



# WEST JERSEY RAILS QUARTERLY

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One of the first regular assignments for the PRSL's RDCs was on the Camden-Haddonfield "shuttle" trains. In 1950 half a dozen weekday roundtrips (four on Sundays) connected with Philadelphia-Atlantic City runs at Haddonfield. The RDCs were perfect for these short trips offering a quick turn around. Philadelphia-Atlantic City train No. 1021 has just departed Haddonfield station as the M-404 enters the mainline as Camden train No. 518. Visible in the background is the parlor car of Atlantic City-Philadelphia train No.1018, which is stopped at the station in this winter 1952 scene.

R. L. Long photo

## **SILVER CARS TO THE SEASHORE: THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY IN CAPE MAY**

By Alan Marian

Who remembers October 18, 1950, you might ask? Well, over one hundred historians, railroaders, and guests showed up in Cape May City on Saturday, October 21, 2000 to acknowledge the import of that very day. For that was the delivery date of the first six Budd RDCs (rail diesel cars) from the mighty plant on Red Lion Road in northeast Philadelphia to the Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines at Camden Engine Terminal. The initial batch of six bore numbers M-402 through M-407, and at

once began their destiny of saving passenger service on our favorite railroad for another 32 years while everything else about that service seemed to be collapsing.

But today's story is not about the Budd cars themselves which are amply documented elsewhere. It's about you and me and all those folks who attended the party or supported it by purchasing items to benefit both the Cape May Seashore Lines and the West Jersey Chapter.

*(Silver Cars Continued on page 4)*

**March Meeting "Saturday the 31st, 1:00 to 4:00 PM"**

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### Chapter Meetings

4th Monday of the month  
 September through June, 7:30 P.M.,  
 except March, which will be  
 Saturday March 31, 1 P.M.  
 at the Haddonfield Borough Hall,  
 242 Kings Highway East, Haddonfield, NJ

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### Chapter Officers

President..... Richard J. Magee  
 Secretary..... Ron Baile  
 Treasurer..... Bill Sweeney  
 Historian..... John Burlage

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### West Jersey Rails Quarterly Staff

Managing Editor..... William J. Coxey  
 Associate Editor..... Albert T. Holtz  
 Layout/Production ..... Fritz Plenefisch  
 Circulation Manager ..... Dave Thompson

Anyone who has an idea for or would like to write an article for the *QUARTERLY* please contact the Editor, Will Coxey or Publications Chairman Jim Brazel.

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### Membership

Chairman..... Bob Vogel  
 Current Membership..... 166

We welcome the following new members:

Ann S. & Earl Adams ..... Haddonfield, NJ  
 Donald J. Buckley..... Bradenton, FL  
 Michael Brotzman..... Haddonfield, NJ  
 Kermit Geary Jr..... West Deptford, NJ  
 William F. Strassner..... Barnegat, NJ  
 Christopher J. Young Jr ... Medford Lakes, NJ  
 Membership applications are available by mail or from our Membership Chairman.

[chuchubob@yahoo.com](mailto:chuchubob@yahoo.com)

### IN MEMORIAM

William J. Brown, S. Seaville, NJ

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Richard J. Magee

**Election Of Officers:** At its January meeting, the board elected the following officers for 2001. President; Rich Magee, Treasurer; Bill Sweeney, and Secretary: Ron Baile. Congratulations, gentlemen! Ron Paul, former secretary, indicated that he did not wish to be nominated for another term. Thanks, Ron, for a job well done! The office of Vice-President remains vacant; I hope we will find a candidate sometime this year.

**Nominating Committee:** A special thanks to the members who served on the 2000 committee, which nominated directors to serve in the class of 2003. Committee members were Bob Vogel: Chairman; Helen Mountney, Ron Albury, Don Crabiell, and Alan Marian. Your contributions to this vital chapter function are acknowledged.

**60 Years and Counting:** Congratulations to members Lew Pardee, J. Hansell Lewis, and Les Whitfield, all of whom recently celebrated 60 years of membership in the NRHS!

**March and May Meetings:** Please note: the March meeting will be *Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>* from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Haddonfield Boro Hall. This will be our second annual Saturday afternoon meeting. Please plan to join us after the meeting for dinner and fellowship at the Pufferbelly Restaurant in Lindenwold, adjacent to the PATCO/NJ Transit station. Dinner will be by individual settlement and guests are welcome.

The May meeting will be *Tuesday evening, May 29<sup>th</sup>*, at 7:30 pm, Haddonfield Boro Hall, due to the Memorial Day holiday.

**2001 Dues:** If you haven't already done so, please pay your dues promptly. There will be a \$3.00 late fee assessed on all dues received after March 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Triumph III:** The Chapter is currently making arrangements with the publisher to make the new *Triumph III* book available to members at a discount price. It is a detailed photo history of the PRR's Philadelphia Terminal Division. Two photographs from the our archives were used in the book, which covers the physical plant and changes that were made over the decades. See enclosed flyer for price and ordering information.

## MEMORIES OF THE PENNSYLVANIA-READING SEASHORE LINES' BRIDGETON-CAMDEN COMMUTER TRAIN

By H. Munro Githens

I have many pleasant memories of the last years of the PRSL's through Bridgeton-Camden train about 1940. The regular consist for this train, Nos. 878 and 883, was a PRSL E-3sd Atlantic type locomotive, three P70 coaches and one PB54 combine. In addition train No. 878 forwarded a MB54 mail-baggage car, the Glassboro and Bridgeton RPO, from Bridgeton to Glassboro. By 1938 only one of the five PRSL-owned class E-3sd Atlantics remained in service, No. 6061, making this train special, at least to me. Ed Hand was the normal engineer and like the engine was also special.

It was a great train to watch anywhere, but some of my favorite places were rattling over the diamond at Bridgeton Junction, leaving the station at Elmer and pulling on to the Millville Line after the station stop at Glassboro.

Train No. 878, the morning run to Camden, ran local to Wenonah and then express to Broadway, Camden. The scheduled running time for the express portion of the run, a distance of 11.3 miles, was 16 minutes. It was quite a sight as Ed rounded the curve into Woodbury and passed Red Oak tower with the whistle screaming and a trail of smoke over the train. As he passed the passengers waiting on

the platform for Millville-Camden train No. 758, there were times he whipped the side of his cab with his glove as though he was riding a horse in the Kentucky Derby. Next stop, Broadway, Camden!

The late afternoon return trip, No. 883, ran express to Woodbury. The schedule time was 14 minutes to cover 8.2 miles. Not the BOARDWALK FLYER, but sure seemed like it as you roared through Gloucester, Brooklawn and Westville with the whistle blowing frequently. Open windows during the summer made it even more dramatic. The most fun was racing highway traffic between South Westville and North Woodbury. There was always a G.R. Wood bus to leave in the dust.

Ed was noted for occasionally overrunning the platform at Woodbury. Perhaps it was due to wet rails or leaves. One day a passenger waiting to get off at Woodbury announced "Next stop Woodbury Heights" as the train breezed past the platform.

The through Bridgeton-Camden service ended effective January 15, 1942 and the few remaining Bridgeton Branch passengers had to change trains at Glassboro. No wonder I miss the early PRSL years.

PRSL Class E3sd No. 6082 is southbound in October 1937 with Saturday-only Camden-Bridgeton train No. 879. Unlike weekdays, on Saturdays the Glassboro and Bridgeton RPO ran through to Camden. The Atlantic type locomotive was built for the West Jersey & Seashore in August 1907 at the Pennsylvania Railroad's Juniata Shops and was scrapped in April 1938.

Granville Thomas photo  
D.B. Wentzel collection



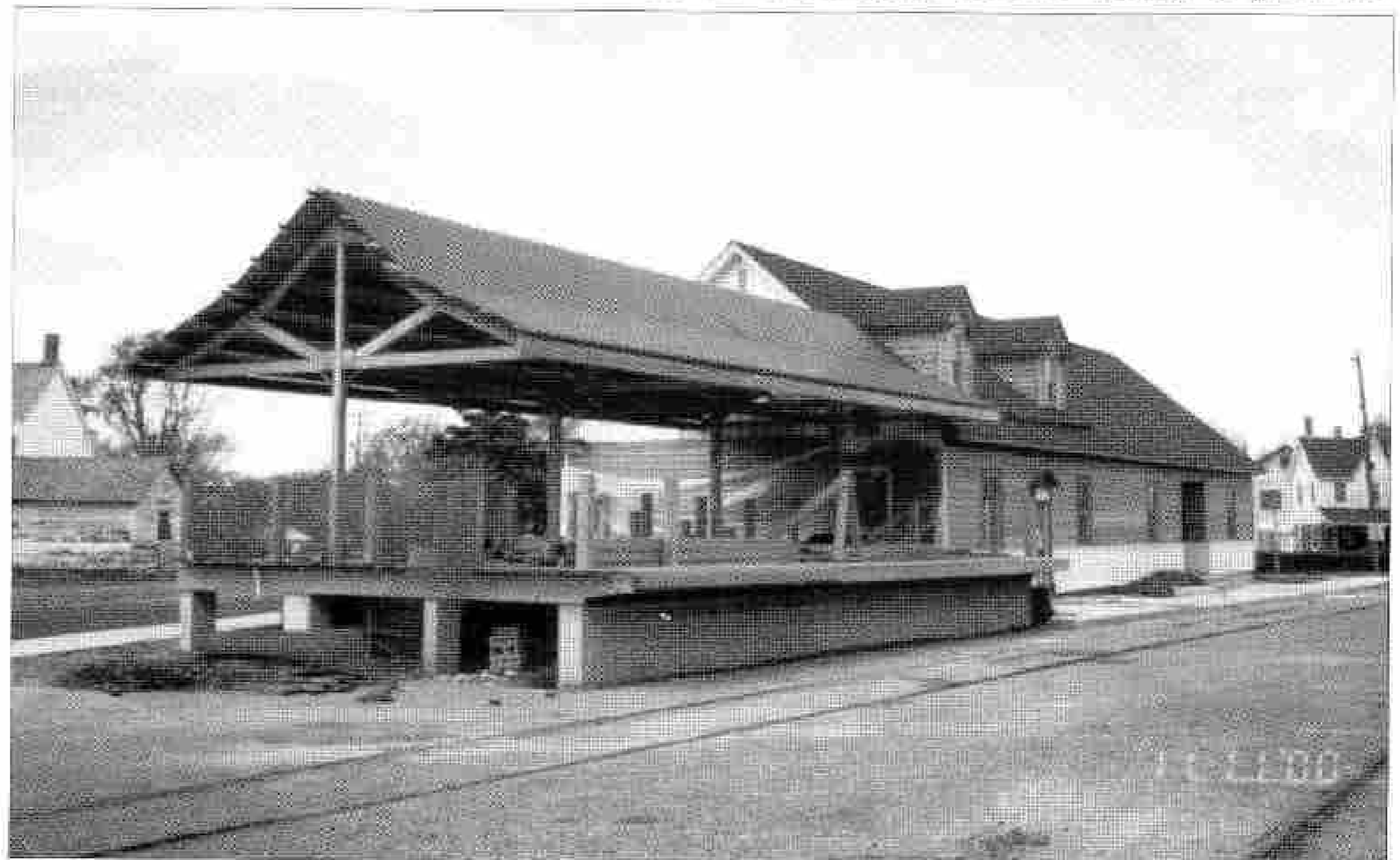
(Silver Cars Continued from page 1)

Saturday of the event was glorious as only Indian summer can be: bright blue sky, no clouds or wind, temperature in the 70s. First noticed when pulling up to Cape May terminal was the transformation of the venerable old station we knew into a structure tripled in size with tan wooden siding. The old part was in the center, recognizable by the door and two dormers. Facing it from the tracks, the right end had a large freight door and the left end was a high-level platform under construction. The grade crossing over Broad Street had been rebuilt but was still guarded only by silent crossbucks, not flashers. The URHS Pennsy GP9 was tied up at the end of Track 1, with Track 2 left open for traffic, and Track 3 still buried in the weeds.

Four display tables were outside of the new building which was still closed to the public. The West Jersey Chapter offered our publications, flyers, slides, photos, and magazines for sale. The Strasburg Model Railroad Club was selling and showing HO scale models of PRSL equipment including the Budd cars. The New Jersey Association of Rail Passengers offered several informative newsletters about positive and negative transit news around the state. The Cape May Seashore Lines table surprised all with a colorful array of caps, gloves, booklets, keychains, commemorative shirts, collectible railcars, and plaques. Refreshments were available featuring a large birthday cake with a colored PRSL logo in icing.

The former PRSL Cape May station was expanded and renovated by Ville Construction of Vineland for the City of Cape May, funded by an Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancement Act (ISTEA) grant. This November 11 scene shows the new high-level platform. A new low-level concrete platform extends to Broad Street.

J.W. Vigrass photo



A short horn blast announced the approach of train No. 301, due at 10:45 a.m. At 10:58 the silver face of a Budd car shyly peeked around the curve. It nosed through the switch onto Track 2 while flagmen hopped out to protect Broad Street. The two-car train eased to a stop with M-407 on the head end and M-410 behind. Our own Tony Macrie, President of CMSL, bounded off the train saying he was "excited as hell over this great piece of machinery". He was happy for the public support and felt that a day like this was overwhelming.

Next off the train was conductor Tom Moran who praised Macrie for his efforts. Moran pointed to the RDC saying he "rode 'em when they were new" and felt that production never should have been stopped. Leave it to Tom to coin a phrase that the manufacturer would have been proud of: "A Budd car is forever!"

The last pre-ceremony comments came from the *Quarterly's* sharp-eyed editor Will Coxey who counted 88 special trip passengers and 8 others for a total of 96 riders. Our Chapter President Rich Magee whispered that the arrival was late due to an "extended pit stop" at Cold Spring Village since the Cape May facilities were closed, but otherwise the trip was perfection.

At 11:10, M-410 departed northbound as train No. 302, M-407 remaining on Track 2 as a stainless steel backdrop for a celebratory banner and the speakers' microphone stand. Tom Moran served as master of ceremonies and spoke about several topics including CMSL being a partner

with New Jersey Transit to expand rail service in the Garden State.

Up next was Chapter President Rich Magee who told of his 10 years as a PRSL block operator (see the December 2000 *Quarterly*). He pointed out that RDCs were among the Seashore Line's first diesel powered and first air conditioned passenger cars. A short history lesson included the delivery of two batches of six cars each in 1950 and 1951. He described how the versatile units split up at Tuckahoe and Wildwood Junction on the way to the shore, then rejoined for the trip north. The tone was sincere when Rich said "this means a lot to me."

The star of the day, and rightfully so, was Tony Macrie who enthusiastically held center stage. He spoke thoughtfully of the Budd Company and Camden Engine Terminal both gone, Reading Company also gone, and the "eerie effect" from seeing these fifty-year-old products still alive and well. He said that the disappearance of the fondly remembered past gives us "today's need to memorialize things". The equipment built to replace RDCs, the SPV-2000, failed after a few years, the oldsters having far outlived their heirs. Attention was directed to the head end of M-407 which Tony said had suffered slight damage in a recent grade crossing collision. Without its pilot or safety stripes, that end actually looked just as it did on delivery day a half-century earlier. The modern-day railroad president recalled a photo he took at age 13 in 1966 of a Budd RDC

trackside near his Hammonton, N.J. home. Today that man stood proudly in front of that selfsame car, M-407, which he now owns. If this is not the American dream, then there is no such thing. Macrie stepped down to hearty applause and a good-natured kidding about speaking for almost twenty minutes.

Just before noon, the next two speakers took their turns at the mike. Doug Bowen, vice-president of NJARP, complimented CMSL for being "politically aware" and helping his own organization lobby the state for use of multiple-unit rail vehicles elsewhere. Chapter member John Nieveen fondly recalled riding a Budd car in the mid-1950s into the Ocean City Gardens station which went out of service not long after that trip.

The last two men to address the crowd were from the group of retired railroad workers who were honored guests of the organizers. Chapter member Ray Young vividly described a long silver string of Budd cars at Tuckahoe which he later saw being towed into Ocean City behind steam power for the Monday morning rush. Looking back around the sharp curve at 51<sup>st</sup> Street and seeing all that shiny modern technology glittering in the sun was unforgettable. He also recounted a funny tale of how a visiting foreign prince invited the train crew to lunch despite explicit orders to the contrary from the trainmaster.

Bill Ewan spoke to the group about his career as a fireman and engineer from 1946 through



CMSL President A.C. (Tony) Macrie addresses an enthusiastic crowd in front of his gleaming RDC M-407. The station is out of sight to the left. The weather could not have been better.

W.J. Coxey photo



Some of the former PRSL employees posed in front of the M-407 after the ceremony. They are, left to right: John Holroyd (passenger & freight conductor), Bob Harrop (engineman), Bill Ewan (engineman), Nick LaMarra (freight conductor), Rich Magee (block operator), Ken Ireland (block operator), Bill Strassner (signal department), Charlie Crelier (block operator, dispatcher & rules instructor), John Serock (block operator, dispatcher & movement director) and Otto Bonaventure (freight agent).

H. Gerald MacDonald photo

1982. He drew smiles with tales of running a Budd car through Hammonton at 90 mph as a young crewmember, and another time cutting through an 18" diameter pine tree trunk laying across the rails with the RDC's wheels. An unexpected and somber note was his confession of killing 16 people over his career who disregarded crossing safety. There were 93 grade crossings between Cape May and Camden which he called "186 chances to hit someone" every day. Numerous deer were also victims of the 60 ton steel cars.

The other retirees were too reticent for public speaking but after their group photo in front of the locomotive, I interviewed each one individually and gathered the following comments.

Francis Peters, 85 from North Wildwood, spent 38 years as fireman and engineer on the Reading. He would occasionally shift RDCs around Reading Terminal trackage, and called them "simpler and easier" than steamers or other diesels. To him, it was amazing to see

them running today and CMSL looked alright.

Milton Risley, 73 from near Swedesboro, spent his career with the Pennsy as a freight and passenger train engineer. Four to five times each year, PRSL borrowed him for a day at a time as a hostler at Camden Terminal. To him, RDCs were smooth and clean compared to other equipment. When asked how it felt to see them running now, he said "I love it!"

Otto Bonaventure, 58 from Deptford, worked 10 years on PRSL followed by 20 on Conrail as a freight relief clerk and agent. Although he had no direct involvement with these cars, Otto felt great seeing them operate today, and hoped they would run for another 50 years. He called the PRSL a family operation, and "wished it had avoided Conrail". To him, CMSL was doing a great job.

Nick LaMarra, 82 of Deptford, worked as a PRSL freight conductor from '42 to '81. He rode RDCs for pleasure or commuting and described the ride as "different than a caboos". It was overwhelming seeing them working today and

he expressed respect for Tony Macrie. He felt fortunate to have worked on the PRSL, and recalled seeing a young Macrie standing on his van taking train photos at Hammonton almost thirty years ago.

John Holroyd, 69 of Mantua, worked 41 years on PRSL and Conrail, calling himself the second senior conductor for freight and passenger service. Calling the silver cars good, fast, and safe, he described them as "riding in a cloud". He never regretted his railroad work, and felt great seeing today's CMSL operation.

John Serock, 81 from Blackwood, spent 30 years with PRSL and Conrail. He served as dispatcher, rules examiner, and movement director in the office, as well as a block operator at many location. To him, the silver cars were good because they ran quietly. He described Seashore Lines as a good place to work but the company "chased passenger business away". He was yet another vote for CMSL being a fine operation.

Chapter member Ken Ireland from Absecon, at age 49 was the baby of the group. He worked as a block operator from '70 to '76 at the tail end of Seashore Lines and the beginning of Conrail. As an extra man, he was sent everywhere but he singled out the memory of Canal Movable Bridge with its old dual trolley handles to turn the bridge and lift the rails. As a block operator, he always hoped that either M-407, 408, or 410 was coming because they were good and reliable.

Bad news was either M-402 or 413 which often broke down. He laughed recalling one day when a southbound RDC has an engine fire start at Rio Grande. The train was sent on and the Cape May Fire Department was called. When they asked where's the fire, Ken told them "go to the station, it'll be there in ten minutes!"

Bill Ewan, 81 from Williamstown, had been one of the public speakers but also met with me individually. He had no romantic illusions about the event, saying "railroading was over for me when steam changed to diesel". Seeing the Budd cars still running was nice in an academic way, not an emotional one. He blamed poor maintenance in the '60s and '70s for periodic fires in the engine compartments. To him, PRSL was not interested in passenger service because it did not pay.

Similar comments came from Charles Crelier, age 81 from Westmont. He worked for PRSL from '47 through '75 as block operator, dispatcher, and rules instructor. While seeing today's Budds provoked good memories, he admitted that he "liked steam because you knew where to hand up the orders". On the double-ended Budds, one never knew from which end the crew might pop out. To him, PRSL was like family because no one would report anyone unless a big mistake was made. After Conrail started, "they came looking for you".

After the ceremony, the crowd dispersed to enjoy the sunny delight of Cape May.

The RDCs were equally at home on a long-distance (for the PRSL) high-speed seashore run or a slow local with frequent stops. Here Camden-bound train No.302 from Ocean City, Wildwood and Cape May enters the mainline at Winslow. The "high line" Cape May Branch connecting track was abandoned in the late 1950s not long after the Cape May Branch was single tracked between Winslow and Tuckahoe in 1957.

R. L. Long photo



There was, however, a pleasant postscript at the regular Chapter meeting on Monday night, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Tony Macrie and Tom Moran attended as honored guests, to another round of applause. Tony spoke movingly of the old rail cars, and their historical importance as being "something you can touch, that moves, that goes". He repeated something from the Saturday speech concerning riders on his Cape May Seashore Lines. When they ask where the antique train is, they are literally stunned when they hear that the RDCs are fifty years old.

I caught up with Chapter member Lou Mountney of Haddonfield at the meeting. He spent 33 years with the Reading's clerical and disbursement office but often rode the RDCs while in New Jersey and called them a godsend for passengers although the seats could have been better. Lou admitted that he "hated to see steam go" and although a Budd car was terrific, its worst fault was "it was not a steam engine."

Well, it seemed a tad unusual that Messrs. Ewan, Crelier, and Mountney all pined for steam engines. Then, when I pulled Chapter

President Rich Magee aside at that same meeting two nights later there was a different surprise. *He* pined not for old locomotives but for those Tuscan red coaches. To Rich, there was "nothing like a P-70" and compared to an RDC, P-70s rode "like glass". Now this was just a bit much, with three steam lovers and one P-70 fan in the group. I mean, we *were* here for the blasted RDCs, weren't we?

A perfect touch to that night's program was an official Budd Company promotional film with views of silver cars operating around the US. The delight was audible when we watched a string of RDCs pulling into Tuckahoe, followed by an elevated camera view of the separated cars departing on the Cape May and Ocean City tracks simultaneously.

This ceremony was not a goodbye to either CMSL or the silver cars, both of which are doing very well, thank you. Rather, it was truly a salute to the men and women who designed, built, operated, and serviced a magnificent American machine, the Budd Rail Diesel Car. May our descendants ride them in the year 2050.



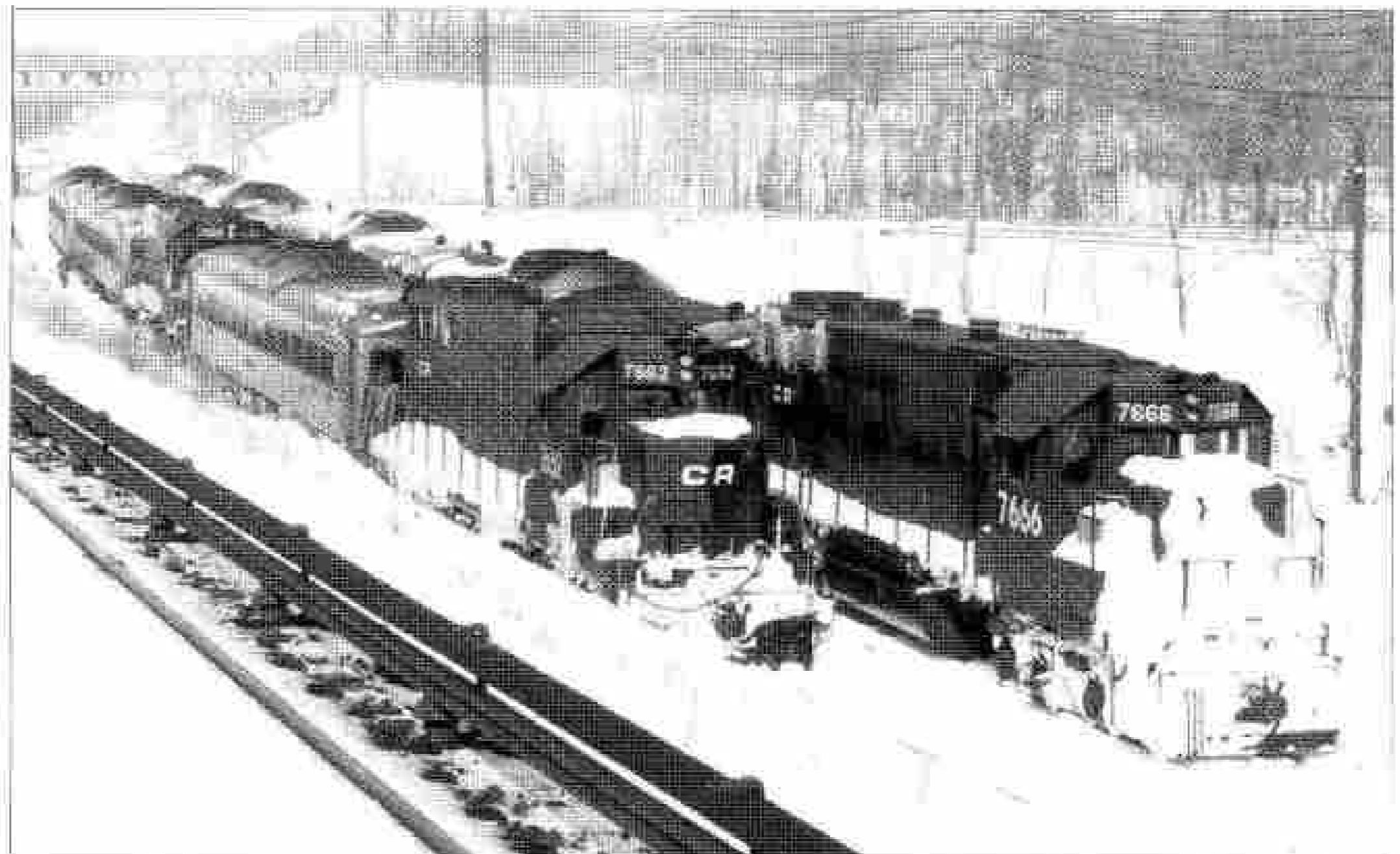
Most of the Camden-Cape May Branch trains were really three trains coupled together north of Tuckahoe. In June 1975 after the Wildwood trains had been discontinued, Lindenwold-Ocean City and Cape May commuter train No.363 has just departed Tuckahoe after a brief stop where the Ocean City car was cut off. The Ocean City Branch crew completed the run to the family resort. The stripped ends and larger horns came during the mid-1960s in response to an increase of grade crossing accidents. Ocean City Branch trains ended abruptly August 13, 1981 due to the Crook Horn Bridge and Cape May trains stopped running October 5, the same year due to track conditions.

W. J. Coxe photo



Snow was seldom a problem for the RDCs during the 1950s and '60s when daily freight trains kept lines open. As the frequency of the freight trains declined, the RDCs required assistance especially in major snows. In this February 20, 1979 scene at Lindenwold, former PRSL GP38s towed the RDCs. The Ocean City-Cape May train is on the left with a separate engine for each branch. Only the first of the three Atlantic City trains (right) was towed.

A.C. Macrie photo



Originally the Cape May station was located on the south side of Lafayette Street, now occupied by a parking lot. In this early Saturday afternoon, September 4, 1955 scene, the passenger station is not visible behind the two trains. This depot was moved to its present location in April 1960 when the size of Cape May terminal was reduced. The RDCs will depart for Camden at 3:15 p.m. as train No.414 followed a half-hour later by PRR E-6s, No.645, which is on the point of Philadelphia train No.456.

G.M. Hart photo, W. J. Coxey collection



Until the recent renovation, PRSL's Cape May station appeared more like a private residence than a railroad depot. This September 1978 weekend scene includes four RDCs. The car adjacent the station had arrived that morning from Lindenwold as train No.357 and returned early evening as No. 360. The two cars on Track 2 and the single car in the background are for the two weekday commuter runs, Nos. 350 and 352. The M-407 is the front car on the right.

R.E. Farrell photo



## SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY LIGHT RAIL LINE REPORT

By Frank C. Kozempel

November 20 marked the dedication of the sample station and rail car display behind Zurbrugg Hospital on Taylor Street in Riverside. The station is an example of the typical facility to be built along the line. It has a low-level platform with steps and an access ramp. An inverted "V" shaped roof covers part of the platform. Globe lights, a ticket vending machine, a route map and an emergency phone are present.

A full size replica of one passenger section and the power unit of the prototype car are mounted on a short section of track next to the station. It contains 36 forward facing seats plus three facing the rear behind the operator's cab. Large picture windows grace both sides as well as the front. One double door, about six feet wide, is located on either side where the floor is level with the platform. Forward of the doors, the floor level is two steps higher. The seats have high

backs and are reasonably comfortable. Baggage racks are mounted above the seats in the front section of the car. The short power section can be passed through to reach the rear section of the three-unit articulated vehicle. It is necessary to ascend two steps to pass through the power section, which rides on the middle truck. Overall length is about 105 feet. The external appearance of the car is similar to the electrically-powered cars on the Hudson-Bergen line.

As of December 7, the pile approach trestles of the Delanco Bridge had been removed. Concrete piers and abutments for the new fixed span bridge were already above the water. The old drawbridge was removed and loaded on a barge November 13, and moved to Gloucester for storage until April 1, 2001. After that date if no one wants it, NJT can scrap the 106 year-old span.

Two new yard tracks had

been completed with welded rail in East Burlington. An existing passing siding adjacent to the main had been rebuilt and lengthened. This became the sign-up place for WPBU29 instead of Burlington station. Because of major tie replacement and bridge and culvert repairs, their sign-up time was moved to 2:00 p.m.

With the exception of the track through Burlington and the half-mile on either side of the Rancocas Creek, virtually all of the ties had been replaced from MP20.5 near Dulty's Lane all the way to MP5.0 in Delair. A short stretch to Hatch just past the Atlantic City Line overpass remained to be done. Beyond that point new track will eventually be laid along the east side of the Conrail freight tracks into Pavonia.

A double-track fixed span bridge is being constructed on the Federal Street side of Conrail's Cooper River bridge.



The public can become acquainted with the appearance of the light rail line's cars and stations via a half-car replica and typical station on display at Riverside. The narrow 10-foot car width is evident.



The cab of the Adtranz-Stadler GTW6/2 (gelenktrieb wagen 2-B-2) articulated car is part of the display. These views were taken November 20<sup>th</sup>, the day of the dedication.

J.W. Vigross photos

## CURRENT EVENTS

Tropicana Casino and Resort's venture with Amtrak was apparently successful and four trips were scheduled to run in first quarter: January 28-30, February 11-13 and 25-27 and March 18-20. The specials originate in Newport News, VA and stop at all principal stations to and including Baltimore, MD.

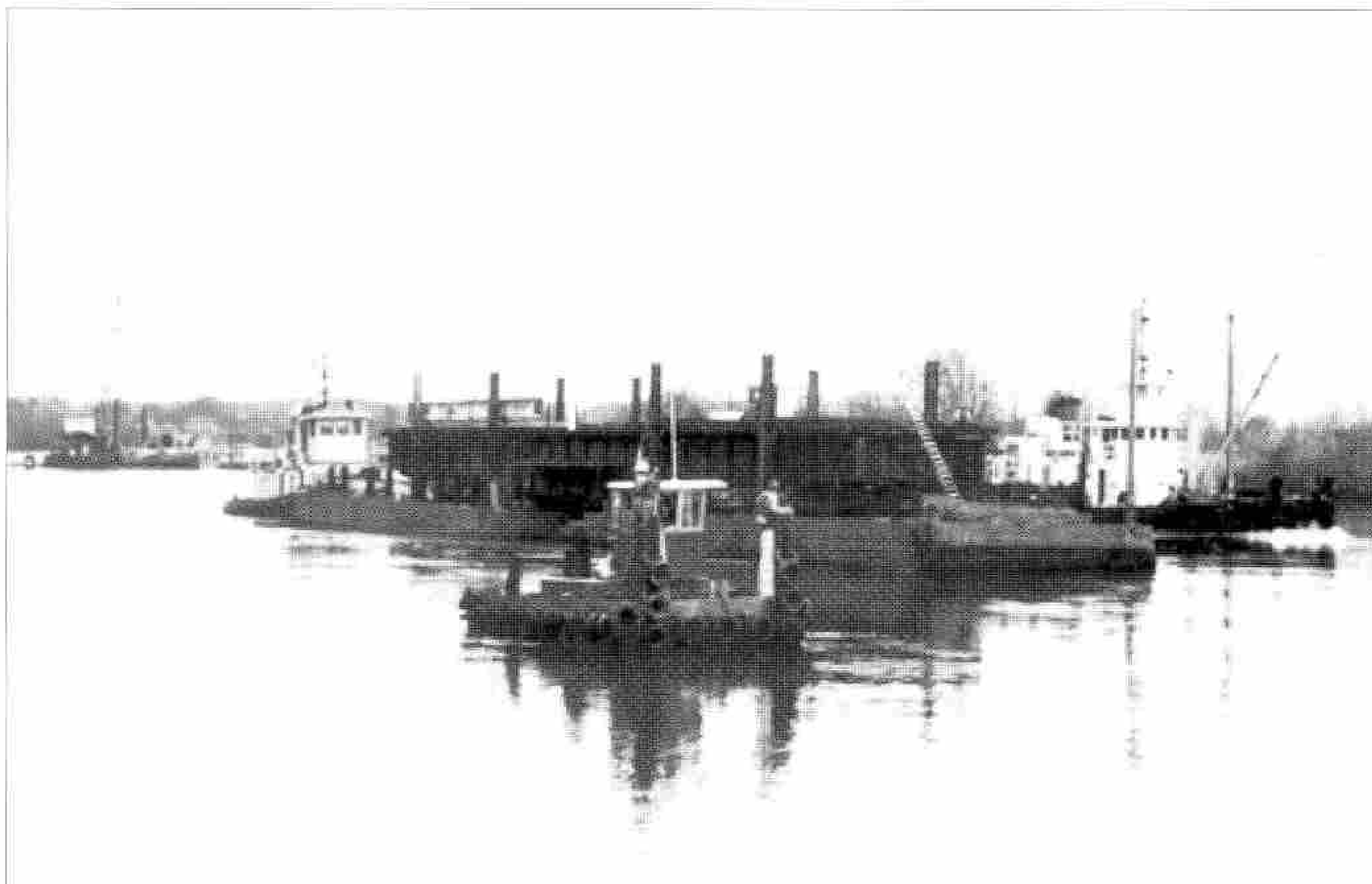
NJ Transit reported a 6.8% system-wide increase in fiscal 2000 rail traffic to 206,100 weekday rides over the previous year, a 43% increase since 1991. Unfortunately, the Atlantic City Line posted a small decline for the second year in a row. Most of this decline was likely due to service interruptions caused by the extensive track maintenance program that was completed by December 18th. With a total of 982,000 rides during the period, fares only covered 25% of operating costs. Nevertheless NJT Executive

Director Jeffrey Warsh said, "We're going to make our stand on the Atlantic City Line and continue to demonstrate our commitment for the region."

For comparison, the Northeast Corridor, NJT's busiest line, handled 24.5 million trips and revenue was 7% above operating costs. Weekday traffic at Mercer County's four stations increased 9.5% to 25,060 weekday rides. NJT's other seashore line, the North Jersey Coast Line, had a total of 8.7 million rides and covered 73% of the operating costs.

The NJ state assembly overwhelmingly passed (75-0) a bill in early December that names Phillipsburg as the site for the \$ 70 million transportation heritage center and Netcong as the location for a satellite museum.

*(Current Events Continued on page 12)*



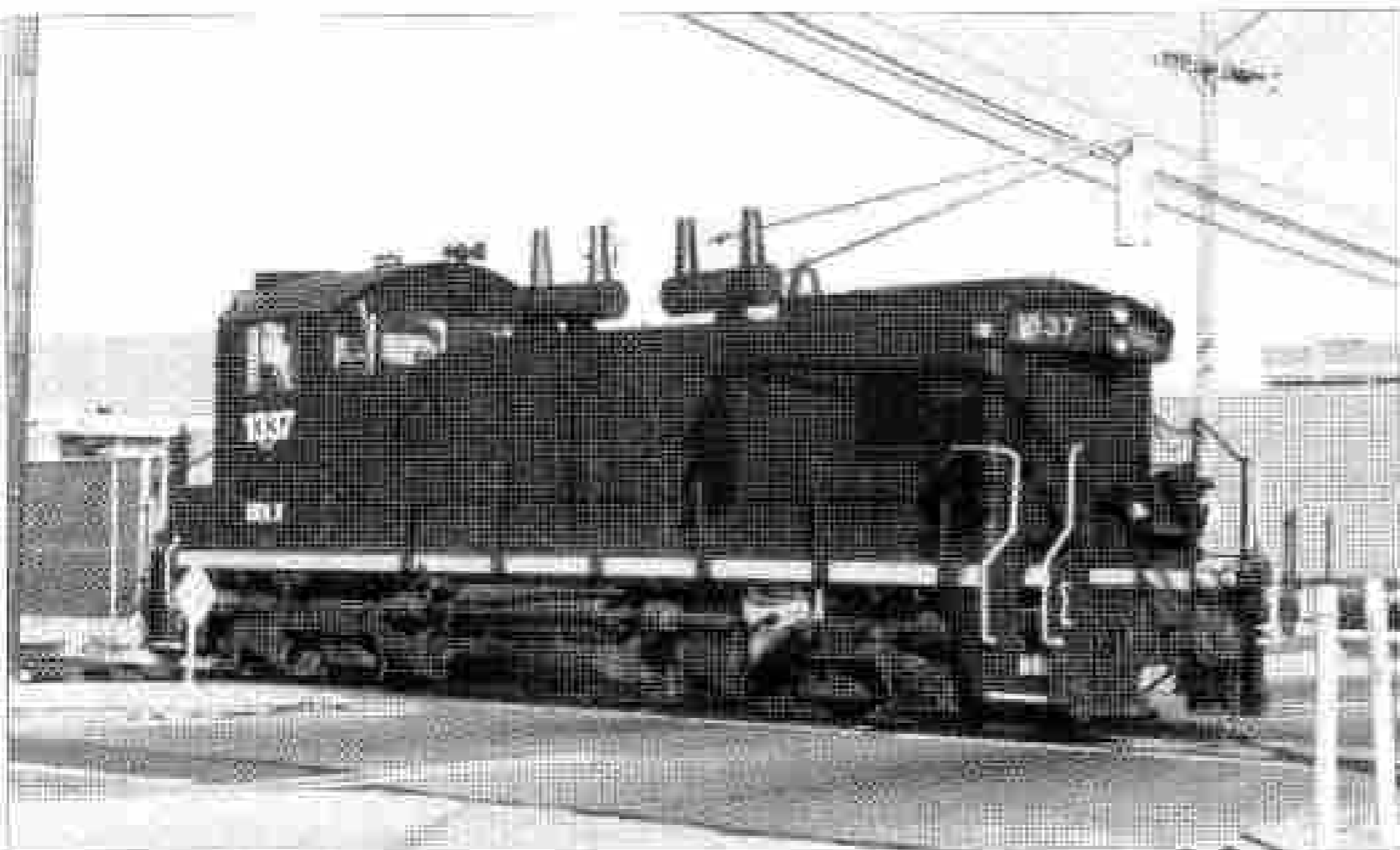
This November 13<sup>th</sup> scene from the Landon-Stone Bridge (Rt 543) shows the old Delanco swing span in transit down Rancocas Creek bound for South Gloucester. Clearwater Marine's tug VIGEROUS (left) is propelling the barge with a small tug steering the bow of the barge. Clearwater's tug DEVIOUS, a former USCG buoy tender, had assisted in placing the bridge on the barge. Note the work in progress on the new railroad bridge in the background.

Alan B. Buchan photo

Last fall Conrail completed a Southern Secondary track program between Red Bank and Lakehurst. Unused trackage at Lakewood, Sand Pit (three miles south of Lakewood) and Lakehurst was removed. The unused siding at Farmingdale was not removed but was spiked out of service. Two sidings used as runaround tracks at Lakewood and Lakehurst were shortened and rebuilt.

The line is served twice a week by Browns yard (Old Bridge)-based local WPSA35, which usually enters the Southern at Red Bank long before sun up on Tuesday and Friday mornings. The line's two most important customers are Cary Chemicals in West Earle and Gold Lumber in Farmingdale where the train often turns. Business below Farmingdale is light with about three regular customers in Lakewood and none below. A typical consist is about a dozen cars, half covered hoppers for Cary. Often the crew operates with a roadswitcher, usually a GP38, at each end of the train to facilitate switching. This line along with the Amboy, Freehold and Chemical Coast secondary tracks was reassigned to the South Jersey dispatcher in October.

SMS Rail Services of Bridgeport, NJ has taken over from Conrail the switching of the Valero (former Mobil) Refining Co. in Paulsboro, NJ beginning November 28<sup>th</sup>. Freshly painted Baldwin S12 No.300 and a leased EMD switcher were the initial power.



SMS has leased this EMD SW1200RS switcher to assist Baldwin S12 No.300 at the Valero refinery. This photo at the Billingsport Road crossing in front of the refinery was taken December 5<sup>th</sup>.

W.J. Coxey photo



WPSA35's three-man crew has run out of time at Farmingdale on December 1. All loaded cars have been delivered and the crew has been taxied back to Browns yard. The consist is NS GP38's 2910 and 2917 with nine empty cars.



Much of Lakehurst yard was removed in early October. Contractor R.J. Corman did the work including removing the material. Here a truck is being loaded with rail on October 11<sup>th</sup>.

R.E. Farrell photos

The Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line was extended three new stations in Jersey City on November 18<sup>th</sup>. On November 24<sup>th</sup>, a traditional important shopping day, over 8200 rides were recorded.

PATH is also enjoying a high level of business with a 10-percent gain over last year's record of 33.6 million passengers. More trains have been added to the rush hour schedule with Newark-World Trade Center service as frequent as every three minutes.

Current Event contributors in this issue include Bob Farrell, Al Holtz, Frank Kozempel, Jerry MacDonald, Fritz Plenefisch, Joel Rosenbaum, Bill Vigrass and Don Wentzel.

**May Meeting "Tuesday the 29th, 7:30 PM"**