

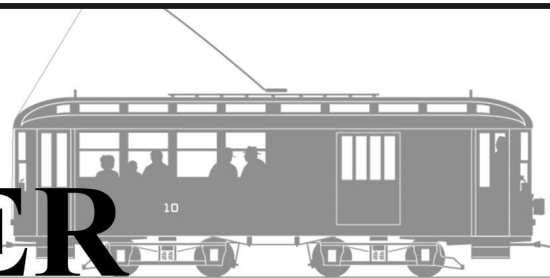
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Shall we ride No.10 again next week?

Yes! It sure beats riding in our buggy!



# TRANSFER

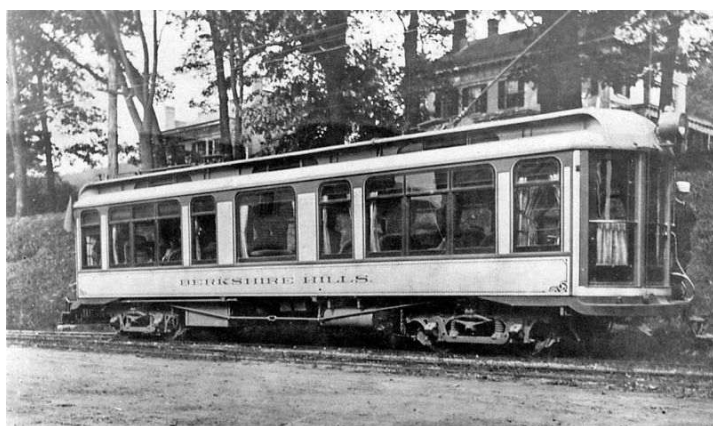


VOL. 34 - NO. 1 SHELBURNE FALLS TROLLEY MUSEUM NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2025

DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE SHELBURNE FALLS AND COLRAIN STREET RAILWAY

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## THE "BERKSHIRE HILLS" IS HERE!



*The "Berkshire Hills" in her glory.*



*After "untarping", plenty of work to do!*

On February 11th the body of the "Berkshire Hills" parlor trolley arrived in Shelburne Falls. It came by a Silk Road Transport truck and trailer from Seashore Trolley Museum in Maine. We had spent several days getting everything ready to unload the body and get it onto the "trucks" (wheelsets) that we had been overhauling here for several seasons. The ground was covered in snow and ice despite repeated plowings to keep ahead of winter. We jacked the car up off of the trailer, then pulled the trailer away, rolled the trucks underneath and lowered it onto the trucks with more jacks. It didn't go quite as quickly or smoothly as that, but it was a good, safe, expeditious unloading. After we got off the iced-over section of track the Trackmobile had no trouble moving the car on trucks up the Main Track and down the House Track to be under cover (for the first time in 90 years!) in the Car Barn. A few days later we pulled the "Berkshire Hills" back out to remove the tarps and straps that had kept her from the elements for 20 years.

See [www.sftm.org/berkshirehills.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/berkshirehills.shtml) for more

details about the arrival and unloading and more pictures of the untarped car, including movies of the Trackmobile moving the BH to the Car Barn.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Projects crew has spent the winter making progress on the Line Car, receiving the "Berkshire Hills" and organizing the Car Barn to make better use of the new space. The annual inspection and maintenance of No. 10 is nearly complete. The Trackmobile and Grove crane have been worked on as well. The track and overhead wire is inspected and the yard is cleaned up and ready for the operating season. The board updated our Five Year Plan, even though it hadn't run its course, because of significant progress and changes in direction. You can see our 2025 Five Year Plan at [www.sftm.org/orgimages/FiveYearPlan2025.pdf](http://www.sftm.org/orgimages/FiveYearPlan2025.pdf). You can see our past Five Year Plans as well as their Final Reports at [www.sftm.org/organization.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/organization.shtml).

As you can see, we are making our operation smoother, safer and more reliable, *cont on page 3*

## DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS - 2025

Sam Bartlett (President)  
Nash Bly (Vice President, Vice Chair)  
Betsy Wholey Osell (Treasurer, Asst Clerk)  
Lou Musante (Clerk, Asst Treasurer)  
Alden Dreyer (Chair of Board)  
Jim Kessler - Bill Kaiser - Jordan Helzer  
Joshua Redenz - Jim Wholey

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## CONTACT US

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**Phone: 413-625-9443**  
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**Web: [www.sftm.org](http://www.sftm.org)**

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TRANSFER is a publication of the Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum Inc., produced for the enlightenment and entertainment of our members and special friends. Three issues are planned for each year. Comments, contributions, and letters to the editor are welcomed.  
Sam Bartlett - Editor [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org)

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## PLEASE SIGN UP FOR E-TRANSFER

The TRANSFER is available online as a pdf file. This will give you the option of filing your copies of the TRANSFER on your computer, in case you want to refer back to them at some later time.

The e-TRANSFER comes out in full color!

If you wish to receive your future TRANSFERS by email, here's how to do it:

Send an email to: [membership@sftm.org](mailto:membership@sftm.org)

In the Subject line, please enter "SFTM eTransfer".

In the body of your message please enter just your name. Future issues will come to you by email.

Please note – if you are an eTRANSFER subscriber, and subsequently change your email address, please be sure that you let us know at [membership@sftm.org](mailto:membership@sftm.org).

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## VOLUNTEERING - HOW TO DO IT

Stop by, send an email to [trolley@sftm.org](mailto:trolley@sftm.org) or call or text Sam at 413-834-0274. Indicate your interests - operating trolleys, painting, building stuff, selling tickets and gifts or what. We need you!!!

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## OPERATING SCHEDULE

We will be open weekends and holidays from Memorial Day weekend May 24, 2025 through October. See [www.sftm.org/events.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/events.shtml) for Special Events.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

At this writing, SFTM has 130 current Memberships, including 20 Life Members. If your printed TRANSFER does not have '2025' or '2100' on the address label, we hope you will renew your membership. See the Membership Form for more information on Member benefits and giving levels.

Or, renew online at [www.sftm.org/join.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/join.shtml)

If you get the eTransfer, please check the email that was sent with this issue to see your status.

Your support is very important to us!

Please send status questions or changes of address for mail or email to [membership@sftm.org](mailto:membership@sftm.org)

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## PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS!

Floodwater Brewing  
Salmon Falls Gallery  
Mo's Fudge Factor  
Buckland Pizza House

Baker Pharmacy  
Walter's Propane  
Davenport's Service Sta.  
West End Pub

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## NEW MEMBERS

Ian Boyd

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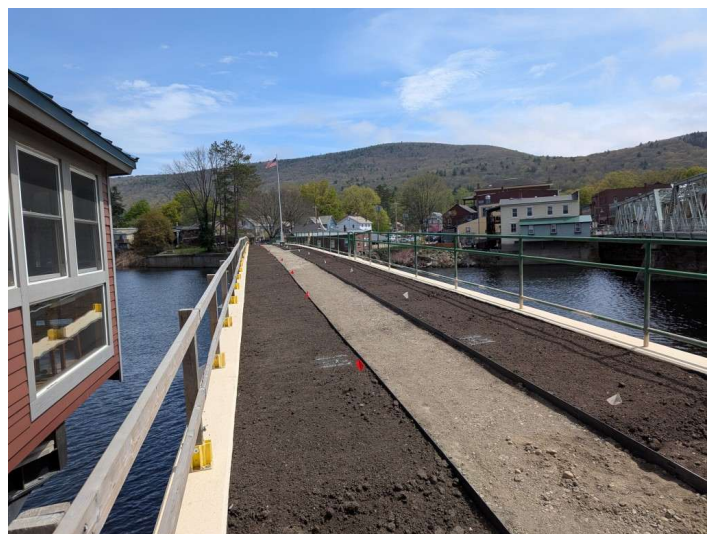
## PROJECT TEAM

If you would like to join a hearty band of volunteers working on restoration, track, maintenance etc. projects, send me an email at [sam@sftm.org](mailto:sam@sftm.org). We meet once or twice a week. We can use all skill levels and will work with you to gain new skills if you wish.

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## BRIDGE OF FLOWERS TO REOPEN!

Rumor is that the BOF committee hopes to open later this spring. Visit [www.bridgeofflowersmass.org](http://www.bridgeofflowersmass.org) for the latest information and an up-to-date opening schedule.



*Still all bridge and no flowers, but much closer to completion than the picture from last issue.*



*President's Report continued from page 1*

as well as more interesting, educational, attractive and fun. You can also see that we need more money than we get from ticket sales and dues to keep us on track.

We don't send out special fundraising mailings or have fund drives. But we do depend on your support for our ongoing operations and for our special projects. The Transfer is the only place where we ask our members for additional financial support. We need to make repairs to the trackmobile, crane and tamper, as well as to connect the 600VDC power supply.

We have an all-volunteer Restoration Crew, but the "Berkshire Hills" parlor trolley restoration project and the MBTA Line Car restoration project will be needing a lot of funds. We will make progress as funding allows, but it still helps to boost our Restoration Crew's morale to know that you, our members, have their backs. Please read the Restoration Reports herein, and go to the web pages for these projects, and then help us out with a generous donation at:

[www.sftm.org/donations.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/donations.shtml)

Please remember to renew your Membership.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

**SAM BARTLETT - PRESIDENT/EDITOR**

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### **COMING ATTRACTIONS SPEEDER DAYS**

This year we will again be hosting our popular "Speeder Days". On the first Saturday of each month from June through October you can come and ride a gas-power speeder, also called a motor car or putt-putt. We will still have trolley and pump car rides, of course. Nearby lightning or other operational issues might lead to temporary suspension.

### **VELOCIPEDE DAYS**

New this year we will be hosting "Velocipede Days". On the second Saturday of each month from



*Our Central Vermont speeder, or a visiting speeder, will give rides for Speeder Days. Ellie F photo*

June through October you can come and propel yourself for a short ride on a replica velocipede. A velocipede allowed one person to travel on railroad tracks for inspection of tracks or telegraph wires. We will still have trolley and pump car rides. Nearby lightning or might lead to temporary suspension.



*Sarah guides a young visitor on a velocipede ride*

### **SAVE THE DATE: SFTM BENEFIT CONCERT**

Join us on the evening of Sunday, August 3rd, as several talented local musicians, including Museum volunteers and friends, present an organ and choral benefit concert at the First Congregational Church of Shelburne (21 Church Common Rd., Shelburne, MA).. Free-will donations will be accepted to benefit the Museum's ongoing projects, including the restoration of the "Berkshire Hills" Parlor Car.

Keep an eye out at [www.sftm.org](http://www.sftm.org) for more details as the date draws near.

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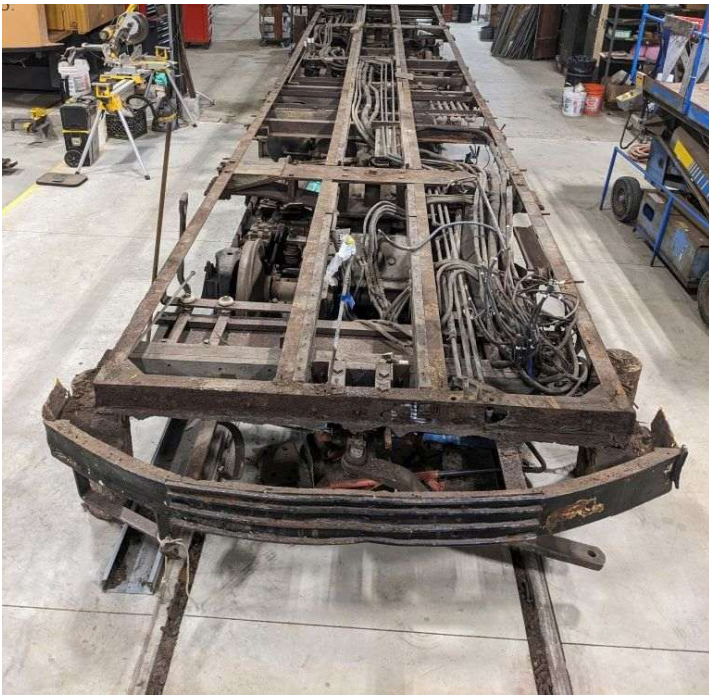
### **FROM THE RESTORATION DEPARTMENT**

#### **MBTA 3283 - THE LINE CAR**

We have removed all of the wooden frame and floor. Josh, Ian, Tom, Larry and Martin are cutting out and replacing a few rusted-out sections of the steel underframe. Larry has removed the brake gear and is getting it cleaned up. Sarah, Larry and Sam are prepping and priming the parts of the frame that we are keeping.

If you would like to contribute to the restoration of this unique piece of Boston transit history, we encourage you to make a donation to the Line Car Fund. See [www.sftm.org/donations.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/donations.shtml) for donation details, or read about our Line Car at [www.sftm.org/linecar.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/linecar.shtml).





*Line Car 3283 is stripped to the steel frame, ready for some welding, prepping and painting*

### **THE "BERKSHIRE HILLS"**

The next step on the "Berkshire Hills" project will be to formulate a restoration plan. There is some damage to the structural frame members from when doors were cut into the sides when it was a diner, and lots of superficial damage due to the fire.

Our short-term plan is to have the car clean and safe for public viewing this season. Much of the elegance of the car is still visible, including hidden cabinets, match strike plates (for lighting your cigar or pipe), ornate wood carvings and inlays.



*The "Berkshire Hills" arrives in the yard on a Silk Road Transport truck. Kelly B photo*

We have already received a \$10,000 donation to cover part of the costs of moving the "Berkshire Hills". We will continue to have expenses with this project. Our restoration progress will be largely dependent on the donations we receive for the "Berkshire Hills" Fund. If you would like to support the restoration of this unique piece of Berkshire Street



*One of four hidden cabinets with a mirrored door and velvet interior linings. The conductor's call button and match strike plate are at the lower left.*

Railway history, please make a donation to the "Berkshire Hills" Fund.

See [www.sftm.org/donations.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/donations.shtml) for donation details, and read more about the "Berkshire Hills" at [www.sftm.org/berkshirehills.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/berkshirehills.shtml).

There will be plenty of work to do on the "Berkshire Hills" now that she is here. If you want to help out by scraping, cleaning, priming, painting or rebuilding wooden parts, please email Josh at [josh@sftm.org](mailto:josh@sftm.org) or call (413) 682 4591.

### **RESTORATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

If you would like to support our restoration efforts by volunteering, please email Josh at [josh@sftm.org](mailto:josh@sftm.org) or call (413) 682 4591.

### **2025 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE!**

2025 Memberships are now due! If your printed TRANSFER does not have '2025' or '2100' on the address label, we hope you will renew your membership now. See the attached Membership Form for

more information on Member levels and benefits.

Or, renew online at [www.sftm.org/join.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/join.shtml)

If you get the eTransfer, check the email that was sent with this issue to see your Membership status.

Your membership dues is very important to our financial well-being, any time of year. We also depend on donations above your dues amount to fund our ongoing Projects, like the "Berkshire Hills" and the Line Car. Please consider a *generous* additional donation with your Membership.

## NO. 10 SUPERLATIVES

Trolley fans may already know about the Roster of Preserved North American Electric Railway Cars at [www.bera.org/pnaerc.html](http://www.bera.org/pnaerc.html). This comprehensive list of trolleys, street cars and other related equipment can be searched and sorted. Jordan has compiled the following list of superlatives regarding our trolley car No. 10:

- The oldest existing trolley car built by Wason Manufacturing

- The oldest existing trolley combine in North America

- The only pre-1900 trolley in New England that gives regular rides (more than twice a year)

- The oldest double truck trolley in operation

- The only trolley currently operational in Massachusetts from before 1940.

- The only trolley from Western Massachusetts that is currently operational

- The only operational trolley in a Massachusetts museum of any kind, except the replica trolley at the National Streetcar Museum at Lowell

Send evidence to the contrary to [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org).

## HISTORY CORNER

### THE LAST TROLLEYS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY: THE GREENFIELD AND MONTAGUE TRANSPORTATION AREA

By Jordan Helzer

In November 1923, the towns of Greenfield and Montague realized abruptly they had a fairly major problem. The Connecticut Valley Street Railway, which provided trolley service in the area, had been in an increasingly dire financial situation for years. That November, the court ordered the company to sell off its assets and cease operation by March 31, 1924. This would mean an end to trolley service for both towns.

Fortunately, in 1920, the Massachusetts Legislature had passed a law allowing town governments to take over trolley service from private companies. After private funding fell through, Greenfield and Montague residents voted to do just that, with a rather conclusive vote of 1,619 to 345. The towns raised \$100,000 in bonds, using \$62,000 to buy the property (trolleys and carbarn included!) and the remaining \$38,000 for repairs and upgrades to the rather worn down routes that they had just bought. This included eight trolley cars (six double truck and two single truck), as well as two snow plows, a double truck flat car, a single truck line car (probably an unpowered platform on wheels), and a flatcar with a wire reel for holding spools of trolley wire. The extra \$38,000 was immediately needed, as the tracks needed extensive rebuilding.

The directors of the line decided to discontinue the primitive buses that were then in service, and run the system entirely by trolley. Trolleys ran between Greenfield and Turners Falls every half hour. Fares within towns were 10 cents, while fares between the two towns were 15 cents, or two tokens. Tokens were sold 12 for 50 cents, a nice discount over paying exact change. In 1925, the company started selling weekly passes. Two zones could be covered for \$1 (there were 5 zones in total), while the whole system was covered for \$1.50. On Sundays and holidays, one could ride anywhere on the system for 25 cents.

The last trolley cars purchased for the system were four lightweight cars from the Wason Manufacturing Company, two in 1927 and two in 1929. The cars were 39 feet, 1 ½ inches long. They were all painted in yellow, and had names in addition to numbers. The cars were 103 (the Mohawk), 105 (the Mohican), 107 (the Picomegan) and 109 (the Pocumtuck). Once they were bought, they handled all day to day service, with the original double truck cars providing extra and coverage service. One of the old single truck cars was converted to a sand car and the other scrapped.

As with all good things, it had to come to an end, and in 1934, the decision was made to replace the trolleys with buses. The buses were purchased in June and took over trolley service completely by July. On July 7, car 107 ran the last run from Greenfield to Turners Falls at 11:30pm, then back to Greenfield arriving shortly after midnight. The new passenger cars were sold to the Cape Breton tramways in Nova Scotia, and one of the snow plows was sold to York



Utilites in Sanford, Maine, where it ran until 1949. The Greenfield and Montague Transportation Area continued to run bus service until the 2006, when the Franklin Regional Transit Authority took over.

Sources: Transportation Bulletin Number 60 (1959), FRTA About us Page from 2015 archived by archive.org

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## **VOLUNTEERING AT THE TROLLEY MUSEUM**

by Marie Betts Bartlett

Visitors to the Trolley Museum have often commented that we have a wonderful group of people volunteering at our museum. Volunteers themselves have also expressed their appreciation for the friendliness, cooperation and sense of common purpose that their fellow volunteers bring to the museum.

The impressive quality of our volunteers was fully on display the day the "Berkshire Hills" arrived at the museum. Fourteen volunteers showed up to help transfer the car from the Silk Road Transport trailer to its ultimate destination in the car barn. As General Manager, Sam asked Restoration Manager Josh to direct the operation.

Before any action took place, Josh convened all the volunteers and emphasized that personal safety was paramount while moving the 20,000 pound "Berkshire Hills" car body, and after that the safety of the car and equipment. Every person there clearly recognized and respected that Josh was the leader of this operation. The volunteers made clear with their actions that they completely supported the clarity of

Josh's words: "Safety first!"

The volunteers were an assortment of people who had worked together many times, as well as people who had not. Some people had experience with heavy equipment, others did not. Yet everyone worked together with an incredible sense of common mission and respect for what other people were doing. People pitched in with the skills they had, whether that was driving the crane to position heavy steel I-beams, or removing the rubber straps that held the tarp to the trailer. Occasional valuable suggestions were made with both respect and deference. The whole operation was a testament to what can be achieved when a group of people come together with a common goal and respect for their fellow workers.

On a less dramatic note, this ability of our volunteers to work together effectively, enjoyably and safely is apparent all year long in the shop and yard work that is done behind the scenes. Sometimes people work together on a common project such as restoring parts of the Line Car or overhauling the trucks for the "Berkshire Hills"; other times they work individually, such as mowing the lawn or removing holiday lights. No matter what though, the group of people have a common mission of working cooperatively with like-minded folks for the benefit of the SFTM community. Our volunteers are what keep us on track.

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## **TRANSFER AVAILABLE ONLINE**

These pictures look much better on a computer screen. If you only get the printed version of the Transfer and want to see the pictures in color, or want to look at back issues, go to:

[www.sftm.org/transfer/full/](http://www.sftm.org/transfer/full/)

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## **TRANSPORTATION BULLETIN ONLINE**

To learn more about the building of the trolley bridge that became the Bridge of Flowers, and the building and operation of the Shelburne Falls and Colrain Street Railway, you can download a copy of the National Railway Historical Society's Transportation Bulletin No. 75 at:

[www.sftm.org/training/TransportationBulletin75.pdf](http://www.sftm.org/training/TransportationBulletin75.pdf)



*John and Josh use the air jacks to lower the "Berkshire Hills" onto her trucks. Jordan H photo*



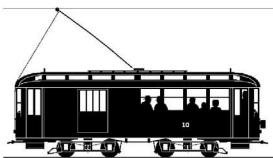


*April 2025 - Bridge of Flowers structural work is complete!*

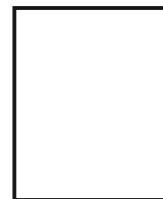


*This is the start of work on the concrete trolley bridge in mid-1908. Did these workers, or Fred T. Ley, the contractor, know that their efforts would still be appreciated over 100 years later?*

Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum  
PO Box 272  
Shelburne Falls MA 01370-0272



413/625-9443    [www.sftm.org](http://www.sftm.org)



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See the included Membership Form, or renew online at

[www.sftm.org/join.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/join.shtml).

Please consider getting your Transfer online, see Page 2 for eTRANSFER details.

You can visit our FaceBook page at

[www.facebook.com/ShelburneFallsTrolleyMuseum/](http://www.facebook.com/ShelburneFallsTrolleyMuseum/)

#### MUSEUM RECIPROCITY

A group of trolley museums has formed a Member's Reciprocity Program. Current SFTM members get a discount at participating museums.

See what museums are participating at [www.trolleywayfinder.org/](http://www.trolleywayfinder.org/). Bring your membership or acknowledgement letter or card.

#### TRANSFER INDEX AVAILABLE

Nina has volunteered to create an index of Transfer articles. We still need to do the early issues for which we only have paper copies. You can download the index from

[www.sftm.org/transfer/transferindex.xls](http://www.sftm.org/transfer/transferindex.xls) to make it easier to find old "news" about our museum, and local railroad history. We have been publishing Transfer newsletters for thirty-three years!

#### TRAINING DAYS 2025

For new and returning operating crew, our Training Days are May 10 and 18 this year.

See [www.sftm.org/training.shtml](http://www.sftm.org/training.shtml) for details. Join our all-volunteer trolley and pump car crew. We do the training, no experience required.

#### THANKS FOR THE HELP!

Thank you to Marie, Ellie, Alden and Jordan for contributing to this issue. To submit an article, picture or idea for the Transfer, please email [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org).

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#### GIFT MEMBERSHIPS!

Did you know you can give an SFTM Membership as a gift? Just write the lucky person's name and address on the membership form, check the Gift box and include your check.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

I tend to only use first names, because the Transfer is posted online and some folks prefer not to have their names splashed all over the web.

Feedback is always welcome.

*Sam Bartlett- editor [editor@sftm.org](mailto:editor@sftm.org)*