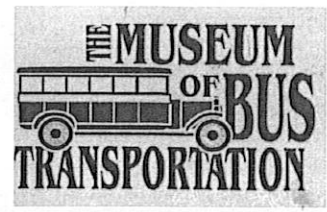


Bus Musings



Volume 12 Number 2

Spring 2010

The 1924 Fageol.....It's Here!



Slated for scrapping in 1942 the Fageol was retained for service, overhauled, and used through 1949.

It has appeared in several movies including "The Presidio" starring Sean Connery and Meg Ryan, and "Ironweed" starring Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep, and has been used in many parades, weddings, and special operations during its career.

Mr. Demeter donated the bus to the MBT and also paid to have it transported across the country to our Museum in a closed truck.

This will be a very valued addition to our growing collection and we plan to almost immediately place it on the floor where it will join our other Fageol – the 1927 "intercity" bus from the late Richard Maguire collection.

Museum of Bus Transportation

2010 BOARD MEETINGS

- June 1
- July 6
- August 3
- September 7
- October 5
- October 30 - Annual Meeting which is an all day event
- November 2
- December 7

Regular Board meetings are held at the Museum in Hershey at 6:30PM

NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS

- Northeast Charter and Tour Co.
 - Klein Transportation
 - Carry The Light Ministries
-

Michael Demeter, Peninsula Charter Lines, Inc. (East Palo, California) has generously donated his prized 1924 Fageol to the Museum of Bus Transportation.

This unit was built by Fageol in their Oakland, California plant and was assigned to Peninsular Railway Company's Palo Alto Division in 1927 when Peninsular started to abandon its street railway lines and substitute buses.

The Palo Alto Division, according to Mike Demeter, was sold in 1934 and again in 1941 – this bus has been under the same owner since the last sale. It is interesting to note that this bus has stayed on its original property, through several owners, since it was new.

We've been advised that the original color was red and gold which were standard Peninsular colors. Late in 1934 the colors were changed to green and white.

The Demeter family had a fondness for the bus and insisted that it be kept under cover to preserve it. It is believed to be the oldest bus still in operating condition in the State of California.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

J. Thomas Collins, President
Capital Area Transit

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Central Dauphin School District
(retired)

**Robert L. Smith, Vice President/
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PA Bureau of Public
Transportation

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E and B Transportation

Sharon Ogden, Webmaster
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Clarence Cornell
ABC Companies, Inc.

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Hempstead Bus Corp. (Retired)

Ken McNelis
Klein Transportation

Ralph J. Fetrow
Members 1st Credit Union

Elaine Farrell, CAE
Pennsylvania Bus Association

Jot Bennett
Capitol Bus Company (retired)

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**The Museum of  
Bus Transportation**  
161 Museum Drive  
Hershey, PA 17033  
717.566.7100 Ext. 119  
Fax 717.566.7300  
[www.buseum.org](http://www.buseum.org)

## *From the Board Room...*

First off, you'll notice that we have revised the format of our quarterly newsletter somewhat; we thought it was time for a change!

The basic purpose of this column is to keep you posted on matters of your organization – this will continue to be a recap of the minutes which are distributed to our Board members and advisors.

Two well-known industry leaders have joined the board: Jot Bennett, transit consultant and former owner and president of Capitol Bus Company and Elaine Farrell, CAE, the executive director of the Pennsylvania Bus Association. Having these two on board will assist us in receiving more industry recognition and financial support. They have both become very active in our Organization.

We've been reviewing our current investments and have decided to invest \$100,000 (a former CD which became due) into a new 6-year "structured Note". This investment could return us as much as 9% each year but, in no case, would we lose the principal. As of this writing it has already increased in value by nearly \$6,500. Thanks for submitting this idea goes to our treasurer Ed Wolf and board member, and financial advisor, Ralph Fetrow.

The IRS Form 990 (financial recap for a non profit organization) is still in the process of preparation. It is the basis for the various state reports that we are required to file.

The current slate of officers have been re-elected by the Board. Board member Ken McNelis handled this year's election.

We have established a building committee, headed by member Bob Devine and Ken McNelis. The thrust of this committee is to explore expansion of the current George M. Sage Memorial Annex. The first step in this process was to obtain a survey and bids were solicited for that purpose. A local Hershey firm was the successful bidder at a price of \$2,900 (other bids were in excess of \$3,100). Of concern, to us, was to ascertain the status of the possible "flood plain" that the Annex is in. After the survey work was completed the firm, headed by Ed

Kaylor, explained to us that most of our property is, indeed, in a flood plain. There appears to be a small segment of the current property, if properly elevated (as with the current building), that could be expanded, basically, to the rear. At this juncture, we need to consult with several builders to decide what, and if, we want to expand – then we must share that with South Hanover Township.

We have begun our fundraising program....our newest Board member, Jot Bennett, stated that this must be for a "specific purpose" rather than just monies for the general fund. He reminded us that the intercity bus industry is still somewhat on the road to a slow recovery from 9/11 and that money is tight with most operators.

Oliver Odgen's idea of "Buses of the Negro League" is very popular even though the Museum was closed several days due to bad weather. The Board voted to offer former player, also a MBT volunteer, full membership.

Bob Beard, supporter and former board member donated some Trailways items for distribution at our Fling.

An Increase in mailing recently included direct mail to every state bus association in the continental United States, and all members of the Pennsylvania and New England bus associations. These packets included the Spring Fling flyers and other MBT data including membership forms.

Gift shop sales, to date, were up over the first three months of 2009.

The timeline through the 1990's is now complete. Bob Smith suggested we might want to "sell" some of the earliest panels which initially had no sponsors but were paid for with general funds in 2003 and 2004 when the Museum first opened.

Members are reminded that Board meetings are open to any member – we continue to meet on the first Tuesday evening of each month....we will meet through the Summer at the Museum.

## ◀ FLEET REPORT

President Collins volunteered to assume the role of fleet manager. He will handle all of the administrative functions regarding titles, acquisitions, restorations, and deletions to the fleet. Dan Lehman will supervise maintenance.

Three buses were discussed for possible disposal, sold, parted out – they are the '51 Marmon –Herrington (perhaps too far gone for restoration), '72 GM T6H 5308 (parts and sale potential), and the '90 Orion (good sale prospect).

The Checker (aka Transit) should be completed and on display at the Fling.

MCI Marketing asked us recently how many MCI's we had in the fleet – we have 4 which include MC-5C, MC-8, and two MC-9's (one 2 axle and one with NJ specs).

The final fleet appraisal was submitted by Michaud Bus Appraisals. We are going to use the lower figure as part of our "net assets" in future financial reports. We have acknowledged the Michauds for this work. As we add vehicles that data will be forwarded to them.

We are pleased to announce that the New Jersey Transportation Heritage Center is going to loan us a 1953 GM model TDM 4512 (former Public Service G-572) for display in the Museum. It will be delivered on Fling weekend and will remain with us through the major change out in early October. This will be an outstanding example of a GM "old look" – fully restored.

## ◀ MACK NOTES....

From our "Mack Expert" comes this interesting item.

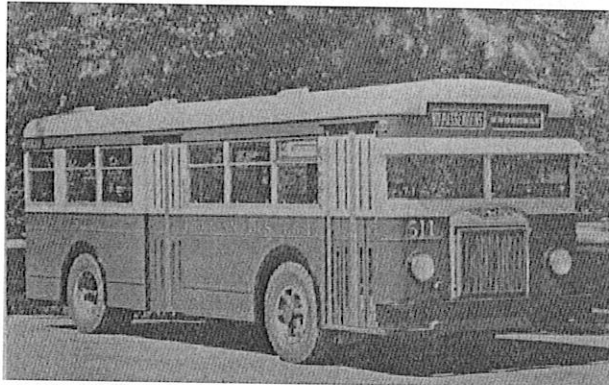
Harvey Eckert wrote that it seems fitting to note that 2010 is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mack's withdrawal

from the bus manufacturing business. Harvey notes that during the first half of the 1900's MAN truck manufacture, beside Mack, built buses – among them White, Corbett, Ford, Reo, and Kenworth but none reached the status of being "#2 in the industry" as Mack did.

"We mourn the loss of this once proud product as well as the demise of this once prominent segment of American vehicle production. Thankfully, we can still reminisce when Mack was once a very dominant factor in bus production" says Harvey.

Mack always stated that the first Mack was a bus and the first bus was a Mack! In postwar years alone (1946 to 1960) Mack built 7,123 buses!

Shown below is a 1934 model CL of Brooklyn Bus Corporation (part of the MBT photo collection)



## ◀ STORAGE EXPANSION

The following information was submitted by co-chairs Bob Devine and Ken McNelis as we ponder the possibility of expanding, in some form, our storage.

As the MBT's fleet expanded, and more units were offered, the Board was approached concerning the possibility of erecting additional storage designed to eliminate any "outside" storage of our vintage units. As the collection approached the 35 mark we realized that only 11 to 12 of the buses

can be physically displayed on the Museum floor at any time. The George M Sage Annex can accommodate another 12 to 14. We usually have several buses "off site" being painted or fully restored and the remainder, and additions, remain outside.

There are seven members of the Building Committee. Initial steps have been taken, the first of which, mentioned in the Board report, was to have the Annex property surveyed.

We now have to ascertain what type of building we want to construct and determine an approximate cost from prospective suppliers.

Obviously, this expansion is not a line item in our current budget and we'll include this in any fund raising from this point on. Naming rights may figure in this expansion – especially if we erect a pole barn – each "stall" could bear the name of a donor.

We have a rather extensive program planned and enlist your comments.

## ◀ MUSEUM NOTES

Since the MBT is a vital part of the Museum we will continue to update you on items of mutual interest to us that pertain to the Museum in general.

For the first quarter of 2010, 7,987 paid visitors came through the doors. This was a full 32% increase in the corresponding period for 2009, resulting in a nearly 40% increase in revenue. Several key events, including our own "Buses of the Negro Leagues" attracted visitors.

There has been a significant increase in website hits as well – many of these from charter and tour groups who want to include the Museum in their Hershey packages.

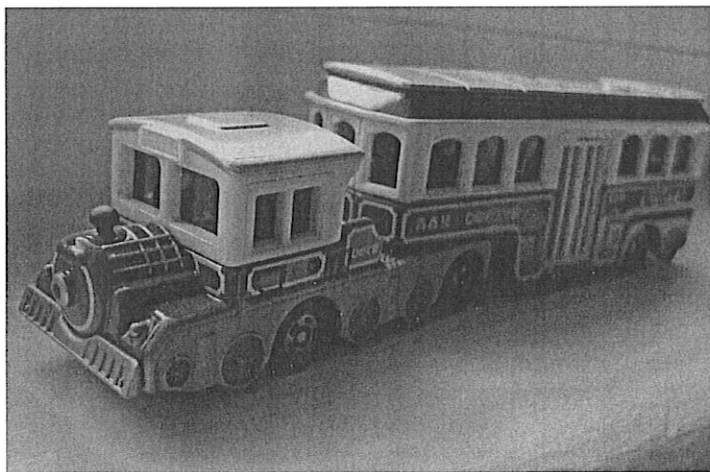
CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## *Model Bus Musings by Doug Campbell*

**Model Buses for SPRING! "Locomotion", a "bendy bus", and a conductor that walks...all for our Spring model shelves!**

My model bus review this month starts with a MOST UNUSUAL (but real-life actual vehicle!) BUS that looks more like a TRAIN LOCOMOTIVE!

This heavy little die-cast 5 inch long model "locomotive Type Bus Seishungo" is a fully rubber tire rolling bus from Japan by Takara/Tomy Toys of Japan, although this little beauty is manufactured in a toy plant in Vietnam. It is in 1/37 scale, and is a 2009 release...and I believe this coach operates in a Japanese "Disney-type" amusement park to shuttle visitors around the grounds of the park. The locomotive style cab is a separate casting from the "train-car" like trailer, and they come apart, attached by a metal "5<sup>th</sup> wheel" in the center. The passenger door is on the left side, and the model is painted blue/cream, and gold with red wheels, and the train wheels are painted on the sides in red also. Very intricate tiny Japanese graphics cover all sides, and all windows are covered by clear plastic, with full detailed molded interior. This is really a most fascinating model, sent to me as a gift from Japan. The model firm's website, although maybe in Japanese is [www.takaratomy.co.jp](http://www.takaratomy.co.jp) if this might help with a source of supply. The model is number 138 in the toy range. ▼



Next is an impressive 15 inch long red & white "Bendy Bus" (model "bends in the center") from Hamleys Toy Shop in London, England ([www.hamleys.com](http://www.hamleys.com)).

This bus is listed as stock # 481036 on the bar code. This die-cast and plastic coach is a model of a current bus on London's crowded streets that goes past the famous and large Hamleys Toy Shop on Regent Street, hence the Regent Street destination, and Hamleys logos on the coach. The doors open with little dials, the motor is

friction, and the right side destination sign is movable to change. There is a driver and full molded interior. This is an exclusive model made for Hamleys only. The model looks so realistic! ▼



Finally this month we go back to the 1950's with a bus from my childhood, which I still have in mint condition in the box...a tinplate large, almost 16 inch long, 6 inches high SIGHT SEEING BUS by Bandai Toys of Japan. This coach is battery operated and loaded with operating features such as bump and go action, flashing direction lights, automatically stops and starts running again, sounding horn, and a little miniature steward figure on the upper deck that moves back & forth automatically to service the passengers. This is a typical Japanese tinplate toy of the 1950's period...beautiful colorful lithographed colors/graphics on the body, passengers realistically shown in



windows, and the upper deck is molded of clear plastic to see the little steward moving back and forth! A charming model, although I'm not sure, as were many Japanese 50's tinplate buses, that there was an actual real prototype! HAPPY COLLECTING!

# *This Old Bus: Remembering Brooklyn's Fifth Avenue Depot*

*by Bob Devine*

On December 16, 2009, I had the opportunity to ride bus 9098, a 1958 GM TDH-5106. It is preserved by the New York City Transit Authority and was operating for the holiday season. I remembered riding this old bus when the 9000s were assigned to Brooklyn's Fifth Avenue Depot. My father was a bus operator for the New York City Transit Authority from 1951 to 1982. He was assigned to Brooklyn Division and for most of his career he worked out of Fifth Avenue Depot. He also worked out of Ulmer Park and Flatbush. Constructed in 1950 they were almost identical in design. By 1950, Fifth Avenue Depot was entering its sixth decade. I had many opportunities to visit and as a youngster, a visit to the depot was like a Yankee fan going to Yankee Stadium.

The depot was located at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and 36 Street in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn. It was bordered on the east by Greenwood Cemetery and the subway maintenance yards to the west. Originally known as the Union Depot, it was built as a passenger terminal for the Brooklyn, Bath, and West End and the Coney Island and Prospect Park Elevated Railways. The depot was a Romanesque style of architecture designed by Merecein Thomas, a noted Brooklyn architect of the period. It cost \$75,000 to construct and the first trains entered the terminal on May 29, 1890. A construction strike delayed the opening a few weeks. The two story structure was built of stone and brick and trimmed in terra cotta and stone. Two huge windows extended into the gabled roof at the front and rear. All windows were stained glass. The lower level served as offices of the Brooklyn, Bath and West End Elevated Railway

while the upper level served as the terminal. The building was 125 feet wide on the Fifth Avenue side and approximately 100 feet deep on 36 Street. It was about 30' in height.

Directly behind the main building were six tracks. There were five platforms approximately 1000 feet in length. In 1895, a ramp was constructed on the 37th Street side to permit elevated trains to enter the yard.

There was also a loop track for trolley cars to turn around. In 1917, the depot was converted to a car repair shop and an extension was added to the rear. The extension included a saw tooth style roof with skylights. By this time, all lines in Brooklyn were merged to form the Brooklyn Rapid Transit and later the name changed again to Brooklyn Manhattan Transit. On May 31, 1940, the Fifth Avenue Elevated Railway was abandoned and the elevated railroad torn down. The newly formed Board of Transportation of the City of New York took control of the BMT. In 1944, the car shop was converted to a bus garage and became known the Fifth Avenue Depot. By this time the original building was modified. All the arched windows were changed. The arch sections were bricked and two pained push out windows of clear glass were added. A

third floor was added and a fire escape added on the 36th Street side. The Fifth Avenue side of the building contained the swing room with telephone booths and vending machines. The former passenger entrance was a single door and used only by employees. The upper floors were used for administrative offices. A steel stairway let out the garage and repair shop. Most buses were serviced over pits, although it did have a few lifts. I often heard the sound of a Detroit Diesel 6-71 revving up and watched as a mechanic skillfully backed up the bus. Due to its age, it leaked so bad one did not have to go outside to see if it was raining. Buses entered at the rear of the garage and would be turned around inside. Bus washing and fueling were done in a separate building. Additional outdoor storage was also provided.

Fifth Avenue was assigned approximately 246 buses. During the 1950s, it was assigned mostly GM TDH-4510s and 1700 series Twin Coach 41-S models. The first GM new-looks to arrive were 130 TDH-5301s in



*A mechanic checks the air pressure on 4064 in January 1982. Note service pit and support columns to left of the bus. Fifth Avenue's 4000s were well maintained.*



*Here is my father working the B70 Eighth Avenue line in May 1980. 4013 was one of 100 Fixible 111CC-D51s assigned to Fifth Avenue in 1969.*

1961 numbered 1001-1130. About half were still housed there when the series was retired beginning in the mid-70s. Also assigned during this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## *This Old Bus: continued from page 5*

was assigned there. The first air-conditioned buses came in 1969 when the TA purchased 203 buses from Flixible. Numbers 4000-4099 went to Fifth Avenue. The 9000s went to Staten Island Division. In addition to the Flxs in 1969 were ex-Surface Transit and Fifth Avenue Coach TDH-5106s when extra buses were needed due to a subway rehabilitation project. The weekday operating base requirement was 135 buses. A total of 206 were required for AM service and 194 for PM. By 1972, the fleet numbered 237 buses with an average age of 6.9 years. In addition to the 100 Flixibles delivered in 1969, other buses assigned included 1959 TDH5301s 21-30; 1961 TDH 5301s 1001-1063; 1963

TDH 5303s 3698-3749 and 1968 T6H5305A s 8898-8909 for use on the X27 Manhattan Express. On occasion buses from other depots were repaired at Fifth Avenue when necessary.

Fifteen bus routes came out of Fifth Avenue. They were B11-49th & 53rd Streets; B15-Manhattan Bridge; B16-Ft Hamilton Parkway; B19-Carlton Avenue; B23-Cortelyou Road; B33-Hamilton Avenue; B35-Church Avenue; B37 Third Avenue; B63-Fifth Avenue; B67-Seventh Avenue; B69-Vanderbilt Avenue; B70-Eighth Avenue; B71-Union Street; B75-Smith Street and B77-Lorraine Street. The last bus route my father worked was the X-27 Manhattan Express started in

1972. The B88-Culture Loop 2 a weekend only route was added in 1973. These lines used only 6900 series T6H-5310As which were delivered in early 1973. In the 1970s, two demonstrator buses worked Fifth Avenue routes. In June 1974 a MAN articulated worked the B88 and later an RTS demonstrator worked the B63-Fifth Avenue route.

Plans were underway in 1981 for a new depot. The old Fifth Avenue Depot was razed and a new depot was completed in 1984. In June 1988, the depot was renamed Jackie Gleason Depot in honor of the actor who played a Brooklyn bus driver in the television series *The Honeymooners*.

## *Along the Line* continued from page 3

The Museum has refinanced its outstanding construction debt to improve its cash flow.

### ◀ OUR FLXIBLE-TWIN FL-P-33

We've recently received some data on the interior paint for this unusual bus in our fleet, as we plan to have it painted in the last Quarter of

the Annex and the related bus artifact flea market in the past, we are pleased to note that the Bus Division of the Friends of New Jersey Transportation Heritage Center (FNJTHC) will be sending 7 buses to the event including a '53 TDM 4512, '60 SDM 5301, '68 PD 4903, '59 4515, '89 MCI 102-A3, and a 2009 Prevost H-345. Also coming is an '82 T8H 5308A.

While we're at it Greyhound will, again, have a bus on display.

It our plan to have these vehicles on the tarmac at on the Museum campus – this will provide us with maximum exposure to the general public, as well.

Dubbed "Hounds of the Mother Road Reunion" the event, which attracted nearly 100 visitors, took place in Adrian, Texas.

Ten Scenics, a 4104, a 4107, and even an Eagle were on display for the event.

Industry greats (In addition to Dave Millhouser), were Fred Dunikoski, John Oakman, and Tim Vaught.

Mr Dunikoski, whose long career with Greyhound, included introducing the fleet of 1000 Scenics into service spoke at the event.

Mr. Millhouser took some time to distribute information on the MBT and our forthcoming Spring Fling.



2010. Hopefully we can get it (fleet number 171) looking like the photo – snapped when the buses were built in Loudonville....stay tuned!

### ◀ SPRING FLING

While the emphasis has generally been placed on the activities at

### ◀ THE SCENIC CRUISE

Our "man on the street" advisor Dave Millhouser attended the recent "Scenicruise" honoring the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of, perhaps, the most famous American bus of all time....the GM PD 4501.



**1-877-642-4283**