



Vol 16

# THE MAIN LINE



No 9

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

November 2024

**(CORRECTED VERSION 11/17/2024)**



## Goings On at Seashore —

On Saturday, November 30 the Museum Store and Model Railroad Building will be open for the Chamber's Pajama Shopping Day from 9:30AM-5PM.

## Events

The next big and year-ending event is Christmas Prelude, which will be held eight days this year instead of the six of previous years. The two extra days will be model railroad only days - opening the model railroad building only (no trolley rides) on Thursdays December 5 & 12 from 9:30AM-4PM. Tickets in-person for \$3 each, and guests will have the opportunities to operate the layout (depends on staff available to assist).

**Christmas Prelude Trolley Rides** will take place Friday-Sunday December 6-8 and 13-15 from 9:30AM-5:30PM; rides will depart from the Visitors Center every 30 minutes beginning at 9:30AM, with no 12PM or 12:30PM trolley rides (crew rest break).

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



# Do You Recognize ?

Last Month's Do You Recognize -

Our Company Of Interest last month was a transportation company formed in a 1902 merger between several interurban and street railways including

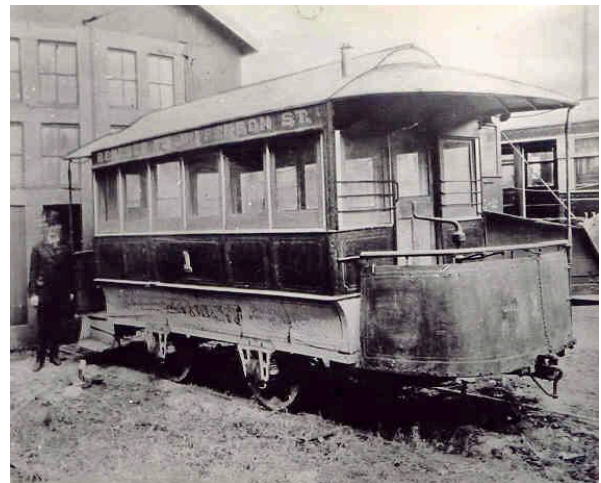


An Early View of Downtown of our Line's Headquarters City. Equines and Electrics Meet - No sign of Internal Combustion.

three city railways, four suburban railways with a fifth acquired later and another leased. The merged line maintained streetcar networks throughout the western part of New York State: and a single line in the adjacent province of Ontario.

In 1899 the International Traction Company was formed to begin consolidation of many of the area transit providers in and radiating

from its headquarters city. In 1902 the transit company formed the International Railway Company subsidiary to unify some 15 smaller transport entities under common control through various purchase and lease arrangements in the western part of New York and the southern portion of Ontario. Our company maintained multiple streetcar networks in the New York State and a single line in Ontario. In addition it



Horsecar #1 of a Predecessor Line Possibly a Peterson & Corbin Product



Interior of Private Parlor Car For Transporting Dignitaries. Brill (1898) Originally for Predecessor Line. On Separate Occasions Transported U.S. President William McKinley and the Future King Edward VIII of the United Kingdom

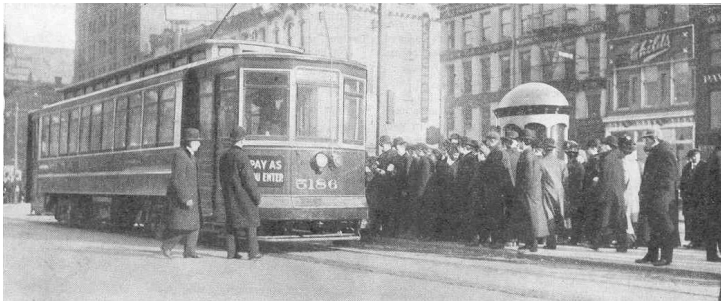
operated an interurban route between Buffalo and Niagara Falls inherited from a predecessor line with a new line constructed to bypass congestion on the original line after the 1902 mergers. A second interurban, made up of two predecessor lines, ran from Buffalo to Olcott Beach on lake Ontario. A somewhat interesting feature of this second interurban was the fact that, when ultimately it was double-tracked, one track was

owned by our line and the other by the paralleling Erie Railroad that leased it to our line for interurban operation. By 1904 the system had 373 miles of trackage and operated over 950 cars of various ancestry.

In 1923 the parent International Traction Company formed a subsidiary, International Bus Company, and beginning



No. #3032 - Light Duty City Car  
G. C. Kuhlman Car Company - 1903



No. #5186 - PAYE Car  
G. C. Kuhlman Car Company - 1907

that year an ongoing gradual shift to buses and with some bus routes established paralleling the company's existing rail routes. In 1926 two interurban bus routes were established the company's two principle cities although, in this case, interurban rail on the route didn't end until 1937. In 1937

all interurban rail service was discontinued and much of the service replaced with buses of the bus subsidiary that the parent transit company had formed in 1923.

Freight service continued on a portion of the interurban trackage leased from the above-mentioned railroad with 3 steeple cab locomotives until 1950, when the lease was terminated and the operation returned to the lessor railroad.



No. #6037 - Nearside Car  
J.G. Brill Company - 1911

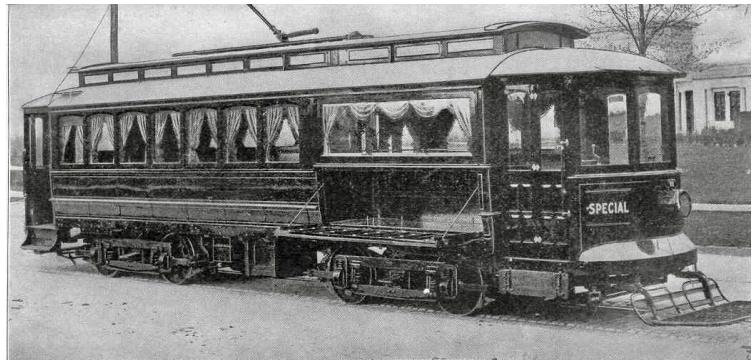
In 1947 the Niagara Frontier Transit System (later the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority) was created to reorganize our declining company. Finally in 1950 our company reorganized and transferred its assets to the public transit system. At the time of the transfer the public entity continued operation of three streetcar routes.

Our company's fleet was initially made up of a diverse collection of equipment inherited from the many merged lines. Some of the first cars had been constructed by Patterson & Corbin Carriage Makers - aka Patterson & Corbin. The company moved towards some level of standardization as it became necessary to add to and replace the initially inherited fleet. Beginning in 1911 through 1913 the company purchased over 350

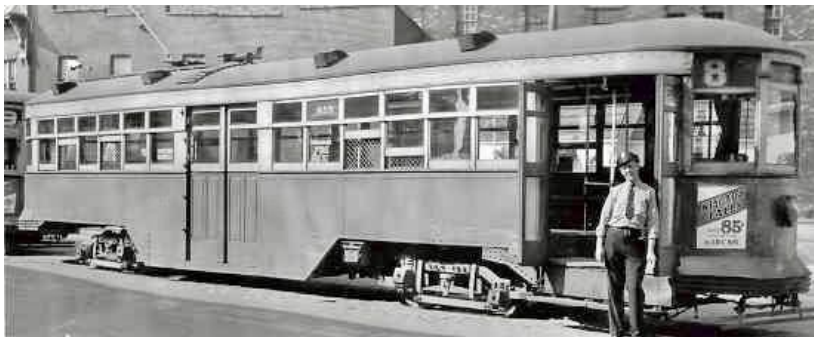


No. #6074 - Nearside Car  
G. C. Kuhlman Car Company - 1912

Nearside cars from J.G. Brill on the advice of our company's management firm - some of the Nearside cars were built by Kuhlman, a Brill subsidiary beginning in 1904. The management firm had designed the Nearside in-house for use by our company and two other firms for which



Funeral Car  
J.G. Brill Company - 1916



No. #149 - Peter Witt Car  
G. C. Kuhlman Car Company - 1917

they provided management services. Between 1917 and 1919 the company also ordered 130 Peter Witt cars from Kuhlman to supplement the larger Nearside cars. These two types became the mainstay of the operation. Various

other cars including special purpose and work cars were also acquired over the years as well as rebuilds of portions of the inherited fleet.



This Month's Do You Recognize-

This Month's Do You Recognize operation is a bit more complex as it involves two electric lines operating at the same time and intertwined by a partial lease of one by the other. The first being an electric railroad, initially narrow gauge that began as a horse and mule powered



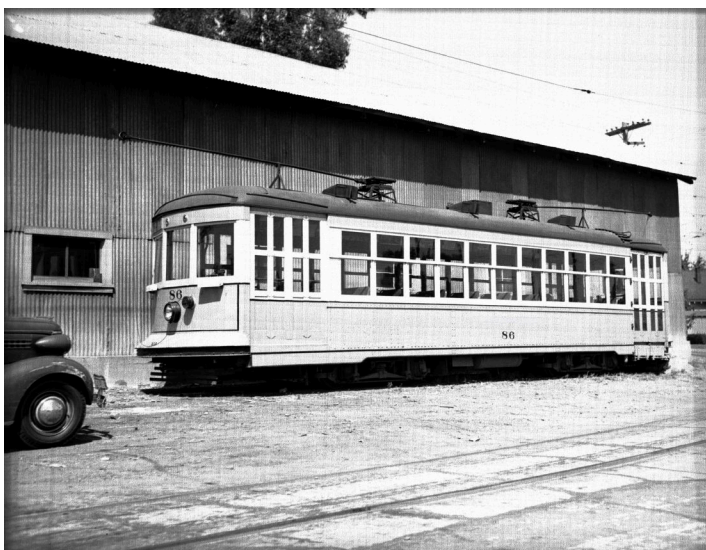
No.#3 - Freight Motor - American Car Co. 1906

railway in 1874. This system was renamed an electric railroad 1891 with the first electric cars operating on 15 July 1892. The system was converted to standard gauge during 1905-1906. The second electric line - the traction company - was incorporated on 7 August 1905 as a second streetcar line for the citizens of its origin city and an alternative to the

existing narrow gauge electric railroad. Electric passenger service began on 1 September 1907 with local trolley service competing with the above mentioned electric railroad and interurban service in direct competition with a major steam railroad. In August of 1910 the line had reached the city that would be its end point and passenger trains



No.#6 - Freight Motor - Company Shops 1921



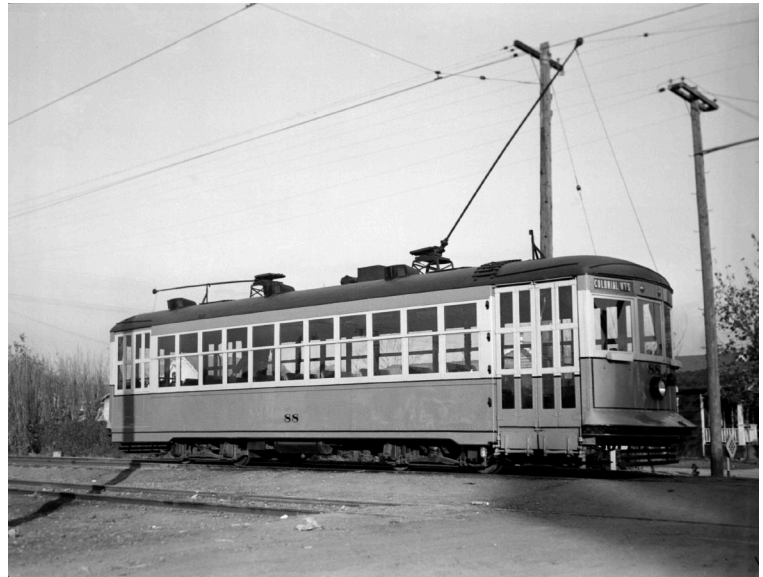
No.#86 - Passenger Motor - St. Louis Car Co. 1925

began through service. The interurban used 600 volt overhead catenary in three cities that it served and 1,200 volt DC third rail between them. Freight service followed with merchandise, livestock, and produce (primarily grapes, strawberries, and sugar beets). At its peak, this interurban was operating 36 passenger trains a day.

It became evident that there was not the demand for the

two trolley operations and on 22 May 1915 the trolley operations were merged through the electric railroad leasing the trolley trackage of the traction company while the traction company focused on its interurban passenger and freight operation

In 1928 there was an attempt to sell the traction company to competing steam railroad. A struggle for control by three major steam railroads was decided in 1936 when the ICC awarded the three railroads shared control of the interurban. With the impact of the Great Depression, and the struggle for control, the interurban fell on hard



No.#88 - Passenger Motor - St. Louis Car Co. 1925



No.#24 - Locomotive - Second Hand 60 Ton - Baldwin-Westinghouse 1944

times and on 4 February 4 1933 the interurban operated its last passenger train.

Freight operations continued under wire until 1946 when the move from electricity to diesel was begun with the purchase of two GE 44-tonners (Nos #25 & 26). On

24 December 1947 the line completed dieselization. The traction company still operates residual freight operations, partially over a portion of the original route and some leased trackage.

The urban streetcar service survived until 28 September 1941 when



No.#10 - Freight Motor - Cincinnati Car Co. (1930)  
Acquired Second Hand in 1938 with two other similar units  
(Nos. # 8 & 9)

the electric railroad, having been sold to a large transit company in 1939, was converted to buses.

From 1906 through 1943 the origin city for the interurban was also served by trolleys of an energy and railway company. It sold these services in 1943 and they were converted to bus by the new owners in 1947.

The images in our collection were mostly taken in the 1937-40 range so the traction company was out of the passenger business and the electric railroad in its final years.



**Library Committee**

**Library Committee**

The next Library Committee workshop is scheduled on December 14, 2024 from 10AM -2PM.

The next Library Committee meeting followed by a workshop is scheduled on January 11, 2025 from 10AM -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 - 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

Meeting Dates for 2025 with Business Meeting followed by workshop:  
Jan 11; Mar 8; May 10; July 12; Sept 13; Nov 8

Scheduled workshop dates for 2024: Dec 14

Workshop Dates for 2025: Feb 8; Apr 12; June 10; Aug 9 ; Oct 11; Dec 13



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 has uploaded 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/)  
[https://digitalmaine.com/trolley\\_documents/](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](mailto:TheMainLine@ramsdell.com) . You can also find the most recent (18 +/-) issues on the museum's website at: <https://trolleymuseum.org/seashore-trolley-museum-library/library-newsletter/> Note: The most recent issue generally is available on the above site within two or three days of publication.

Regards,

Ed Ramsdell, Editor

*The Main Line*

[TheMainLine@ramsdell.com](mailto:TheMainLine@ramsdell.com)

<http://www.trolleymuseum.org>





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



## Wandering through the collection -

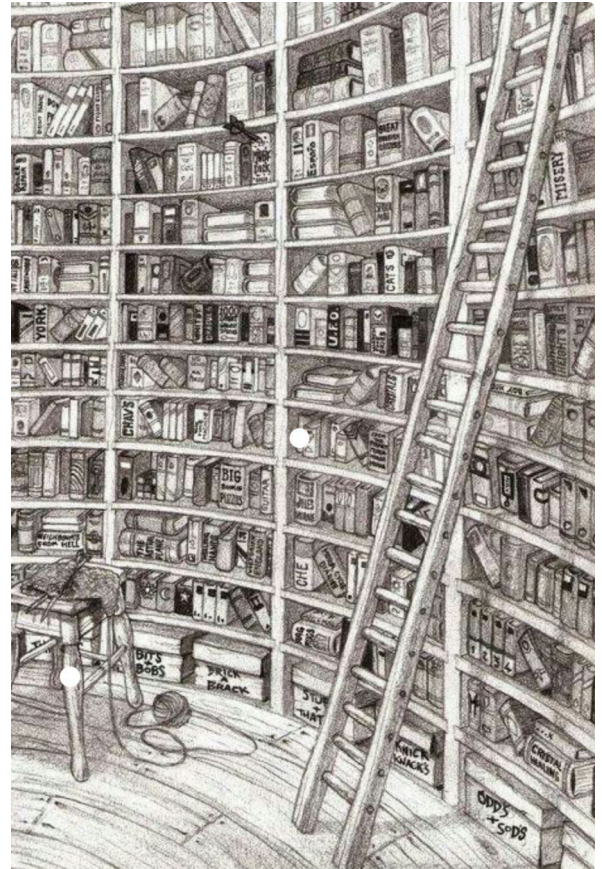
From an obviously dusty engineering dictionary.

Have you ever been bored enough to wonder why our electric overhead is called catenary?

The word catenary is derived from the Latin word for “chain” (catenam). Various sources attribute the English word "catenary" to Thomas Jefferson, who wrote it in a letter to Thomas Paine describing the arch of a bridge.

The term "catenary" refers to the curve that an “idealized” hanging chain or cable assumes under its own weight when supported only at its ends.

Catenaries are used in architecture and engineering, such as in the design of bridges and arches, so that forces do not result in bending moments. In the railway industry it refers to the overhead wiring that transfers power to trains. This often includes supporting a contact wire and in such a case it actually does not follow a true catenary curve.





# 2024 Season Events!

195 Log Cabin Road | Kennebunkport, Maine

Open 9:30AM-4:30PM on  
Wednesday—Sunday from  
June 1 thru October 27 and  
weekends in May and  
December.

## June



= Experience our Pump Car!



**Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>: Speeder Day!** Take a ride on one of several Speeders visiting Seashore for the day.

**Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> Pride Day.** \$3 from each ticket sold this weekend will benefit local LGBTQ+ nonprofits.

**Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>: Dog Appreciation Day.** Dogs are welcome every day at the Museum; come today for special dog-friendly door prizes!

**Saturday-Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>: "I've Driven By Several Times But I've Never Been Down the Driveway" Days.** Free admission to York County, Maine residents who have never been to our museum.



**Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup>: Father's Day.** Fathers' admissions are free! Behind the Scenes Shop Tours will be offered at 11AM and 1PM.

**Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>: New Hampshire Day.** To honor New Hampshire's statehood anniversary, car 38 and City of Manchester will be featured. Residents of NH get in for \$6.03! (All children 16 and under are free).

**Saturday-Sunday, June 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>: Dino Trolley!** A Seashore fan favorite for youth of all ages. Admission includes several dino-themed activities across campus and a 2D dino hunt on our railway.

## August

**Saturday-Sunday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>: Model Railroad Weekend.** Get the chance to operate our new Maine Central Model Railroad!

**Saturday-Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>: Dino Trolley!** A Seashore fan favorite for youth of all ages. Admission includes several dino-themed activities across campus and a 2D dino hunt on our railway.

**Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup>: Corn Hole Tournament.** Register in advance online. Cash prize! Proceeds benefit Seashore.

**Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup>: Ham Radio Day.** The York County Amateur Radio Club will be operating throughout the day. "Get on the air" and meet new radio friends from around the world!



**Saturday-Sunday, August 31<sup>st</sup>-Sept 1<sup>st</sup>: Seashore Celebrates 85 Years.** Join us for a trolley parade and fundraiser dinner to support Seashore. More information is available at <https://trolleyuseum.org/event/85years>

## September

**Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>: All Women Crew Day.** Celebrate the role women have played in transit history.

**Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>: Grandparent's Day.** Free admission for grandparents.



**Saturday-Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>: Teacher Appreciation Days.** To show our appreciation, teachers' admission is free!

## Wednesdays in July & August Ice Cream Night!

Join us from 5:30PM-7PM for ice cream sundaes and a trolley ride! Admission is only \$12/per person; children 2 and under are free.

We partner with a different nonprofit from our community at each Ice Cream Night, and they will get 50% of the proceeds! Check out our website Event Calendar for a list of benefiting nonprofits.

## Pumpkin Patch Trolley

**Fridays-Sundays & Indigenous Peoples' Day  
September 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> and October 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> & October 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>**

Ride a trolley to Seashore's Pumpkin Patch; all guests get to pick out a pumpkin. On Saturdays, Sundays, and Indigenous Peoples' Day enjoy fun, fall festive family games and activities for all ages!

## July

**Saturday, July 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>: Happy Birthday Seashore** Celebrate our 85th birthday with treats and docent-guided tours.



**Saturday, July 6 10AM: Walking Tour: Early Seashore Days.** Enjoy a docent-guided walking tour of the original ten acres acquired by the founding members of Seashore in 1939.

**Saturday, July 6 12PM: Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Wheeling No. 639!** Bring a birthday card, a photo you've taken of 639 at Seashore, or a photo in your collection of 639 in service to add to a temporary exhibit.

**Sunday, July 7 10AM-1PM: Behind-the-Scenes Restoration Shop Tours.**

**Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup>: Moxie Day.** Free samples of Moxie and Diet Moxie.

**Saturday-Sunday July 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>: First Responder Days.** To show our appreciation, first responders' admission is free.

**Saturday-Sunday July 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>: Daniel Tiger Visits Seashore!** Visit Seashore Trolley Museum on July 27 & 28 to meet Daniel Tiger from the PBS KIDS series Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood!

## October



**Friday - Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup>: Happy Trolleyween!** Trick-or-treat around campus and participate in our "ghost hunt" for a chance to win a free 2025 Family Membership! Costumes are encouraged.

## December

**Friday-Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Prelude Trolley Rides!** Ride on heated, decked out trolleys, free hot chocolate, SANTA and more! Check out our website for the details as the event gets closer, and be sure to purchase tickets in advance of your visit.

### Regular Admission

Adults (ages 17 – 59): \$15.00  
Adults (ages 60+) and  
Children (ages 6-16): \$13.00  
Children (ages 3 – 5): \$7.00  
Children (ages 0-2): Free!

### Become a Member!

Individual Membership: \$40  
Youth up to age 18: \$25  
Plus 1 Guest & Family  
Memberships: \$60

For more information, the most up-to-date schedule,  
and to purchase tickets, please visit  
[www.trolleyuseum.org](http://www.trolleyuseum.org)