admission tickets are free.

Pumpkin Patch Trolley! Friday, September 22- Sunday October 15: Hop aboard a trolley at the Visitors Center and take a ride on the heritage railroad to The Pumpkin Patch. Each member in a group can select a pumpkin to take home, even the adults! Enjoy several activities back at the Visitors Center. Friday-Sunday September 22-24, September 29-October 1, October 6-8, October 13-15, and Monday October 9 (Indigenous Peoples' Day).

See Calendar at end of *The Main Line*

Note that some events sell out so always check for more info, online ticket sales etc at <https://trolleymuseum.org/events/>.



Advance FYI for 2024-

Friday-Sunday March 1-3, 2024:

Seashore Trolley Museum will be hosting Northeast Association of Trolley Organization's Winterfest.



Do You Recognize ?

Last Month's do You Recognize -

Our railway of interest this month was the product of twenty years of incorporations, franchise acquisitions, construction, acquisitions, and



A colorized view of one of the original headquarters city

mergers of several predecessor street railways serving three counties in Kansas and Missouri. The earliest line was the Pittsburg Railway Co. with a street railway franchise of two miles, granted in 1890, in Pittsburg, KS. A second line was franchised by the same city in 1891 to the Forest Park Electric Railway in 1891 and was eventually

absorbed by our railway. The ultimate system crisscrossed rich bituminous coalfields, claimed to be the richest between the Mississippi and the Rockies, along with having adjacent oil and gas deposits.

A drawback to this story, unfortunately not that uncommon, is what appears to be total lack of company records. A number of sources indicate that basically all pre-1929 records were destroyed at that time when the line had failed, was sold at auction, and purchased by local businessmen to save the remnants mostly for



A colorized postcard view of the same city

freight. Pretty much everything has to be garnered from legal records, newspapers of the day, and trade publications. Interestingly there was a history written as an academic paper but the voluminous citations in the paper all relate to governmental and court records and the aforementioned newspapers of the day and trade publications. Information such as developing an equipment roster had to be developed from car company delivery lists and trade publications.

The Pittsburg, Frontenac and Suburban Line arrived in 1894 with a 35-year franchise. This line purchased the earlier 1891 line after it's sale at auction. The new railway also branched out into selling power to residential consumers and for commercial lighting.

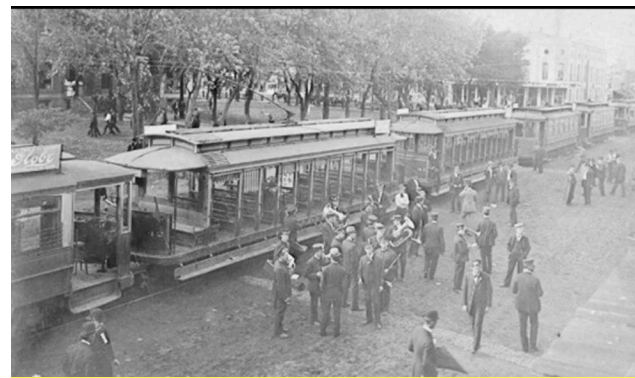


28 ft single-truck of predecessor railway
St. Louis Car Co (?) c 1905

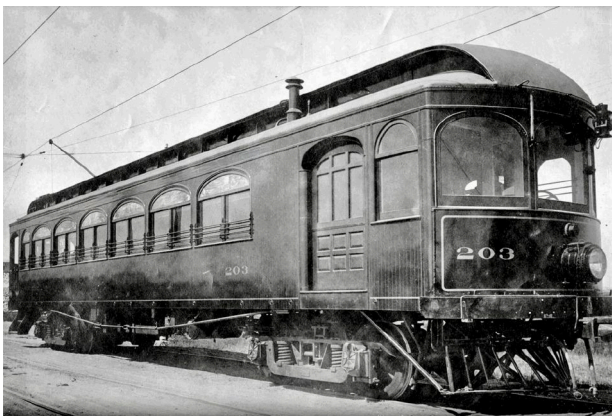
In 1905, Fred H. Fitch, the former superintendent of the Southwest Missouri Railroad purchased this line. A number of closed city cars and 14-bench opens were acquired in 1905 from the St. Louis Car Company

The new owner expanded the line and by October 1906,

twelve additional towns were all connected by the this company. In 1907 Fitch concluded an agreement with J.J. Heim, of Kansas City. Heim's family had major interests in breweries and amusement parks in the city, plus a streetcar line to the brewery and their Electric City amusement park. The westerly portion of the city having developed as a "streetcar suburb" of the eastern portion. It was agreed to merge the business interests with those of our line and move the headquarters into the city. The new partner in the merger was named president and he and his associates held \$3,000,000 of the total authorized capitalization of \$5,000,000.



Celebration of opening of new extension - c 1906

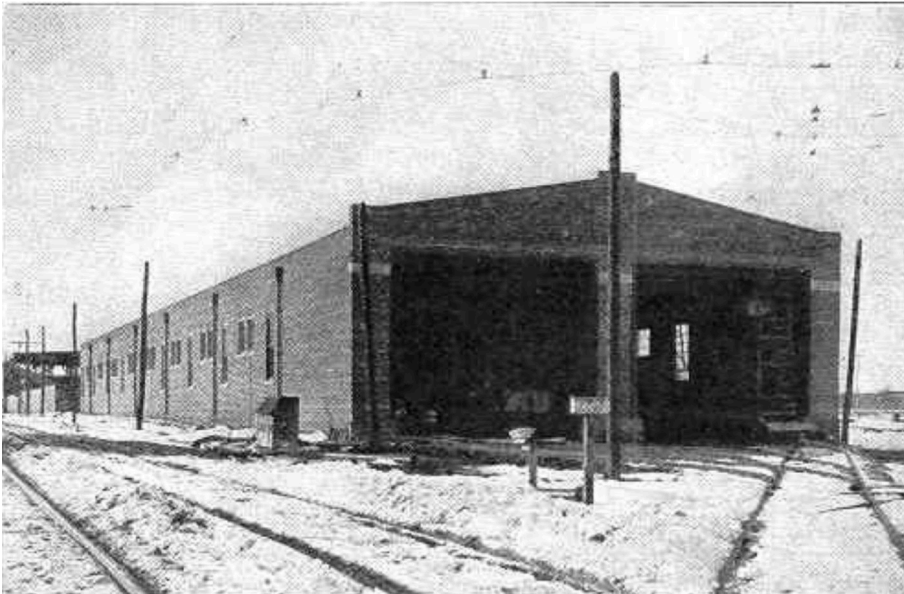


Interurban No# 203 - Jewett Car Co. (1908)

After the merger various other extensions were constructed and new lines started, all being brought under the merged company, Joplin & Pittsburg Railway Co., through a major reorganization. By the end of 1909 the system controlled 68 miles of track including the 28 mile interurban route between Pittsburg, KS and Joplin, MO (the Air Line).

In 1909 a trade journal listed the entire rolling stock as:

- 5 double-truck 53-ft. passenger.
- 2 double-truck 53-ft. express.
- 15 double-truck 43-ft. passenger.
- 4 double-truck open, seating 85 each.
- 7 single-truck closed.
- 12 single-truck open.
- 2 line and wrecking.
- 10 flat.
- 3 ballast.
- 6 coal.



A carhouse and shop on the interurban c.1909

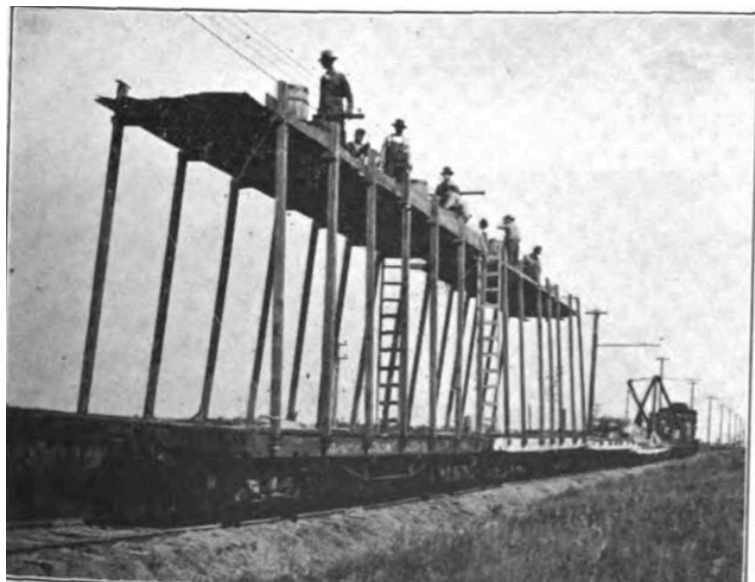
From 1907 through 1912 a additional number of city cars, express cars, and big interurbans (for the Air Line) were acquired from the Jewett Car Company.

On March 1, 1910 there was a reorganization of our company and its acquired and

constructed lines which brought all of the trackage, rolling stock, etc., through merger, under the head of the our railway of interest and under its final name.

An amusement park was leased in 1909 by survived only until 1912, the land then becoming a city park. Also in 1912 the line ran afoul of a county attorney for failing to equip its interurbans with toilets and proper heating as required by state law.

Problems also arose when attempting to negotiate crossing of the lines of a competing interurban. The



A rather dramatic platform car used for erecting catenary c.1909

period from 1911 through 1919 was rife with labor problems with six strikes occurring over the eight year period. The organized labor movement was much more active in western of the two states served than across the state line.

By 1920 the line was being heavily impacted by rate reductions mandated by regulatory agencies, competition, lawsuits, and labor issues cut into the line's revenue and it entered receivership in 1924. By the latter part of the 1920s the company was involved in several seemingly desperate attempts to increase passenger traffic with discounted tickets, reduced fare ticket books, increased frequency of service, weekend discounts, etc. All to apparently no avail as the company began to submit abandonment requests to the regulatory entities and the courts. Testimony was submitted



National Bank in Pittsburg, KS - trolley to right c.1910

as to various routes operating with an average of 3 or 4 passengers per trip. One innovative effort to raise funds in 1927 was an attempted advance sale of \$50,000 of tickets to be used later - this had little success.

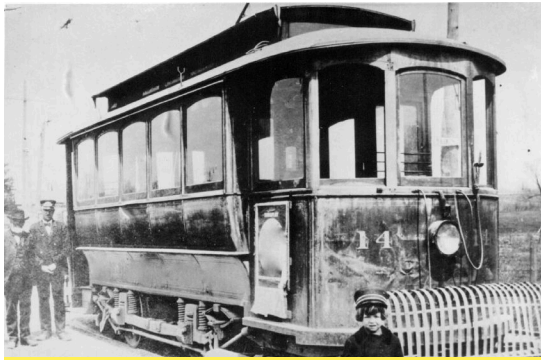
By the late 20s our line was so out of favor with some

communities because of lack of maintenance and unfulfilled promises to repair streets that several actually sought to have the company barred from their communities. Even one of the two communities in the company name actually petitioned the state commission to have it closed and offered to assume some promised street repair just to get rid of the railway.

Finally our railway received authority to end service at the end of March 1929 and the line was actually sold at auction in mid-May 1929. A group of businessmen from Pittsburg, KS purchased the line to save it from being junked. The reorganized line limped along with some city passenger (all passenger service ended in 1932) and local freight traffic while gradually lopping off bits of the line. However, the remaining and declining coal and gravel traffic were not enough and 1954 saw the last of the line sold for scrapping.

This Month's do You Recognize -

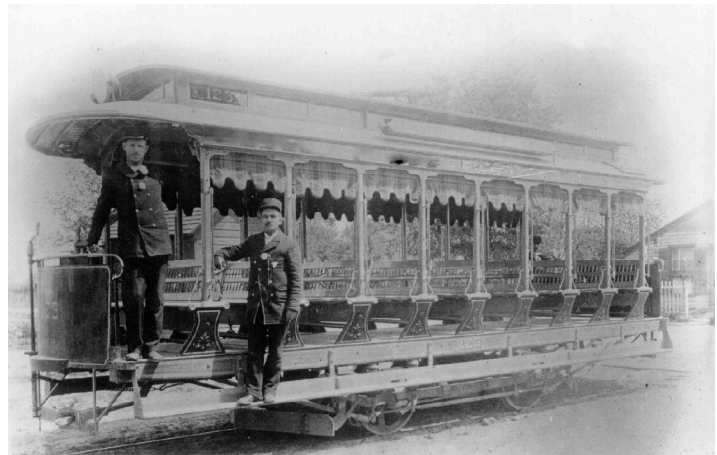
The first public transportation ancestor to our street railway of interest was introduced in 1872, some 78 years after the U.S. Army constructed a fort near the confluence of three rivers. The fort, ultimately named after the general that oversaw its construction, withstood a siege by a combined force of native warriors supported by the British during the War of 1812. The community that grew in the area of the fort came to bear the same name. The first European settlement in the area was trading post constructed c. 1706.



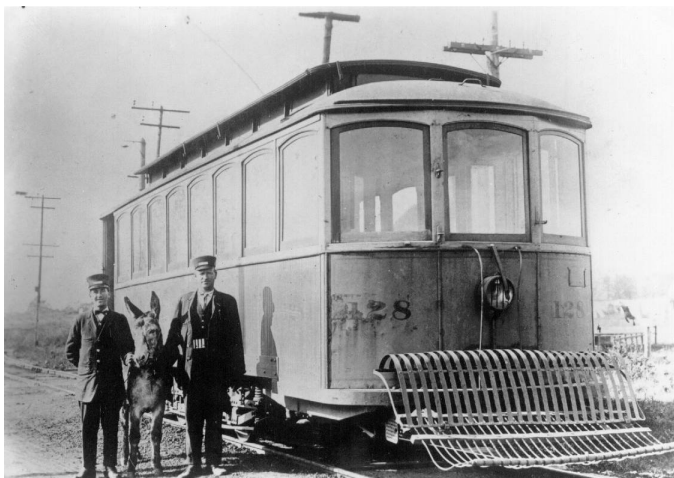
Closed car No. #14 - J.M. Jones (1892)
Although this image was taken c. 1900 this appears to be one of the original 1892 cars

horsecars in service. In 1873 the company floated a \$20,000 mortgage (almost \$510,000 in today's money), unfortunately the railway did not pay off the mortgage and also defaulted on their original bonds. This resulted in the company's sale in foreclosure on the courthouse steps in August 1887.

A new street railroad, taking its name from the city, was organized in late August 1887.



Consolidated railway open No.#123 .
J.M. Jones (c.1899)



Traction co. closed car No.#128 -
J.M. Jones (c.1900)

During this iteration of the company two additional companies came into being. One that same summer with the construction of a line by the owner of a local brewing company and in 1892 another line was proposed but met with much opposition and debate over routing, equipment, and such. The new company finally received approval in late 1882 but was seemingly operated by our original company from the

1887 reorganization. By 1887 our company was operating some 28 cars

with a fleet of 10 original cars, 19 from 1887, and others picked up over time.

The next reorganization was technology driven with the arrival of electricity in 1892. An electric railway company, again adopting the city's name, was organized to take over the street railroad and convert it from horsecars to electricity. By

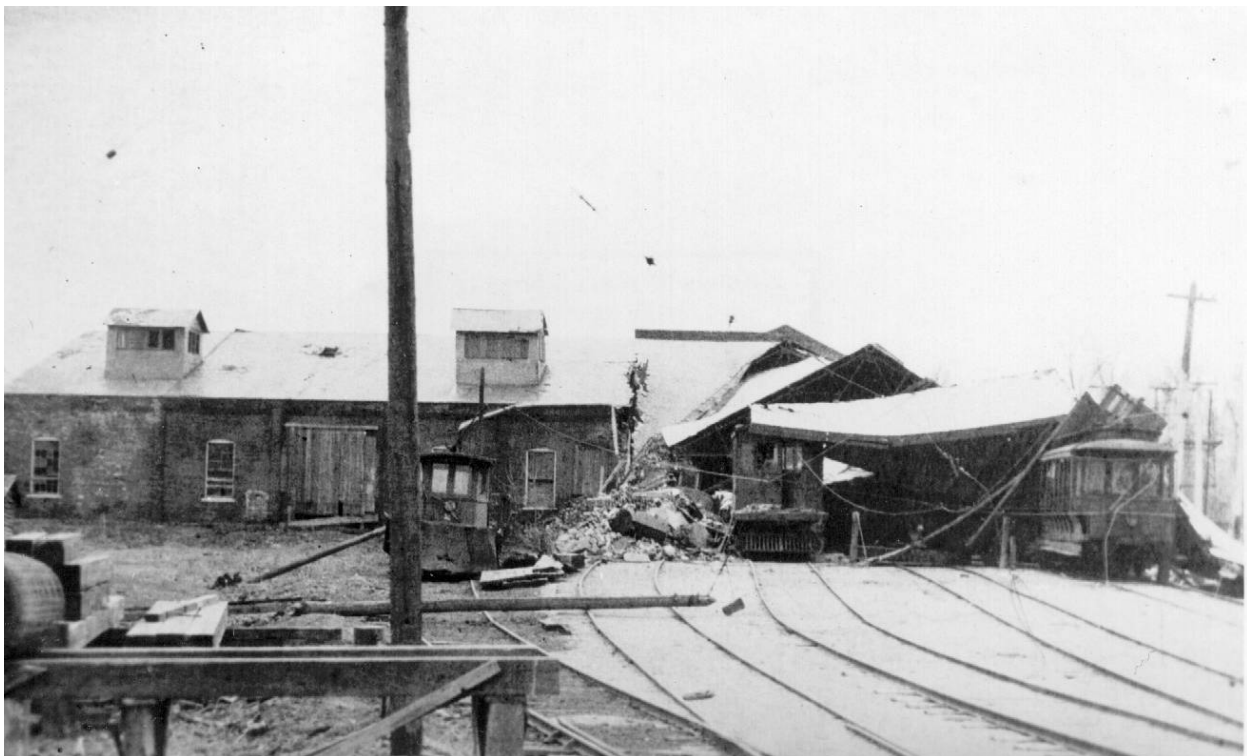


Parlor car No.# 501 - Cincinnati Car Co, (1905)
after yet another reorganization



The disastrous 1910 wreck (41 dead and many maimed) that doomed the 1904 company.

1894 the electric railway company had also acquired the independent line earlier formed by the brewery owner. Labor difficulties persisted in the early 1890 with management attempts to reduce wages, walkouts, and the use of Pinkerton Detectives. Also in the early '90s several



Bad luck following bad - a carbarn of the company reorganized due to the 1910 wreck was struck by a tornado dropping its slate roof onto a number of cars, damaging some and destroying others.

somewhat ill conceived and underfunded attempts to start new lines were floated.

With the 1894 acquisition of the brewer-owned independent another reorganization in 1885 saw the incorporation of a new “Consolidated Railway Company” to take over the electric railway. Reorganizations continued to be quite popular with the formation of a traction company in 1899 to acquire the consolidated. Another change in 1904 created yet again a new traction company named after the city and a river valley extending some 400 miles southwest from the city to the SSW. A few more corporate twitches and the worst crash in interurban history with the death of 41 individuals and the maiming of many additional in 1910 brought us to, in 1911, The “city name” and Northern



Closed car No.#311 - Cincinnati Car Company (1909) - image c. 1920



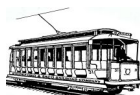
Freight motor No.#53 - rebuilt c. 1913 in company shops from wrecked passenger car

“state” traction company. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the company’s lines reached three states. By 1920 this combination was failing and sold to a “service corporation” again taking the state’s name. Finally this entity fell under the control of a statewide interurban system created in 1930-31 to consolidate various holdings of the collapsing Insull empire. Interurban service struggled on until 1942. Back in the original namesake city, trolley coaches replaced trolleys and in 1948 the routes were sold to a local transit line with trolley buses ending in 1960 and municipal ownership coming about in 1968.



Home city terminal - post 1920

For the purposes of those who participate in trying to identify the line in question probably identifying the city will do. The endless acquisitions, reorganizations and acquisitions of other reorganized groups makes a specific carrier name a very difficult choice.



Library Committee



Library Committee

The Library Committee has a committee meeting scheduled for September 9, 2023 (9AM - 12PM) with a workshop following (12PM to 2PM).

The Library Committee workshop in August, scheduled for August 12, 2023 from 9:00 AM to 1PM. was postponed because of the need to move a quantity of donated materials from NH to Seashore on the 12th, plus volunteer conflicts with the August 12-13 Dino Trolley. A special business meeting and workshop was scheduled for Friday, August 25th from 9:00 AM-2 PM. The Library Committee's meetings on Saturdays are held on a bimonthly basis on the odd months followed by a workshop with standalone workshops from 10AM -2PM on the even months. Updated information will be forthcoming as available.

The Wednesday Evening Workshops are still cancelled - hopefully resumption in the future. There is also discussion of possible additional workshops.

For further information/questions concerning the Library please contact Karen Dooks (781-799-5868).

By Karen Dooks, Chair

Currently scheduled meeting dates for 2023 with business meeting followed by workshop: September 9 and November 11

Scheduled workshop dates for 2023: October 14 and December 9

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:

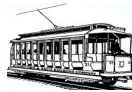
<https://virtual.yccc.edu/c.php?g=238406&p=3225494&preview=7b52901d1f51db2b76cb2a141ca8589c>

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.

Regards,

Ed Ramsdell, Editor

The Main Line

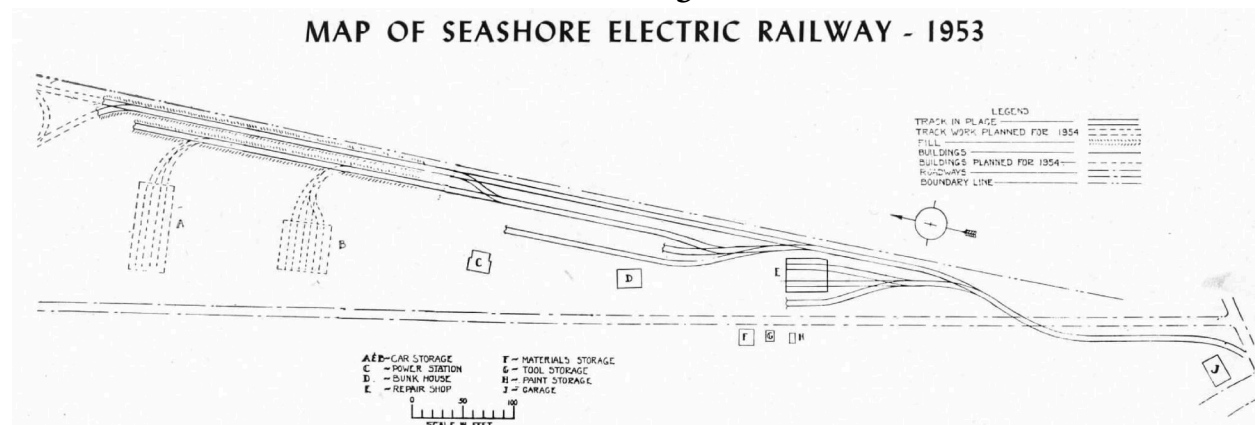
TheMainLine@ramsdell.com

<http://www.trolleymuseum.org>



A Look Back - A little glimpse of 70 years ago as seen through the 1953 *New England Electric Railway Historical Society, Inc. - SEASHORE ELECTRIC RAILWAY - ANNUAL REPORT:*

MAP OF SEASHORE ELECTRIC RAILWAY - 1953



ROSTER OF EQUIPMENT - 1953

Passenger Cars

No.	Type	Builder	Year	Trucks	Motors	Control	Former Owners
31	12-bench open	Brill	1900	Brill 22-E	2-GE200	K-36	Biddeford & Saco R. R.
38	Interurban pass.	Laconia	1907	Laconia 9B	4-GE80	K-28	Manchester & Nashua St. Ry.
60	20-ft. box	Laconia	1895	Brill 21-E		K-2	Manchester St. Ry.
80	Birney Safety	American Car Co.	1919	Brill 78-M		K-10	Denver & So. Platte; York Utilities
82	Birney Safety	American Car Co.	1919	Brill 78-M	2-GE258	K-10	Denver & So. Platte; York Utilities
70	Coach-baggage	Wason	1912	Brill 27-MCB2	4-GE217	K-42A	Aroostook Valley R. R.
4387	Convertible	Laconia	1918	Bay State 12C	4-GE247	PC5, CJ129A	Eastern Mass. St. Ry.
88	30-ft. lightweight	Wason	1926	Brill 177-E1X	4-GE258	K-35JJ-LB	East Taunton St. Ry.; York Utilities
615	15-bench open	Brill	1901	Standard O-50	4-GE80	K-35	Connecticut Company
838	15-bench open	Jones	1905	Taylor SB	2-WH93A	K-28	Connecticut Company
1468	15-bench open	Bradley	1911	Standard O-50	4-GE80	K-35	Connecticut Company
1160	Railroad roof box	Stephenson	1906	Standard O-50	4-GE80	K-28	Connecticut Company
1391	15-bench open	Bradley	1910	Standard O-50	4-GE80	K-35	Connecticut Company
4400	Deluxe lightweight	Bradley	1927	Brill 177-E1X	4-GE265	K-35KK-LB	Eastern Mass.; Boston El. Ry.; MTA
1030	Hi-speed interurban	American Car Foun.	1931	Cincinnati ABC 74D	4-WH539A1	HL, 189D	Indiana R. R.; Lehigh Valley Transit
City of							
Manchester	Parlor car	Briggs	1895	Brill 21-E			Manchester St. Ry.
475	26-ft. box	Newburyport	1903	Taylor LB	2-GE86	K-2	West End St. Ry.; Boston El.; MTA
6270	M-U Surface-Subway	Kuhlman	1918	Brill 77E	4-GE247	ABPC, 32A	Boston Elevated Ry.; MTA
1267	Wire Gate Convertible	Transit Supply	1907	TCL 9 Roller Brg.	4-GE203	K43F2	Twin City Rapid Transit Co.

Work Cars

615	Birney (office)	Wason	1919	Bradley	2-GE506	K-63	Potlond R. R.; Biddeford & Saco
S-71	Line car	Bay State St. Ry.	1915	Peckham	2-GE67	K-10, K-12	Eastern Mass. St. Ry.
038	Motor flat	Worcester Cons.	1912	Bemis	2-WH3	K-6	Worcester Consolidated St. Ry.
52	Freight motor	Brill	1909	Brill 27-E1½	4-GE205	Type M, C-71	Aroostook Valley R. R.
8	Box trailer		1893	Portland			Mousam River R. R.; A.S.L.; Y.U. Co.
34	Railway Post Office	Fiegel	1873	Maguire	2 GE800	K-2	Union St. Ry. (New Bedford)
16	Snow plow	Wason	1905	Wason	2-GE80	K-35	United Electric Rys. (Providence)
108	Line car	Laconia	1902	Standard C-50	4-GE70	K-28	P.D.&Y.; A.S.L.; Y.U. Co.; S.&E. R.R.
100	Locomotive	Laconia	1906	ALCO	4-GE80	K-35	Atlantic Shore; Y.U. Co.; S.&E. R.R.
2016	Derrick car	Boston Elevated Ry.	1912	Standard O-50	4-WH101B	K-28	Boston Elevated Ry.; MTA
1059	20-ft. box, grinder	Barney & Smith	1895	West End	2-GE86	K-10	West End St. Ry.; Boston El.; MTA

ADDITIONAL WORK EQUIPMENT: No. T-116, 4-wheel flat car; No. 5, hand car; No. 6, hand car;
No. S-32, Massey-Harris Tractor, No. S-117, Model AA Ford line truck.



SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM) Ham Radio Day	28	29	30 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM) Ice Cream Night! (5:30PM-7:30PM)	31 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	1 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	2 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)
3 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	4	5	6 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	7 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	8 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	9 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)
10 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM) Grandparents Day at Seashore	11	12	13 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	14 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	15 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	16 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)
17 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	18	19	20 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	21 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	22 Pumpkin Patch Trolley	23 Pumpkin Patch Trolley
24 Pumpkin Patch Trolley	25	26	27 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	28 Open Today! (9:30AM-4:30PM)	29 Pumpkin Patch Trolley	30 Pumpkin Patch Trolley

For further additional event information and ongoing information throughout the year be sure to check: <https://trolleymuseum.org/events/> .

