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Colebrookdale Railroad welcomes an open car for the upcoming passenger operation from Pottstown to Boyertown

By Rebecca Blanchard, The Boyertown Area Times
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‘A hayride on the rails,’ is a phrase that’s making its ways around town this month. It teases the possibilities on the Colebrookdale Railroad’s most recent addition: an open car.

The car, designed as a flatcar with siding, arrived in Boyertown via truck on Tuesday, May 6. It was purchased and delivered from the Upper Hudson River Railroad.

“The open car will round out amenities for passengers,” said Nathaniel C. Guest of the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust, explaining that the car would offer a “360 experience” for passengers, which would be included with admission to a seat on coach.

“It fits quite a few people; we anticipate folks will want to venture out,” said Guest. Passengers will be free to wander onto the deck of the car, and then return to their seat one of the coach cars. “We don’t suspect everyone will be out on it all at once.”

According to Guest, this is the first passenger car to arrive for the railroad and other coaches are on their way—or will be once they are in top mechanical shape.

“I knew we needed an open car,” said Guest. “The open deck nature of the car will enable us to set it up in a variety of ways—there’s a lot we can do with it.” A hayride was among the possibilities listed by Guest.

Reportedly built in the early 1900’s, while there is no exact build date, Guest estimates the car was built in the 1930s. It was designed as flatcar with siding. He further explained that open cars come in a variety of forms—some with sides removed and some which have a roof.

“We wanted a car that gave the best view—we got it,” said Guest.

However, with scenery comes the weather. Guest said the car wouldn't be able to be used in certain weather conditions such as rain and winter weather.

"We really wanted the view," he said, speaking on behalf of the Trust regarding the decision to purchase the car. "Everyone has a seat [on the coach car] that will protect them from the weather."

According to Guest, at this point, the only real work that needs to be done on the car is mainly aesthetic. He looks forward to having it as part of the train in the fall. This is slated to be the only open car for the Colebrookdale Railroad tourist passenger operation.

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