



Vol 16

THE MAIN LINE



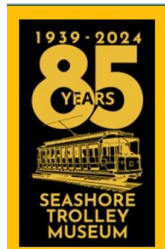
No 2

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

April 2024

Goings On at Seashore —

Annual Meeting:



The NEERHS Annual Meeting took place at Seashore on Saturday, April 27 with activities throughout the entire day (9AM-4PM). Events included: 9AM - 4PM: Library Book Sale, Exhibit Room, (9AM) Guided Tour of the Model Railroad Building led by Katie Orlando, Executive Director and Steve Berg, Director of Museum Operations, In-Person Voting for Trustee Candidates, (10AM - 4:30PM) Trolley Rides & Rail Bike Rides, (10AM) Trolley Ride in Memory of Devon Hubner, (11AM-12:30PM) Business Meeting and Administrative Officer & Department Reports, (12PM-1:30PM) Taco Bar Lunch supporting the Nagasaki 134 Restoration, (12:30PM) Election Results, (1PM-2:30PM) Early Seashore Days walking tour with Phil Morse of the original ten acres acquired by the founding members of Seashore in 1939 to place Biddeford & Saco No. 31, (1PM-2:30PM) Guided Tour of the Restoration Shop with Dave Rogers (Shop Director) & Brian Tenaglia (Shop Foreman), (3PM-3:30PM) Meeting of the Board of Trustees: Electing and Appointing 2024 Officers:

Election results: Karen Dooks & James van Bokkelen were elected to the position of elected trustees.

See page 12 of this issue for additional material concerning the annual meeting.

Volunteer & Donor Appreciation Dinner:

on April 27 following the Annual Meeting day was an evening of appreciation for Seashore Trolley Museum and National Streetcar Museum at Lowell supporters, donors and volunteers.

The catered event, open to all, took place in the Visitors Center Exhibit Room at Seashore . Several awards and recognitions were given to honor top 2023 volunteers and supporters.

2023 & 2024 donors contributing \$100 or higher and 2023 volunteers who have more than 50 documented hours at either museum received a free admission to the event for themselves and one guest.

Events -

May 4 2024 - Opening Day!

Opening Day - Guests with a Maine driver's license get in for \$2.07, and all guests 16 and under get in free. All guests will get a free ticket to enter a door prize raffle for a chance to win prizes donated by the local community.

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



Do You Recognize ?

Last Month's Do You Recognize -



No. #51 & #50-Ottawa Car Co, (1900)
It appears that circa 1915 opens were banned in a major city on the system due to accidents involving running boards - they were either rebuilt or transferred.

Our railway of interest, the Niagara, St Catharines and Toronto Railway (NS&T), is centered within Niagara Peninsula bordered by Lake Ontario, the Niagara River and Lake Erie.. The area is also one of the two largest wine producing regions in Canada.

This system had over seventy-five miles of track and was both one of the earlier operations and also one of the most long lived. The system was founded in 1898 from three earlier lines developed throughout the peninsula. The earliest being a steam

road, the St. Catharines & Niagara Central Railway, incorporated in 1881 and after little success filing for bankruptcy in 1899 with the remnants purchased by the NS&T. The second of the three was an urban horsecar line, the Niagara Falls, Wesley Park &



No. #61 - Niles Car Company (1912)

Clifton Tramway Company, incorporated in 1886, electrified in 1900 and

sold to the NS&T in 1901. The primary attraction of the operation to the developing railway system was that it provided access to international traffic. The third company was another horsecar line incorporated in 1874, the St. Catharines Street Railway, with full electrification in October 1887. It also absorbed an adjacent street railway the following year with our railway acquiring control in May of

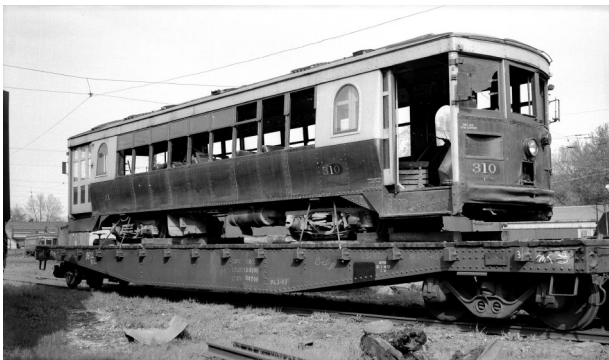


No. #82 - Company Shops (1923)
Rebuilt as Freight Motor in 1956

1901.

In the midst of consolidating these three companies the railway also extended its route to provide access to one of the lakes and established steamer operations through a new navigation company, the Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto Navigation Company, operating between Port Dalhousie and Toronto. Several steamers were acquired and the lake service continued until 1947. The original foreign interests in the railway were bought out by local businessmen associated with a major steam railway. This brought an infusion of new capital that permitted both upgrading and expansion of the system.

The fairly dense population in the area permitted passenger service



Originally No. #306 - Cincinnati Car Company (1926) assembled by the Company Shops
renumbered as #310 in 1948



No. #130 - Preston Car Co. (1914)
Rebuilt in 1947

with convenient headways freight service, using up-to-date equipment. The line was an economic success throughout most of its history. The parent steam road failed just after the WW1 and



No. #620 (in front) Ottawa Car Co. (1930)
and No. #83 built in Company Shops (1923)

the line was nationalized under the management of the government-owned Canadian National Railways. This was done to prevent the Canadian Pacific from achieving a rail monopoly. The new ownership looked to sell off the railway to the communities served but in 1923 the railroad's president became interested in the railway and interurban lines in general. This included turning over one of the railroad's steam tracks and electrifying it for a high speed route.

The full name of the entire operation was changed to reflect the parent railroad and differentiated from the steam road by the addition of "electric lines". Our railway's name was continued as a district within the network of electric railways controlled in order to distinguish it from other interurban operations under the railroad's control. Towards the end of the 1920s costs of railway operation were rising, in June 1926 local streetcar service in provided by the railway was converted from two-man operation to one-man operation. Costs kept increasing, and profit margins thinning. Finally, in February 1929 a new local service was launched and used buses instead of streetcars.

The Great Depression of the 1930's brought an end to our railway's prosperity and forced the abandonment of a number of lines along with cut backs on others beginning in 1931.



No. #16 built by National Steel Car Co. - (1918)



No. #23 built by McGuire-Cummings Manufacturing Company - (1913)

As the 1930s wore on increasing automotive and truck competition further weakened the system. Abandonments of major route segments in 1947 and 1950 left only a roughly 18 mile passenger line open on the south of the old system. Passenger service operated here until March 1959 with freight service lasting until July 1960.



This Month's Do You Recognize -

Our railway of interest this month was an electric interurban railway that only existed for the years from 1926 to 1930, operating wholly within one state. Its earliest predecessor built the first section of line in 1894, 1896 and 1898 saw additional sections built by separate traction companies. In



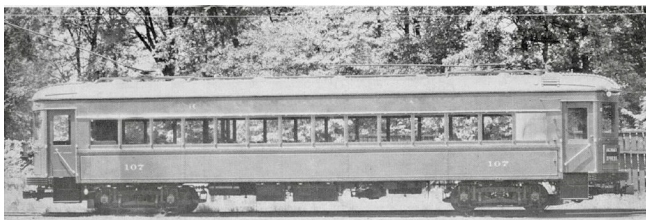
Early Predecessor Horse Car C. 1875

1900 these three companies were consolidated into one entity along with the local streetcar services serving a local city. A 6-mile steam road was absorbed in 1902 to form a new traction company. The entire property was leased to a new traction company in 1905 and in 1907 this company assigned its lease to what became the state's largest traction company. Ultimately our line was created in 1926 through the reorganization an

predecessor traction company that itself had been spun off from the above mentioned state's largest, but financially unstable, interurban. This earlier large interurban had been formed in 1907/1908 through the consolidation of 14 smaller interurbans and was financially



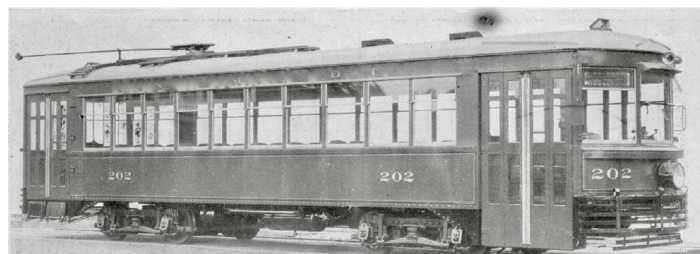
No. #100 Pax-Baggage - Kuhlman Car Co. (1926)



No. #107 One of Three (107-109) Double Ended Cars Equipped For Train Service - Kuhlman Car Co. (1926)

unsound from its beginning, paying no dividends throughout its existence. In 1918 it spun off the line that, after another reorganization in 1926, became our line of interest. The original large interurban formed in

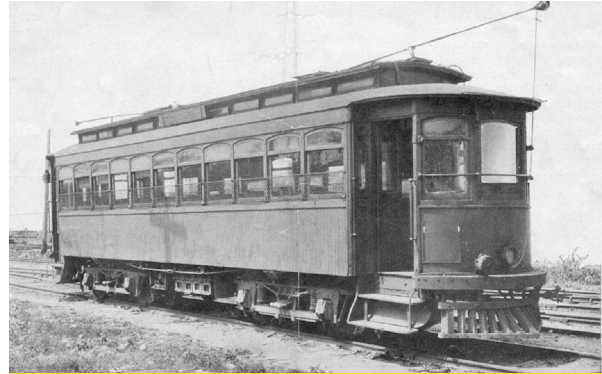
1907/1908 struggled on, spinning off another line in 1920 and finally going bankrupt and dissolving in 1921. Most of the remaining constituent parts also became bankrupt while continuing to operate. Several of these entities actually recombined with our line of



No. #202 One of Ten Deluxe City Cars - Cincinnati Car Co. (1927)

interest in yet another reorganization in 1930 to form yet another interurban of 323 miles that was soon brought down by bond debt (both new borrowing and a large debt left over from our 1926-1930 railway of interest), the Great Depression, and, ultimately, the loss of connections with other interurbans, especially related to freight interchange.

The newly reorganized interurban (1926) was headed by a former University of Pennsylvania Wharton School professor of finance who had previously had success in reviving a Chicago-based interurban in 1922. He believed that there was still a place for the interurban in medium



No. #? Decrepit City Car - One Of Several Burned At Celebration Of the Arrival Of the New 100 & 200 Series Cars.

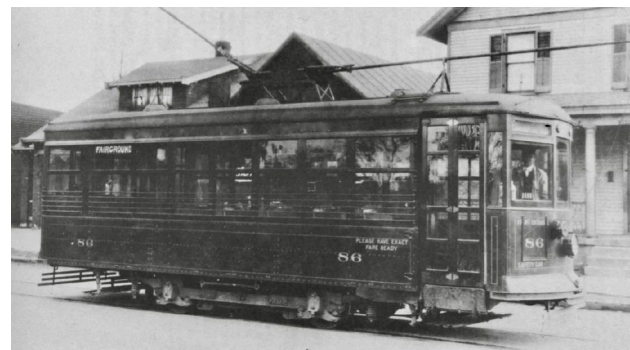


Cars Alongside of New Offices & Shops

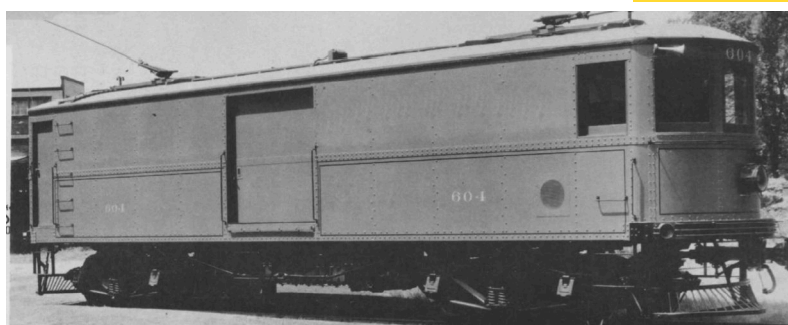
distance passenger traffic as well as longer distance LCL (less-than-car-load) freight, and thus conceived the reorganized line. The somewhat decrepit line included 53.5 miles of interurban trackage (72.95 including double-track) and 13.8 miles for local streetcar service in one of the cities served. A trade publication

at the time described the line acquired as a “cadaverous streak of rust”.

After the 1926 reorganization to form our railway he ordered all steel interurban coaches from Kuhlman and the Cincinnati Car Company, also box-motor express cars and freight cars, and spent heavily to improve track and right-of-way. These included 10 new high-speed interurban cars equipped for multi-



No. #86 Birney - Cincinnati Car Co. (1926)



No. #604 Freight Motor - Kuhlman Car Co. (1926)

unit train service, 10 new double-truck one-man, two-man cars, to provide city service at one end of the line, six new single-truck one-man cars for local streetcar service,

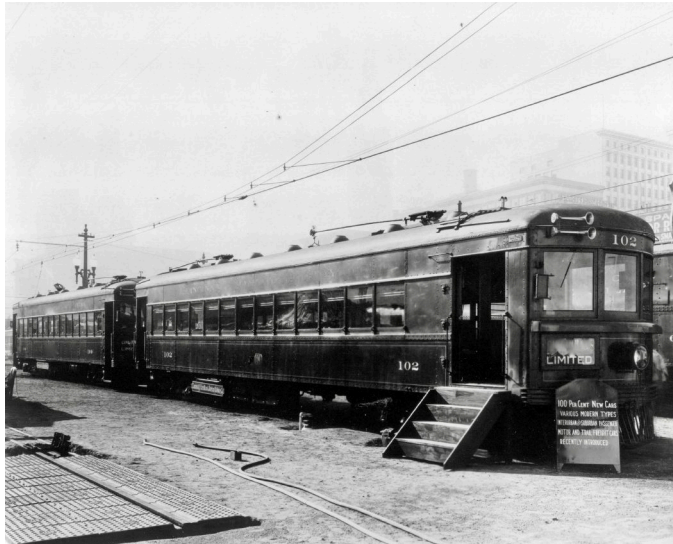
plus the complete overhaul of sixteen out of twenty two existing Birney safety cars. In support of the freight business 40 C.E.R.A. (Central Electric Railway Association) standard box cars and a new 50-ton freight motor (Kuhlman Car Co.) were also purchased.



No. #603 Freight Motor - Cincinnati Car Co. (1928)

The new interurban's exteriors were in a brilliant Tuscan red Duco finish with interiors including leather seats and colors resembling that of saddle leather. The interior color selection driven by the preponderance of local industries whose worker's clothing would have been exposed to long periods of oily conditions. Interiors

feature mahogany woodwork, center dome lights, and cream ceilings. The double-truck one-man, two-man cars were similarly decorated. A considerable amount of consideration was given to design, both physical and paint, to insure an image of modernity and speed as management worried that steam trains "looked fast" and they sought to counter this image.

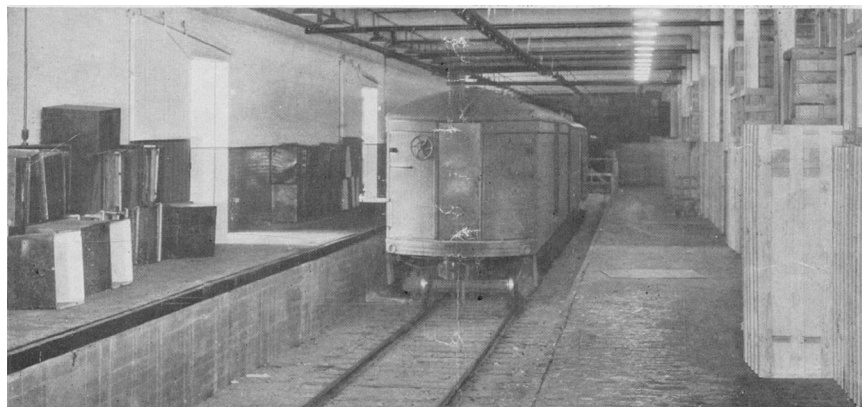


No. #102 & 109 On Display At Traction Convention - Kuhlman Car Co. (1926)

Success was also achieved in increasing the freight business utilizing the new interurban freight

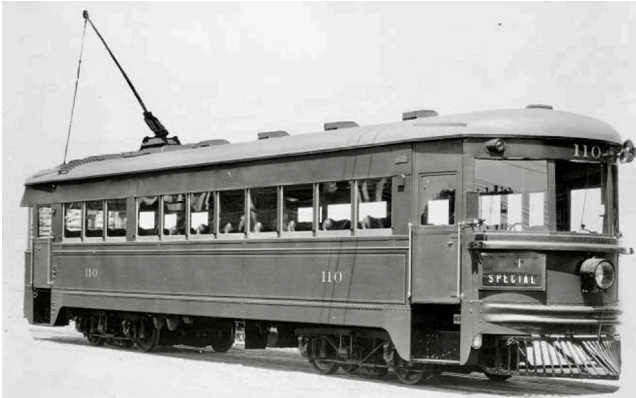
equipment, often operated at night, and he was also quite successful in establishing through rates for LCL with some steam railroads.

With the onset of the Great Depression (1929-1939) the company president merged the profitable line he had created with two connecting interurbans that were essential for passenger and particularly freight connections.



Loading Freight Inside New General Motors Delco-Frigidaire Plant C. 1927

Following what had been his successful strategy when forming our line in 1926 he borrowed heavily to invest new equipment including aluminum high speed passenger cars from the Cincinnati Car Company. The new company resulting from the merger was named for the city at its southern endpoint and a geological feature carved by glacial ice at its northern end. Connections were also made with two additional critical connecting interurban companies on the northern end of the line. For a time the interline freight service was the longest continuous, same equipment, interurban freight service to ever operate in the United States.



No. #110 - One of Twenty New High Speed Cars Acquired By Successor Company - Cincinnati Car Co. (1930)

The collapse of the U.S. economy brought about increasing financial losses and declining operations. Two essential connecting lines entered bankruptcy and closed. The expanded line established in 1930 was abandoned in 1939.



Removing Track - (1935)



Library Committee



Library Committee

A Library Committee meeting and workshop is scheduled onsite for May 11, 2024 from 10AM to 2PM.

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 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: May 11; July 13; Sept 14; Nov 9

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



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

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<http://www.trolleyuseum.org>



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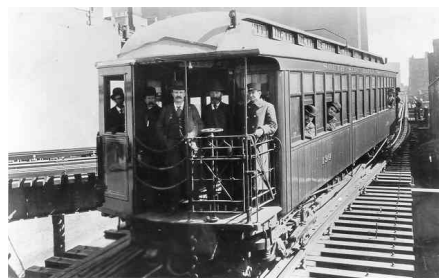


Wandering through the collection -

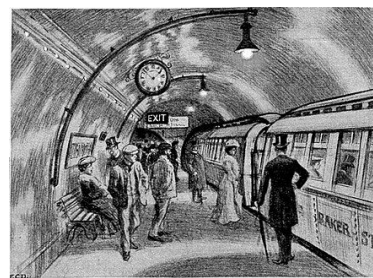
What do the world's largest refracting telescope, the Union Loop in Chicago, and the Bakerloo, Piccadilly, and Northern Tubes in London, UK have in common?



Yerkes
Observatory

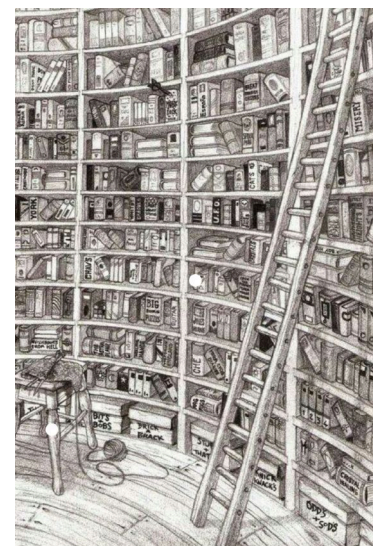


Chicago



The London Tubes

This month's "wandering" is more about backing into the collection than starting out there. I was reading an article about the refurbishment and reopening to the public of the 1897 Yerkes Observatory at Williams Bay on Lake Geneva in southeastern Wisconsin. The observatory contains the largest refracting telescope (40 inches [1 meter]) in the world. As a side note there is a slightly larger (43 inches) refractor in the Roque de los Muchachos Observatory at La Palma, Spain, run by the Institute for Solar Physics of Stockholm University. However, La Palma is a solar telescope, constructed in 2002, and there are some technical differences that allow a polite dispute as to "the world's largest". Should you care, a refracting telescope, such as the Yerkes, uses lenses to collect and magnify light while a reflecting telescope (also called a reflector) is a



care, a refracting telescope, such as the Yerkes, uses lenses to collect and magnify light while a reflecting telescope (also called a reflector) is a

telescope that uses a single or a combination of curved mirrors that reflect light and form an image - think Mt. Palomar Observatory with its 200 inch mirror, "huge" 70 years ago, now dwarfed by reflectors such as the Hobby-Eberly in Texas with its mirror diameter of 32 feet.

OK - so why, in a mostly street railway oriented publication, am I rattling on about telescopes? In reading the telescope article the name Yerkes, Charles T. Yerkes to be exact, rang a slight transit bell, pardon the weak pun, and hence I wandered into the files.

I found that Charles T. Yerkes had moved to Chicago in 1882 and bought an option on a street-railway line. Over the next 15 years, Yerkes used stock in one line as collateral to acquire the next, and the next, and so on to create the tangle of companies that became his transit system. He replaced horse-cars with cable traction, added 500 additional miles of lines, installed electricity for 240 miles of his system, and constructed the north-side elevated tracks and the Union Loop, which circles downtown Chicago.

In creating his Chicago empire it is probably accurate to say that he used whatever means necessary to achieve his ends and his reputation suffered.

In 1892, George Ellery Hale, a University of Chicago professor, learned that America's premier telescope lens maker, Alvan G. Clark, had a pair of optically flawless glass disks, 42 inches (1.07 m) in diameter, perfect for the world's largest refracting telescope. With the help of William Rainey Harper, the University of Chicago president, Hale approached Charles T. Yerkes, a wealthy Chicago businessman, about funding a new, prestigious observatory. Yerkes agreed and it is suggested by some that he saw this as an opportunity to restore his reputation. Unfortunately Mr. Yerkes donation of some \$285,375 (about \$9.7 million today), with resultant naming rights, was not totally successful in refurbishing his image.

Yerkes eventually sold his interests in the financially burdened streetcar and elevated systems to transit barons Peter Widener and William Elkins. He proceeded to London to invest in converting its subways from steam to electricity. He founded the Underground Electric Railways Company of London (UERL) in 1902, ultimately moving towards a unified and cooperative transport system, again by such means as he deemed necessary

The observatory had many astronomical breakthroughs in its years in service but after 120 years in operation, the University of Chicago ceased operations at Yerkes on Oct. 1, 2018 and the university had considered selling the observatory to an out-of-state developer. Ultimately, ownership was instead transferred to the non-profit Yerkes Future Foundation in May 2020, which began restoration and renovation of the historic building and grounds. In May 2022 the observatory reopened for public tours.

And, of course, the answer to the initial question is: **Charles T. Yerkes!**



The NEERHS Annual Meeting (Additional material continued from page 1):

After the most welcome provision of coffee and donut holes the day began with a 9AM guided tour of the Model Railroad Building led by Katie Orlando, Executive Director and Steve Berg, Director of Museum Operations. The Maine Central Model Railroad layout although still in the process of reassembly in the new building is quite amazing. The product of decades of work by Harold and Helen Beal of Jonesport, ME.



l to r - Ben Hickey, Model Railroad Building Manager, Katie Orlando, Executive Director of Seashore, and Steve Berg, Director of Museum Operations discuss the model railroad while standing behind the Jonesport segment of the layout.

Most everyone by now has read something about the layout but you have to see it to appreciate both its enormity (some 1,000 square feet, 4,000 trees, 500 train cars, 3,000 feet of track, etc.) and the amazing detail. The model had to be cut apart to be moved from Jonesport and reassembly is somewhat different due to building configuration and compliance with access and egress requirements of the safety codes. Consequently there is still realignment, patching, and painting underway. Also many photographs of the layout in its original location to help guide reassembly. One fascinating aspect is that several actual Maine locations are represented in the model. One segment represents Jonesport, the Beal's hometown, including a model of their home. In the Jonesport section even the tiny human figures represent actual residents of the town.



Maine Agriculture (Generic)



The Queen City
of
BANGOR



At 10AM Connecticut open car #303 and closed car #1160 took members to Talbot Park for a remembrance of Seashore Volunteer Devon Hubner, who passed away unexpectedly on 2/1/24.

Karen Dooks, Seashore Librarian and Library Committee Chair setting up the library book sale table in the lobby of the Visitor's Center.



The Annual Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Rob Drye shortly after 11AM. Rob Drye, Board Chair; Jim Schantz, President & CEO; and Katie Orlando, Executive Director reported on the state of the museum.



Rob Drye, Board Chair



*Jim Schantz, President & CEO



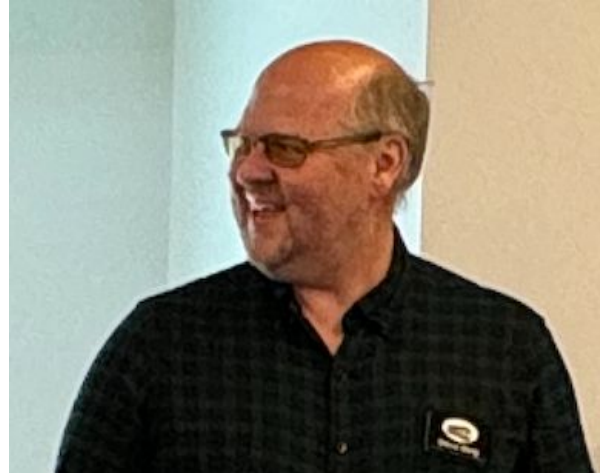
Katie Orlando, Executive Director

*My apologies - my limited photographic skills led me to getting an unsatisfactory picture of Jim Schantz - hence the above is a stock image from last year.

Various department heads and professional staff presented reports including:



Karen Dooks, Seashore Librarian presenting the Library and Archive Report. These included the various ongoing activities involving collection intake, cleaning, cataloguing and preservation.



Steve Berg, Director of Museum Operations gave an update on Capital Projects including the planning and initial ground preparation for the new maintenance equipment building which will include a bus inspection and servicing bay. Steve also reported on the planning for a new library facility and presented preliminary architectural plans.

After the Annual Meeting a very tasty Taco Lunch was available with proceeds supporting Nagasaki Car #134.

Coordinator of Educational Services – John Mercurio using the platform public address system to announce the Trustee Election results with Karen Dooks & James van Bokkelen elected to the position of elected trustees.



Your editor was not able to stay for the Volunteer & Donor Appreciation Dinner so no photos. However there are many good ones on the Seashore Facebook site.

