

Bus Musings

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The Newsletter of the Museum of Bus Transportation

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President's Message...

By Tom Collins

It's hard to believe that we're nearing the end of 2008 and that this is the last newsletter for the calendar year. It's been, generally, a good basic year for your Organization...not exciting but somewhat stable.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, we have not received a lot of large donations this year and that corresponds to the general economy, not necessarily due to anything that we have or have not done.

The resources we do have, thanks to our most recent Board member Ralph Fetrow, a professional financial advisor, have been invested as wisely as we could – major investments are in a 15 month CD and Money Market and other investments in a Janney M Scott account.

Our "prepaid rent" with the Museum itself is an asset that we often forget. When you review our expenses it shows as an "expense", approved by our accountants, but it is actually an asset in the fact that it has been paid up front and amortized over a twenty year period. Factoring that out, the monthly statements look somewhat better.

Focusing on the plus side we are pleased to note that over 90% of our members are renewing; several who have not are those with whom we seem to have lost contact with moves. Many of you, thankfully, have renewed and added something extra to that \$30 dues – that extra amount is appreciated and, hopefully, we

have acknowledged that to those of you who did send us a donation.

Donations in excess of dues assist us in printing expenses, adding items to our display area, and putting monies away for transportation by flatbed truck of our fleet to body shops or displays areas. Our contactor, H and S Towing, has been very fair to us over the years and treats our "babies" with care.

Following our successful "Spring Fling" our Annual Meeting was also, although less attended, a general success. About on a par with 2007 during the day and through the evening, we had over 80 member and guests. Not all of them participated in the full days activities but we were pleased to note the number of operating companies and vendors on hand at the event.

Our display was changed on October 8. Added were the Wolf Bus Lines 1951 Fitzjohn model FTG, and our 1952 GM PD 4103 (Southeastern Greyhound M-180) – the rest of the display was rearranged to create an entirely different look. Whenever we make changes of this type it requires a lot of volunteer work and a lot of time. Since the Museum is open from 9:00am to 5:00pm each day these major moves are done long after hours.

We served on the selection committee for the new full time Executive Director for

the Museum. Ms. Holly Bedsole was selected from a pool of seven qualified candidates. Ms. Bedsole comes to us from General Motors and is, indeed, a transportation person. We can expect some changes in the general operation of the Museum under her leadership.

Speaking of the Museum, at the close of business in October attendance was 42,642, up 5,238 from the same period in 2007.

That figure is impressive considering the general state of the economy and the fact that many major attractions experienced a drop in attendance. We experienced a lot of interest in our bus display during October when Hershey becomes the "Antique Car Capitol of the World". As we've stated before, nearly everyone has a bus story to tell when they see our display. The car guys can't seem to get over the fact that our 1947 Flexible has a Buick Fireball 8 for a powerplant! We've got some interesting news as regards our fleet... check out the separate column for those details.

2008 has been a good year – we're growing, slowly, trying to cope with rising costs but your support and interest keeps us "busing on".

We'll close out by saying Thanks and wishing you and yours a Happy Holiday Season and New Year.

☰ Along the Line...

Fleet News...

Our fleet manager, assisted by a small cadre of volunteers, worked on several projects over the past few months. A "non-bus" item was the purchase of a new lawn tractor to make grass cutting easier for Dan and his crew.

We now own thirty (30) buses and have three on long term loans.

Added vehicles in the second half of 2008 were the following;

- **1951 International Metro** ex-Atlantic City jitney
- **1960 Chevrolet Stepvan** ex-Atlantic City jitney
- **1929 Pierce Arrow** (Wayne body) bus appeared in the movie "Ray"
- **1972 GM T6H 5308A** ex-Jamaica Buses

The Pierce Arrow is quite a vehicle having played a major role in the movie "Ray" depicting the life of Ray Charles. It was donated to us by Dr. Michael Walsh of Indiana. Dr. Walsh paid to have the bus transported directly to us. It needs only minor cosmetics, mainly side glass, and a radiator cap to make it ready for show. It is a gem and a rare piece.

Jerome Cooper, the former president of Jamaica Buses, donated the 5308A to us and also paid to have our transport service pickup the vehicle in Long Island and transport it back to our garage. It, too, will require some cosmetics but basically it is a nice unit.

Concentrating on trimming our fleet – making it more quality and less quantity several projects are well underway at this writing.

The 1940 White model 786-1 is at Bergen Auto Upholstery having a com-



pletely new (old period material) set of seats installed – courtesy of Nancy Citti, President of Bergen. We plan to have some paint work done to its roof while it is off the property, as well.

Our rare 1985 Volvo model B10-M should be in a for complete repaint by the time you read this – this is being funded by an anonymous donor.

Plans are in the works for another complete paint for our rare TGH 3302 – ex-Colonial Williamsburg.

Fallen Members....

In the late Fall we lost two dedicated members and supporters .

Ken "Kenny" Snyder, a long time bus fan who spent his lifetime riding and studying bus operations in and around Philadelphia. Kenny, who hailed from Norristown, rode buses of the old Schuylkill Valley Lines to and from high school and often bragged about standing across the street from their old garage at 1000 East Main Street in Norristown on Saturday mornings to watch the "pullouts" of line buses and charters. He continued this interest into the SEPTA days. Kenny will be missed at our affairs.

Marvin E. Walsh passed away at the age of 102. Marvin was best known for working his way up through the industry from mechanic to becoming president of Safeway Trails, Inc. Safeway (Safeway Trailways) was, perhaps, one of the most successful and innovative intercity bus lines on the East Coast. Operating a fleet of about 140 vehicles (none of them at any time more than 6 years old) Safeway ran hourly service between New York City and Washington, D.C. during the zenith of the bus industry. Thirty minute service was run between Philadelphia and New York

City. Other innovations of Marvin Walsh, was a safety department equipped with a helicopter, tachographs on every bus, and a guaranteed seat on every trip.

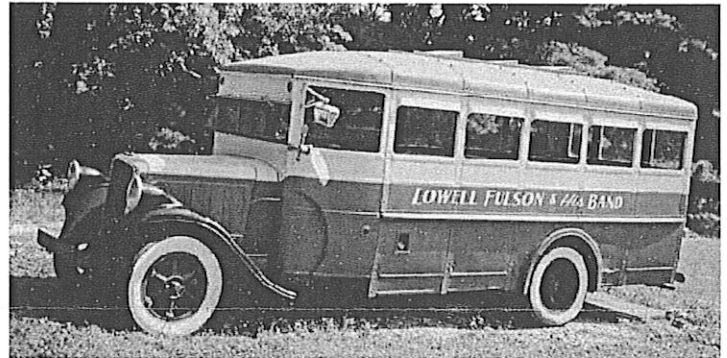
Mr. Walsh was, for a time, president of the National Trailways Association and performed consultant work for other major carriers. He was a supporter of the Museum of Bus Transportation.

UMA Expo....

Your organization is planning to attend the United Motorcoach Association Expo in Orlando, Florida in late January. We will have a booth 15' X 40' which will accommodate ABC Companies recently restored Yellow Coach. The booth and the bus have been offered to us complimentary. The Museum of Bus Transportation will have some expenses and it is expected that we will have four personnel on hand for the event..

This event should give us exposure to many bus operating companies who, to date, have not been aware of us .

We expect to have coverage of this in our next newsletter.



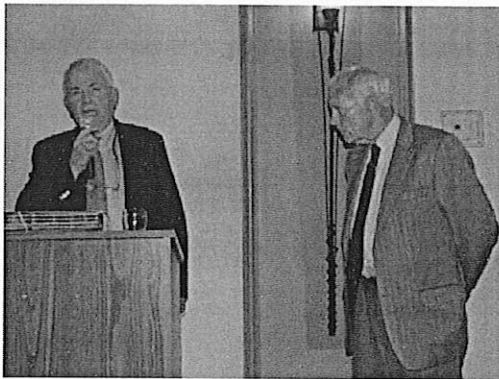
2009 Events

Board Meetings	October 6
January 6	November 3
February 3	December 1
March 3	
April 7	Spring Fling
May 5	June 5-6
June 2	
July 7	Annual Meeting
August 4	October 31
September 1	

Museum Re-elects Board Members At 2008 Annual Meeting.

Members of the Museum of Bus Transportation, by U.S.P.S., re-elected the 4 current board members whose terms were set to expire at the end of this year. The October 25th morning meeting was addressed by President Tom Collins, followed by the Acting Executive Director of the AACA Museum, Sue Dittman. General discussions were invited on many subjects before the meeting closed. V.P. Dan Lehman and his Carry the Light Ministries furnished a luncheon menu in return for donations to the Museum and many attendees then climbed aboard the Executive Coach for an afternoon tour of Gettysburg.

An open bar, donated by Dino Mandros, and an excellent buffet supper awaited us in a private room at the nearby Crossroads Café during which Sharon Ogden handed out two dozen door prizes and Susan Perry, American Public Transportation Association, presented a special and personal



gift to the Museum. Guest speaker Howard H. Roberts, President of the New York City Transit Authority, spoke to us on his transit system and presented a Power Point show of Fifth Avenue Coaches both old and new,

various views of the City and its bus and subway system, and an introduction to the new, double decker Van Hools now being placed in service in New York City. In all, over 53 members and guests met for dinner that night and 80 came for the meeting and bus tour.



You Spoke, We Listened.... Spring Fling to be 2 days in 2009

Although it had been suggested by a number of Fling attendees last June, members and guests also wrote and e-mailed us asking for a 2 day Bus Memorabilia Flea Market in the future. We had been getting folks from the far west and west coast and Canada and some wished for more than a 6-hour market once a year. So, mark your calendars for Friday, June 5th and Saturday, June 6th and attend **North America's Largest Bus Collectible and Bus Memorabilia Flea Market.**

We learned last spring after setting out almost 30 tables in the Memorial Annex Building that we had room for a total of 50 under one roof. The plan for 2008 will be to invite as many other bus organizations, museums, bus groups, etc., to reserve a table (s) on which to advertise themselves and sell items to profit their own organizations. Reservations are accepted on a first paid, first reserved basis and until we run out of space.

We have yet to attempt to obtain a motel in the area that might offer us a discounted rate and serve as a host hotel for the weekend. Room rates average around \$100.00 a night on weekends in Hershey. Also, no bus tours or dinners are planned. The 2 days will consist of the Flea Market, outdoor bus display, lunch being served at the Annex by Dan's Diner, and visits to the main Bus



Museum and its gift shop. The days will end at 5 PM. We plan to keep the parking and shuttle service to the Annex free and not charge an admission to the bus display and flea market.

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Model Bus Musings *By Doug Campbell*

There are three diverse and equally interesting models to review this issue starting with a black & white old-look GM like die cast "County Sheriff Department" bus by Superior Toys of China. This model features an opening right front door and left emergency door, and as this might seemingly be a vehicle used to transport prisoners, I notice NO window bars or extra security in the molded interior seats. But nonetheless an attractive paint scheme, and interesting version of this casting, often found for sale at small gift



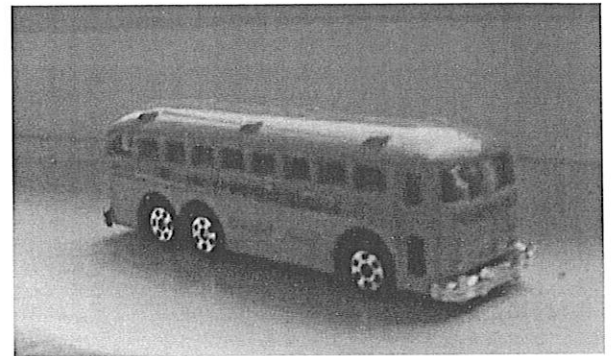
shops. The model features a "pull-back" motor, but I am sure this is not based on any actual real prototype vehicle!

Next, one of the most detailed and unusual buses in my collection is a 1/43 scale Mercedes-Benz Lo 1112 "Southamerica Bus" (available through Mercedes Benz dealers part no. B6 604 0523). This model bus is made in China, and no manufacturer is listed on the model or box, but the die-cast details, and truly wonderful colors & graphics make this one of the finest bus models I have ever seen! The interior is filled with lots of colorful passenger figures, and the paint details on the bus body are simply AMAZING!!! The figures inside look so



REAL, including driver and even two young lovers in the rear seat!! This is a model exclusively sold through Mercedes dealers I am told, and it will fill your toy shelf with so much color and excitement!!!

Finally this month, a very tiny 3 inch CROWN SCHOOL BUS in perfect detail, die-cast from Zee Toys back in 1976, and a most realistic model of California's famous school transportation! This is painted school bus yellow with accurate labels, and even a realistic interior! Look for this model maybe on E-Bay or at toy collector shows, as it was issued now over 30 years ago. Selling back then for 68 cents!! Happy Collecting!



This Old Bus: Tucson Rapid Transit 217 *By Bob Devine*

The Tucson Rapid Transit Company was established in 1905 and by the mid-1920s began operating buses on two routes. Bus service expanded as new routes were established. All streetcar service ended on January 1, 1930. The first diesel powered buses were TDH 4509s purchased from General Motors in 1951 and 1952. Three TDH 4512s arrived from GM in 1953. Numbers 216 thru 218 arrived in November and carried serial numbers 232 thru 234.

General Motors began testing two air conditioned transit buses in 1956 and by 1958 the program was a success. Operating in an area where the temperatures often exceed 100 degrees, TRT took notice

of GMs experiment. In 1959, bus 217 along with 216 and 218 were retrofitted with Thermo-King air conditioning. The following year GM TDH4512's 220-225 were also retrofitted. The American Transit Corporation took control of Tucson Rapid Transit in 1967. The company was renamed Tucson Transit Corporation and buses were re-numbered. Bus 217 became 2337 and was repainted into ATC colors of olive green and white. After the City of Tucson acquired Tucson Transit in 1969 bus 2337 was repainted in the city's light yellow, white and silver scheme. The city's transit service was named Sun Tran in 1975 and with the delivery of new buses that same year from Flixible, 2337 was retired after almost 24 years of service

A group of local individuals convinced the city to preserve 2337. For the 1980 Centennial celebrating the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in Tucson, 2337 was restored to its original colors and renumbered back to 217. The bus was used in shuttle service for the events. It also took part in the dedication of the Ronstadt Transit Center in 1991.

Bus 217 is the oldest air conditioned transit bus to be preserved. It is preserved by at Old Pueblo Trolley Museum in Tucson, Arizona. One of the experimental air conditioned buses is preserved by the New York City Transit Authority.