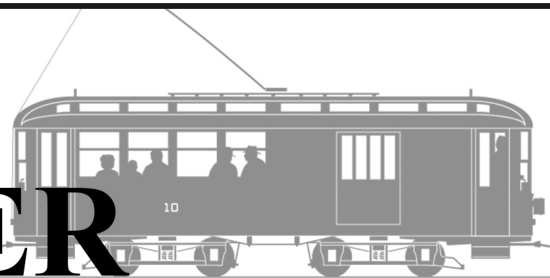

Shall we ride No.10 again next week?

Yes! It sure beats riding in our buggy!



TRANSFER



**VOL. 33- NO. 3 SHELBURNE FALLS TROLLEY MUSEUM NEWSLETTER
FALL 2024**

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

CAR BARN EXTENSION IS COMPLETE!



*Sam raises his arms in victory over Murphy's Law.
L Weaver photo*

After several years of planning and fundraising and waiting out a pandemic, we broke ground for the Car Barn extension a year ago. With help from contractors and volunteers, we completed the 43 foot extension in thirteen months. The extra space inside is already being put to use. The volunteer members of the Projects Team can move around and get things done, instead of always having to move something

before starting a new project.

Thank you to the Massachusetts Cultural Council's Cultural Facilities Fund's \$50,000 matching grant and a generous bequest from the estate of Dave and Polly Bartlett. Grants from Amherst Railway Society and Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts have been supplemented by many smaller donations from individuals. And thank you to all the volunteers who helped finish this important project.



Nov 2023 - Here is where we started



Dec 2024 - Forty-three feet longer!

See www.sftm.org/carbarnextension.shtml for more details and pictures.

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS - 2024

Sam Bartlett (President)
Nash Bly (Vice President, Vice Chair)
Betsy Wholey Osell (Treasurer, Asst Clerk)
Lou Musante (Clerk, Asst Treasurer)
Alden Dreyer (Chair of Board)
Jim Kessler - Bill Kaiser - Jordan Helzer
Joshua Redenz - Jim Wholey

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TRANSFER is a publication of the Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum Inc., produced for the enlightenment and entertainment of our members and special friends. Three issues are planned for each year. Comments, contributions, and letters to the editor are welcomed.
Sam Bartlett - Editor editor@sftm.org

PLEASE SIGN UP FOR E-TRANSFER

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.

The e-TRANSFER comes out in full color!

If you wish to receive your future TRANSFERS by email, here's how to do it:

Send an email to: membership@sftm.org

In the Subject line, please enter "SFTM eTransfer".

In the body of your message please enter just your name. Future issues will come to you by email.

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.

VOLUNTEERING - HOW TO DO IT

Stop by, send an email to trolley@sftm.org or call or text Sam at 413-834-0274. Indicate your interests - operating trolleys, painting, building stuff, selling tickets and gifts or what. We need you!!!

OPERATING SCHEDULE

We are closed until Memorial Day weekend 2025. But you can visit us at the Railroad Hobby Show January 25 and 26, 2025.

www.railroadhobbyshow.com

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

At this writing, SFTM has 126 current Memberships, including 20 Life Members. If your printed TRANSFER does not have '2025' or '2100' on the address label, we hope you will renew your membership. See the Membership 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 email that was sent with this issue to see your status.

Your support is very important to us!

Please send status questions or changes of address for mail or email to membership@sftm.org

PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS!

Floodwater Brewing
Salmon Falls Gallery
Mo's Fudge Factor
Buckland Pizza House

Baker Pharmacy
Walter's Propane
Davenport's Service Sta.
West End Pub

NEW MEMBERS

Mathew & Rebecca Moretti

Sarah Davenport

George Peacock

PROJECT TEAM

If you would like to join a hearty band of volunteers working on projects over the winter, send me an email at sam@sftm.org. We meet once or twice a week if it isn't too cold. During the winter we'll mostly be working in the Car Barn on restoration and maintenance projects. We can use all skill levels and will work with you to gain new skills if you wish.



Jim, Rico and Dick keeping things safe for Moonlight Magic. J Perry photo

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We've had a busy fall! Ridership has been down a little due to the Bridge of Flowers being temporarily closed, but we've still given lots of trolley rides, pumpcar rides and speeder rides.

Trolleyfest was a big success, with about 300 visitors and beautiful weather. Thanks to Marie for organizing and all the other volunteers for helping out.

Moonlight Magic was also a big hit, despite the wet snow in the middle of the evening. Thanks to Marie and Bruce for organizing and all the other volunteers for doing what you do so well.

We got a trackmobile (www.sftm.org/trackmobile.shtml) donated from the MBTA. This cross between a tractor and a locomotive will be very helpful when we have to move our caboose and other cars around the yard, and perhaps we'll be giving occasional caboose rides next year! We have already used it to move the caboose for Moonlight Magic and to put the caboose away for the winter. John has been fixing a few problems to get it fully functional.

MBTA also gave us a Grove crane. This machine is about twice as powerful as the crane we have, and will be helpful for building track, replacing trolley wire line poles and disassembling and reassembling trolley cars and their trucks. It needs a few repairs before it will be operable.

We have also bought a used trolley power supply. This will allow us to have the proper 600VDC voltage on our trolley wire, with enough power to run other trolleys like the Line Car, when it is ready to run. We need to raise thousands of dollars to be able to connect this power supply to the grid.

As you can see, we are making our operation smoother, safer and more reliable, as well as more interesting, educational and fun. But you can also see that we need more money than we get from ticket sales and dues to keep us on track.

We don't send out special fundraising mailings or have fund drives. But we do depend on your support for our ongoing operations and for our special projects. The Transfer is the only place where we ask our members for additional financial support. We need to make repairs to the trackmobile, crane and tamper, as well as pay for and connect the 600VDC power supply.

Even with our all-volunteer Restoration Crew, the "Berkshire Hills" parlor trolley restoration project and

the MBTA Line Car restoration project will be needing a lot of funds. We will make progress as funding allows, but it still helps to boost our Restoration Crew's morale to know that you, our members, have their backs. Please read the Restoration Reports herein, and go to the web pages for these projects, and then help us out with a generous donation at:

www.sftm.org/donations.shtml

Please remember to renew your Membership.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

SAM BARTLETT - PRESIDENT/EDITOR
FROM THE RESTORATION DEPARTMENT

MBTA 3283 - THE LINE CAR

We have removed more of the wooden frame and floor and are nearly ready to start cutting out and replacing a few rusted-out sections of the frame.

If you would like to contribute to the restoration of this unique piece of Boston transit history, we encourage you to make a donation to the Line Car Fund. See www.sftm.org/donations.shtml for donation details, or read about our Line Car at www.sftm.org/linecar.shtml.

THE "BERKSHIRE HILLS"

The "Berkshire Hills" Parlor Trolley's "trucks" (wheel sets) have been reassembled. They roll nicely!



Nov 2024 - trucks for the "Berkshire Hills" are ready.

We have changed some details for moving the "Berkshire Hills" here. We hope early next year to load the car body onto a trailer in Maine and unload it onto its trucks here. Then we can roll it into the Car Barn for restoration and public viewing.

continued on page 4

We have already received a \$10,000 donation to cover part of the costs of moving the "Berkshire Hills". We will continue to have expenses with this project. Our restoration progress will be largely dependent on the donations we receive for the "Berkshire Hills" Fund. If you would like to support the restoration of this unique piece of Berkshire Street Railway history, please make a donation to the "Berkshire Hills" Fund.

See www.sftm.org/donations.shtml for donation details, and read more about the "Berkshire Hills" at www.sftm.org/berkshirehills.shtml.

There will be plenty of work to do on the "Berkshire Hills" once she gets here. If you want to help out by scraping, cleaning, priming, painting or rebuilding wooden parts, please email Josh at josh@sftm.org or call (413) 682 4591.

RESTORATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

If you would like to support our restoration efforts by volunteering, please email Josh at josh@sftm.org or call (413) 682 4591.

2025 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE!

2025 Memberships are now due! If your printed TRANSFER does not have '2025' or '2100' on the address label, we hope you will renew your membership now. See the attached Membership Form for more information on Member levels and benefits.

Or, renew online at www.sftm.org/join.shtml

If you get the eTransfer, check the email that was sent with this issue to see your Membership status.

Your membership dues is very important to our financial well-being, any time of year. We also depend on donations above your dues amount to fund our ongoing Projects, like the "Berkshire Hills" and the Line Car. Please consider a *generous* additional donation with your Membership.

HISTORY CORNER

Did you know? Fred T. Ley was the contractor who built the concrete bridge in 1908 that is now known as the "Bridge of Flowers". He was a Springfield Mass. contractor who also built Fort Devens and the Chrysler Building in New York City. For eleven months, the Chrysler Building was the tallest building in the world. But did you know he also had large fi-

nancial interests in several trolley lines, including the Berkshire Street Railway? Fred T. Ley was one of the passengers on the first trip of the "Berkshire Hills" parlor trolley that will soon be at our museum, when it made the inaugural run on the Berkshire Street Railway.

This information comes from the book "William Van Alen, Fred T. Ley and the Chrysler Building" by George C. Kingston, on loan from Nancy Dole's Books and Ephemera. A review of this book appears in the Fall 2019 Transfer, Vol 28-3 by Carl Byron.

Did you know this isn't the first time the concrete bridge was renovated and repaired? In 1983 the bridge also had all the flowers removed for repair of the bridge. For \$580,000 the fill in the arches was removed and replaced with gravel topped with 18" of loam. Cracks and surface deterioration were filled and repaired. Repairs were made to the water main and piers at and below the waterline, where damage from ice in the river had occurred.

This information comes from a Springfield Union newspaper clipping, date unknown, and the Bridge of Flowers Wikipedia page. The final paragraph quotes William Allen, the engineer for the project, as saying "It was designed for railroad loadings, the way gasoline is going, who knows, it might be a trolley bridge again."

The clipping is also on loan from Nancy Dole's Books and Ephemera,

THE BOSTON & ALBANY RAILROAD IN CHESTER (EARLY 1920'S)

Tony found this reprinted article from "Stone Walls" Summer 1986, pp 33-36, a regional magazine published for a few years. The author is unknown.

Shelburne Falls would have had similar "hustle and bustle" to that described below. The climb from West Deerfield, past Shelburne Falls to Buckland on the Boston & Maine is not as steep as Washington Summit on the B&A, but pushers were used here too. Lightly edited.

Nearly all trains westbound had to have help up the mountain from Chester to Washington, the power for which was supplied by steam engines. There were eight daily Pullman (dining, sleeping, state room, etc.) trains running from Boston to Buffalo, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, and St. Louis: each one on a time schedule of its own. They also stopped all stations

about the size of Westfield and Pittsfield. These trains normally had from nine to twelve cars and each one stopped at Chester and a "pusher" engine was coupled at the rear to help them pull up the hill. On holidays, when demand was much greater than normal, the trains would run in sections. For example: When twenty-eight cars were needed to accommodate passengers for a run, the train would be separated into three trains. These ran on the same time schedule and had the same train number. If a train were running in sections, all sections except the last one would display green flags by day and green lights by night on the front of the engine. This was to notify all personnel that there were other trains running on the same schedule. For instance, if a freight train were on a side track to let the passenger train pass, it would have to let all sections pass unless the train dispatcher gave them a message declaring other sections running a certain amount of time late of schedule.

In addition to Pullman Trains there were three regular scheduled mail express trains east and west. There were also several other passenger trains that served Chester. These were called "local passengers" and stopped at all the towns from Springfield to Pittsfield and beyond. They had special rates for school children and regular commuters. There were four trains in each direction. They also carried mail and express, and one train carried merchandise and milk, which picked up several cans from local farmers. Salesmen would also use the trains which ran through Chester. They would arrive on one train and after contacting merchants (4 grocers, 1 drugstore, 2 hardware, 1 meat market, 1 gristmill, 1 grain, coal and cement, 1 clothing and others) they could return without waiting too long. All merchandise was shipped to Chester by Railway Express or by a local freight. It handled only merchandise to be delivered at the freight house at each town en route. It also picked up less than carload lots for any destination. Merchants generally picked up their merchandise at the freight house.

Between schedules of all these passenger trains, a vast amount of freight was handled as this was the main route from Chicago to Boston. All freight trains came from West Springfield to Chester hauled by one hand-fired locomotive or engine. At Chester, a pusher or sometimes two were added and the train was helped to Washington. Here the pusher was

disconnected and returned to Chester to make another trip. Four trips up the hill was considered a day's work. In order to insure no delays at Chester there were four or five pusher crews at work at all times. On holidays when passenger service was heavy, as many as seven or eight crews were used in one day.

Brakemen were required to ride on top of cars on all eastbound freight trains running from Washington to Chester regardless of weather conditions. Each train had two regular brakemen and, unless the train was short (30 cars or less), a third brakeman from Chester was added. On each car near the hand brake staff, there is a pressure retaining valve. When this valve is in holding position, the brake pressure on that car (everything working properly) will remain constant until the valve is returned to release position. The three brakemen each taking one third of the cars, turned all retaining valves to holding position before leaving Washington. Then they positioned themselves on top of the cars so they could communicate signals the entire length of the train. Then the ride down the hill (twelve miles) was made with a running time of forty-two minutes. Their duty then was to watch for excessive smoke in the daytime or fire and sparks at night. This was not too difficult because as the train was rounding the curves one brakeman could see the other brakeman's section of train. Of course, the other, in turn, could see back to his companion brakeman. In the event one brakeman saw something wrong and signaled, the other brakeman went over the cars to the one in question and put the retaining valve in release position. As a rule, that corrected the problem. If not and the brakeman thought it was becoming dangerous, he would signal the engineer to stop the train and investigate further. On arriving at Chester, all valves were put back into release position. One brakeman would then go to the engine and the other would go back to the caboose and the train continued to West Springfield. The Chester brakeman then returned to Washington on the next westbound train to ride another down. This brakeman would normally ride three trains a day.

Since the railroad back in these days was a thriving business and because Chester's geographical location of being nestled in the foothills of some very steep mountains, many townsmen were employed by the B. & A. system. This, of course, made Chester a thriving little community.



Here is our recently-arrived model 8TMD Trackmobile. An odd-looking machine, but very useful!



Here is our recently-arrived Grove crane. Also an odd-looking machine, but also very useful!



No. 10 arrives at Salmon Falls for Moonlight Magic



Sarah guides Althea on the velocipede at Trolleyfest

TRANSFER AVAILABLE ONLINE

These pictures look much better on a computer screen. If you only get the printed version of the Transfer and want to see the pictures in color, or want to look at back issues, go to:
www.sftm.org/transfer/full/

TRANSPORTATION BULLETIN ONLINE

To learn more about the building of the trolley bridge that became the Bridge of Flowers, and the building and operation of the Shelburne Falls and Colrain Street Railway, you can download a copy of the National Railway Historical Society's Transportation Bulletin No. 75 at:
www.sftm.org/training/TransportationBulletin75.pdf

!!ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION!!

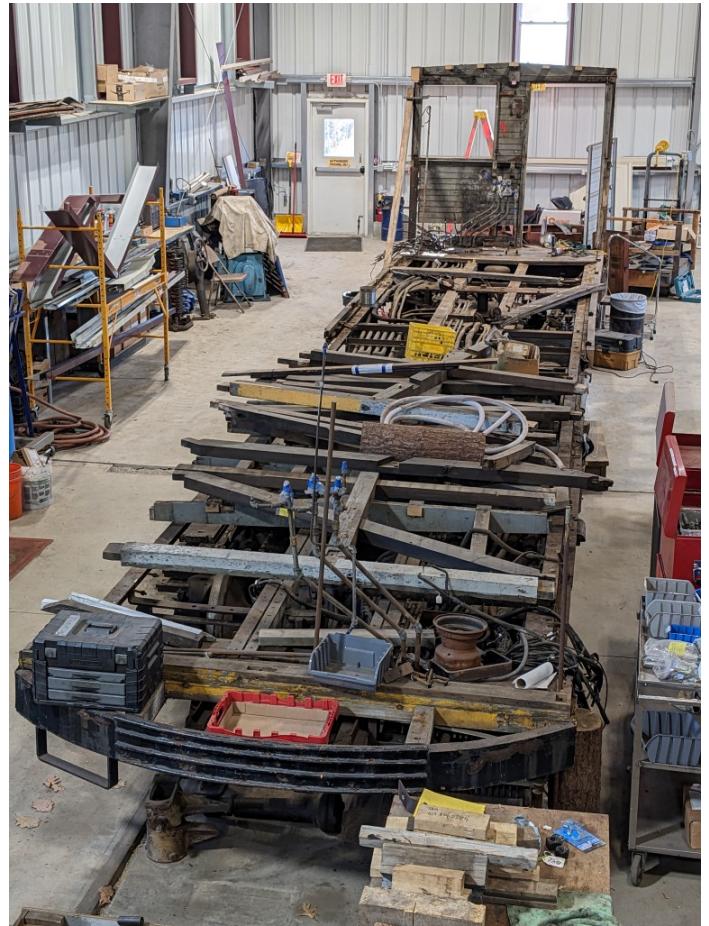
We will hold our 2025 Annual Meeting on Tuesday February 11 at the museum's Visitor Center at 6:30pm. We don't plan any particular program, this will just be to count votes from the ballots and anyone present, to elect Directors, President and Vice-President. If you are a member you may use the attached ballot to place your vote.

YEAR END GIVING

Please remember SFTM when you are planning your Year End Giving, or any other time! We depend on donations both for our day-to-day expenses (our General Fund) and for our restoration and expansion projects. You can send us a check or go to our website to donate online. We are an all-volunteer non-profit educational 501(c)3 organization.



Dec 2024 - All bridge and no flowers

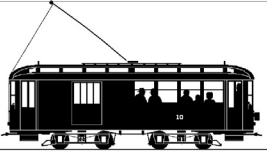


Dec 2024 - the Line Car is mostly disassembled

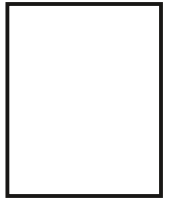
MBTA Line Car 3283 at work in Forest Hills, Mass. in 1984. Note that the work platform has been raised to allow access to the overhead wire. Photo by Norton D. Clark, Kevin Farrell Collection



Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum
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413/625-9443 www.sftm.org



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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/>

MUSEUM RECIPROCITY

A group of trolley museums has formed a Member's Reciprocity Program. Current SFTM members get a discount at participating museums.

See what museums are participating at <http://www.trolleywayfinder.org/>. Bring your membership or acknowledgement letter or card.

TRANSFER INDEX AVAILABLE

Nina has volunteered to create an index of Transfer articles. We still need to do the early issues for which we only have paper copies. You can download the index from <https://www.sftm.org/transfer/transferindex.xls> to make it easier to find old "news" about our museum, and local railroad history. We have been publishing Transfer newsletters for thirty-three years!

RAILROAD HOBBY SHOW 2025

Come visit us and hundreds of other exhibitors, from tourist railroads to model layouts railroads of all scales, at the Big Railroad Hobby Show at the Eastern States Exposition January 25 and 26, 2025.

www.railroadhobbyshow.com

THANKS FOR THE HELP!

Thank you to Marie, Larry, Jim P., Nancy, Tony and Nina for contributing to this issue. To submit an article, picture or idea for the Transfer, please email editor@sftm.org.

TRANSFER AVAILABLE ONLINE

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<https://www.sftm.org/transfer/full/>

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.

EDITOR'S NOTES

I tend to only use first names, because the Transfer is posted online and some folks prefer not to have their names splashed all over the web.

Feedback is always welcome.

Sam Bartlett- editor editor@sftm.org