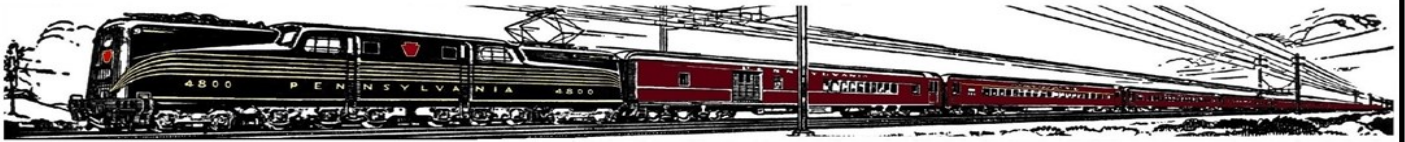


**LANCASTER
DISPATCHER**

1935-2023



LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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AUGUST 2023

A large, stylized illustration of a blue and red locomotive pulling a passenger train. The locomotive is the central focus, shown from a low angle as it approaches the viewer. It has a prominent headlight and a red stripe running along its side. The train is set against a dramatic sunset background with warm orange and yellow tones. The text 'BLACK DIAMOND' is at the top in a large, serif font, with 'Honeymoon Express Service to' in a smaller, cursive font below it. 'HAZLETON' is written in very large, blue, block letters, and 'PENNSYLVANIA' is in smaller, gold, block letters below that. At the bottom, 'LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD' is written in large, gold, block letters. The overall style is reminiscent of classic railroad promotional art.



Railway News Flash

By Steve Ferrell

Gathered from press releases and revised for this publication

- Amtrak announced on June 27th that traditional dining for first class private room customers will be restored on the two regular passenger trains from New York to Florida. This the prepackaged microwaved frozen meals served to sleeping cars recently. Riders have reported that these meals were unacceptable.
- To meet the growing demand for train service, the Piedmont and the Carolinian now offer five daily roundtrips for travel between Raleigh and Charlotte North Carolina and points in-between.
- Amtrak is continuing its partnership with Seastreak, operator of ferry service between Providence Rhode Island and Newport. There will be four daily roundtrips through October 9th.
- The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA, NYC subway) announced that fourteen additional Subway stations will be refurbished as part of the “Re-NEW-Vation Program”.
- MTA Chief McCarthy announced the commencement of the preliminary design process to develop the Penn Station master plan for reconstruction of the station.
- The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has begun the process of extending the Second Avenue Subway to 125th Street in Harlem from its current northern terminus at 96th Street (about 1.5 miles).
- Norfolk Southern filed suit to force the chemical, railcar firms to share in the cleanup costs of the East Palestine derailment and chemical release.
- June 30th: The new Honolulu, Hawaii rail system opens with the first scheduled trains. The new Skyline Light Rail System, called by Hitachi (the manufacturer) the first fully autonomous metro system in the United States. It is the first major rail transit system to open since 1993.
- Midcoast Railservice announced that a Budd Rail Diesel Car (RDC) is now on display at Bath, Maine. Ow branded as a “Coastliner”, these units have been upgraded with an ADA Act compliant bathroom. Once a second car arrives, qualification runs will begin on the Rockland-Brunswick route that Midcoast leases from the state of Main to operate freight and passenger service. Passenger service will begin during the August 4-6 Rockland Lobster Festival with four daily round trips.
- The Finger Lakes Railway resumed its public excursion program on July 8th between Canandaigua and Clifton Springs, NY, using a Budd RDC. The trips will continue to operate on Saturdays between July and October 7th.
- The famous “Choo-Choo” Barn gigantic model railroad layout in Strasburg, PA has been sold. The Groff family, owners and operators for over 60 years, have sold the business along with the Strasburg Train Shop to Gary Russell of Stevens, PA. With the passing of longtime operator Tom Groff and a recent departure of a key employee, it was time to find new ownership. Longtime model railroad enthusiast, Garry Russell officially took the reins of the business in late April and plans to expand the business and daily improvements are already underway. A recent visit showed many improvements taking place.
- On July 14th, near Lakeland, Fl., the Amtrak Silver Star’s lead locomotive derailed after a grade crossing with a truck carrying cars. Eight passengers suffered non-critical injuries.

**THIS MONTH ON THE PENNSY****PRR, PRSL & LIRR EVENTS IN AUGUST**

Source: Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society (permission of Christopher Baer, PRRHTS).

August, 1914 Lower deck cabins removed from the New York ferry "Pittsburgh" to increase vehicular capacity from 2 to 4 lanes; Chicago, Newark, New Brunswick, Philadelphia and St. Louis rebuilt on the same plan by 1917.

August 7, 1924 Broadway Limited leaves New York with a radio set with roof antenna in one compartment; radio is to be carried through to San Francisco to test for "dead" areas with no commercial broadcasting.

August 26, 1929 New "HARRIS" Interlocking placed in service at north end of Harrisburg station.

August 26, 1934 GE and Baldwin deliver the first experimental Class GG1 2-C+C-2 4620 HP electric locomotive No. 4899 for testing as a more powerful replacement for the P5a; design based on New Haven's 0350 Class; the rather awkward original striping and lettering scheme is the work of a General Electric employee. Westinghouse and Baldwin deliver experimental 5,000 HP Class R1 2-D-2 No. 4800 for testing as more powerful replacements for P5a; it is essentially a P5a with an extra driving axle.

August 5, 1939 The Broadway Limited carries only two passengers from Philadelphia on its entire westbound trip between New York and Chicago.

August 21, 1939 New air conditioned Savarins cocktail bar opens on north side of Arcade at Penn Station; designed by Raymond Loewy.

August 23, 1944 PRR Test Department issues report of performance of two prototype Class T1's on Altoona Test Plant; sets record of 6,100 HP; develops tractive effort equal to three K4s's at 85 MPH; on basis of these tests, management decides to proceed with production models.

August, 1949 PRR announces that it has received the last of 145 road diesels ordered since the war, and all principal East-West freight and passenger trains have been dieselized; passenger service is now 42% diesel, 39% electric and 19% steam.

August 27, 1954 PRR files along with the N.J. Public Utility Commission to discontinue all three New York-Atlantic City trains, including the Nellie Bly, and substitute Trenton-Atlantic City service, effective Sep. 26, 1954.

August, 1959 General Electric Company submits report on replacing PRR electric locomotives and MU cars with modern equipment; options range from purchasing 75 new 5,400 HP rectifier-type passenger locomotive similar to the New Haven EP-5 "Jets," with 75 GG1's replacing 91 P5a's to purchasing an additional 25 passenger and 50 freight electrics to replace the 91 P5a's and the oldest 75 GG1's; also 203 modern MU cars to replace the 265 oldest MP54's.

August, 1964 (At one week before Board meeting), PRR officials meet with New Haven Trustees and receive their alternate plan by which Penn Central would acquire only the New Haven's freight business for \$80 million and passenger service will be abandoned.

August 1, 1969 Pullman Company ends maintenance of sleeping cars and ceases operations.

August, 1969 Penn Central sends H6, H10, G5, and M1 from the Historical Collection to Strasburg.

August 27, 1969 Penn Central announces that SEPTA has contracted to buy 144 "Silverliner" cars, of which 130 will be assigned to Penn Central.

July “Away” Meeting and Train Ride on the East Broad Top Railroad

By Jim Donohue



The 2023 “Away” meeting took place on the East Broad Top Railroad in Rockhill Furnace, Pennsylvania. Twenty-four chapter members made the two-hour trip from Lancaster to ride the steam-powered narrow gauge train. The train ride was delightful and with a “wye” at both ends of the line, the train was pulled locomotive-first in both directions of the nine-mile, one hour round trip.

Most impressive was the amount of work that the volunteers have accomplished since the railroad was resuscitated in 2020. In that year, the railroad was purchased by EBT Foundation, a non-profit foundation, and limited regular train service resumed in the summer of 2021. EBT reopened for its first full season in May 2022, and locomotive 2-8-2 Mikado, EBT # 16, returned to steam in early February, 2023.

For most of the Chapter members, this was their first trip back to the East Broad Top in many years. Everyone agreed that the ride, the scenery and the service were all excellent. Because of the wye turn-around, passengers saw both sides of the tracks without changing seats.



Above, locomotive # 16, caboose 28 and coach # 23.

July "Away" Meeting and Train Ride on the East Broad Top Railroad



Above, diesel switchers and hopper car. Most of the EBT freight was coal.

Left, entering and (right) exiting the wye. The 2-8-0 pulled the train outbound, backed into the wye and the caboose properly trailed the train, leaving the wye.



July "Away" Meeting and Train Ride on the East Broad Top Railroad

EBT Sightings



Left, EBT Rockhall Station



Below, PRR white box car

Left: Dual Gage Trackage

All photos this page: John V. Smith III



Left :EBT delivery truck
Above: farm view from train
Right: Engineer on # 16



July "Away" Meeting and Train Ride on the East Broad Top Railroad

Bonus: The Rockhill Trolley Museum

The Rockhill Museum shares trackage and some facilities with the East Broad Top. The trolleys are standard gauge, leading to dual-gauge tracks on part of the property. Several Chapter members elected to ride the trolley as well. Car # 311 was in service.



Above: Johnstown Traction Company # 311

All photos this page: John V. Smith III



Above, inside Johnstown Traction # 311

PCC Trolleys Philadelphia # 2743 and Newark (NJ) Subway # 6.

A Return to Banks Seafood in Wilmington, Delaware By John V. Smith III

A total of thirteen rail riders met at Philadelphia's 30th street station. Nine of us were members of the NRHS! Mostly all of us were wearing our new "Ride with we Steve" caps. Many had a long two-hour dwell at 30th Street and most enjoyed a light breakfast at Jersey Mike's, Dunkin' Donuts or other eateries. During the day, quite a few people would comment on our caps and inquire about our rail riding group.

We hopped aboard the 10:39 SEPTA regional rail line to Wilmington on an Electrical Multiple Unit (EMU) car #708. It was a Silverliner V, with great views out of the first car's front windows. It was great to have an engineer's view of the Northeast Corridor and its busy traffic. After stopping at the Penn Medicine Station, Steve pointed out where the Media Line diverted to the southwest. Shortly, we would observe the Airport Line leaving the NE corridor, using mostly old Reading Railroad freight trackage to reach Philadelphia International Airport. At Claymont, a trip member pointed out the new station being built north of the existing one. Upon completion, it will have high level platforms and handicap access.

It was overcast with a light rain when we arrived at Wilmington at 11:32 AM. It was a short half-mile walk to Bank's Seafood where we all enjoyed fantastic seafood, served by Brooke, a very nice young woman. Brooke did a fantastic job serving all of us. We enjoyed appetizers, entrees, dessert and great conversation.



Above: Meeting for Breakfast at 30th Street Station's food court – Photo by Eric Dervinis



Above: Boarding our Silverliner V consist to Wilmington – Photo by Eric Dervinis



Above: Waiting for our Wilmington Train at 30th Street, most wearing their Ride with Me Steve caps. Photo by Author



Above: Arriving at Banks Seafood – Photo by Eric Dervinis

A Return to Banks Seafood in Wilmington, Delaware (continued)

After a relaxing dining experience and after we finished our dessert, we realized that it was time to catch our 2:20 train back to Philadelphia. We had to make a dash through the raindrops back to the Wilmington Station, where our train was waiting on the platform. For the return trip our consist was a Silverliner IV, which some call a: "Moldy Oldie". At fifty years old these venerable cars still had a very smooth ride and reached up to 88 mph on the return run. On the train ride back, we spotted a new locomotive which Jim Donohue identified as an ACL-42 "Charger". This is the new diesel locomotive that is replacing the Amtrak P40 and P42.



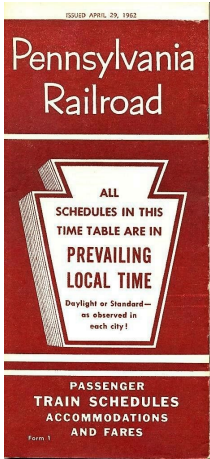
Above: The Group enjoying a meal at Banks
– Photo by Brooke, our waitress



Above: Jim Donohue telling John Smith to get back on the train (from Wilmington) as it continued on to Fort Washington
- photo by Eric Dervinis



Left: Siemens ACL-42 "Charger" Diesel Locomotive -Photo from Amtrak



**Time Table 8-23
PENNSYLVANIA
EXCURSION
RAILROADS
AND MUSEUMS**

For Lancaster Chapter news, see
"INSIDE THE BACK PAGE"



Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania
300 Gap Road, Rt. 741
Strasburg PA 17579
www.rrmuseumpa.org
717-687-8628

The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania will be open
Wednesday thru Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.,
and Sundays from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00.



Strasburg Railroad.
301 Gap Road, Ronks, PA 17572
www.strasburgrailroad.com
866-725-9666
Now operating daily.



Reading Blue Mountain & Northern
Reading Outer Station:
3501 Pottsville Pike
Reading, PA 19605
www.rbmnr-passenger.com
610-562-2102

All-day excursions to Jim Thorpe every Saturday and
Sunday in August.



Everett Railroad
244 Pullman Drive
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
www.evertrailroad.com
814-696-3877
Steam-powered excursions on
August 19th and 20th



Stewartstown Railroad
21 W. Pennsylvania Ave.
Stewartstown, PA 17363
717-746-4998

www.stewartstownrailroadco.com

Train rides on August 5th and September 9th



Wanamaker, Kempton & Southern
42 Community Center Dr,
Kempton, PA 19529
www.kemptontrain.com
610-756-6469
Regular Train Rides every Sunday
through November 7th



Wilmington & Western Railroad
2201 Newport Gap Pike,
Wilmington, DE 19808
www.wvrr.com
302-998-1930
Regular Train Rides on all Satur-
days and Sundays in August (except
August 20th)



East Broad Top Railroad
421 Meadow Street
Rockhill Furnace, PA 17249
info@eastbroadtop.com
814-998-1930
Operating all Wednesdays thru
Sundays in August



Colebrookdale Railroad
64 S. Washington Street
Boyertown, PA 19512
www.colebrookdalerrailroad.com
610-367-0200
Operating weekends in August



The Stourbridge Line
812 Main Street
Honesdale PA 18431
<https://www.thestourbridgeline.net>
570-470-2697
Trains run Sundays, Wednesdays,
and Saturdays in August



New Hope Railroad
32 West Bridge Street
New Hope, PA 18938
www.newhoperailroad.com
215-862-2332
Operating all Fridays, Saturdays
and Sundays in August



The Reading Railroad Heritage
Museum
500 S. Third Street,
Hamburg, PA 19526
<http://www.readingrailroad.org/>
610-562-5513
Saturdays 10 AM - 4 PM,
Sundays Noon - 4pm

"INSIDE THE BACK PAGE"
UPCOMING LANCASTER CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

AUGUST 20, 2023 - ANNUAL STRASBURG RAILROAD TRAIN RIDE AND ON-BOARD MEETING 3:00 PM

JULY "AWAY" CHAPTER MEETING



24 members of the Lancaster Chapter with our conductors at the East Broad Top, July 16, 2023

Saturday, August 12th, 9am clean-up day at the Christiana Freight Station. If so, could you add on clean up day to wear old paint clothes. We have lots of painting to do.

Sunday, August 20th, Strasburg Railroad Train Ride and meeting on the train; Tom Shenk and Steve Himpsl will be on platform at 2 PM selling ride tickets for \$ 5.00 each (for this day's trip only).

Saturday, September 9th is the Christiana Festival. The chapter participates, so plan to attend! September 9th is the commemoration of the date of the Resistance in Christiana also know as the Christiana Riot. Quakers in the area hid runaway slaves in root cellars, fake bottom floors, etc. until they could safely continue North to Canada. A free former slave lived on a farm outside of town and had runaways in his home, the slave owner came to get them and in the fight that ensued the slave owner was shot and killed and his son wounded. Supposedly this was the beginning of the unrest in the next 10 years that led to the Civil War. September 11, 1851 was the actual date.

Sunday, September 17th is the annual picnic at the Freight Station. BBQ Chicken entree provided, pot Luck side dishes-bring your favorite side!

In memoriam: Longtime NRHS member and speaker at many different chapter meetings, Wayne Laepple passed away at age 75 on July 10th. He volunteered at both the restoration shop and archives at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania where he also served as a board member of the Friends. Well known for his technical expertise and railroad articles, Wayne also volunteered at the East Broad Top and Wiscasset Railroads as an expert technician. A celebration of life will be held later on. See www.thegroffs.com for more information.

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CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING
LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., N.R.H.S.
AUGUST 20, 2023 - SUNDAY, 3:00 PM
CHAPTER STRASBURG TRAIN RIDE AND MEETING
ON-BOARD THE TRAIN

LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC.
 NATIONAL RAILWAY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 10 RAILROAD AVENUE
 CHRISTIANA, PA 17509-1416
 PHONE: 717-917-5137
 CHAPTER WEBSITE: WWW.NRHS1.ORG



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