



VOL. 29 - NO. 2 SHELBURNE FALLS TROLLEY MUSEUM NEWSLETTER  
SUMMER 2020

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

## CLOSED FOR THE 2020 SEASON

As you have learned or guessed by now, the **Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum is closed for the entire 2020 season** due to the pandemic. We will not be open for Moonlight Magic. I know this has been a disappointment for many folks, as it is for me and our volunteers. But with the Bridge of Flowers closed for the entire year and Moonlight Magic activities cancelled, it seems like the best decision.

Normally at this time of year we are closing things down at the end of our normal operating season, and getting ready for Moonlight Magic.

In the last Transfer I said we might lose as much as \$8000 this year by being closed. I'm pleased to inform you that it will not be anywhere near that bad, thanks to hard work by our Treasurer, Betsy, who found a liability insurance policy that will cover us when we are closed, for a substantial savings. Between that and a reduction in other costs *and generous donations from our members*, I think we will

weather this year well enough.

The Board of Directors is committed making sure that our little museum comes out the other side of this pandemic better than ever!

The bright side of being shutdown is that we have had time to work on projects like track work and restoration 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 hope to reopen Memorial Day 2021, but the Boston Marathon for next April has already been cancelled, so, no promises. You can always check our status on our webpage.

We welcome 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 at <https://www.sftm.org/join.shtml> or use the enclosed form if you are not already a 2020 member. (Cont. on Page 3)



*On a rare trip out in 2020, no. 10 makes a test run over the rebuilt turnout at the west end of the line.*



*Looking towards the Car Barn at the rebuilt turnout 2, where the House Track splits from the Main Track*

## 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!!!

---

### NEW MEMBERS

Jay Cashook

## 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 83 current Memberships and 42 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	



*This new 6" water main from Elm St to the Freight House will allow us to eventually add fire protection to all our buildings.*

(President's Report - Cont. from page 1)

Regarding memberships, the board has decided to extend 2020 memberships to include the 2021 operating year. This is to recognize that members have been unable to take advantage of some of the normal member benefits. It is to also recognize your ongoing support of SFTM in these troubled times. So if you renew now, your membership will be good until Dec 31, 2021. Of course we hope that everyone who can pay their dues for both years will do so, as we depend on membership contributions for our ongoing existence, even when not operating.

The Board of Directors and our friendly volunteers wish you health and peace in these troubling times. We will see you when we can safely reopen.

*Sam Bartlett - President- Editor*

### **SPARE TRUCK PROGRESS**

Josh, Carsten, Andrea and Ellie continue to scrape the rust and grime off the disassembled spare trolley truck, and have started painting and reassembling it. Josh has been using our big lathe to make new pins and square-headed bolts.

### **CAR BARN EXTENSION PROGRESS**

In August we had Hillman Excavating and the Shelburne Falls Water Department on hand to install a 6" water main from Elm Street to the Freight House. This will enable us (as funds permit) to install sprinkler systems in each building. Although heavy equipment was used for most of the digging, one of our volunteers who wears many hats dug a 30' long 4' deep trench under the building with pick and shovel. The project included a hydrant at the Elm Street corner. We



*The Shelburne Falls Water Department crew guide our new hydrant into place*

also ran a 1" supply line to the Visitors Center to replace the undersized line that currently supplies our restrooms. Although not technically part of extending the Car Barn, this was part of the grant requests that we've been making. Thanks to the Mass Bay RRE for their ongoing support of this project!

### **CAR BARN FUNDRAISING PROGRESS**

We had a setback in our fundraising efforts. You might remember that we had been promised a \$44,500 matching grant from a foundation a few years ago. We raised the match by using a state matching grant, but when we applied to have the first grant paid to us, we learned that the foundation had closed and the funds were no long available. So now to access our \$50,000 Mass Cultural Facilities Fund matching grant we need to raise the missing \$44,500. We have raised over \$26,000, so we are more than half-way to our match, which will free up \$100,000 for this project. We hope to start work on the Car Barn extension next spring, can you help? Send a check or see

<https://www.sftm.org/grantmatch.shtml>.

### **TRACKWORK CONTINUES**

Josh, Sam, Ellie, Nash and Dave have removed the old, rotten switch timbers in Turnout 2, installed "new" timbers, jacked everything up, added ballast



*No. 10 makes a test run over newly rebuilt turnout* and tamped the timbers. The objective is to get the track more level across the rails and remove the sag in the frog area. This will make life easier for No. 10 when she returns to operation. Two test trips over the new turnout with No. 10 were flawless.

We also added some track to a turnout by the Freight House (Turnout 5) to make a "Pocket Track" for keeping the trackmobile frame out-of-the-way. We plan to modify this frame to help us with our track-work.

## IN MEMORIAM

Several members have passed away this year. As far as I know, none were COVID-related.

**Margaret Eggert** was a familiar face at Trolleyfests, helping with food sampling and other activities. She and her husband Hank have been long-time supporters of SFTM.

In Memory of **John Greene**, by Dave Goff:

The Shelburne Falls trolley museum was saddened to learn of the passing of one of our honorary Life Members, Mr. John Greene. John was an integral part of the early years of the museum serving as Chief Track Foreman, Motorman and jack of all trades.

I first met John after the museum started operations in 2000. At the time, conductor and motorman opportunities were scarce at the museum. I was told that if I wanted an entry level position, I should join the track gang. I soon realized the track gang was John and me. John quickly established that if I spent time as the muscle, he would educate me on all aspects of track repair. Soon we were changing out ties with date nails going back to the 1930's. And, yes I learned a lot. "It pays to dig 'em" said John when referring to a tie changeout that we did by hand and spiked by hand. John also developed a plan to move several hundred feet of middle track sideways about three feet to clear the new mis-located line poles. SFTM saved many thousands of dollars in track repairs through John's efforts.

Many may not know that SFTM was ideally positioned to be a darling of John's. John worked for the Boston and Maine Railroad for many years and was responsible for the section of mainline up and through Hoosac Tunnel. His track shanty office was the white structure next to Pan Am tracks opposite the shed. It was certainly convenient to retire and move across the tracks to take up his special office chair in the former SFTM carbarn, which is now the Shed. I would wander into the yard on almost any day of the week, and the shed doors would be open and a waft of cigar smoke would tinge the air. You knew John was ready to fix some track.

Working for the Boston and Maine and successor Guilford Transportation Systems, one of John's notable responsibilities was to walk the Hoosac Tunnel for inspections. Five miles one rail and five



*John Greene inspects track repairs in 2007*

miles the return rail. "I never saw anything alive in there, and never saw a ghost", said John. He hi-railed branchlines up and down the Conn River mainline. And spoke about how the Bondsville trestle on the Central Mass would shudder and shake with only the passage of a hi-rail truck. He often spoke of what use to be, and lamented the changes in the rail industry, specifically the elimination of the branchlines and the breaking of the unions. He was a union railroader until his last moments.

Besides his love for creating a sound and level SFTM right-of-way, John also appreciated operating Car No. 10 and meeting the general public. In many ways I think John's years at SFTM gave him a profound purpose and extended his life on this planet.

You can find more memories about John at <https://www.sftm.org/johngreene.shtml>

In Memory of **Dante S. Stephensen**, by Alden Dreyer: Life member Dante S. Stephensen of Atlanta died on July 26 2020 at age 84. He was a very successful restaurateur, to put it mildly, and lived in his private railway car, in a rural area, connected to the NS mainline, where he would take it out on occasion for trips behind Amtrak trains. To learn more, simply Google his obituary, or Dante's Down the Hatch. In conversation with Dante, many years ago in China, I told him about our little museum and he said if I sent him information, he would make a contribution. Which was very generous and typical of Dante. As far as I know, he never visited New England or had any interest in trolleys. Sally and I visited him at his restaurant, and at his home, which had nearly as much operable railway equipment as our museum does. He chauffeured us around Atlanta in his 1938 Packard. I was fortunate to know him.

## SFTM'S OTHER TROLLEYS

by Jordan Helzer

In addition to car No. 10, SFTM also has two streetcars from Boston, commonly known as PCC cars. The cars themselves were built in 1951, as part of the last streetcar order for Boston before switching to more modern "light rail vehicles". Car 3321, one of SFTM's cars, has the special distinction of being the last trolley of any kind built in Massachusetts.

"PCC" in the cars' name stands for the Presidents' Conference Committee. The committee was formed in the late 1920s due to the closure of streetcar lines across the country. The Shelburne Falls and Colrain was a victim of the advent of the automobile, but it was far from the only line that closed. The streetcar lines' presidents wanted a trolley that would attract traffic back from the automobile, and so formed a design committee that produced the PCC. The PCC had a number of improvements over conventional trolleys, including its styling, acceleration, and a much quieter and smoother ride.

SFTM's PCCs were part of the last order of PCCs built for Boston. The Pullman-Standard Company, a descendent of the original Pullman Company, was the manufacturer of all of Boston's PCCs except for the first. This included both of SFTM's PCCs, 3299 and 3321. PCCs were not all identical, and there were various changes through their twenty years of manufacture.

3299 and 3321 are what are known as "Picture Window" PCC streetcars, due to their large windows. The body design was intended as the final body design for PCCs, however, it was only built for Boston. The fifty Picture Window cars, numbered 3272-3321 were

all built in 1951. The Picture Window cars also featured small windows above the large picture windows, called "Standee windows". These windows were put in so that standing passengers could see outside more easily.

Despite their modern body design, the Picture Window cars featured older style mechanical systems than most PCCs built after World War II. PCC's mechanical systems came primarily in two generations. The originals were what were known as "air electrics". They had air operated braking systems. Post war, most PCCs were "all electrics". This meant that the cars used electrically operated brakes to stop. Boston's PCCs, except for a small series bought used, were all air electric. This is because Boston ran its PCCs in trains of multiple cars controlled by one operator. Air electric and all electric cars could not run in trains with each other, so Boston continued to order air electric PCC cars.

SFTM's PCCs were retired from service in Boston around 1990. At that time, 3321 and 3299 were bought along with a third car by a streetcar organization in Brooklyn. After some difficulties the project was shelved around 2003. Both 3321 and 3299 sat for years on a pier in Brooklyn. This proved problematic in 2015, when Hurricane Sandy came rolling through. Sandy flooded the pier, and trolleys, with salt water. They were then donated to SFTM.

SFTM is currently working on restoring 3321 and 3299. New doors have been created to replace the damaged older doors, and the cars have money set aside for painting. If you want to help restore these cars, feel free to donate money to the PCC fund at <https://www.sftm.org/pcccars.shtml>.

Photo Copyright 1990 Paul Polischuk

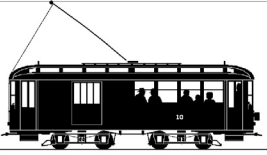


*3321 in Brooklyn Photo copyright Paul Polischuk*

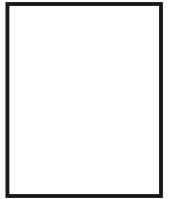


*3321 Between Riverside & Woodland MA 1972  
Copyright Joe Testagrose*

**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/>

### **WANTED: TRANSFER INDEXER**

Here is a way you can help SFTM from home. We have twenty-nine (!) volumes of the Transfer, three issues per year. It would be nice to have an all-time index and table of contents for this collection. Some of these we only have paper copies of, so part of the job would require scanning the paper copies as well. If you can help with this please contact me at [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org).

### **CABOOSE STOVE**

We recently received a caboose stove from a Central Vermont caboose, thanks to the Beagle family of Monson, MA. Rowan will clean it up and paint it for installation into CV 4015.

### **YOUTUBE CHANNEL**

We have added some new videos to our YouTube channel, thanks to the efforts of Catherine Stryker. You can take a virtual ride on the trolley or the pump-car. A link to our YouTube channel is on our home-page.

### **BIG RAILROAD HOBBY SHOW**

The Big Railroad Hobby Show 2021 has been cancelled.

### **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.

---

Thank you to Dave, Alden and Jordan for contributing to this issue.

To submit an article, picture or idea for the Transfer, please email [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org).

### **EDITOR'S APOLOGIES**

This issue is rather late, usually it comes out before Trolleyfest. Between the pandemic, trackwork, and the fact that my wife and I have moved to Shelburne Falls (closer to the museum!), I haven't made the time to get this issue out on time. I will be sending out issue 3 before the year-end, with information on elections and the usual news. I will also have an article on the gas-electric locomotive that donated its trucks for No. 10, and some historical pictures of odd railroad equipment building a dam just downstream of Shelburne Falls.

*Sam Bartlett- editor*