



Vol 17

THE MAIN LINE



No 02

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

April 2025

Goings On at Seashore —

This year's Annual Meeting of the New England Electric Railway Historical Society (d/b/a Seashore Trolley Museum), will be held at Seashore on Saturday, April 26. In addition to our official meetings, there is a great day of fun activities and fellowship planned. This event is open to all members and their families.

Spring Has Arrived -

Opening Day at Seashore Trolley Museum will be on Saturday, May 3rd. The museum will be open and operating trolleys weekends in May, and Wednesdays-Sundays from June 1st through October 26. Regular admission hours this season will continue to be 9:30AM-4:30PM. The National Streetcar Museum at Lowell, continues to be open year-round, on Saturdays and Sundays from 11AM-4PM.

Check out Seashore's 2025 Special Events Calendar [HERE](#);

Additional Events

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

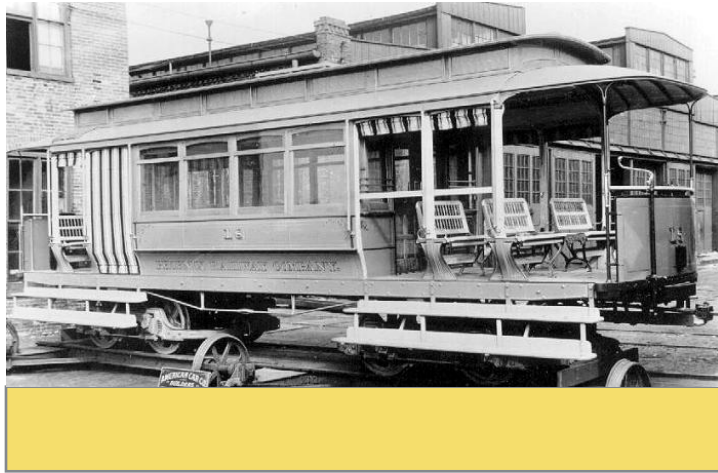
The Main Line - Volume 17

We have arrived at another one of those thresholds - Actually we got there last month, but I can't count. The March 2025 edition of *The Main Line* began our 17th year of this monthly bulletin. If you are counting, (the primary question would be why?) including March that's 194 issues including 2 extras and 1 two-month issue. The delay in this announcement was that I numbered February 2025 the same as January - (Vol 16 No 11) so we got to Vol 17 a month late before I noticed. Really glad I wasted our mutual time explaining that - now onward! Thanks for bearing with us.



Do You Recognize ?

Last Month's Do You recognize -

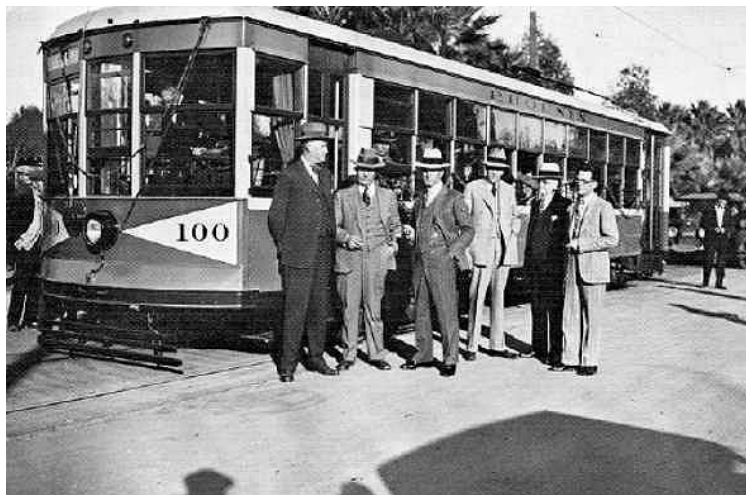


Last month's system, the Phoenix Street Railway, was founded in 1887 and used horse and mule cars over a two-mile route growing to eight miles within six years. The founder, Moses Hazeltine Sherman a Vermont native, was involved in land development and traction in several western states including the building of lines

that formed a major part of the E.H. Harriman empire. Beginning in 1893 our system was completely electrified in reasonably short order. The line proved popular with the inhabitants and, as with many traction companies, helped shape the growth of its host city. In 1911, the first of several planned interurban lines



California-type car No. # 19 - American Car Co. (1913)



The new fleet arrives - Double Truck Birney. - American Car Co. (1928)

opened - this line closed in 1927 after the system's sale to the City of Phoenix. Additional lines planned at the time were never constructed. A potential competitor arose in 1912 and surveyed several routes and did some minor construction but then faded from the scene by 1914. The system reached its height in the 1920s with several line extensions and by 1925 there were six lines

encompassing 33.6 miles of track transporting some seven million passengers a year. While popular, the line encountered growing financial

problems and by the early 1920s the city was threatening to revoke its franchises for non-performance. Sherman had moved on west in 1890 to new development and traction prospects after a squabble with the city over water development rights. This may have led to some loss of interest and other focus for the founder. Hearings were held on suspending the company's franchises and various motor bus companies were



Double Truck Birney. - American Car Co. (1928)



Double Truck Birneys. - American Car Co. (1928)

seeking franchises of their own. However, In 1925, after a public ballot question, the city purchased the street railway line.

Improved service including reduced headways and new cars increased ridership. A significant step was the

purchase in 1927-28 of eighteen new double-truck Birneys from J.G. Brill's American Car Company subsidiary. These were the core of the fleet through World War II with buses replacing streetcars on several routes after the war. In the last years the company operated service over four lines with seventeen of the

double-truck Birneys. October 1947 saw a massive fire destroy the central car barn and most of the streetcar fleet. City officials faced the decision to either rebuild the fleet or use buses. Buses were chosen as an alternative



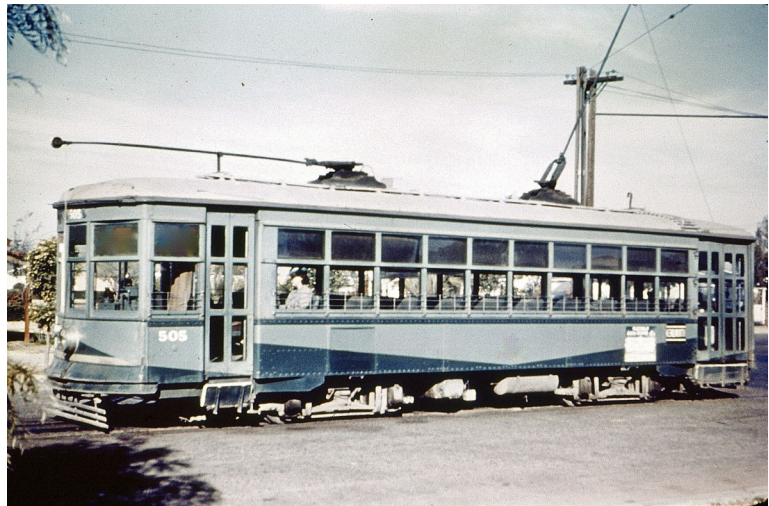
Double Truck Birney No. 517 - American Car Co. (1928)

to rebuilding the fleet and the streetcar system was abandoned in February 1948. Conspiracy theorists raised the possibility that this was the way for the city to get out of the streetcar business once and for all. However, as lovers of streetcar history know, wooden stuff including carbarns tends to burn and it is probable that the most likely culprit was carelessness rather than evil intent.



Double Truck Birney. - American Car Co. (1928)

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Double Truck Birney No. 505 - American Car Co. (1928)

As a point of information, notations with the color images indicate that these were probably taken in February of 1942 at about the time of renumbering the cars to the 500 series.

Interestingly, light rail returned to the city just slightly over 60 years after the last run.



Do You Recognize?

This Month's Do You recognize -

Our railway of interest this month operated a 57 mile interurban line



No. #80 Interurban - Niles Car & Mfg. Co. (1908)

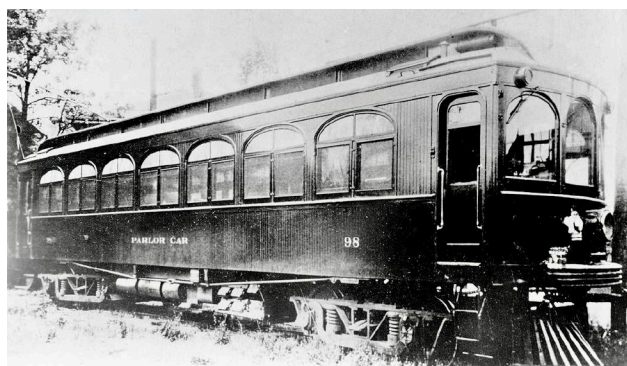
between two county seats in the same state. The southerly endpoint was the most populous city in the state. Both endpoint cities were known for products made from agricultural materials - grain for the southernmost and milk for the northern.

Our railway was incorporated on October 25, 1905 with offices and shops located on

the line 19 miles from the south endpoint. Actual track construction got underway some six months after incorporation with first operation from the southern city to the location of the main offices and shops taking place almost exactly two years following incorporation with another 14 miles opened some 10 days later. Another 11 months saw the entire 57 mile line opened in September of



No. #89 Interurban - Niles Car & Mfg. Co. (1908)



No. #10 Interurban - Later converted to Parlor Car and numbered #98 - Niles Car & Mfg. Co. (1908)

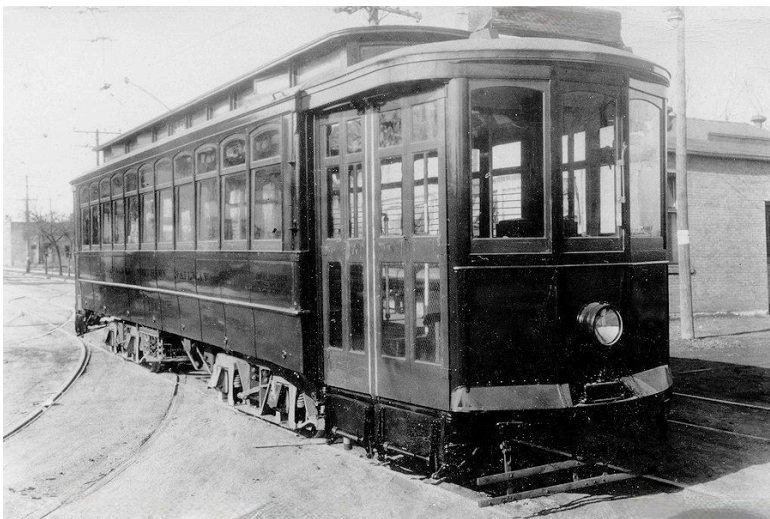
1908. In November of 1907 the company also opened streetcar service in the southerly endpoint city. Initial plans called for a 57 route-mile interurban (112 track-miles).

In 1922 our railway was acquired by the largest electric railway and electric utility system in the state that had combined several earlier horsecar, steam dummy, and streetcar lines into one system.

The next year our line's terminal in the southern endpoint city was closed and operations moved to the Public Service Building built in 1905 by our line's new owners. Deluxe parlor car service also was begun over the interurban in 1923. Further consolidation of facilities took place in 1925 with the movement of the northerly endpoint's terminal into a new facility shared with another electric railway. In 1928 our line was officially merged into the railway that acquired the line in 1922.



No. #3 Interurban (renumbered #82) -
Niles Car & Mfg. Co. (1907)

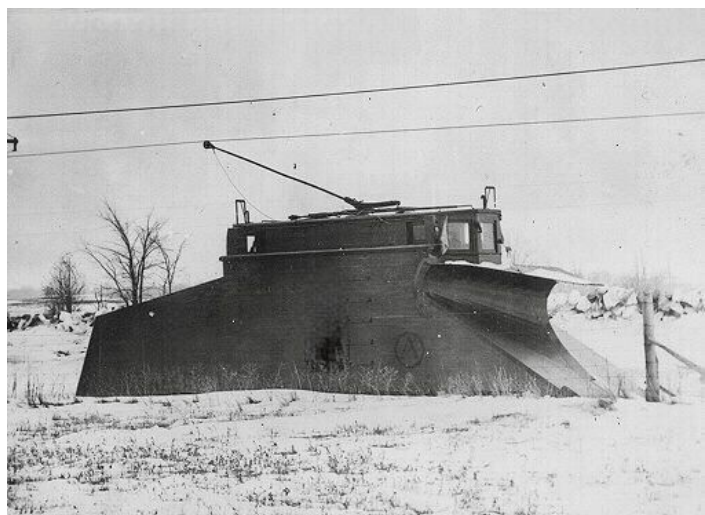


No. #104 City Car - St. Louis Car Co. (1904)
In 1927 rebuilt by successor company as three truck train

Our railway was mostly a Niles Car & Mfg. Co. client up until its acquisition in 1922 and merger in 1928. The acquiring road purchased equipment from several manufacturers including St. Louis Car co., Kuhlman, Pullman, and J.G. Brill. Kuhlman was also used in some rebuilds, probably including some of our line's original cars.

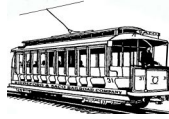
In 1938 the parent electric railway and light company was reorganized as an electric power company with control of transit operations moved to a new electric railway and transport subsidiary.

Electric railway economics and the great depression began to catch up with our line in 1940 with the abandonment of approximately half of the



No. #A Plow - Russell Car and Snow Plow Co.
(1908)

interurban line. At the end of WW-2 the remaining southerly portion was sold to a motor coach line in September 1945, changing hands again to another transit company in 1947, with abandonment of the electric railway line coming in 1948. A small part of the railway was kept to provide freight service to a power plant - this ended in the 1970s.



Library Committee



Library Committee

The next Library Committee meeting and workshop is scheduled on May 10, 2025 from 10AM -2PM.

The next Library Committee workshop is scheduled on June 14, 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.

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

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

Workshop Dates for 2025: Apr 12; June14; Aug 9 ; Oct 11; Dec 13



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 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_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 . 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

<http://www.trolleymuseum.org>



Wandering through the collection -

The “Other Seashore” -

Last month this section was devoted to the relatively short-lived “North Terminal” operation of Seashore just north of the US-1 bridge over the CSX (née Pan Am, née B&M) rail line in the late 1950s and early 1960s. There were a number of comments and remembrances from readers who remembered the northern operation and/or worked at it - following are some excerpts:

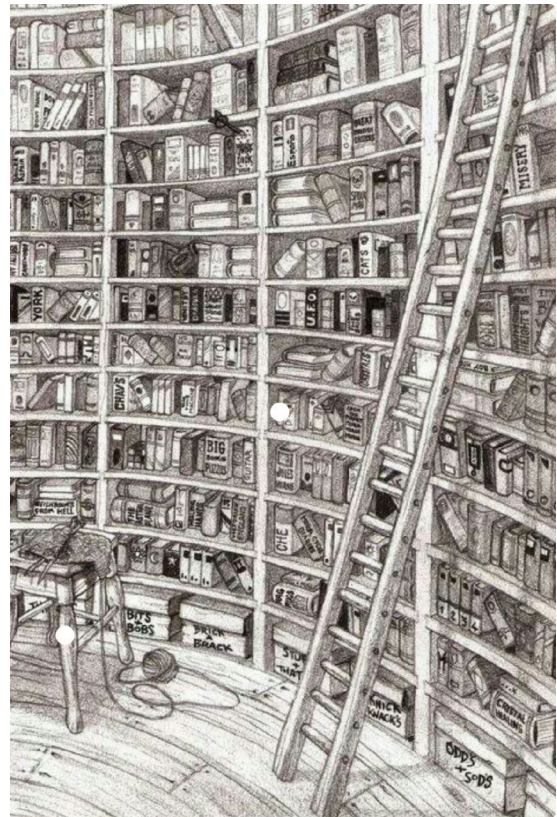
Kevin Farrell noted: *“The thought at the time was get the public out of the main museum area and focus on a new longer ride that would be visible by the public traveling on route 1. One of the immediate problems was that you saw the cars from the Route 1 Bridge and by that time you had to make a 180 degree turn on to a small road. Signs were added to the Terminal building to help the public see the cars. Some of the cars that came to Seashore were delivered directly to The Terminal operation. Type 5 5734 was delivered from Everett Shops to The Terminal in early May, 1959 and went into daily operation. "Liverpool's Last Tram 293 was also delivered there.*

By 1962 it was apparent that the Terminal operation was costing a lot of money and while attracting a lot of people, most people were still coming over to the main location where the majority of the collection was. The decision was made to resume operations and rides at the main location and stop the operation at The Terminal.

Gradually the cars got moved back to the property. The Terminal building where the gift shop was, became a secondary bunkhouse where some of the Shop employees would stay while working for the summer season, beginning in 1964-1968.

Materials stored in the storage building were gradually moved over to the main location as well. The trolley wire was taken down and reused at the main location.

Eventually many years later, the buildings there were burned down in a controlled exercise with the local fire department.



Barbara Gladney actually worked on the north end and she notes: *"The summer of 1955 or 56, on summer break from Radcliffe, I worked at Seashore as tour guide, initiated and operated a new little gift shop (including Seashore streetcar calendars and T- shirts), and fed supper to the troops. Not a great cook, it was usually tuna casserole or beans. Most were there just on weekends, so they put up with it. And, of course being female, I did the dishes. I remember painting the walls of a small house in the north end. It was across the street from tourist cottages, where I stayed when I visited after the summer season. During that summer I rented a room in a home up from the main part of Seashore."*

Ernie Eaton passed along a YouTube link that contains part of some 8mm home movie film that his uncle shot at Seashore in the late 1950s - at least partially of the north end. He notes: *"Hi Ed, I think this video might be of interest as it relates to your recent Main Line issue . It is from 8mm home movies taken by my uncle in the late 50s. At least some of this was filmed at the Biddeford location. Feel free to share the link if you like."*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DGG_yZgeVI

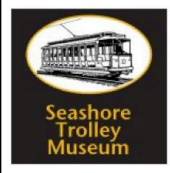
Karl Johnson sent along some comments and a photo that his father had taken at the North Terminal. He noted: *"Thank you for the last edition of the Main Line. It is always nice to see older photos of the museum. I never did see the Terminal when it was active. Like you, this is what I recall back (in) Sept. 1964 driving by the place. That's my Dad's car (Frank Johnson Jr., a long time member). He also took the photo. He used to stay at the terminal on occasion. At this point from what I can piece together the Sterling Engine had been relocated to the main museum on Log Cabin Rd. So the pole being on the wire didn't mean anything (I don't think). The Liverpool car was the last car at the Terminal. The tracks were taken up in 1975 or 76, and the rails and ties used in Fairview on tracks 3 + 4. I was there at the museum at that time. Artie Ellis, Jim Tebbets and Mike Simonds took the track and ties up and moved them. I loaned them my pick up. About the same time, the building was found to have the cellar foundation failing, everything was moved out and placed into the Yellow reefer cars at the main museum. Eventually the building was used for practice by the local volunteer fire dept. "*



Thanks so much to Kevin, Barbara, Ernie, and Karl for adding texture to the North Terminal article.

Ed





2025 Season Events!

195 Log Cabin Road | Kennebunkport, Maine

Open 9:30AM-4:30PM on
Wednesday—Sunday from
June 1 thru October 26 and
weekends in May and
December.

May



= Experience our Pump Car!



Saturday, May 3rd: Opening Day & Maine Day! Admission for Maine residents is \$2.07; youth 16 and under are free.

Sunday, May 4th: May The 4th Be With You Day. Come dressed as your favorite Star Wars character and get free admission.

Saturday, May 10th: Dress Like a Conductor Day. Youth ages 16 and under who dress like a conductor get free admission!

Sunday, May 11th: Mother's Day. Mothers admissions are free! Behind the Scenes Shop Tours will be offered from 11AM—1PM.

Saturday, May 17th and May 24th- May 25th: Military Appreciation Days. Active duty military personnel and veterans' admissions are free!

August

Saturday-Sunday, August 9th-10th: 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.



Saturday, August 16th: Members Day & Open House. Members have the opportunity to ride and operate cars in our collection and participate in special workshops! Admission is free for all guests.

Sunday, August 24th: 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 30th-31st: Model Railroad Weekend

June



Saturday, June 7th: Speeder Day! Take a ride on one of several Speeders visiting Seashore for the day.

Saturday, June 7th Pride Day. \$3 from each ticket sold this weekend will benefit local LGBTQ+ nonprofits.

Sunday, June 8th: Dog Appreciation Day. Dogs are welcome every day at the Museum; come today for special dog-friendly door prizes!

Saturday-Sunday, June 14th-15th: "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 15th: Father's Day. Fathers' admissions are free! Behind the Scenes Shop Tours will be offered at 11AM and 1PM.

Saturday, June 21st: 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 28th-29th: 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.

September

Saturday, September 6th: All Women Crew Day. Celebrate the role women have played in transit history.

Sunday, September 7th: Grandparent's Day. Free admission for grandparents.



Saturday-Sunday, September 13th-14th: Teacher Appreciation Days. To show our appreciation, teachers' admission is free!

Saturday, September 20th: Dog Appreciation Day. Dogs are welcome every day at the Museum, but come today for special dog-friendly door prizes!

Sunday, September 21st: Massachusetts Day. MA residents are half off!

Pumpkin Patch Trolley

Fridays-Sundays & Indigenous Peoples' Day

September 26th-28th and October 3rd-5th, 10th-13th & October 17th-19th

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!

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.

July



Saturday, July 5th: Happy Birthday Seashore Celebrate our 86th birthday with treats and docent-guided tours.

Sunday, July 13th: Moxie Day. Free samples of Moxie and Diet Moxie.

Saturday-Sunday July 19th-20th: First Responder Days. To show our appreciation, first responders' admission is free.

Saturday-Sunday July 26th-27th: Daniel Tiger Visits Seashore!

October



Friday — Sunday October 24th-26th: 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 5th-7th and 12th-14th: 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: \$50
Youth up to age 18: \$25
Plus 1 Guest & Family
Memberships: \$80

**For more information, the most up-to-date schedule,
and to purchase tickets, please visit
www.trolleymuseum.org**