



*Vol 15*

# *THE MAIN LINE*



*No 10*

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of the New England Electric Railway Historical Society Libraries*

December 2023

## **Goings On at Seashore —**

Seashore's 2023 public season wrapped up with the last of the Christmas Prelude activities on Sunday, December 10, 2023. The weather cooperated to some extent although early December had a spate of being really wet. It appears that January 2024 is going to see some traditional Winter weather arrive with perhaps three storms spread over the first couple of weeks including a couple having the possibility of some heavy snow.

The campus was closed and the staff off from Thursday, December 21st - Tuesday, January 2nd. Normal off-season work in the office and shop has resumed along with various committee and subcommittee meetings.

Seashore is turning 85 in 2024! The museum will be opening two new buildings for members and guests to enjoy: South Boston Carhouse and The Maine Central Model Railroad, created by Helen & Harold Beal. A new bus and trackless trolley display will also be opening in 2024. Work has recently begun on the site work for a new maintenance garage to house our work vehicles, including space to work on bus maintenance and restorations. Currently it is planned to have a series of 85th Anniversary events including a trolley parade over the July 4 - July 7, 2024 long weekend.

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



## Do You Recognize ?

Last Month's do You Recognize -

New Orleans Public Service Incorporated (NOPSI) began operation on September 22, 1922 and continued as a transit provider until July 1, 1983. It took over a major local carrier and a number of companies whose streetcar lines it operated.



A view in the mid-1880s with multiple bobsled horse/mule cars. Builders uncertain although a number of what are likely Stephensons and a St. Louis product.

The earliest public transportation within our carrier's home

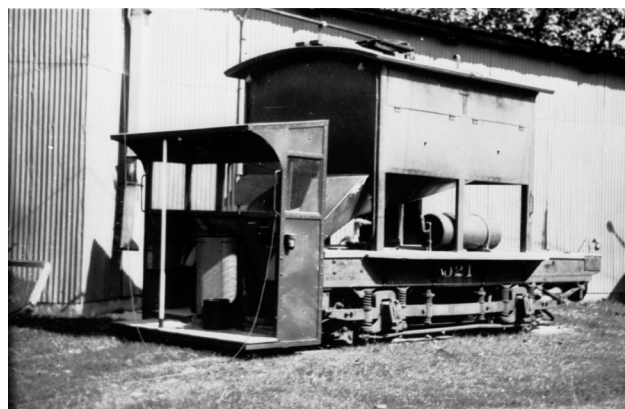
A view in the mid-1880s with multiple bobsled horse/mule cars. Builders uncertain although a number of what are likely Stephensons and a St. Louis product. city was provided beginning in 1831. Those first operations included inter-city and suburban railroad lines, and

horse-drawn/mule-drawn omnibus lines. Starting in 1835 the New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad opened three lines. In the first two were horse-drawn lines and the third a steam-powered line.

Until the mid-1800s omnibus lines provided the only public transit outside this immediate area. The the New Orleans City RR was chartered in June 1860 and began operation in June 1861, followed in quick succession by additional lines. The company opened and continued service on its new lines despite the opening of the Civil War. A few other carriers attempted to begin service during the war. Railway expansion resumed soon after the war's end. In 1866, several additional street railways began operation. The horsecar lines of these companies covered different parts of the city, overlapping in some areas.

A number of experiments were tried in the

# 21 Sand Car - probably rebuilt from an earlier (circa 1896) sand car - builder unknown. Sanded one rail at a time to keep good contact to ground. attempt to find a better method than horses or mules for propulsion



# 21 Sand Car - probably rebuilt from an earlier (circa 1896) sand car - builder unknown. Sanded one rail at a time to keep

of streetcars. These included an overhead cable car system, an underground cable, a walking beam system, pneumatic propulsion, ammonia and the Lamm Fireless engine. The Lamm engines used either ammonia or stored steam. However residents adjoining the routes using the Lamm system objected to the locomotives and ultimately electrical propulsion of



#29 built by St. Louis Car Co. (1899) on a design by Ford, Bacon & Davis. Converted to a rail grinder and then sand car. Ultimately restored in its sand car

streetcars won out over all the other experimental methods with electric powered streetcars making their first appearance in the city on the Carrollton line in February 1893. Other companies soon



# 453 built by American Car Co. (1906)

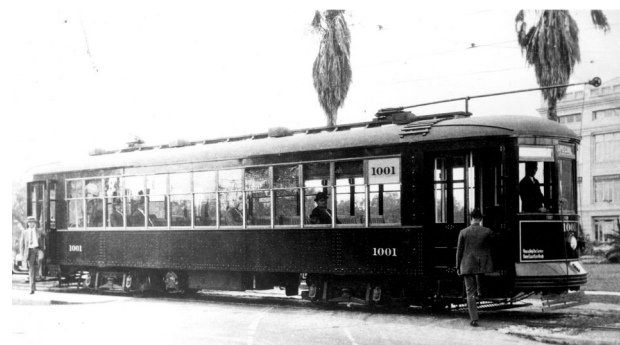


# 934 built by Perley Thomas (1923-24)

joined the electric bandwagon. All six companies serving the city were electrified within a few years and animal powered routes eliminated. #29 built by St. Louis Car Co. (1899) on a design by Ford, Bacon & Davis. Converted to a rail grinder and then sand car. Ultimately restored in its sand car configuration and is still operated from time to time by the successor transit agency.

# 453 built by American Car Co. (1906)

By the middle 1880s the inevitable economic pressures for consolidation started to come to bear with combinations taking place through the '90s culminating in 1902 with the New Orleans Railways Co. gaining control of all streetcar operation in the city. With the advent of consolidation new labor



# 1001 built by Perley Thomas (1925)



challenges came to the forefront. The consolidated company tried to keep the multiple labor agreements of the previous companies with their varying conditions, expiration dates and smaller areas that might be impacted by any possible work stoppage. In September of 1902 after a system-wide disruption of two weeks a settlement was reached and in 1903 a contract recognizing the union was accepted by the company. In 1905 the operating company became



42 ft. Passenger Motor #86 -  
St. Louis Car Co. (1925)

the New Orleans Railway and Light Co.

Consolidation of under a single company helped rationalize some lines and reduced the number of streetcar lines operating over long stretches of route with limited demand. There was another strike in July 1920. This one was settled around the end of July with a new contract. Final consolidation of ownership as well as operation finally became



50 ft. Interurban #202 - American Car Co. (1906)

reality in 1922 with the formation of the New Orleans Public Service Incorporated (NOPSI) that would last for some 60 years.

In 1929, the new company was hit with a widespread strike by transit workers demanding better pay, which was widely supported by much of the public. A popular foodstuff earned its name during this strike. There was

much rioting and animosity,  
streetcars burned and  
several people killed.



# 1201 - the system's first trolley bus - Brill (1929)

Service was gradually restored, with the strike ending in October. The year 1929 brought another interesting change with the system be re-gauged from standard gauge 4 ft 8 1/2 in to 5 ft 2 1/2 in (Pennsylvania trolley gauge) to match much

of the existing streetcar lines.

Buses began to be used in 1924 with several streetcar lines converted to bus over the next 15 years. Beginning after World War II many streetcar lines were replaced with buses, either internal combustion (gasoline/diesel) or electric (trolley bus).

The last four streetcar lines in the city were converted to motor bus between 1953 and 1964 with one line remaining in operation and now enjoying historic landmark status.

In 1974, the ATU won a representation election and formed a local division.

Negotiations proved unsuccessful, and a strike followed. In December 1974, a contract was signed but the strike was not completely settled until the following March.

All streetcar lines except historic landmark operation were discontinued between 1925 and 1964. Motor buses began

operation in 1924 with service expanded to include most of the

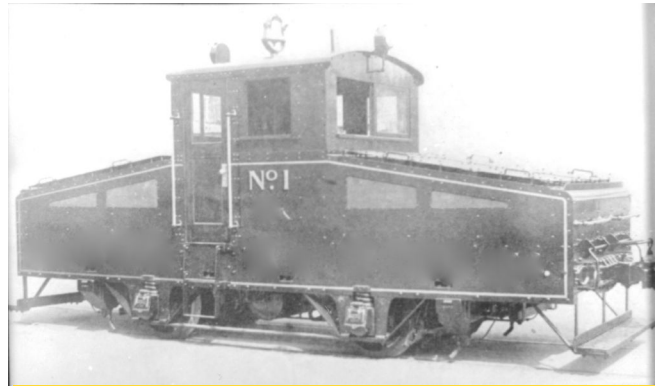
urbanized local area. Trackless trolleys were used from 1929 to 1967.

In 1983 a public transportation agency, the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority, assumed operation of the system.

Those interested in more detailed information might find the following texts of interest:

Street Railways of New Orleans by E. Harper Charlton - Interurbans Special No. 17 - April 1955

The Streetcars of New Orleans by Louis C. Hennick and E. Harper Charlton - Pelican Publishing Company 1975



# 1 - Battery locomotive - built by Atlas Car & Manufacturing Co. (1926). Assigned to a power plant moving coal gondolas over a distance of some two blocks.



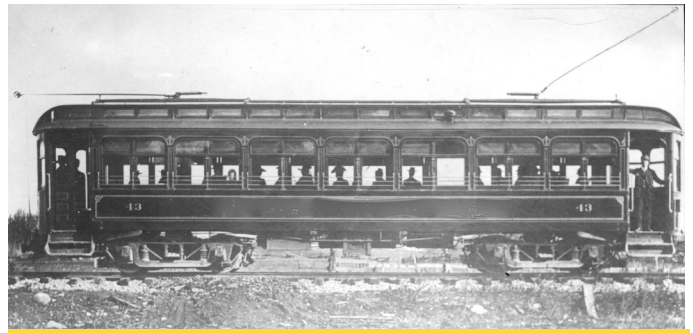
This Month's Do You Recognize -

We move into the Heartland for December's road of interest. This system provided interurban electric passenger and freight service in its state as well as trolley service in a couple of the communities served - those two communities comprised part of the company's name (hint, hint). The system operated for 30 years from 1903 to 1933 with some 60 miles of track operated by the parent company and another 20 miles operated under a subsidiary. The company was also a seller of electrical power to one of its name communities.





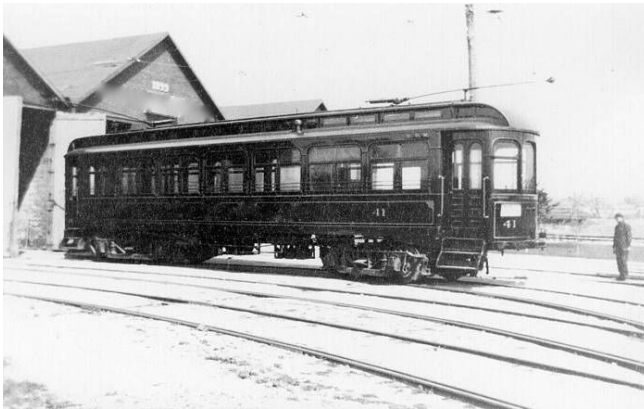
The line's 990' wooden trestle survived all 30 years.



#43 - G. C. Kuhlman Car Company - 1902.

also provided partial funding for another amusement park on its lines. The parent railway was formed in 1901 through the purchase of an existing

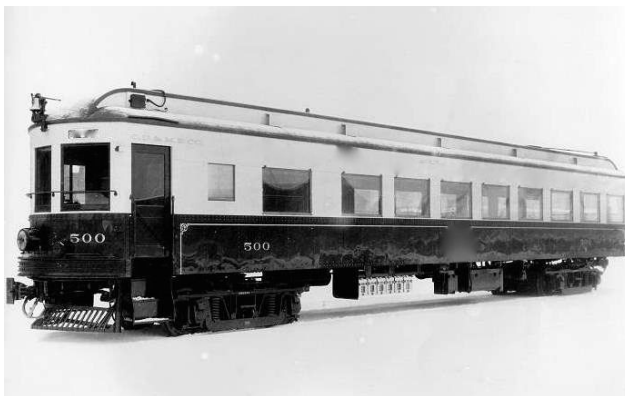
The company developed a park with playing fields and picnic areas to attract interurban passengers and  
also provided partial funding for another amusement park on its lines. The parent railway was formed in 1901 through the purchase of an existing street railway as well as another rival company that had acquired a right-of-way over its intended route. The parent railway bought its rival and began interurban service in 1903.



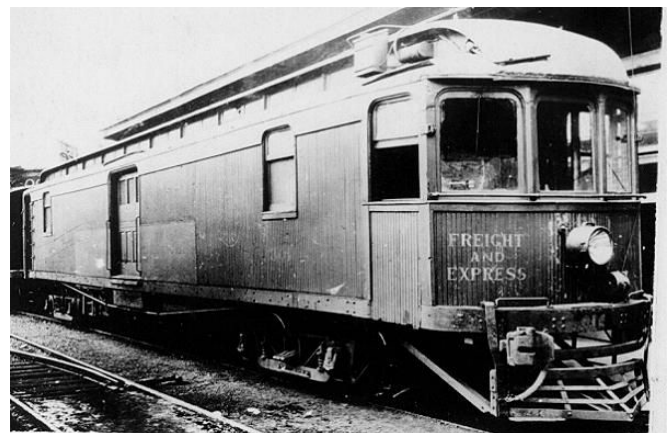
#41 (Jewett Car Co. - 1902)

In October 1904, the parent incorporated as a holding company operating through a similarly named subsidiary.

In 1908, the company built a 20 mile line through a new subsidiary railroad to



#500 - Steel interurban Parlor Car (American Car & Foundry Company - 1926) This car and sister #501 were purchased to attempt to compete with increasing highway competition.



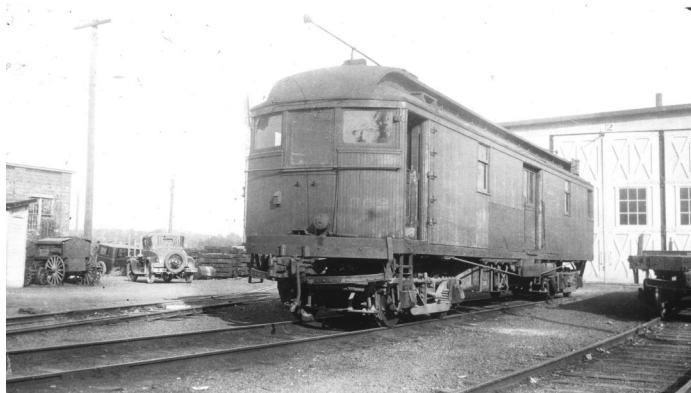
Freight motor #301 (Cincinnati Car Co. - 1907)

connect with an nearby road with plans for through service to other parts of the state. subsidiary operated passenger service over its route and nightly through freight service with the connecting system. The large capital costs of

constructing the subsidiary line forced both the parent and subsidiary into bankruptcy in 1909. In 1914 the subsidiary was reorganized with the new road having railway in its name instead of railroad and in 1917 the parent reorganized replacing railway in its name with "electric co." A 1922 investment rating book described the company's holdings in addition to its trackage and overhead as including a complete electrical distribution system in one city, 3 steam power generating



#501 is preserved at a museum and the body of #500 was existent a decade ago on a farm.



Freight Motor #302 at abandonment - 1933  
Perhaps one of the freight motors saved to serve the generating station along with #303

stations, 23 city cars, 12 interurban cars, 15 freight, 18 flat dump and 2 motor snowplows.

The subsidiary railway lost money in the late 1920s entering bankruptcy again in 1930 with its ultimate absorption by its parent in 1931. Also in 1931 the connection with the adjacent

system that had provided nightly through freight service ended when the connecting firm closed. From 1930 to 1932 the railway was under the control of a holding company for the A Major City Terminal Samuel Insull empire. Finally in 1933 the now combined firm filed for bankruptcy in March of 1933 and abandoned service in August 1933. Replacement service



#102 Line Car and Plow dismantling the line in 1933. This car was apparently saved along with the 3 freight motors for service on the spur to the generating station.



Car barn near the end of service

was initiated with buses by a regional transit company and then in 1939 the transit company was acquired by Pennsylvania Greyhound Lines with service subsequently supplied by Pennsylvania Greyhound.



The electrical generation branch of the firm was profitable and, including merger with another firm, continued operating the coal fired generating station into the 1960s. Interestingly the firm maintained three electric freight motors in service until 1952 operating a five-mile connection



#40 & #42 at abandonment

with a steam road to obtain coal for the generating station. Finally in 1952 a diesel locomotive ousted the three freight motors with the rail link finally closing in 1969. About a mile of original right of way is still operated under the auspices of a railway museum.



**Library Committee**

**Library Committee**

The next Library Committee meeting with following workshop is scheduled for January 13, 2024 from 10AM until 2PM. Subject to possible weather conditions it may be necessary to hold the Committee meeting by Zoom only and defer the workshop. Further information as the week progresses (Karen Dooks - 781-799-5868).

The remainder of the Herb Pence slide collection will be transferred into archival trays. Other items to be addressed include sorting materials in preparation for the Amherst Model Railroad Show and ongoing cleaning of the Library.

Elections for the Library Committee will be held in January.

The Library Committee has a workshop scheduled on February 10, 2024 (10AM - 2PM). Over the past several months a reorganization of the materials in the garage has been done, the collection of Russell National Motor Coach Guides repacked and most of the slides in the domestic collection from Herb Pence removed from carousel trays to an archival slide storage system to greatly reduce the space required for storage. More archival materials are being purchased to store the Winkley and Kean slide collection, as well as the Herb Pence foreign slide collection. Additionally, Kenyon Karl has been scanning and describing the slides in the Winkley



and Kean collections with work on the George Sanborn Collection to commence soon.

The Library Committee's meetings on Saturdays are held from 10AM -2PM with start times adjusted seasonally to weather and traffic. The meetings are on a bimonthly basis on the odd months followed by a workshop with the standalone workshops from 10 AM -2 PM on the even months. Start times are adjusted seasonally to weather and traffic. 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 2024 with business meeting followed by workshop: January 13; March 9, May 11; July 13;

Sept 14; Nov 9

Scheduled workshop dates for 2024: Feb 10; Apr 13; June 8; Aug 10; Oct 12; Dec 14



Links:

More than 1000 of the images are accessible online = [https://digitalmaine.com/trolley\\_images/](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_museum/)  
[https://digitalmaine.com/trolley\\_blueprints/](https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_blueprints/)  
[https://digitalmaine.com/trolley\\_images/](https://digitalmaine.com/trolley_images/)  
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Please remember when sending donations for the library to note that it is for Library Development – Fund 951



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Regards,

Ed Ramsdell, Editor

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<http://www.trolleymuseum.org>



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### **From The Collection-**

The following New Zealand images were taken by Foster M. Palmer in 1954/55 and the slides later scanned by Jim Schantz. The Dunedin system is significant as Dunedin was the second city in the world to adopt the cable car (the first being San Francisco).

The majority of images were taken on the Dunedin Mornington line. Opening on 23 March 1883, the Mornington line travelled one mile (1.6 km) up High Street to Mornington. This line was the steepest recorded tramline in the world, with a gradient at the highest point of the track measured at 1 in 3.75. The Mornington line was the last to close, on 2 March 1957.

Seashore's cable tram #105 operated on the Mornington line. The car was built in 1903 by David Stansfield of Mornington.



Wellington, NZ



Cable tram and trailer 109 at Princes St. terminus Dunedin, NZ



High St. at Melville St. Cable tram approaching - Dunedin, NZ





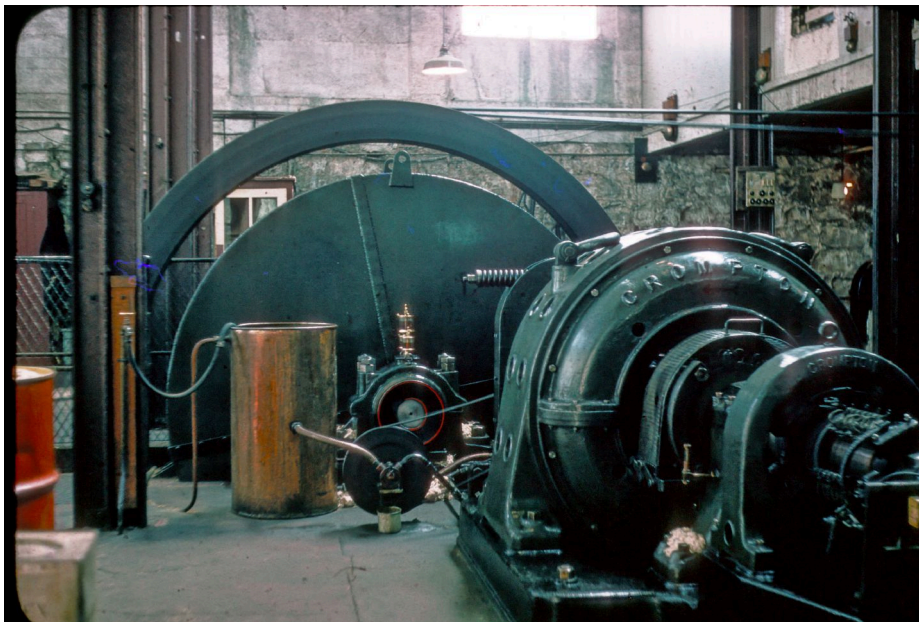
Cable tram 108 approaching - Dunedin, NZ



Mornington terminus of High St. cable trams - Dunedin, NZ



Cable tram 108 at Mornington terminus - Dunedin, NZ



200 h.p. motor driving main line (High St.) cable - Dunedin, NZ



Seashore's No.105 @ Seashore (c. 1957)  
Built 1903 by David Stansfield of Mornington