



VOL. 29 - NO. 1 SHELBURNE FALLS TROLLEY MUSEUM NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2020

DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE SHELBURNE FALLS AND COLRAIN STREET RAILWAY

## 2020 UPDATE - OPENING POSTPONED INDEFINATELY

I like to think of riding on our 1896 trolley car as more of a trip back in time than a scenic ride. It is a chance for visitors to see what life was like one hundred or so years ago. And I have often daydreamed about what it would have been like to hop on a trolley car in Shelburne Falls and ride up to Colrain, looking at the passing farms and factories and catching up with neighbors who were traveling as well. Sometimes (especially when I am skiing or biking along the abandoned Hoosac Tunnel and Wilmington Railroad or Deerfield Valley logging railroad roadbeds) I like to think about what it was like to be the engineer on a steam-powered narrow gauge train rolling through the forests (or what was left of them after the logging operations) between 1890 and 1936.

But I don't think I would ever choose to time-travel back to 1918 or 1919, during the "Spanish Flu" pandemic. To prevent the spread of contagion, passengers were refused permission to board street

cars if they were not wearing face-covering masks. Travel was limited, gatherings were limited, and human interaction was limited. You can see where this is going.

Because of COVID-19 and the related business and social restrictions, **the Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum will not be opening for our usual date on Memorial Day weekend.** And we will not have our Training Day until, or when, social distancing is lifted. The Board of Directors feels that the health and safety of our volunteers, our guests and our community is more important right now than hands-on historical education. We feel that trying to operate with the required safety precautions is too cumbersome to allow us to give an enjoyable educational experience. Pump car rides would be off-limits and trolley passenger loads would have to be limited to one family group per trip. We don't intend to even open our buildings to the public. We (Cont. on Page 3)



*Are these bandits planning to wreck No. 10? Or is this Dave and Josh making our track smoother?*

## DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS - 2020

Sam Bartlett (President)  
David Dye (Vice President, Chair of Board)  
Betsy Wholey Osell (Treasurer, Asst Clerk)  
Lou Musante (Clerk, Asst Treasurer)  
Alden Dreyer (Vice Chair)  
Nash Bly - Polly Bartlett - David Goff - Tony Jewell  
Bill Kaiser - Joshua Redenz - Jim Wholey

---

## CONTACT US

**Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum**  
**PO Box 272**  
**14 Depot St.**  
**Shelburne Falls MA 01370**  
**Phone: 413-625-9443**  
**Email: [trolley@sftm.org](mailto:trolley@sftm.org)**  
**Web: [www.sftm.org](http://www.sftm.org)**

---

TRANSFER is a publication of the Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum Inc., produced for the enlightenment and entertainment of our members and special friends. Spring, Summer, and Fall issues are planned for each year. Comments, contributions, and letters to the editor are welcomed.

Sam Bartlett - Editor [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org)

---

## SIGNING UP FOR E-TRANSFER

As a convenience to our members, and as an attempt to control costs, the TRANSFER is available online as a pdf file. This will give you the option of filing your copies of the TRANSFER on your computer, in case you want to refer back to them at some later time.

eTRANSFER comes out in full color!

If you are a current member and wish to receive your future TRANSFERS by email, here's how to do it:

Send an email to: [membership@sftm.org](mailto:membership@sftm.org)

In the Subject line, please enter "eTransfer".

In the body of your message please enter just your name. Your address will be entered on our emailing list, and the future issues will come to you by internet instead of by USPS mail, thereby saving printing and mailing costs. Save a tree, too!!

Please note – if you are an eTRANSFER subscriber, and subsequently change your email address, please be sure that you let us know at [membership@sftm.org](mailto:membership@sftm.org).

---

## VOLUNTEERING - HOW TO DO IT

Stop by, send an email to [trolley@sftm.org](mailto:trolley@sftm.org) or call Sam at 413-834-0274. Indicate what your interests are - operating, painting, building stuff, selling tickets and gifts, grant writing, or what. We need you!!!

---

## OPERATING SCHEDULE

The museum is closed and will not be operating until the pandemic-related restrictions enable us to reopen. Please see Page 1 and watch [www.sftm.org](http://www.sftm.org) and Facebook for updates.

---

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

At this writing, SFTM has 70 current Memberships and 37 unrenewed 2019 memberships. If your printed TRANSFER does not have 2020 on the address label, please renew your membership, see the Membership, Donation and Volunteer Form.

See the Form for more information on Member benefits and giving levels.

Or, renew online at <http://www.sftm.org/join.shtml>

If you get the eTransfer, please check the message in the email that was sent with this issue.

Your support is very important to us!

Please send status questions or changes of address for mail or email to [membership@sftm.org](mailto:membership@sftm.org)

---

## PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS!

West End Pub	Blackmer Insurance Agency
The Optician	Mirick Insurance Agency
Bakers Pharmacy	McCuskers Market
Keystone Market	Salmon Falls Gallery
Walter's Propane	Shelburne Falls Bowling Alley
Berkshire East	McCusker's Market
Mo's Fudge Factor	
Coldwell Banker Upton Massamont REALTORS	
The Blue Rock Restaurant & Bar	

---

## NEW MEMBERS

John Hartmann	Geralynn Laferriere
---------------	---------------------

---



*Josh has been building this two-person pump car in his 'spare' time.*



don't know when we will reopen, it may not be at all this year. We will continue some projects and will do the necessary upkeep and maintenance to make sure we are ready to reopen when it does feel safe.

As far as we know, no one who is COVID-positive has been at the museum.

Our Board of Directors has been fiscally responsible, making sure we have enough of a "rainy day fund" to get us through a rough patch. We are facing more than a rainy day, but we feel that we can weather this storm financially. We project that we might lose in the range of \$7000 this year, instead of our 2019 excess revenue of over \$8000. Because of support from members like you, we have been able to pay off our mortgage, so we don't have that hanging over our heads. Because of our loyal volunteers, we do not have any staffing costs that would need to be covered. We expect to be able to collect much of our rental income from our tenants. We will still have to pay utilities and insurance. We are hoping that many of you will step up and make an extra contribution, if you can. And we are hoping you will maintain and renew your membership for 2020, even if you don't get to ride the trolley this year.

The bright side is that, as long as we can keep our volunteers safe, we can work on projects like track work and painting No. 10 that would be hard to do while we are open for operations. So you can expect to see some changes when we do reopen.

We will keep you posted online at [www.sftm.org](http://www.sftm.org) and on our Facebook page. We will send out a mailing if and when we do decide to reopen this year.

You can make contributions to our General Fund online at <https://www.sftm.org/donations.shtml> or mail a check to SFTM PO Box 272 Shelburne Falls, MA 01370. You can renew your membership online at <https://www.sftm.org/join.shtml> or use the enclosed form if you are not already a 2020 member.

The Board of Directors and all our friendly volunteers wish you health and peace in these troubling times. We hope to see you as soon as we can safely reopen.

*Sam Bartlett - President- Editor*

### **SPARE TRUCK PROGRESS**

Josh and others have been working on sandblasting and scraping the rust and grime off the disassembled spare trolley truck, in preparation for painting and reassembling it, and adding upgraded brake gear.



### **CV SPEEDER RUNS AGAIN!**

Many of you have noticed the orange speeder ("motor car", "putt-putt") that lives in the back of the pump car shanty. Some of you have even offered to get it running again. This speeder is a Central Vermont item that is loaned to us by Harvey and Charlie Allen. It has not run in many years, due to some motor issues and a belt-length problem. Over the winter our member Carl got it running again and solved the belt-length problem by installing the proper sized pulley on the axle. These motor cars were the successor to the pump car. When the internal ('infernal') combustion engine was improved enough to be small and reliable (but also loud and smokey), pump cars were pushed into the weeds, and speeders made the work of track crews less aerobic (and warmer in the winter). Decades later, the hi-rail pickup truck supplanted the speeder.

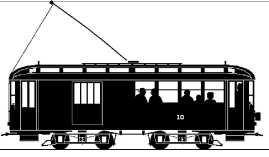
### **CAR BARN EXTENSION PROGRESS**

We have contracted Rybak Engineering to do a preliminary design of the updated water supply line for our buildings, which is the first step in our Car Barn extension project. We need to replace our 1" water line before it fails, and we want to install a 6" line so that in the future we can install sprinklers in the buildings. We hope to use the present shut-down to do the messy excavation.

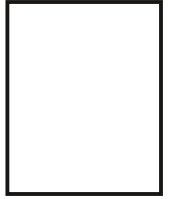
### **TRACKWORK CONTINUES**

Josh, Sam and Dave have been removing old, rotten switch timbers in Turnout 2, installing 'new' timbers, jacking everything up and adding ballast. The objective is to get the track more level across the rails and remove the sag in the frog area. This should make life easier for No. 10 when she returns to operation.

**Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum**  
**PO Box 272**  
**Shelburne Falls MA 01370-0272**



413/625-9443 [www.sftm.org](http://www.sftm.org)



If your address label does not say '2020' or '2100' please renew your Membership today.  
See the included Membership Form, or renew online at  
<https://www.sftm.org/join.shtml>.

Please consider getting your Transfer online, see Page 2 for eTRANSFER details.

You can visit our FaceBook page at  
<https://www.facebook.com/ShelburneFallsTrolleyMuseum/>

### **TRACKMOBILE DEPARTURE**

The museum has been hosting several privately-owned Trackmobiles ("TMs") over the years. The owners have been rebuilding them and using our tracks for testing and demonstrating them to prospective buyers. Recently another one left for a new home, seen here being lifted up by a crane in preparation for loading onto a low-boy trailer.

One TM is still on the property. The owner's hope is to always have one operating TM here, so that we can continue to give cabooses rides at Trolleyfest and move the caboose for Moonlight Magic.

TMs are designed for operation in small industrial switching yards, even a single track spur. The TM can use its rubber road tires to move around off the track, then use its steel rail wheels to move on the tracks. They are rather ungainly, especially in operation.

TMs use a clever method for getting enough weight to get good traction on the steel rail. When coupled to the car it is moving, the TM can use its coupler to lift the car, transferring some of the car's weight onto the TM's wheels. A classic case of using an apparent problem (moving a heavy car) to your advantage (getting traction).



### **GIFT MEMBERSHIPS!**

Did you know you can give an SFTM Membership as a gift? Just write the lucky person's name and address on the membership form, check the Gift box and include your check.

---

### **BIG RAILROAD HOBBY SHOW**

The Big Railroad Hobby Show was January 25 and 26, 2020 at the Big E in West Springfield. We had a nice turn out, it was fun to see our old friends and meet new folks.

---

Thank you to Dave for contributing to this issue.  
To submit an article, picture or idea for the Transfer, please email [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org).