



# TRANSFER



Number 10 is back ... on track

## Trolleyfest launches new era

October 9, 1999 - It was a great day. Vintage autos paraded, bands played, dignitaries spoke, trolley fans and rail buffs turned out, children (young and old) relished the day, and restored Shelburne Falls & Colrain Street Railway trolley number 10 performed admirably. Even the sun came out as number 10 made its first official run since retirement in 1926.

For the car's donor, Marshall Johnson, and his wife, Grace, it was the realization of an impossible dream. Through the years other museums had expressed interest in restoring number 10, but it wasn't until Shelburne Falls resident and rail consultant, Tony Jewell, formed the Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum in 1991 that progress in earnest began to be made.

As Sam Bartlett points out (*We did it!!!*, page 5), Trolleyfest ushers in a whole new era for the museum. In an instant we went from a group focused on restoration to a full-fledged organization that will focus on providing visitors the experience that only an operating vintage trolley can—an experience of an earlier time that few today can remember. In a future issue we'll relive the trials and tribulations of getting number 10 back on track, but meanwhile, let's enjoy the ride!

*Al*



LIVING TRANSPORTATION HISTORY: RESTORED TROLLEY NUMBER 10 AND A HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE PROVIDED RIDES FOR ENTHUSIASTIC VISITORS. (AL BARTEN PHOTO.)

### In this issue:

Trolleyfest launches new era	1
Countdown to T-Day	2
Our American Flyer car	3
We did it!!!	5
A few words from the Prez	6
Membership form	7
This 'n that	8

*Transfer* is published by the Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum for its members and friends. For information or contributions, contact Alfred Barten, Editor at 413/369-4143 (abarten@crocker.com). ©1999 Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum.

## Countdown to T-Day

# The Age of Miracles lives on

The events of the last week leading up to the October 9 Trolleyfest are worthy of recording. While Trolleyfest was going to be held in any event to celebrate the restoration of number 10, shop forces led by Sam Bartlett labored feverishly against great odds to make the car fully operational for Trolleyfest. Herewith a brief account:

**October 3 (T-6):** Board of Directors advised on status of number 10. Overhead trolley system (1200 feet) all up. Substation in and working. Restoration work on car well-advanced. Controllers installed. But—no brake actuating system, no resistors. Half the rails not bonded. Car wiring cables cut to length but not connected. Bruce Thain due to come in two days with brake rigging, resistors, and other parts. Car operation by T-day considered 50% possible.

**T-5:** The "trunk" cable that had been temporarily installed is removed, tagged, pulled into a piece of fire hose (with lots of soap for slipperiness) and rehung under car. One brake staff is installed and connections for the motors and resistors are installed. Same odds.

**T-4:** Bruce Thain delayed a day. Tensions rise. Odds tank. Miscellaneous work goes on anyway.

**T-3:** Bruce arrives. So does Fred Perry, driving from St. Louis. Bruce and Fred had done a lot of previous work on the car, and were key advisors on technical aspects of the project. Both start work at once. Brake levers installed, still not connected to brake wheels. Resistor grids installed, motor leads and second controller connected. Odds up.

**T-2:** Resistors, brake components, and wiring flying together. Controllers, resistors, and motors wired together. Odds soar when a temporary lead from the trolley pole to the controls is tied in. Late in the day Bruce and Fred pronounce the car ready for a test.

With reduced voltage from the transformer to the rectifier, and with Fred at the controls, the assembled workers watch anxiously. Fred moves the controller, nothing happens. He advances it more, and in a shower of sparks the car moves under power for the first time since 1926. Rust burns off the rails as the wheels roll along. One person comments that welding glasses would be in order for those watching the car arcing along the track. After rolling to a stop, Fred

drags the temporary connection through the car to the other controller to see if the first notch works on that end. Same problem, fewer sparks. The car reverses and moves back toward the barn—downhill. With the brake system not yet finished. But Fred skillfully stops the car with a touch of reverse.



JACK CREWELL AND SAM BARTLETT CLAMP TROLLEY WIRE. (DAVE BARTLETT PHOTO.)

A second short run is called for, and the first passenger since 1926 hops on with Fred, and we go about 400 feet before returning to the barn. Odds boom. Then the decision to increase the line voltage to about 300 Vdc is made. Sam makes the change on the transformer. It is nearly dusk as the car steps briskly out of the barn. At the end of the tangent Fred stops the car. As he runs back toward the barn, he

## The Age of Miracles lives on (Continued from page 2)

opens the controller all the way, to "full parallel." Instead of accelerating, the car coasts to a stop. All the lights inside and outside the Museum and car barn go out, and the security alarm goes beserk. The car is moved back into the barn, as it has been all summer, by pickup truck and trailer hitch. After a call to the power company, the crew calls quits to a long day. Odds sink.

**T-1:** The brakes get set up. Painting and woodworking by Mike Cole and Joe Pagano continue unabated, as they have all week. At noon the power company shows up in three trucks, with new heavier line wire to the building, and a 50 kVa transformer for the pole. Over the lunch hour they get us wired again, and are quickly gone. Saved!

During the day a local welder has welded rails and jointbars together as a quick and dirty fix to the bonding problem.

By late afternoon it is decided to run the car for the first time to the end of the line. Arcing furiously between wheels and rails, the car notches up cleanly and heads for the Salmon Falls "station." Fingers crossed—it negotiates a turnout and gets over a section of badly out-of-crosslevel track. What's more, the trolley wheel nicely tracks the wire around the reverse

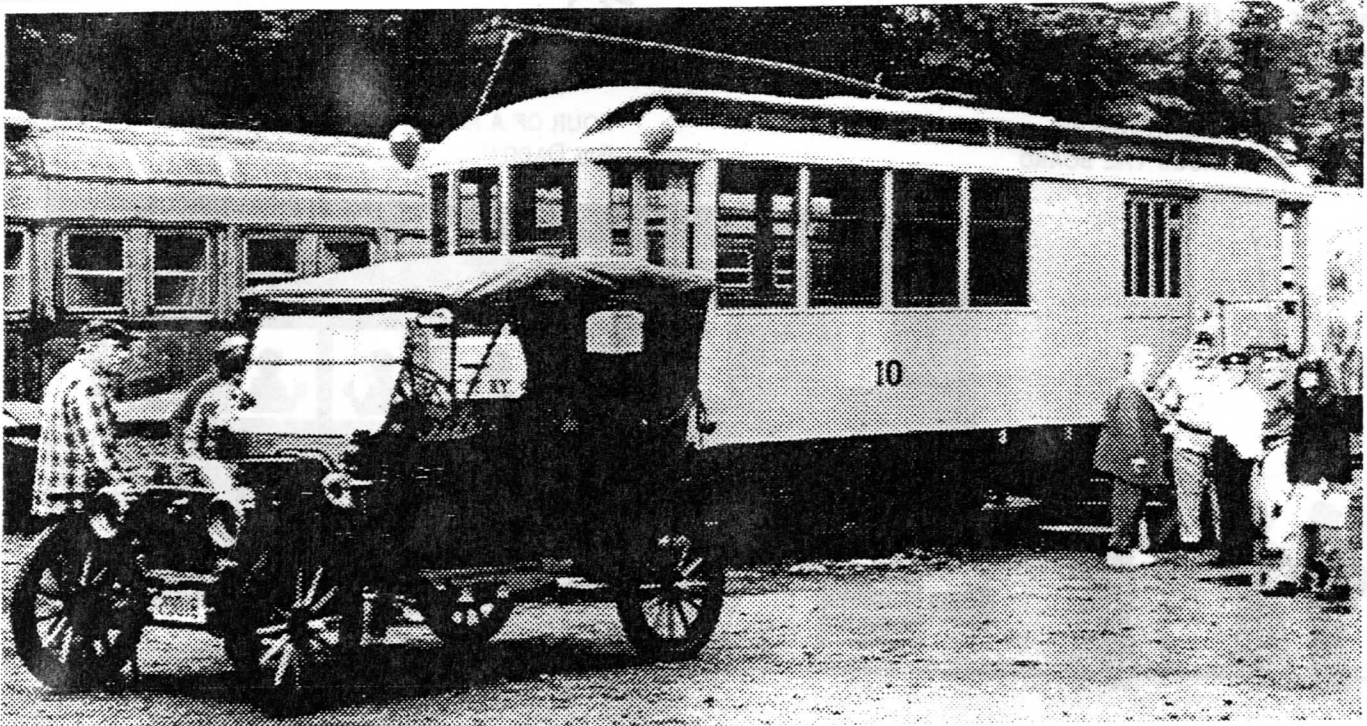
curves. On the return trip the car doesn't want to switch into parallel mode but does make it back to the barn. The brakes need work. After a bit of tinkering, a second round-trip to Salmon Falls and back is made with no fatal problems. The crew, while ahead, quits for the day. A cleaning crew comes in to sweep shine the inside of the car. Odds approach 100%. Only Murphy can stop SF&C number 10 now!

**T-Day:** At first light people are crawling over and under the car, cleaning, adjusting, and generally tinkering. Car lighting, a gong on one end, and a second brake staff, are all in place. Only minutes before the parade arrives, the blue flag comes off. And after the ceremonies outlined elsewhere in this edition, the pole is raised to the wire, and the car does indeed start off, perfectly, with its first load of the day.

As it moves down the line, total euphoria overtakes the many people who worked so hard for so long to restore this trolley. Their story warrants a Homeric ballad.

October 9, 1999, then, goes down in history as the day the Shelburne Falls & Colrain Street Railway is reborn. It also marks the day Murphy took a holiday in Shelburne Falls.

*Dave*



MARSHALL (LEFT) AND GRACE JOHNSON ARRIVED BY MODEL T, WHICH LED THE PARADE FROM ARMS ACADEMY TO THE MUSEUM. (AL BARTEN PHOTO.)

## A bit of history

# Our American Flyer car

About sixty years ago the A. C. Gilbert Company (of Erector Set fame) brought out an early series of HO gauge model railroad stock dubbed "American Flyer." The prototype for the passenger line was a new coach series being produced by the Osgood-Bradley/Pullman Standard Company for such railroads as the New Haven and the Boston & Maine. The cars had a distinctive appearance and they soon acquired from the railfan community the American Flyer name.

In 1937, the Bangor & Aroostook ordered two of these cars from the builder's Worcester plant. The first new cars for the B&A since 1910, they were air-conditioned, and attracted much excitement in Potatoland. Numbered 230 and 231, they seated 84 passengers in true luxury. They were assigned to the Aroostook Flyer, which was the day train #2 from Van Buren to Bangor, and #7 returning.

The end of #2 and #7 came on November 24, 1957. Living then in Houlton ME, and employed by the B&A, I and my wife joined an unusually large passenger load riding the coach for the last time to Bangor. On the return trip I rode in the cab of the

locomotive. It was an exciting but solemn trip through the dark to Houlton. Last runs are always that way. The B&A still operated Trains #1 and #8, but it would never be possible to go by rail to Bangor and back to see a Really Big City and enjoy a day's shopping. And the handwriting was on the wall for the other trains as well.

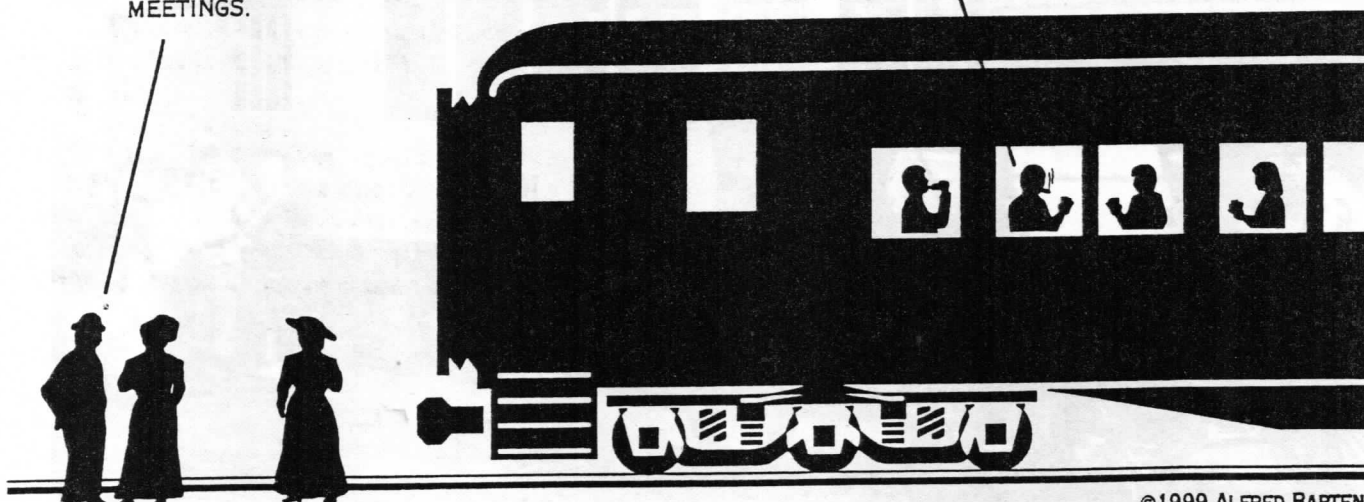
Along with several other passenger cars now surplus, car #231 was subsequently acquired by the Maine Central Railroad as an outfit car for work-train service. The inside was stripped, the distinctive windows were paneled over, and the car was transformed to part kitchen, part bunkroom for work gangs working away from home.

In time car #231 found its way to East Deerfield yard, where, worn out, somewhat damaged, and no longer needed, it was acquired by the Trolley Museum and moved by rail one last time in 1999 to its present home in the Shelburne Falls freight yard.

*Dave*

AND THIS IS WHERE  
THEY HOLD THE BOARD  
MEETINGS.

FOUR OF A KIND,  
BIG DADDY!



©1999 ALFRED BARTEN

---

Now for the new beginning

## We did it!!!

To the amazement of many participants and observers, we are now the proud owners of a beautiful operational trolley car. Due to the work and support of too many people to thank, we have been able to show off this gem for three weekends in October, providing rides to the public while we think about what we want to do next year.

In some ways, we now face our hardest task. Once we got over the hump of getting funding to restore the car, we didn't have to keep worrying (much) about how to pay many of the costs associated with the car. But now the grant is winding down, and we have to at least keep the car safe and in good repair. The board of directors feels that we also should operate the car for the public. If you were around on any of the weekends when we operated, and saw the excitement on the children's faces, the

memories passing by on the older folks' faces, and the interest and support expressed by so many people, you would agree with our decision to operate the car.

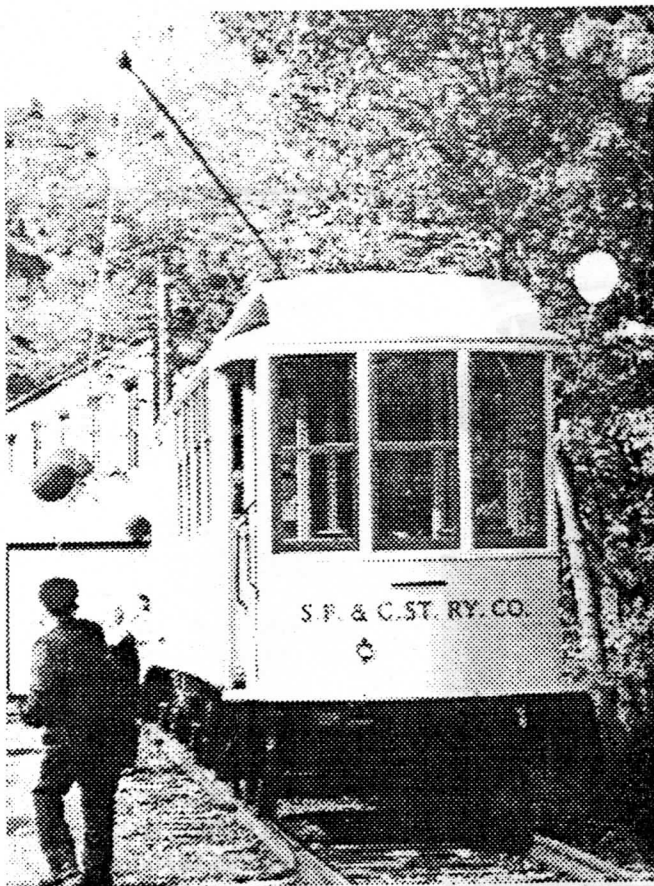
In the past, our volunteers could work the hours that they chose. We had professionals we could pay from the grant. Some of our fixed overhead costs were paid by the grant. Now we need to shift to volunteers who will commit to certain hours and certain days to run the Gift Shop/Museum, and be motorman or conductor on the car. We will still need volunteers for car maintenance and repair, and for track work, work on the coach, work on Steam 10, and other self-scheduled work. But the focus for the next year is going to be providing the public with a safe, enjoyable, and educational experience; both riding on our SF&C number 10 and visiting the Gift Shop/Museum.

If you would like to volunteer for any of these duties, we would be glad for your assistance. Although we continue to use the term "motorman," we welcome women to join the operating crew as well. We will be providing training in the spring, but I'd like to know now who will be available. Please contact Sam Bartlett (624-0192 or Sam@Bart-Tech.com) if you have an interest in helping out next spring, summer and/or fall.

We will also need financial assistance, so please rejoin at the highest level you can afford. We will be charging for rides next year, and will be raising revenue through selling advertising space inside the car. Experience at other museums shows that you cannot support a museum on ticket sales alone, so we need donations above and beyond your membership.

Some of us will be working very hard to make this a successful, three-season, volunteer-run operation. Without enough volunteer help and financial donations, we will have to revert to something simpler, like just bringing the car out for a single Trolleyfest weekend. Your support now is more important than ever.

*Sam*



KINSLEY GOODRICH REVERSES THE POLE FOR A RETURN TRIP BY NUMBER 10. (AL BARTEN PHOTO.)

---

A few words from the Prez:

## Passing the Thermometer

Dear Friends,

Well I know it's been a while since I told you that something was going to happen that actually did. But, it really did!!! And, what a change in the SFTM as a result!

Because, you see, we're truly o-p-e-r-a-t-i-o-n-a-l now. The wealth of enthusiasm by the townspeople, railfans and visitors from the outside, and within our very own group for this operational phase is phenomenal! The warmth of the smiles and tears of joy when the car took off on October 9th will be long remembered.

It is a time of great excitement. The museum is at a pinnacle of positive perception never ever thought possible, much less enjoyed, during the eight previous years. To say that I personally am overjoyed at this transformation is an understatement.

Make no mistake about it. The Museum itself has changed in a very big way. As a small but significant indicator, when people call the Museum today they

no longer say "Will you be open today?" Instead what we hear is "Will you be running today?"

With change comes the need to adjust and to refit the ship for the journeys ahead. A time for a change in Museum leadership that will see this car of ours continue to sail on a sea of success.

And as a corollary to that theorem, it is a time for me to leave in order get my personal ship in order before I have to start dining on the Titanic. So I bid you adieu! It has been my pleasure to serve you and this organization in our quest of a dream. It is gratifying to know that sometimes, dreams can come true!! I am reassured, knowing that you will continue to be there working with our Museum to keep the dream alive and working well.

On a final note, trolley fever is contagious. Don't be afraid to spread it!

Very trolley yours,

*Tony*



(LEFT TO RIGHT) KINSLEY GOODRICH, MARSHALL JOHNSON, GRACE JOHNSON, AND WINFIELD PECK ENJOY THE FESTIVIITIES LEADING UP TO THE INAUGURAL RUN OF NUMBER 10. (BILL BRANDT PHOTO.)