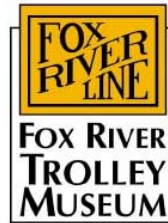


FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e



Issue 03-2, Fall 2009

AE&FRE 304 Comes Home!



304 basking proudly in the autumn sun at Castlemuir - happy to be home again. Don MacBean

The arrival of Aurora, Elgin & Fox River Electric Co. #304 at the Fox River Trolley Museum Tuesday, November 3, 2009 was a long-anticipated homecoming. Car 304, built by the St. Louis Car Co. in 1923, returned to the last surviving remnant of the railroad for which it was built. "The greatest wish of the Fox River Trolley Museum is a reality," president Edward Konecki said after learning that the museum's bid in an Oct. 1 sealed-bid auction was successful.

At the very least, its return "home" represents the fulfillment of an oft-expressed desire of both residents and our members, who knew for decades of the ex-AE&FRE cars that formed the cornerstone of the Trolleyville USA collection in suburban Cleveland. Real estate entrepreneur Gerald E. Brookins, a lifelong trolley fan, bought the four surviving ex-AE&FRE cars when he founded the museum in 1954 because of their service 1935-1954 on the line best known as the Shaker Heights Rapid Transit. There the group of four cars built in 1923 began a second life in 1935, after the AE&FRE ceased passenger operations and pulled up most of its track, keeping three miles for freight trains.

Word earlier this year of the collapse of the museum that Brookins and two succeeding generations of his family had founded and nurtured _ known in its final years as the Lake Shore Electric Railway Museum _ jolted AE&FRE Trolley Museum's all-volunteer staff into action. Feverish fund-raising was undertaken, with appeals to members and long-time donors as well as casual riders on the museum's historic trolley

cars. That fund-raising continues.

Although #304 arrives in South Elgin wearing the cream, silver and red colors of its Shaker Heights days, it is expected to be repainted into the orange and yellow scheme it wore on the AE&FRE, with a sunburst design on either end that it had during its final years in the Fox River Valley.



Ed Frank known for his pictures of the last days of passenger service on the AE&FRE snapped 304 in front of what is now the Third Rail Tap on LaFox Street in South Elgin. Fred Lonnes Collection



Don Egresi, Silk Road's driver, gives an 'up and easy' to get 304 up on the low boy at the Cleveland pier warehouse. Joe Hazinski

AE&FRE 304 and its sisters provided faithful service to the Fox River Valley for 12 years. When delivered, the line still comprised about 40 miles, from Carpentersville on the north to Yorkville on the south. The line was truncated south of Montgomery in 1924, with Aurora-Montgomery becoming a city streetcar line. The Elgin-Carpentersville segment was the next to be abandoned, following a 1933 windstorm that damaged the north end of the line. Service between Elgin and Aurora continued until March 30, 1935, when the interurban cars were replaced by a bus service that still operates today as Pace routes 801 and 802.



A happy and proud Joe Hazinski in front of 304 at the Cleveland pier warehouse where it was stored after leaving Trolleyville. Joe Hazinski



Almost home . . . 304 moving down LaFox Street (IL 31) . . . it can almost feel the rail!!! (Bob Rodenkirk)



Member *Stan Nettis* flagging traffic by on Illinois Route 31 ensuring a safe operation. Don MacBean



Members *Marcia Wakening* and *Laura Taylor* giving their "once over" approval and inspections of 304's interior. Don MacBean

During their years of service in the Fox River Valley, riders young and old made daily use of #304 and her sisters _ traveling to and from schools, work at businesses such as the Elgin Watch factory, business at the old county courthouse in Geneva, and play at parks such as Coleman Grove (today's Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve and the southern end of today's museum line) and Exhibition Park in North Aurora.

The AE&FRE cars would meet the trains of the Milwaukee Road, Illinois Central, Chicago & North Western and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroads throughout their history. Until 1930, AE&FRE riders could change to the trains of the Elgin & Belvidere Electric Ry. to and from the Rockford area, and until the end of passenger service, the Aurora, Elgin & Fox River Electric exchanged passengers daily with the Chicago Aurora & Elgin R.R. (CA&E), always considered its sister line and part

of the same railroad from 1906 until 1923, when the two independently-built but merged railroads were separated by federal bankruptcy court action.



Number 5 ready to pull 304 off the Silk Road rig at the Museum.

Karen Naess



Number 5 spotted 304 to its rightful place on its "main line" at Castlemuir. Don MacBean

During the years of union, the line that would become the CA&E was the Aurora Elgin & Chicago (AE&C) Railroad's Third Rail Division; the line that would become the AE&FRE was the AE&C Fox River Division.

The two railroads shared trackage for about 1.5 miles in the St. Charles-Geneva area from 1909 until 1935. St. Charles branch CA&E trains continued to use the once-joint trackage until 1937, when the branch was converted to bus operation. After that date, only the three miles between Coleman Grove and the Elgin State Hospital remained. This was the trackage the museum purchased in 1972; tracks in and alongside Illinois 31 between today's Castlemuir museum terminal and the State Hospital were pulled up in 1978 to help finance continued museum operations.

The museum has four CA&E cars on its roster, including #20, the oldest operating interurban railroad car in North America.

A fifth CA&E car, #458, built in 1945 and used by the CA&E until 1957, will soon join the AE&FRE collection, also being purchased in the Brookins auction. It arrived January 27, 2010.

Bob Rodenkirk, Don MacBean



304 just after arrival at the Harvard Shop of Cleveland Railways in 1935 where it was re-worked for the Shaker System and was painted in plain CR plain yellow. Eugene Schmidt Collection - Northern Ohio Railway Museum.



304 in front of the paint shop door at Kingsbury Run Shops of Shaker Heights Rapid Transit soon after arrival from AE&FRE - Aurora. Eugene Schmidt Collection - Northern Ohio Railway Museum.



304 in the newer Shaker paint scheme at Trolleyville - USA. Blaine Hays



304 at Shaker Square. It is coming from the Van Aken line on its way to Cleveland Terminal. The tracks in the background are those of the Green Road Line. Note the "plain yellow" paint scheme of Cleveland Railways. Larel Liebenauer



When East Meets West - Welcome Home

The Union Pacific Railroad met the Central Pacific Railroad at Promontory Point, Utah on May 10, 1867 forming the first transcontinental railroad. The Panama Canal was completed and opened on August 15, 1914 joining the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This last November the Fox River Trolley Museum joined the east side and west sides of South Elgin with the acquisition of Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric number 304 uniting it with Chicago Aurora and Elgin cars 11, 20, 316 and 317 from the east side. At one time and until 1923 the Aurora, Elgin and Chicago Railroad owned and operated the interurbans on both sides of South Elgin and the Fox River. Cars of both lines are now back together permitting the Museum to truly represent the history of interurban (electric inter-city railroad) in South Elgin and the Fox River Valley. As in 1867 and 1914 we are rejoicing and celebrating this event.

The Museum is mounting a fundraising campaign to help pay for the restoration and rehabilitation of AE&FRE 304 to its condition when it left the Fox River Valley in 1935. The car went to the Cleveland Ohio where it served 19 years carrying passengers on the Shaker Heights Rapid Transit. It later went to "Trolleyville USA," a Museum preserving over 30 streetcars and interurbans from all over the United States. The downturn of our economy led to the demise of Trolleyville USA that put their collection up for auction. This led to the acquisition by the Fox River Trolley Museum of 304 and Chicago, Aurora and Elgin number 458. CA&E 458, is one of ten interurban cars, the last to be built (1945) in the United States. The details of this fund raising program will be announced soon.

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Ed would appreciate your comments and or suggestions. He can be reached by e-mail at the above address or at the phone number shown. -
Editor

Mission



To preserve and interpret Chicago's electric transport era that began in the 1890s and peaked before 1950. The electric transport era is significant because electric railways, including interurban, rapid transit, and streetcars, helped the Chicago region grow to be one of North America's great metropolitan areas. The Museum strives to show that electric railways were more than convenient, they were and are a way of life for generations of people from all walks of life.

The Museum fulfills this mission by preserving, interpreting, and operating historic railway vehicles on its demonstration electric railway, over the Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric route at South Elgin, Illinois. Furthermore, the museum preserves, displays and interprets smaller artifacts, photos, oral histories, and documents which help relate the importance of electric transport in and around the Chicago Metropolitan Area, putting them in context with their surroundings and era.

Board Announces Meeting Dates for 2010

Board of Directors Meetings

Sunday, March 28, 2010 - 1 pm, South Elgin Village Hall

Saturday, June 5, 2010 - 1 pm, South Elgin Village Hall

Saturday, August 7, 2010 - 7 pm, South Elgin Village Hall

Saturday, September 25, 2010 - 7 pm, South Elgin Village Hall

Sunday, November 21, 2010 - 1 pm, South Elgin Village Hall

Annual Members Meeting

Saturday, November 13, 2010 - 7 pm, South Elgin Village Hall

Members Day

Saturday, June 12, 2010 _ 11 am to 4 pm, Museum Grounds

Saturday, September 25, 2010 _ 11 am to 4 pm, Museum Grounds

Don MacBean

AE&FRE's Last Public Time Table

We have reproduced, at the right, the last public time table of the Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric. It is dated in 1934. This is the probable schedule that car 304 observed until abandonment of passenger service. We would invite your analysis by asking some questions and also ask readers to submit questions and answers for future publication in Fox River Lines. The purpose of this article is to encourage reader's analysis, interaction and to determine ridership patterns, the public's use of the service. The questions are numbered for easy reference to answers.

1. Where did most trains between Aurora and Elgin meet?
2. Which trains had faster terminal to terminal running time, northbound or southbound? Why do you think so?
3. Between what stations was the fastest average speed (running time) required?
4. What train had the longest elapsed time between terminals? Was it north bound or south bound and was it in an AM or PM rush period? What was the possible reason for each difference?
5. Which terminal, Aurora or Elgin, handled more PEOPLE (based on the number of trains) in the AM rush and PM rush?
6. Based on the time table which was faster, the train or the bus?
7. What was the name of the siding where most northbound trains met southbound? (Information is not shown in the timetable, but requires some previous knowledge.)
8. Where did CA&E trains meet AE&FRE trains? (Information is not shown in the timetable, but requires previous knowledge.)
9. What the shortest and the longest running time between South Elgin and Coleman and vice versa? Why the difference? (Castlemuir and Coleman)

Don MacBean

AURORA, ELGIN & FOX RIVER ELECTRIC CO.

PUBLIC TIME TABLE—EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 14, 1934

SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

Daily Schedule—Aurora—Elgin Line

NORTH BOUND

READ DOWN	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily	Daily	Daily	BUS Sat. Only	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Sun. Only	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	READ DOWN
	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	
AURORA.....	5 45	6 00	6 30	7 30	9 00	10 30	11 30	12 10	1 30	3 05	4 00	4 30	5 05	5 35	6 05	6 35	7 05	7 35	8 05	AURORA
EXPOSITION PARK.....	5 58	6 12	6 44	7 45	9 15	10 45	11 39	12 22	1 43	3 13	4 12	4 43	5 18	5 47	6 17	6 47	7 17	7 47	8 17	EXPOSITION PARK
NORTH AURORA.....	5 59	6 13	6 45	7 46	9 14	10 44	11 40	12 23	1 44	3 14	4 13	4 44	5 19	5 48	6 18	6 48	7 18	7 48	8 18	NORTH AURORA
MOOSEHEART.....	6 02	6 16	6 48	7 49	9 18	10 48	11 42	12 25	1 46	3 16	4 15	4 46	5 21	5 50	6 20	6 50	7 20	7 50	8 20	MOOSEHEART
BATAVIA.....	6 10	6 22	6 55	7 56	9 25	10 55	11 48	12 31	1 55	3 25	4 25	4 56	5 25	5 57	6 27	6 57	7 27	7 57	8 27	BATAVIA
GENEVA.....	6 20	6 32	7 05	8 06	9 35	11 05	11 55	12 42	2 05	3 36	4 35	5 09	5 35	6 07	6 37	7 07	7 37	8 07	8 37	GENEVA
ST. CHARLES.....	6 28	6 43	7 14	8 14	9 44	11 14	12 02	12 51	2 14	3 44	4 44	5 23	5 44	6 16	6 46	7 16	7 46	8 16	8 46	ST. CHARLES
COLEMAN.....	6 39	---	7 28	8 24	9 54	11 24	---	1 01	2 24	3 56	4 56	5 35	5 24	6 02	6 54	7 24	7 54	8 24	8 54	COLEMAN
SOUTH ELGIN.....	6 42	---	7 29	8 27	9 57	11 27	---	1 04	2 27	3 57	4 57	5 38	5 27	6 05	6 57	7 27	7 57	8 27	8 57	SOUTH ELGIN
ELGIN.....	6 51	---	7 39	8 37	10 07	11 37	---	1 14	2 37	4 07	5 07	5 48	5 37	6 14	7 07	7 37	8 07	8 37	9 07	ELGIN

SOUTH BOUND

READ DOWN	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily	Daily	Daily	BUS Sat. Only	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Sun. Only	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily Ex. Sun.	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	READ DOWN
	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	
ELGIN.....	6 10	---	7 10	7 45	9 10	10 40	---	12 10	1 40	3 10	4 10	4 40	5 10	---	6 10	7 40	9 20	11 00	---	ELGIN
SOUTH ELGIN.....	6 18	---	7 18	7 52	9 18	10 48	---	12 18	1 48	3 18	4 18	4 48	5 18	---	6 18	7 48	9 28	11 08	---	SOUTH ELGIN
COLEMAN.....	6 22	---	7 22	7 56	9 22	10 52	---	12 22	1 52	3 22	4 22	4 52	5 22	---	6 22	7 52	9 32	11 12	---	COLEMAN
ST. CHARLES.....	6 26	7 00	7 35	8 07	9 36	11 06	12 03	12 36	2 06	3 36	4 36	5 06	5 36	6 20	6 36	8 06	9 46	11 24	---	ST. CHARLES
GENEVA.....	6 45	7 10	7 45	8 16	9 46	11 16	12 10	12 46	2 16	3 46	4 46	5 16	5 46	6 29	6 46	8 16	9 56	11 34	---	GENEVA
BATAVIA.....	6 54	7 24	7 54	8 24	9 54	11 24	12 17	12 54	2 24	3 54	4 54	5 24	5 54	6 40	6 54	8 24	10 04	11 41	---	BATAVIA
MOOSEHEART.....	7 00	7 30	8 00	8 30	10 00	11 30	12 22	1 00	2 30	4 00	5 00	5 30	6 00	6 40	7 00	8 30	10 09	11 47	---	MOOSEHEART
NORTH AURORA.....	7 02	7 33	8 03	8 33	10 03	11 33	12 24	1 03	2 33	4 03	5 03	5 35	6 05	6 48	7 03	8 33	10 11	11 48	---	NORTH AURORA
EXPOSITION PARK.....	7 05	7 35	8 05	8 35	10 05	11 35	12 26	1 05	2 35	4 05	5 05	5 37	6 07	6 50	7 05	8 35	10 13	11 50	---	EXPOSITION PARK
AURORA.....	7 18	7 48	8 18	8 48	10 18	11 48	12 35	1 18	2 48	4 18	5 18	5 50	6 20	7 02	7 18	8 48	10 26	12 02	---	AURORA

J. W. GUNDERSON, General Manager, W. H. EISSLER, Div. Supt. Aurora. E. S. ACKERMAN, Div. Supt. Elgin.



As Seen
from the
Observation Car

Back Home and the Future

President Konecki has commented elsewhere in this issue that the Museum has now united east and west in South Elgin and Kane County by having interurban cars from both sides of the Fox River from lines once under the same management. We can now say we are truly representative of east and west!

This is also confirmed by the level of interest, encouragement and support the Museum has received from the community - South Elgin and Kane County. This is significant when considering the fact that there are very few people still alive when AE&FRE 304 left the area to go to Cleveland in 1935. Most people that commuted on CA&E 458 last in operating in regular service Kane County in 1957 have retired and moved to warmer climes.

When the Museum received official notification of its successful bid for these cars the South Elgin Village Board and staff were advised as was the Kane County Forest Preserve Commission and staff. Questions were asked about the cars and their history and a short power point presentation made to the December meeting of the KCFP Commission. The Museum is grateful for this interest in and appreciation of our efforts to restore part of the communities' heritage to an active status.

Museum management is now preparing a campaign to raise funds to restore these cars to operating and historical condition. We are calling upon members and friends to participate in this very large undertaking as years of benign neglect have taken their toll on the cars and considerable skills, money and labor are required in this labor of love to get them operating again. The Museum has received substantial donations already for which we are thankful . . . but the biggest part of the effort is still ahead. Keep tuned!

Don MacBean

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Fox River Lines is the official publication of the Fox River Trolley Association, Inc., an Illinois not-for-profit corporation. It is published four times per calendar year for distribution to members and friends of the museum. Reproduction of Fox River Lines, either in part or in its entirety, is strictly prohibited without prior permission from the editorial staff or the FRTA board of directors. Entire contents Copyright © 2009 Fox River Trolley Association, Inc.

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Correspondence: Comments, suggestions, and corrections relating to Fox River Lines should be directed to Managing Editor Don MacBean at the address listed above. The editorial staff appreciates your feedback.

