T·H·E
# LIVE WIRE
THE OFFICIAL NEWLETTER OF AMERICA'S FIRST DOWNTOWN STREETCAR MUSEUM

Volume 52, Number 4 April, May, June, 2023

# *Public Service Coordinated Transport Car 26 Returns to BSM.*

*By Matthew W. Nawn, BSM 1501. Photos provided by the author unless otherwise credited.*




Car 26 arrives at BSM's 28th Street 'Josh' Loop via Falls Road. The car will be unloaded at the city highway yard and pushed to the museum carhouse using PRT snowsweeper C-145.

After four years of hard work, pandemic and supply chain impacts, project scope growth, and thousands of hours of work, Public Service Coordinated Transport PCC Car 26 returned to the Baltimore Streetcar Museum on Wednesday, May 3, 2023. Baltimore Streetcar Museum is proud to share this exciting news with its members and friends. This is a monumental step forward for this transformative project, which began with the car's arrival at BSM in 2014 after more than a decade of storage in New Jersey, and is planned to end in late fall 2024 upon final completion of remaining work by BSM volunteers and return of this historic car to public operation.

As has been documented in previous issues of *The Live Wire*, it took years of painstaking, and at times frustrating, work to first make this deteriorated vehicle operable again, followed by more than four years of contracted work to structurally repair and restore the exterior carbody and interior. With the contracted part of this long project completed, BSM's own talented volunteers will do the final work necessary to accurately restore this car at a level commensurate with the other priceless rolling stock owned by the museum. Additionally, the completion of Car 26 will provide the museum with a vehicle configured to give guests with mobility challenges an opportunity to experience an educational ride on a restored vintage streetcar.

### *Planning, A Helpful Gift, and a Preview of What's to Come.*

Early in 2023, restoration contractor RMS, Inc. notified Car 26 Project Managers Matt Nawn and Harry Donahue that the contracted work on the exterior and interior was completed and requested that the car be picked up for ship-

***Continued, see Car 26, pg. 3.***

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*is published by the Baltimore Streetcar Museum for the enjoyment of it's members and friends. Your comments and submissions are encouraged. Please send correspondence to:*

***The Live Wire***
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Baltimore, Maryland 21211

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Logan Tracy
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The Museum's Board of Trustees meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month (except August) at the Museum's Visitor's Center auditorium. Members in good standing are invited and encouraged to attend. The meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.

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# At The Museum

## The Museum is open for the 2023 operating season.

### Hours: Saturdays & Sundays
### Noon until 5:00 p.m.

*Hope to see you there!*

Most Saturdays - visit the museum in your work clothes. There are always plenty of opportunities to volunteer and help promote the museum's mission of preservation.

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# From the President

by John J. O'Neill, Jr.

We have just completed some very significant events at the Museum. The first was Logan'sBirthday Bash which raised over $2,000 for the restoration of car number 3828. We have collected well over $100,000 for the restoration, but still are in need of a restorer to do the job. We have considered a number of alternatives and the existing restoration specialists are all committed to many other projects or are sick, so we are still casting around for help! Other cars are well underway with car 26, 1050 and 7303 progressing nicely.

Another set of events the have been very successful are musical venues that have brought a number of folks to the Museum who normally wouldn't be in the market to visit us. Many thanks go to Tom Caldwell and the volunteers who have staffed these events which have brought revenue and also widened the reach of the Museum attracting non-tourists and non-railfans. This will be good. Hopefully generating return visits and / or family and friends who will come down.

We are now open on both weekend days until Labor Day and are still in need of volunteer operation staff to operate the cars. Our resources of volunteers continue to be stretched thinner since there are the usual other tasks such as restoration, maintenance, and routine administrative chores that always need to be done. I am closing by asking everyone to consider spending an additional couple of hours per month to keep everything rolling. I know many of you have and are doing just that, so this plea is going to those who aren't as active as they once were.

Hope to see you soon at the Museum!

John

*Car 26, continued from page 1.*

ment back to the museum at the earliest possible opportunity as the shop space was needed for other contracts. Planning for shipment of the car back to the museum commenced immediately, but unforeseen equipment challenges by our initial trucking contractor delayed the process as a new hauler had to be found. Baltimore's unique track gauge makes transporting rail vehicles by truck a real challenge, as all firms who routinely haul rail vehicles for museums and commercial clients configure their trailers for railroad standard gauge. Moving a streetcar configured for Baltimore's gauge requires customizing equipment at considerable time and expense. Thankfully, due to a great professional rapport between BSM and expert hauler Silk Road Specialized (SRS), BSM was able to negotiate with SRS to reconfigure their equipment and perform this unique move to bring 26 home. Scheduling this kind of operation is not done in an instant, the process began in early spring.

Meanwhile, as the planning for the return of car 26 to Baltimore was underway, the project was able to secure a second, substantial, grant from Liberty Historic Railway, Inc. (https://www.lhry.org/), which provides the funding to purchase a platform-based wheelchair lift for exclusive use with Car 26. The wide carbody width of 26 enables wheelchairs and other mob-




Right: The PSCT 26 Moving Crew in Columbia. From left to right: Ed Amrhein, Matt Nawn, Harry Donahue, Logan Tracy and Carl Merson.

Below: Some parts had been loaded into 26 prior to the May moving day. Here, Logan Tracy and Will McKeowen move the new roof boards inside the car.



ility devices to be safely carried in this car without substantial or permanent alteration of its historic features (one stanchion can be non-permanently removed when the lift is used). This fulfills a major purpose of the acquisition of this car in the first place.

Additionally, the project received some additional motivation from our friends at Minnesota Streetcar Museum in April. Minnesota Streetcar Museum has completely restored former PSCT Car 3 to its original configuration as Twin City Rapid Transit 322 in a project quite similar in scope to ours (see https://old.trolleyride.org/CHSL_Main/322restoration/index.html for more information) and graciously brought their car out for inspection and a test ride on a day they were otherwise closed when Car 26 co-manager Matt Nawn was in Minneapolis for a public transportation conference (Matt works full time in the transit industry). This opportunity helped answer some detail questions related to reassembly and provided inspiration to push the restoration of Car 26 closer to the finish line.






Above: PSCT 26 loaded and departing Columbia for the trip to Baltimore.

Right: Matt Nawn and Leonard Kulacki supervise the unloading of PSCT 26 upon arrival in Baltimore. Much work, to be performed by BSM volunteers, still lies ahead. Photo by Andy Blumberg.

***Moving Day - May 3, 2023.***

Silk Road Specialized's rig arrived in Columbia on the evening of May 2 to facilitate loading early the following morning. Around 7 a.m., the loading began with the support of BSM volunteers: Ed Amrhein, Harry Donahue, Logan Tracy, Cheri Tracy, Carl Merson, and Matt Nawn assisting the driver and helper from Silk Road Specialized. No unusual move ever goes exactly as planned, and the BSM-Silk Road team creatively improvised in areas like building temporary track from various steel shapes and using Logan's truck to tow 26 forward a short distance inside the shop. With the loading completed around 11a.m., the trip to Baltimore began.

However, the rig had not left RMS' property before being stopped by a slow-moving freight train doing switching moves on the Columbia & Reading Railroad. During this brief delay, a Red Rose Transit Authority bus parked next to 26, providing an unplanned contrast between two different generations of public transit vehicles. Once the train had cleared, the trip proceeded a short distance before being stopped again, this time by an illegally parked landscaping truck. After some tight maneuvers, the trip was underway again, and other than

a brief stop to secure a door which opened in transit, the trip to Baltimore proceeded without further difficultly.

At BSM, additional volunteers Leonard Kulacki, John LaCosta, Mark Dawson, Dennis Yeager, Mike Lawson and Justin Thillman made preparations for the arrival of Car 26, including staging PRT C-145 such that it could push 26 into the carhouse over the pit on Track 1. A number of other members were on hand to witness the unloading. Car 26 arrived at the unloading area by the former Ma &Pa Roundhouse at 1:36 p.m., and the unloading progressed without difficulty. The car was secured inside the carhouse by 3:30 p.m.

### *So, What Remains to be Completed?*

While the work performed under contract by RMS was extensive, it did not, and was never intended, to include everything necessary to completely finish the car and return it to operable condition. Doing so would have been cost-prohibitive, and RMS' expertise with electric streetcars is specialized to carbody work. Furthermore, the RMS facility has neither 600VDC power available, or trackage built to Baltimore gauge. RMS performed exactly what was stipulated in their contract with Museum; to strip the car to bare steel, repair all areas of deterioration, and finish the carbody exterior in modern, durable, high-performance paints to a level of quality representative of the car's service in New Jersey circa 1964. Considering this was the first time the car was stripped to bare steel in its existence, and each of the seven coats of paint the car received after 1954 was done by hand, the quality of the completed car not only meets, but exceeds, the requirements. The car is appropriately restored; the work is highly durable, yet the car is not "over restored" to a condition unrealistic of what it would have looked like while carrying passengers in New Jersey's largest metropolis.



A smiling Matt Nawn poses with PSCT Car 26. The car is shown back on BSM rails in preparation for its trip to the carhouse. Photo by Andy Blumberg.

***Remaining work to be completed on PSCT 26 at BSM is as follows:***

*Underfloor:*

- Clean, prime, paint underbody
- Blow clean all underfloor cabinets and interior cabinets
- Clean and paint inside of underfloor covers with Glyptal
- Repair hardware for pedal access box
- Repair and repaint (or replace) HB Lifeguard

*Interior:*

- Rewire new heaters
- Install heater covers
- Wire interior lights including destination sign lights
- Trim and install rubber floor
- Pick up and install seats
- Resolve sticking window issue
- Install window cranks and test all windows
- Paint "Take One" boxes
- Install all interior fittings and details
- Install destination signs
- Touch up interior paint
- Install interior decal
- Install advertising signs

*Exterior:*

- Install new standee windows and destination sign glass
- Install door glass
- Install exterior vents
- Install roof ladders
- Install starter's button
- Install roof matting, two places
- Install front roof vent
- Install roof boards
- Install rear roof vent
- Install trolley pole, trolley hook, rope, and retriever
- Wire pole
- Install taillight wedges and taillights
- Install headlight
- Pick up and install headlight wings
- Rework lower area by front doors, fill, and touch up
- Touch up all exterior paint
- Install exterior decals

***Remaining work to be completed on PSCT 26 at BSM is as follows (continued):***

*Propulsion, Braking and Related Systems:*

- Retruck car
- Install missing wheel shunts
- Install replacement rubber truck bumpers
- Touch up truck paint
- Fabricate brackets for shock absorbers
- Purchase and install shock absorbers
- Modify backup controller
- Remove extra battery wire lower right side
- Install and connect batteries
- Readjust doors
- Document all wiring changes
- Structured control, propulsion, and braking tests

***The Work Has Already Begun.***

Less than a week after Car 26 returned to BSM, work towards final completion got underway with Logan Tracy and several friends spending two long days methodically cleaning all surface rust from underneath the carbody, a tiring and filthy but important job. A crew returned on May 20 and made substantial progress getting more than half of the underbody coated with an industrial primer. Progress updates will be shared in subsequent issues of *The Live Wire* as this exciting project methodically approaches completion.



The restoration of Car 26 is only possible due to the tremendous support, physical and financial, from the dedicated volunteers, friends, and supporters of the Baltimore Streetcar Museum. Much like the other non-Baltimore cars owned by the museum which originated in Philadelphia and San Diego, all funding for the restoration of Public Service Coordinated Transport Car 26 has been raised specifically for this project through the generosity of individual donors and grantors and the project is not subsidized with regular museum funds. Your generosity and support for this project will come to final fruition when PSCT 26 joins other restored PCC Cars BTC 7407 and SEPTA 2168 as part of the museum's collection of operable rolling stock.

Thank you!



The underbody preservation crew and the results of their efforts. A dirty but necessary job.

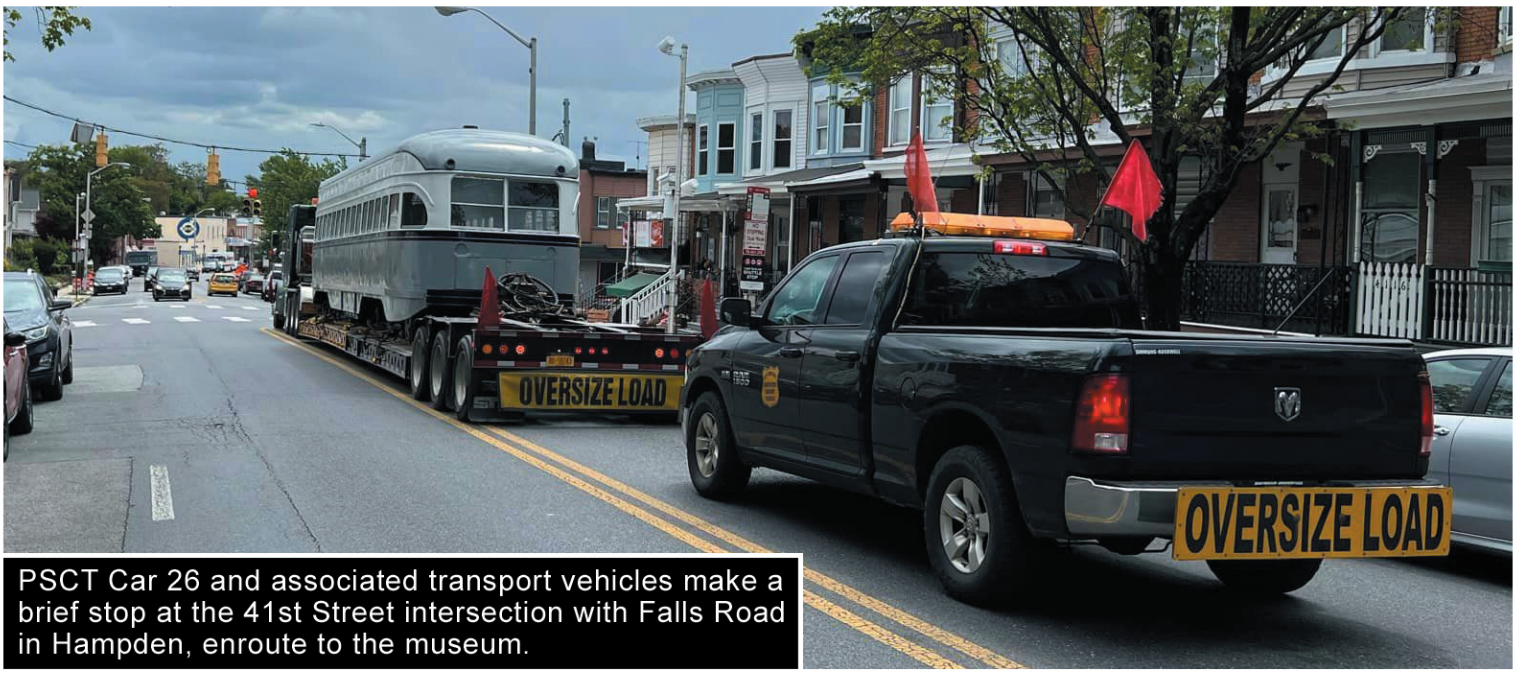
# *Chasing PSCT 26 on the Return.*

*By Logan Tracy, BSM 771. Photos by the author.*




A brief stop a the Baltimore City Line on Interstate 83 before exiting to smaller city streets.

On May 3, 2023, I chased our New Jersey Transit Car 26 as it traveled back home. We started out in the narrow streets of Columbia, Pennsylvania; as we came to the intersection of Perry Street and South Fourth Street (in Columbia), a landscape truck was illegally parked and made the turn a difficult one. Along the way we made several stops to take pictures of the streetcar returning home. On route 30 we stopped at Accomac Road, between Columbia and York, where the doors had to be secured (again). Once through busy North York, we merged onto Interstate 83, and headed south towards Baltimore. Stops were made at in York at Mount Rose Avenue and North Street. Additional stops were made at the Pennsylvania and Maryland line at Freeland Avenue, and the Baltimore City line. Once we arrived in Baltimore, we exited the Interstate onto Cold Spring Lane, and headed towards Falls Road, while construction workers turned their heads and pointed, wondering at the sight.




PSCT Car 26 and associated transport vehicles make a brief stop at the 41st Street intersection with Falls Road in Hampden, enroute to the museum.

Project Update

# *Consolidated Railway 1050 Platform Reconfiguration Continues to Make Progress.*

*By David Wilson, BSM 699. Photos by the author.*

We continue to make significant progress in returning car 1050 to service. As reported in the last issue of *The Live Wire*, the first of the platforms to be rebuilt has progressed to the point where we needed to consider the second.



Removal of the second platform on car 1050 is well underway in this photo from the June 3rd work session. Mike Lawson is working to loosen the second outside knee in this photo. Note the nails protruding from the car's knees, a surprise finding.

The second platform has now been completely removed. Many of the parts that will be reused or reinstalled are being prepared for the day when they are needed for the re-build. The cleaning of parts is ongoing. The wooden elements, for the most part, are ready. While working on the initial platform, much of the floor and weather tread was duplicated in anticipation of the second platform. There are some parts that remain to be fabricated however.

Although we manufactured timbers to do all eight of the car's knees, upon inspection we have decided to keep the two outside knees on the second platform. Their condition is much better than we previously thought, and in an effort to keep as many of the car's original components as possible, they will be remounted after some cosmetic work. This will ensure the platform dimensions are the same as what was removed, and retain as much of the car's historic fabric as possible. One curious thing that was discovered during demolition is that this 'second' end, had the flooring attached with nails instead of screws. This begs the question; was this platform re-floored at some time. While we do not have a definitive answer, it appears so. Generally speaking, and with some knowledge of car builder's practices, we believe the flooring was generally screwed down at the factory. Certainly on the first platform, and in the car's interior, screws were and are used for the attachment of the floor boards. Our intention is to use screws in the rebuilding of the second platform, and thus match the previous rebuild.

The big question here of course is; what about the 'wrap-around' dasher installation. The answer to that question was very much on the minds of the crew and so in April, we did a 'test fit' of the new dasher steel. The main concern here was the bend where the dash makes the transition to enclose the side of the platform. The new steel was supported on jacks and clamped to the new woodwork where needed to in order to get the best fit. We are happy to report that the dash fits very well; not perfect, but after it is trimmed of excess material, you would be hard pressed to see any deficiency. Considering how far off we could have been with this fit, we are very happy indeed. The first dasher will be trimmed and have its headlight hole cut out with the museum's plasma cutter in the near future. After fitting (and a sigh of relief for the good fit), the new dash steel was unclamped and removed in order to continue the work on the platform's floor.

On May 6th, with the help of Bryan Steckler and

Jacob Seabolt, the weather treading was attached on the first rebuilt platform. With that completed, the exterior knees were primed and the platform was given a primer touch up. We are now at the stage with this platform where parts previously removed and cleaned are being refitted to the new woodwork, some (such as the hand brake and sander hardware) in different positions from where they were previously. This relocation is





happening as part of the effort to depict the car as it appeared upon delivery.

Left and above: 1050's new dasher steel was set into position on April 8th in order to check on the fit, and to see how much trimming will be required before it can be attached permanently. The dasher was supported on jack stands and fastened with clamps. The steel was removed after its initial test fit in order to attend to the remaining work on the platform floor. These photos give a good indication of how the car will look with it's new enclosed platforms.

Below: Bryan Steckler looks on while Jacob Seabolt attaches the weather tread layer to the first of the rebuilt platforms. Following this work, the paint was touched up.

The BSM shop crew is very busy with all of the work we are giving them. So far there has been a steady stream of parts to the shop for work, and parts returning from the shop after work. As has been mentioned before, the platform railing supports are a major part of this but future projects for the shop personel will involve manufacturing parts needed for the installation of the car's hand brake in its new position on the outside of the dasher. In addition to this, we recently discovered that the brake staff was in need of some work to have it operate properly in its new, relocated position. When the brake staff was test fitted, we were able to observe that there was a distinct wobble when it rotated, which caused the staff to bind up. Gary and Mike from the shop were on hand to observe the problem, and indicated that the defect could be addressed by a little lathe work on the staff. Generally however we are quite pleased by the way everything is going together, and we are confident that all of the issues can be worked out in order to have the new platforms work as intended.



# *Snowsweepers on a Hot Summer Day.*

*Submitted by Bernie Sachs, BSM 298.*

Is there anything with less utility than a snow sweeper during the heat of summer? Perhaps yes, but sweepers in July must rank high on the list of the useless.

It's August 4, 1955 and the temperature stands in the ninetys. The place the is the storage yard adjacent to Belvedere Carhouse.

Mrs. Charles Schmid and daughters Vicky, age 7 1/2, and Patti, age 23 months are on a stroll past the idle sweepers which wait for their next assignment.

The photo is by Albert D. Cochran of the Baltimore Sunpapers, and is currently part of the Special Collections of the Albin M. Kuhn Library, at UMBC.




The Baltimore Streetcar Museum would like to acknowledge the following donors who have made donations to BSM during the period from 3/16/23 - 6/6/23. We appreciate their generosity and apologize to anyone we missed.

***For PCC 26***

John Bessent
Walter Rothaug

***Donations For Streetcar Restoration In Memory of Buster Hughes***

Joseph Stewart
Melvin Boteler
Bernard Sachs
Michael Reeber

***For Murals***

Russel Greco

***For the Restoration of Car 3828***

Logan Tracy Birthday Event

***For PCC 7303***

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James Hutzler
Renee/John Roth
John Engleman
Ray Cannon
James Hogan
Anna Otchin
J Kraft
Susan Diefenbach
Karl Johnson
Bryan Cooper
Garry Pace
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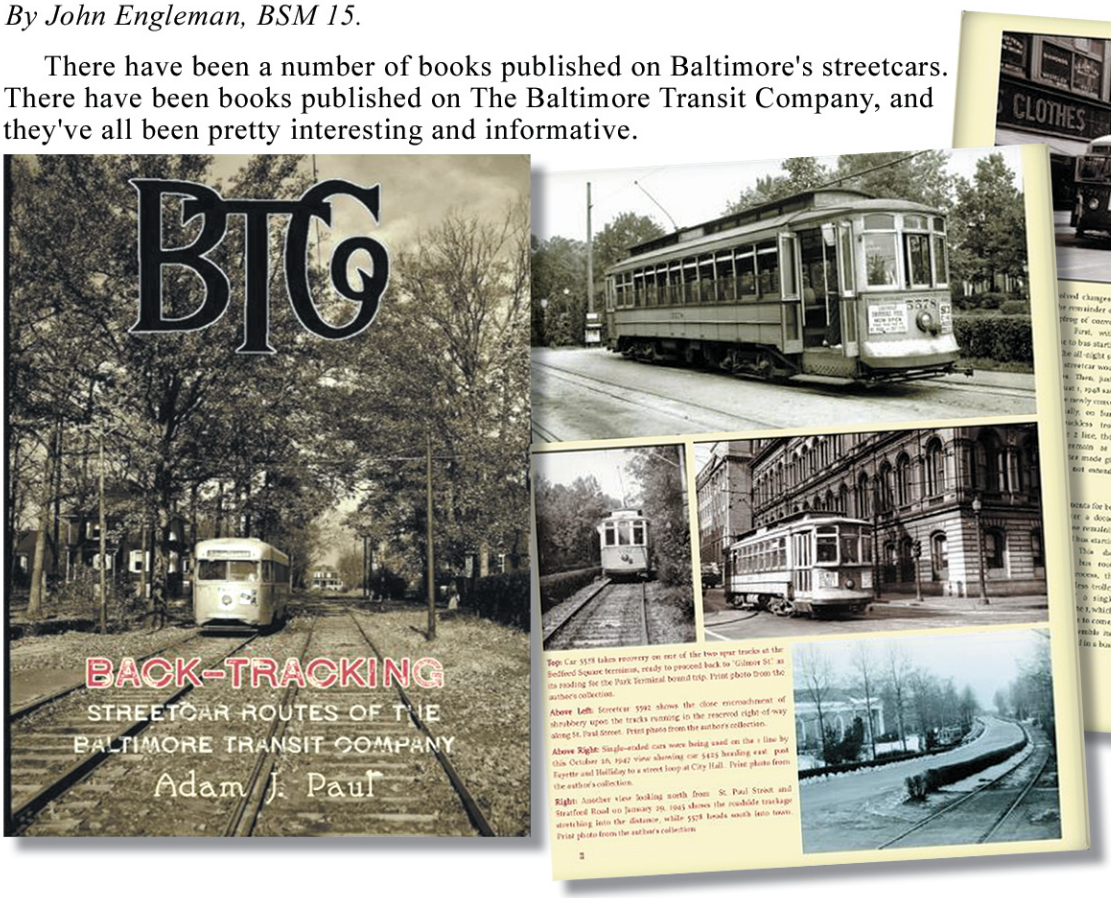
Team 7303 would like to thank ALL of our 2023 donors for their continued support.

Sally Donner, Ted VonEiff, Carl Kruelle, Susan Diefenbach, Shelley Hopkins, Joseph Corasaniti, James McMahon, James Hutzler, Renee Roth, John Engleman, Ray Cannon, Jim Hogan, Anna Otchin, Karl Johnson, Bryan Cooper, Gary Pace, William Gough, Charles Long, Charles Blardone, Joyce Kraft, James Ripley, and Fred Maloney.

# *New Book on Baltimore Streetcar Routes.*

*By John Engleman, BSM 15.*

There have been a number of books published on Baltimore's streetcars. There have been books published on The Baltimore Transit Company, and they've all been pretty interesting and informative.




Now comes another one, "BTCo, Back Tracking, Streetcar Routes Of The Baltimore Transit Company". One hundred and twenty-eight pages of Baltimore's streetcar lines covering every detail of the streetcar lines since the incorporation of the BTC back in 1935. From articulated cars to two-man semi-convertibles, to remodels, to Peter Witts, to PCCs and the Brilliner, from yellow cars to red cars to green cars and back to yellow cars; from Fort Howard to Dickeyville, from Overlea to Ellicott City, this book covers them all (and it has a few trackless trolleys and buses thrown in as well).

The over 180 photographs range from sepia to black and white to full color. This book doesn't just measure up to the standards of others, it sets the bar. Adam Paul, who was the creator and master of the absolutely wonderful Baltimore Transit Archives "BTCo.net" website has done it again.

This new book chronicles every one of Baltimore's streetcar lines in great detail, with maps, photos, and truly amazing text filled with information, anecdotes, facts, and plans, both aborted ones and ones that actually happened. Plus, it puts to rest a few rumors and confirms others, one with a photograph of a long-rumored story that no one could ever prove. Adam does. Many of the hundreds of photographs in the book have never been previously published.

I can't say enough about this book. Anyone who has the slightest interest in Baltimore history, Baltimore transportation, and especially Baltimore's streetcars will want a copy of this book. Maybe two copies, as you will certainly wear out your first by constantly referring to it. It is currently available online from Blurb Publishing at this safe link:

https://www.blurb.com/books/11563379-back-tracking.

The book is $32.50 and is well worth every penny.

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# *Eagle Scout Service Project Enhances Museum Appearance.*

*By Harry Donahue, BSM 1082. Photos supplied by the author.*

On Saturday, May 27, Eagle Scout Candidate Nick Hager, seen at right, brought his crew of volunteers to BSM to complete a landscaping project at the museum substation.

Nick's older brother Matthew, completed his Eagle Scout project last Fall; the landscaping of the North side of the substation. Nick's project, landscaping the South side of the substation, was a little more involved since his crew had to design and install two pipes under the sod to allow for drainage. Nick also had to consult with Ed Amrhein and John LaCosta concerning the location of the underground electrical feeder to thesubstation.

Nick and Matthew's projects have definitely improved the appearance on both sides of the substation building. BSM is grateful to these fine young men for their efforts.










# Museum Stories Through Photographs




Above: On June 4, 2023 the Annual Logan Tracy Birthday Bash took place. Over $2000 was raised for the restoration of United Railways and Electric Co. Car 3828. Guest operators from multiple states including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and the District of Columbia were hosted during the day.

Logan would like to thank all the volunteers who attended and helped with the fundraiser:

Carl Merson was our dispatcher, Chris McNally was a big help with the new cash registers, Mark Dawson for helping with the cars and doing a car barn tour. Our operators included Harry Donahue, Stephen Repetski, John LaCosta, Ben Bates, John O'Neil, Andrew Nawn, and Dennis Yeager.






Above: LET THERE BE LIGHT! (In the maintenance pit.) With the return of PSCT 26, and in anticipation of the extensive work that is necessary underneath the car before it can be completed for regular operation, Justin Thilman installed new lighting in the pit. With dramatic results (as seen in the photograph.

Left: SEPTA Car 2168 received some much needed work on its interior lighting system from members Matthew Mummert and Robert King. They checked out and repaired all the interior lights (which had been needing maintenance for about a year). All the left side interior "bull's eye" lamps were out as was part of the front destination sign. The car now has full interior lighting. Photo by Leonard Kulacki.




*A Selection of Interesting Articles From the Past.*
*by Dave Wilson*

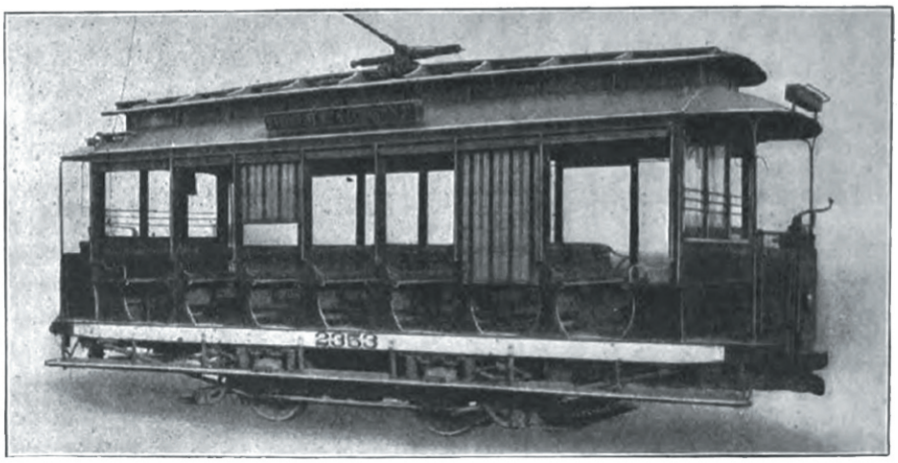
## *Car Sales.*

Baltimore's experience with the sale of surplus cars was 'mixed'. According to Harold Cox in *Early Electric Cars of Baltimore*, 'Larger and better cars were being offered at the same time by Brooklyn, the Third Avenue Rwy.' and others. Here from the March 1907 (below) and the March 1905 (right) editions of The Street Railway Journal, advertisements for used Baltimore cars.


# FOR SALE—BARGAINS

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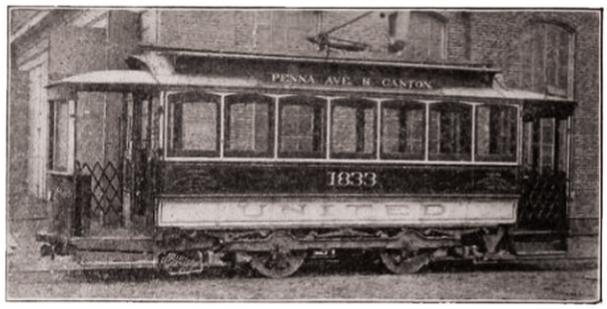
## 52 Open Cars at Baltimore, Md.

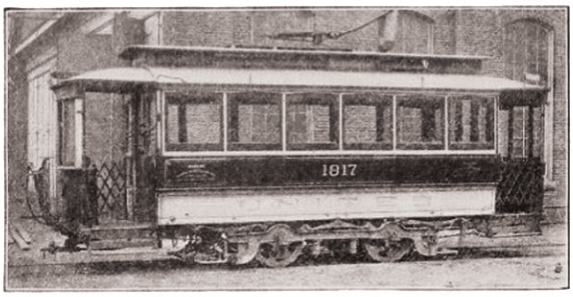
**WRITE FOR FURTHER PARTICULARS**

**ELECTRIC RAILWAY EQUIPMENT CO.,** Commonwealth Bldg. Philadelphia, Pa.


In 1905 Baltimore began purchasing what would come to be the most numerous type of car on the system, the Semi-Convertible. Up to that time the United Railways and Electric Company had been operating with cars which it had inherited from predecessor companies. These cars represented a sorry lot if a letter published in the WORLD of December 6, 1901 can be believed. The writer commented: "Don't you think that it is about time that this company should get some new cars? The ones that it has have been painted so much that they won't take any more paint, and are falling to pieces."




# CAR BARGAINS FOR YOU

## 150 Closed Motor Cars

These cars, now being operated on regular city schedule by the United Railways & Electric Co., of Baltimore, Md., must be sold immediately in order to make room for the new cars now building, and which cars will take their place. Most of them are 16 ft. bodies, and others measure 18 ft. over corner posts. They all have portable vestibules, trucks and complete electrical equipments, some G. E. 800, Westinghouse 12A and No. 3. All are in good physical and operating condition. This is an opportunity to get some good material very cheap—about one quarter the cost of the same thing new. **They will suit you.** Gauge, painting, etc., to suit purchaser.

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**31st *and* Chestnut Sts.**




**Philadelphia, Penna., U. S. A.**






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A Post Card view of the busy intersection of Baltimore and Charles Streets in the Twentieth Century's first decade. Single truck cars still ruled the streets as the Semi-Convertible era was just getting started.