

EXPLORING THE SECRET VALLEY LINE

*A Conceptual Plan for a
Tourist Destination on
The Colebrookdale Railroad*



COLEBROOKDALE
RAILROAD
PRESERVATION
TRUST

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Lost in the deep woods sheltering the Manatawny and Ironstone Creeks is a mythical secret valley. Though today only white-tailed deer, great blue heron, and bald eagles know the beauty of this legendary land, it was once the province of pioneers and patriots.

Their stories can be heard in the soft winds whispering through the tall trees and towering trestles of the Colebrookdale Railroad – a magical, forgotten railway to the heart of this Secret Valley. The “Secret Valley Line” is your ticket to a place and time when iron rails connected a divided people and the heart of the nation pulsed with the potent energy of the steam locomotive.

Completed by soldiers home from the Civil War just four months after the Transcontinental Railroad united East and West, the Colebrookdale is a record of epic engineering and heroic human drama. Eight-point-six miles long and a century-and-a-half back in time, the Secret Valley Line beckons you to experience for yourself the unexpected treasures of Southeastern Pennsylvania.



OBJECTIVES

*T*he Colebrookdale Railroad is a treasure from the past whose greatest potential lies in the future. Berks County's work to save the line from abandonment—not once, but twice—is inspirational and truly in the best interest of all in our region. We must maximize the potential of this remarkable railroad line now and for the future. We look forward to working in close partnership with Berks County, the Eastern Berks Gateway Railroad, Montgomery County, Pottstown, Boyertown, area residents, businesses, and attractions to do just that. Our objectives to restore vibrancy to this line are aimed at the following:

- *To build a partnership of local attractions to offer a unified, integrated, and multi-dimensional visitor experience that is economically sustainable and regionally catalytic.*
- *To complete an implementation plan and economic impact study*
- *To stabilize and upgrade the railroad's physical plant for the future, including the erection of passenger boarding facilities, retail, and dining in Pottstown and Boyertown as well as locomotive and railcar servicing facilities*
- *To acquire, restore, and operate historic passenger equipment and motive power*



We are joined together in what providence has afforded as a wonderful opportunity for Berks and Montgomery Counties and the region as a whole. Berks County has pulled this remarkable little line from the brink of oblivion with a foresight uncommon in much of our world today. Now, the Colebrookdale Railroad must face a climb back to recovery—both economically and physically. While the railroad has some presence within the Boyertown and Pottstown communities already, it is and has been unquestionably an under-utilized and under-appreciated resource.

We believe a new day is dawning for this venerable steel trail and the communities it connects. Initial indications show that a tourist railroad here will take advantage of a large, and otherwise untapped heritage and recreational tourism opportunity gap identified by the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative.

A tourist railroad can be a game-changer for local economies. However, such an endeavor must be well planned and well organized. Moreover, any successful enterprise requires sufficient up-front capital investment to make a good first impression and avoid a false start.

We look forward to building the network of partners, planners, investors, and leaders to bring trains back to the Secret Valley on the Colebrookdale Railroad.

This document summarizes initial discussions regarding the proposal to develop a tourist attraction on the Colebrookdale Railroad. Far from a finished publication, this is a working document and is meant to both encourage and record further discussion about the concept and the process of bringing it to fruition.

Bridges to our future.

Some of the Colebrookdale Railroad's many interesting bridges are depicted here. Other images from along the line are included in this report.



The Colebrookdale is one of the most beautiful and historic railroads in the eastern United States. Largely hidden in the Manatawny and Ironstone Valleys, it joins two growing urban centers with an 8.6 mile trip into a wilderness lost in time.

A recent study by the Natural Lands Trust and the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative evidences a significant tourism opportunity gap in the area surrounding the Colebrookdale Railroad. The state's most heavily-traveled tourist corridor passes through this region, with several hundred thousand tourists seeking recreational and heritage tourist destinations nearby. The Colebrookdale can physically, thematically, and programmatically connect the area's multiple attractions and events, strengthening their branding by conceiving of them as part of a unique, multi-faceted, dynamic experience found only through discovering the magic of the "Secret Valley" along the Colebrookdale.

Pottstown and Boyertown, their respective counties, and local businesses are keenly interested in the economic development that inheres to a tourist railroad, including retail, food, and community activity venues. Both boroughs have sophisticated economic development networks that are supportive of the Colebrookdale initiative and will facilitate its integration with existing resources.

These assets set the Colebrookdale apart from area peers. A tourist railroad operation here is likely to be successful but, given the quality of neighboring tourist railroads, the Colebrookdale experience must be implemented in a well-planned and sufficiently-capitalized manner. While progress can be incremental, the railroad must avoid a false start. As repeat visitors and word-of-mouth recommendations are absolutely essential to success, the railroad cannot begin operations with deficient equipment, facilities, programming, or service, and expect to be sustainable or of benefit to its communities.

To that end, the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust seeks \$20,000 to match a grant for an **implementation plan** that will assess economic impact, provide proformas, identify next steps, and funding sources. A funding commitment is needed by March 2012.

Berks County, owner of the line, and the Eastern Berks Gateway RR, operators of the line, would like to have passenger excursions by 2013. Understanding that the success of these preliminary excursions could impact that of a dedicated tourist operation on the line, the Trust feels it essential to ensure their quality. Sponsors are needed for the **acquisition and restoration of passenger equipment, boarding facilities, operational costs, and perhaps a steam locomotive** or rental of one.

Trust is seeking **letters of support** from area leaders, businesses, and attractions. Lastly, the Trust is seeking **board members** with connections to complimentary interests and fundraising capabilities.

A provisional website has been established at www.colebrookdalerrailroad.com



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EXCEPTIONAL BEAUTY and RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES can be capitalized upon on the Colebrookdale Railroad. A municipal park near Pine Forge will serve as a good picnic area for tourist service.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. ABOUT US: THE COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD PRESERVATION TRUST

The Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust was founded to promote a tourist passenger operation on the Colebrookdale Railroad between Pottstown and Boyertown, Pennsylvania. Working in concert with Berks County, owners of the line, the Eastern Berks Gateway Railroad, operators of the line, the Boroughs of Pottstown and Boyertown, and other interested parties, the Trust seeks to build a partnership of local attractions to offer a unified, integrated, and multi-dimensional visitor experience.

The Trust's goal is to establish a dedicated tourist railroad based on the Colebrookdale Railroad. Among the Trust's short- and long-term objectives toward that goal:

- Completion of an implementation plan
- Acquisition and restoration of historic passenger equipment of the 1900-1916 era
- Construction of passenger facilities in Boyertown and Pottstown
- Integration of passenger service with local events and attractions
- Provision of dining and lounge service on Colebrookdale trains
- Operation of a steam locomotive
- Assist the County of Berks and the designated freight operator in raising funds to maintain and preserve the line
- Additionally, the Trust may assist in the operation of a number of trial-run excursions along the line in concert with the designated operator, the Eastern Berks Gateway Railroad.

B. CONCEPT: COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD: THE SECRET VALLEY LINE

A Tourist railroad for Pottstown and Boyertown that invites visitors to discover for themselves the unexpected beauty and history of our communities. Benefits to our communities include:

Expanded Heritage and Recreational Tourism, physically and/or thematically linking other attractions.

A "Hook" to bring people to the area to experience a unified, integrated, and multi-dimensional visitor experience

Railroad Operation as a Source of New Events

Catalyst for Development of Pottstown & Boyertown as gateways

Pottstown/Boyertown as day-trip or overnight destination as long-term goal





1. A DEDICATED ATTRACTION VERSUS A SERIES OF EXCURSIONS

We seek to establish a dedicated attraction rather than a merely a series of excursions. This attraction will include:

- Retail, Food Services
- Dedicated Equipment
- Support Infrastructure for Boarding, Parking
- Facilities for equipment maintenance and secure storage
- Close tie-in with other area attractions, thematically, programmatically, physically



Why is such an attraction preferable to just a series of excursions?

- * Net result is greater economic impact over long term and a sustainable attraction with repeat visitors and multiple sources of income.
- * However, a series of excursions may be possible in the shorter term as a fundraiser or demonstration project.

2. IMPLEMENTATION: GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN DEVELOPING A PLAN



- a. Can be an additive building process, with incremental progress—BUT Only One Chance to Make a First Impression!!!
 - * we will ABSOLUTELY NEED repeat customers and
 - * WORD OF MOUTH recommendations

- b. Strong Branding and Identity with Marketing and Promotional Retail
Eg: “The Secret Valley Line”

- c. Identity tied to UNIQUE experience of quality equal to regional peers

- d. Unified, integrated, and multi-dimensional visitor experience

- e. Market the railroad through the narrative of the “Secret Valley”
Narrative Characteristics:



- 1) Integrate the history of our region as told by historic sites: Pottsgrove Manor, the Carousel, Hopewell Furnace; Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles, and others.

This is the only region in the United States where visitors can explore iron industry vestiges from its 18th century infancy, observe 19th century technological innovations and industrial expansion, and learn about 20th century



PARTNERS IN TOURISM: A compatible re-use of the Boyertown yard, the Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles, Memorial Park, Pottsgrove Manor, and the Carousel at Pottstown are adjacent to the track. They and other nearby attractions will partner with the railroad to offer a synergistic benefit for the community.



international steel markets - all within a radius of 35 miles. Colebrookdale ties them together, physically, and thematically.

2) Play upon the legends, ghost stories, and fables of our region. Native American stories are a particularly rich trove. Local storyteller Jack Graham to assist.

3) Play upon the fact that the topography of the railroad creates a sheltered, wild environment in the midst of what is otherwise a developed area. Don't see much signs of modern development. RR is the only access means for some of this space.

4) So we arrive at the idea of it being a secret space—powerful idea:

- * Notion of the unknown invites discovery
- * Allows for people to layer on their own narratives. The most successful attractions invite visitors to subconsciously craft the experience they want to have. Our job is to give them the context to make the memories they wish to take with them.

5). Act of discovery through experiencing this “secret valley” opens up tours oriented toward hiking and nature, geology, camping, local foods, history and culture.

6). Unique history of the line introduces themes found and explored in more depth nearby in our region. Events along the line speaks to human struggle and engineering achievement. Witness the labor strike, overcoming topography, use of the Colebrookdale in the famous Boyertown fire, etc., run away trains. The building of the railroad was “fired with the passion of purposeful endeavor,” and so, too, can be its revival.

7) Railroad is most dynamic way to experience a place—a moving picture out the window with a sensory, visceral appeal. Capitalize on the power of arrival and departure inherent to the train ride to build interest in our communities

8) Juxtaposition of machine in the garden. Leo Marx introduced the concept of the machine in the garden, a tension between the pastoral and industrial and our cultural constructions of the sublime ideal. The historical drama upon which his philosophical consideration is based first happened in the US in the valley through which the Colebrookdale runs and provides an intriguing education lens through which visitors could reflect on their journey.



THE CHARM OF AN EARLIER ERA lives on along the Colebrookdale. A successful tourist operation must capitalize upon it.



9) Secret Valley Sample Narrative
(sample introduction)

Lost in the deep woods sheltering the Manatawny and Ironstone Creeks is a mythical secret valley. Though today only white-tailed deer, great blue heron, and bald eagles know the beauty of this legendary land, it was once the province of pioneers and patriots.

Their stories can be heard in the soft winds whispering through the tall trees and towering trestles of the Colebrookdale Railroad—a magical, forgotten railway to the heart of this Secret Valley. The “Secret Valley Line” is your ticket to a place and time when iron rails connected a divided people and the heart of the nation pulsed with the potent energy of the steam locomotive.

Completed by soldiers home from the Civil War just four months after the Transcontinental Railroad united East and West, the Colebrookdale is a record of epic engineering and heroic human drama. Eight-point-six miles long and a century-and-a-half back in time, the Secret Valley Line beckons you to experience for yourself the unexpected treasures of Southeastern Pennsylvania.



A HISTORIC AND RARE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE FOR THE COLEBROOKDALE: The operation of a steam locomotive should be a goal of the organization, as it will add interest and vitality to the operation of the line.



A RELIC FROM RAILROADING'S PAST: Though they pose a maintenance challenge, the Colebrookdale Railroad's bridges provide spectacular examples of early railroad engineering and, as contributing feature's to the line's unique character, should be considered assets.

3. ECONOMIC IMPACT

A successful tourist railroad attraction can have a significant positive economic benefit for a community, both in terms of that derived up-front from start-up investment as well as that derived from ongoing visitation. For an operation to be truly successful in economically revitalizing a community, several elements must be in place.

First, a critical mass of community character and original fabric must have survived through economic decline and failed attempts to encourage growth, generally taking the form of “urban renewal” in the northeast. Elements in this critical mass of resources include historic sites, parks, old neighborhoods, etc. As a recent study by the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative showed, there are a great number of such resources in our region waiting to be tapped.

Second, there must be a critical mass of talent organized to facilitate revitalization. There must be a willingness to accept people of different backgrounds who will want to visit and ultimately invest in the multiple senses of that term. Both Pottstown and Boyertown have sophisticated and engaged community and economic development organizations with track records of success. Both such organizations are interested in the Colebrookdale as a tourist attraction. Additionally, both communities have diverse populations and have implemented pro-active measures for inclusiveness.

Third, there must be a pool of visitors to attract from. The aforementioned study indicated that Pottstown and Boyertown are located along the corridors



most highly traveled by tourists in Pennsylvania. The communities are located right in the middle of a triangle between Pennsylvania's top three most-visited tourist sites: Independence Mall in Philadelphia, Cabella's in Hamburg, and Lancaster County.

Fourth, the railroad must be given the opportunity to act as the anchor attraction that brings together all of the other elements. The railroad will connect and give context for the other elements and an overall visitor experience. It is clear the Colebrookdale can fulfill this role if well-planned and adequately funded.

While the Implementation Plan for which we seek funds will provide an in-depth economic impact study, a few recent examples provide an indication of the spectrum of economic impacts from tourist railroad start-ups.

Virginia and Truckee Railroad:

Destination Rail Attraction
 \$55 M project, with \$10M in federal funding and \$1M in state funding.
 76 jobs from operations, 750 for construction, and another 118 jobs from support attractions

New Start-up Operation in NE US

Day Trip Market Only
 \$4 M project
 16 jobs from operations and 94 on the rehabilitation of the line.



IRONSTONE RAMBLES: A series of successful steam-powered excursions were operated over the line in the early 1990s.



SOMETHING TO PLAN FOR. A steam locomotive adds to the cost of the Colebrookdale proposal but will be an investment in the endeavor's success.

C. NEXT STEPS

Two next steps must be prepared for in short order. First, completing an implementation plan for the railroad as a dedicated attraction will require obtaining \$20,000 to match a \$20,000 grant already awarded for that purpose. Second, the County and designated freight operator are seeking to have trains operated in 2013. Obtaining equipment and establishing provisional facilities are essential.

1. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A funding commitment for the implementation plan will be needed by March 2012. The implementation plan will accomplish the following:

1. Identify what a tourist RR can do for Pottstown and Boyertown
2. Identify Next Steps Particular to the Operation
 Identify what will give a foothold but avoid a false start.
3. Identify funding sources with specificity
4. Include an economic impact study
5. Prioritize Infrastructure Issues
6. Identify complimentary other development
 FOOD, RETAIL, RESTROOMS, PARKING, COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACE, CONNECTIONS TO TOWN ATTRACTIONS IN POTTSTOWN AND BOYERTOWN
7. Identify liability insurance requirements
8. Proformas



- 9. Identify community and volunteer roles.
- 10. Address special event and capacity needs
- 11. Identify best entity structure to operate with the many interested parties in this situation: owner/freight operator/Federal Railroad Administration

2. PRELIMINARY EXCURSIONS

May or may not happen, depending on funding

Requires:

- 2-3 Open-window passenger cars
- Boarding area
- Bathroom facilities
- Parking area

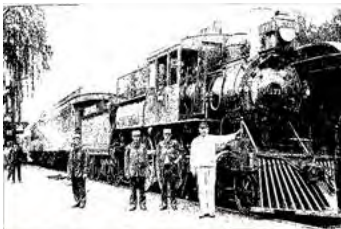
D. PROGRAMMATIC ASPECTS OF TOURIST RAILROAD

1. Boyertown Events To Tie in With Tourist Railroad Operations

- Farmer's Market Saturdays
- "Third Saturday of the Month" Events
- Boyertown Area Sidewalk Expo
- Boyertown Annual Cruise Night
- Coming Out of Hibernation Event
- Boyertown Fun Day
- Duryea Day
- "Dog Days of Summer" Event
- Octoberfest
- Unity Walk
- Halloween Parade
- Der Bel Shnikel
- Holiday House Tour
- "Chillin' on Main" Event
- Holiday Festival of Trees
- Boyertown Attractions
- Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles
- Boyertown Historical Society
- State Theater
- Padre Pio Shrine
- Taylor Backes Glass

2. Pottstown Events To Tie in With Tourist Railroad Operations

- Pottsgrove Manor
- Manatawny Park
- Carousel
- Miniature Golf Park
- Pottstown Performing Arts Center/
- Fourth of July Fireworks
- Schuylkill River Trail
- Parades and Celebrations



REAL HISTORY, REAL EXCITEMENT. The Colebrookdale Railroad offers a rich history and many opportunities for recreation. Family-friendly events are a hallmark of tourist railroads.





A WELL-ROUNDED EXPERIENCE: Local re-enactors, storytellers and artisans will complete the Colebrookdale experience and animate the story of the



INTO A LOST WORLD. The Colebrookdale's tracks frequently disappear into the deep woods, creating a perfect stage for a spooky Halloween event. Imagine the right of way decorated at night with eyes peering back from the woods, a roaring fire with mysterious figures dancing around it, the sounds of wolves howling at the moon.

3. Secret Valley Line Regular Features

Joint Ticket

Combination ticket entitles passengers to visit to other attractions. Pottsgrove Manor, Carousel, Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles, Hopewell Furnace, local B&B's. Transportation provided to those attractions. Discounts offered to other attractions not part of combined ticket tour.

Period-Style Advertizing

Local businesses, attractions, and the railroad itself advertise in coaches and along the rail line using pre-WWI-styled advertisements designed by local artists. Advertisements available for sale in gift shop. See next page.

Special Tours Marketed at Persons with Disabilities

Persons with autism and other disabilities have been underserved by other attractions. Developing an experience especially for them opens us up to a large and receptive market while providing a meaningful service.

Storytelling and Musicians On Board

Professional storytellers tell the tales of the Secret Valley, Pottstown, Boyertown, etc. Fiddlers and other local musicians create a festive atmosphere on every train. This helps to animate the return trip.

Local Foods

Food selections at the station from local vendors. Snacks available for free to each passenger whet the appetite.

Wine and Cheese Trains

First class service to feature local wines and cheeses. A Dining Car should be an option offered at some point on the train.

Retail and Display Space

Local attractions, shops, antique dealers, and other vendors should have space at the station area to display their products and offerings.

Rental Space for Weddings and Special Events

Rental of train, rental of picnic area, etc. Marketing to foreign (particularly Asian) couples looking for a unique wedding experience in Pennsylvania Dutch tradition.

Recommended Itineraries

Complete your day in the area using these planned-out itineraries for those interested in food, retail, recreation, and cultural/heritage tourism.

Telegraphs for Kids

Send your child a telegraph message that you can pick up at the other end of the line. Printed on Colebrookdale RR stationary.

4. Secret Valley Line Special Events

Halloween Terror Train

Night-time event in partnership with haunted attraction developer. Line decorated with special effects; headless horseman, other actors. Tie in with Boyertown's Halloween Parade.





Halloween Pick-Your-Own-Pumpkin Trains and Corn Maze

In conjunction with on-line farms. Hay rides, cider and doughnuts.

Polar Express Trains

Santa arrives in Pottstown and Boyertown via train just after Thanksgiving and dedicates a community Christmas tree in each town. Special trains each weekend thereafter feature a toy and hot chocolate for each child.

Toys-for-Tots Express

Special trains bring children of veterans and disadvantaged children to Pottstown or Boyertown to have breakfast with and receive a special gift from Santa.



Old-Time Baseball Trains

Special trains take passengers to Township Park for an old-time baseball game. Think of the film "The Natural". Ice Cream social and barbecue included.

The Great Car Race

A Fleet of Historic Vehicles race the train from Pottstown to Boyertown; Car show and flea market to follow. Sponsor with Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles; tie in with Duryea Day.



The Great Train Robbery

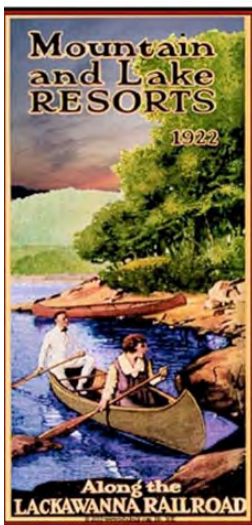
The train is held up by the Secret Valley gang on horseback, and passengers are "robbed."

Fireworks Express Trains

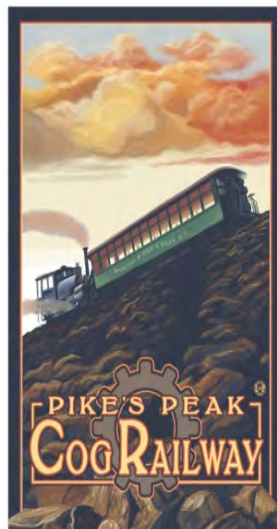
Excursions to Pottstown's large Fourth of July celebration in Mantawny Park.

Native American Encampments and Civil Way Re-Enactments

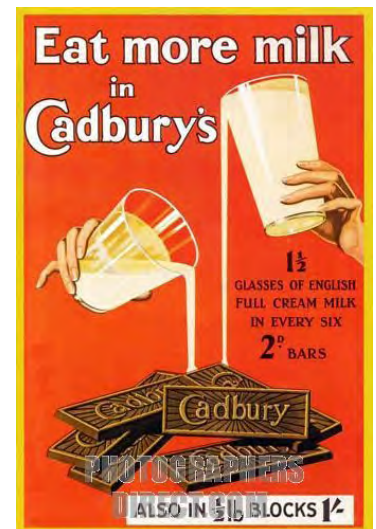
In partnership with local tribes and re-enactors.



ESTABLISHING IDENTITY: In partnership with local students, period-style advertizing for the local attractions thematically-aligned with the railroad could be designed for the railroad, placed along the line and in local publications, and sold as



ESTABLISHING IDENTITY: In partnership with local students, period-style advertizing for the Colebrookdale Railroad itself and local businesses as well could be placed along the line and in local publications, and sold as souvenirs.



Today's visitors expect technological sophistication and respond to interactive and immersive experiences. No tourist railroad in the Country has capitalized on this fact.



The Colebrookdale's equipment and facilities should integrate technology that animates the story of the Secret Valley as the landscape reveals itself through the coach windows.

5. PIONEERING MULTI-MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

SEAMLESS TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION WITH HISTORIC RESOURCES

Current technology allows for historic passenger equipment to be upgraded with audio, video, lighting, and wireless features that will greatly enhance the visitor experience without detracting from the historic fabric or authenticity of the core experience. In keeping with the theme of discovering the Secret Valley for yourself, **flat screen televisions and high-definition sound systems** can animate the journey and **wireless feeds from along the line and the locomotive** add dimensions otherwise unavailable from a coach seat.

INTRODUCTORY VIDEO

While most tourist railroads rely on a poor-quality narration to describe the railroad and inform visitors of nearby amenities and attractions, an experience more in keeping with 21st century expectations will set the context for the journey as a trip back in time using an introductory film. The film can be **adapted for different ages and interest groups**. Additionally, it can be recorded in multiple languages and closed-captioning to accommodate non-English speaking visitors and persons with hearing impairment.

CUSTOMIZABLE TRIP NARRATIONS

The trip down the line offers myriad opportunities to discuss the history, culture, ecology, geology, folkways, food and language traditions, and Native American legacy of the middle Schuylkill area—and introduce opportunities to explore each of these facets in more detail at attractions near the railroad. The presentation offered on board can be tailored for the interests of those riding.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

A multi-media program made possible through technologically-up-to-date equipment can facilitate the railroad's offering a lesson plan in keeping with standards established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The program could be adapted for multiple lesson plans, age and ability groups. This feature would distinguish the Colebrookdale experience from any other program offered to students by any other railroad in the country.

FACILIATION OF SECRET VALLEY THEME

Special lighting and sound effects emanating from hidden places within each car could help give life to the story of the Colebrookdale traveling through a magical secret valley lost to time.

CAB-CAM , TRACK-CAM, LIVE CAMS, ETC.

The technology exists to give each passenger a view of the train they would otherwise never be able to have. This would include live cams broadcast from inside the locomotive cab, alongside the locomotive drive rods, the roof of the train, and from alongside as the train passes by. Webcams set up in the destination towns will give departing passengers a sense of what awaits them. Live Webcams will let folks at home experience a bit of the fun, too.

SMART DEVICE TOURS

A series of markers planted along the right of way will trigger smart devices offering pre-developed interpretations of the line for passengers with special interests or non-English speakers.

ADVERTISING

A multimedia experience offers the opportunity to sell air-time to a captive audience.



A WHOLE NEW PERSPECTIVE:
A technologically and programmatically up-to-date tourist railroad experience will offer visitors the ability to view the railroad from angles and contexts otherwise not available.

CASE STUDIES

1. New Hope and Ivyland Rail Road

Location:

New Hope, PA

Paid and volunteer crew

Operation Season:

Year-Round

Operational Frequency:

*Daily; up to 5 trains per day
45-minute trip*

Destination or Day Trip:

Both

Equipment:

Steam; open-window WM coaches

Coach, Open Car, Dining,

Amenities:

*Food, retail, lodging and other attractions
within walking distance*

Ridership Numbers:

80,000 annually



CASE STUDIES

2. Wanamaker, Kempton & Southern Railroad

Location:

*Berks and Lehigh Counties, PA
Volunteer only*

Operation Season:

May-October

Operational Frequency:

*One or Two Days Weekly; up to 5 trains
per day
45-minute trip*

Destination or Day Trip:

Day Trip

Equipment:

Diesel; open-window WM coaches

Open Car,

Amenities:

Limited food and retail at station

Ridership Numbers

15,000 annually



CONCEPT PROPOSED for the Colebrookdale

Location:

Pottstown-Boyerstown, PA

Paid and volunteer

Operation Season:

May-December

Operational Frequency:

Weekends; up to 4 trains daily

2-hour round trip

Destination or Day Trip:

Day Trip

Equipment:

Diesel and steam; open-window WWII coaches; Open Car, First Class Car, Dining Car, Lounge with liquor service?

Amenities:

Food and retail at station

Ridership Numbers:

10,000 -30,000?

FEASIBILITY AND PLANNING STUDY WILL SAY MORE



Unpacking Success: Quality of Experience is Key. Aesthetic, Sensory, Educational

Infrastructure, Equipment, and Programming must be of sufficient quality to compete with other attractions for new and repeat visitors. Examples shown are illustrative, not exhaustive, of most important considerations.



Victorian passenger equipment with **stained glass and exotic woodwork** demonstrates craftsmanship of an earlier time and adds to sensory/aesthetic experience that is sufficiently different from the everyday—a slice of the past and a little bit of luxury.

Special events on board and coordinated with community capitalizes on "memory making" dollars. On-board demonstrations and narration provide educational experience, advertising opportunities

Open-window coaches capitalize on lines' primary asset—scenery. Allow sight, sound, smells to heighten sensory experience. Dining, lounge, observation cars to increase revenue and broaden range of experience.



RR-themed physical plant with retail and food options heightens "arrival" and "departure," generates income, and facilitates boarding of passengers. Critical mass of development needed. Physical and conceptual tie-in with surrounding area. Town's tie in with carriage rides, walking tours and local attraction guides.



HISTORIC COLEBROOKDALE.

Top photo, a mother waits for her children to arrive from school on the afternoon train. Other photos are shots along the line. provides but one example of local attractions

IV. A VIRTUAL JOURNEY ALONG THE COLEBROOKDALE

Few institutions have been more influential in shaping the American identity than the nation's railroads. More than mere crossroads of commerce, America's railroads have literally and figuratively determined where we as a nation are going and how we got there.

Just as their presence is an integral part of our physical landscape, the railroads are intertwined with the landscape of our cultural memory. Few machines fire the imagination more than the train. The fabled iron horse has come to symbolize the uniquely American combination of uncanny ingenuity, abiding optimism, hard work, and awesome achievement.

Across the nation, creative groups of enterprising buffs have harnessed this unique spirit, powering tourism and community development. These great engines of the past have become engines of economic opportunity.

Few railroads in northeast can boast the history, beauty, and ecological diversity of the Colebrookdale Railroad.

Stretching from Pottstown to Boyertown in Southeastern Pennsylvania, the scenic Colebrookdale Railroad is closely associated with places, people, and events—central to the earliest iron making history in the American colonies. Their stories—stories of local and national import--unfolded along the Colebrookdale's right-of-way and can be heard in the whispers of the tall trees that canopy its course to this day.

Sheltered by the hidden valleys of the Manatawny and the Ironstone known only to the great blue heron and white tailed deer who call them home, the Colebrookdale offers a trip into another world seemingly lost in time.

Chartered in 1853 by the Pennsylvania Legislature, the Civil War slowed the Colebrookdale's construction. Soldiers home from the war hastened its completion in 1869—just four months after the last spike was driven on the Transcontinental Railroad. That momentous event played heavily on the raucous ceremonies accompanying the Colebrookdale's inauguration:

On September 6, 1869, a locomotive named the Bee made the first trip from Pottstown, arriving as the local marching band played *Hail to the Chief*.

The drifting pattern of smoke against the sky was moving slowly this way while the thousand Boyertown area folk trampled the new-cut grass of the railroad yard still further. Their wait seemed forever, but the reason the steam locomotive with its two passenger cars and baggage car took so long was the repeated waits at way stations so everyone might cheer the glistening new equipment. As a matter of fact, its 94 passengers had left the cars at Manatawny



Station, Ironstone, and again at Colebrookdale to put on an acrobatic exhibition for the waiving crowds standing at trackside and crowding every barn roof in their excitement....

The people crowded around the platforms and greeted the arriving passengers with as much fervor as if they had just arrived by the through line from San Francisco. Some of the more enthusiastic of the crowd carried off the newly landed passengers on their shoulders. Silk hats suffered martyrdom in the ardor of the reception.

BERKS AND SCHUYLKILL JOURNAL, Sept. 11, 1869.



As we retrace the route of that first train back to Pottstown, consider the possibilities this treasure from the past holds for historical and recreational tourism and the development of Pottstown and Boyertown gateways. Think about the educational possibilities—opportunities to teach in a dynamic way how the early industry, labor struggles and folkways that unfold along the Colebrookdale touch our national story, and the ways in which the line's resurgence can teach us about our environment and our stewardship of historic resources.

We approach Boyertown, current terminus of the line. We have just come off a bridge built in 1924 by Pottstown's Shoemaker Bridge Company. Behind us is Bechtlesville, Eshbach, and Barto.



Industries for which Boyertown is famous grew up along this stretch of railroad, including the Boyertown Carriage Works and Union Manufacturing. Railroad caboose stoves cast by Union Manufacturing could be found traveling on the ends of freight trains all across the United States.

We approach the Reading Avenue crossing. To the left is Durangos, formerly the mansion house, a popular hotel for rail travelers. A hand-operated gate once protected this crossing, and the Colebrookdale provided a little shelter next to Durangos for the operator.

We approach the former site of the Boyertown train station. The Boyertown station was witness to a history more dramatic than its modest canopied façade might suggest.



On January 13, 1908, the great, dust-laden curtain on the stage of the Boyertown Opera House caught fire. Within minutes, the Opera House was entirely engulfed in flames. About 10:00 PM, Boyertown fire officials placed a call to the Good Will Fire Company of Pottstown. Good Will loaded up their steam pumper fire truck, hose cart, and 50 firemen onto the Colebrookdale Railroad, arriving at the Boyertown station at 11:30 PM to assist with the blaze.

But they were too late to save those inside. It had taken only 10 minutes for the screaming inside the building to stop. The next morning, the charred remains of 170 people were found among the smoldering embers just inside the opera house doors. Crowds rushing to exit the blazing building had pushed forward against the inward-swinging doors, preventing them from being opened. The fire captured national attention, and funeral directors from as far away as Philadelphia began arriving the next day to the Boyertown Station.



On Sunday, January 19, 1908, special Colebrookdale Railroad trains brought 7,000 people to a service for twenty five unidentified victims of the fire who were interred together in a mass grave on a hill overlooking the station. The Opera House fire gave rise to the enactment of new, comprehensive fire codes across the United States. Entrance doors that open out from the building, rather than in toward the building, are now a standard practice because of the Boyertown Opera Fire.

A shortage of caskets after the fire gave helped to grow another iconic Boyertown industry, the Boyertown Burial Casket Company. From 1893 onward, every outbound Colebrookdale train would carry finished caskets to the Pottstown interchange for delivery across the nation. Those caskets were loaded at the Boyertown station with this still-existing crane, itself a technological marvel. Built by the Phoenix Iron Company, it incorporates that institution's patented curved I beam fabrication.



Boyertown's station was also frequented by Thomas Edison, who rode the 10 AM Colebrookdale train once each week for nearly a decade, testing a magnetic ore located in Bechtelsville. The ore would be used for a concentrator essential to large-scale iron and steel making.

We approach our first crossing of the Ironstone Creek. Built in 1905 by the Phoenix Bridge Company for the Reading Railroad's crossing of the Schuylkill River in Port Clinton. When the Reading moved the railroad—and the river—to avoid a tunnel and two bridges, this structure became superfluous. Relocated here in 1927, it replaced a 27-span wooden trestle.



Crossing Farmington Avenue, we pass the familiar two-turreted mansion by Wren's ice plant.

Note the twisting and turning of the line, emblematic of early railroad construction. The fastest recorded train over these tracks occurred in April 1912, when a train carrying the Goodwill Fire Company's engine travelled from Pottstown to a fire in Bally, *making the 13 mile trip in an astonishing 17 minutes*. We now arrive at the COLEBROOKDALE FOUNDRY, with its impressive waterfall. The Colebrookdale Iron Works, was successor to Thomas Rutter's Colebrookdale Furnace and Iron Works—the first blast furnace in Pennsylvania. Named to honor England's earliest iron mills Rutter's Colebrookdale Furnace was established in 1716 along the banks of the Ironstone Creek, paralleled by the Colebrookdale Railroad.



Joseph Bailey, founder of the Colebrookdale Railroad, followed in the footsteps of John Potts, Thomas Rutter, and other Quaker pioneers who had been induced by William Penn to come to Pennsylvania to jump start the colony's iron industry. While the valleys provided the ore, lumber, and water power needed to make iron, they made getting finished products out difficult.

This problem was solved by the Colebrookdale Railroad. Here we see then and now shots of the junction. While the original Rutter and Potts mills are long gone, their mansions lie close to the Colebrookdale line.

We head toward Colebrookdale Station. Early postcard photographs show the large, ornate stations provided for each of the small villages along the line,





including the one shown here at Colebrookdale, as well as at Ironstone, Pine Forge, and Glasgow. From the windows of the train can be seen the remnants of a town street, connecting Farmington Avenue via a long-gone bridge over the Ironstone Creek to the former station area.

We enter a deep rock cut, scene of a notorious if now little remarked labor struggle. In March of 1869, workers constructing this section of track protested for higher wages. They were ultimately successful, earning twenty five more cents per day (for a total of \$1.75 daily) but were forced to work an hour longer each day in return--thus working an eleven hour day.

We near the site of Ironstone Station, seen here, as a mother waits for her children to arrive on the noon train from school. The Colebrookdale was the primary transportation for school children along the line.



The line is canopied by tall pines and deciduous trees for much of its journey. As the Ironstone Creek falls—and the railroad climbs—the sound of rushing water becomes more faint, though tantalizing glimpses through the foliage evidence the precarious height of the train's course.

Farm fields along the line near Greshville look much as they did to trains passing a century ago. Those same trains also delivered mail, milk, and other goods to all the villages along the line.

The physical fabric of the line contributes to its unique appeal. Numerous trestles and dramatic bridges harken to an earlier era of construction and are rare finds on modern railroads. The view from the Red Shale Road crossing, seen here, is impressive, as the stone and steel structure towers over the highway.

High above the valley, we approach the township park on a great sweeping curve, with verdant views as far as the eye can see. We cross the highway on another spectacular trestle. As we enter Pine Forge, we cross over a small bridge and pass one of the line's numerous grist mills before a stone-arch crossing of Pine Forge Road and the meeting of the Manatawny and Ironstone Creeks.



COMMUNITY PRIDE IN RESTORING THE COLEBROOKDALE: Friends of the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust recently restored the 1910 Pine Forge Station sign.

Leaving Pine Forge, we skirt Rattlesnake Hill. We come to the site of Thomas Rutter's Poole Forge by Egolf's Bridge over the Manatawny. This was also the site of a quarry and a six-story tall stone crushing facility. It can be seen here clinging to the steep slope above the railroad on Pool Hill. Its remains can be seen from the railroad today.

Just before arriving at Pottstown, the line traverses thick deciduous woodlands once and still characteristic of its right-of-way. Timber from these forests was harvested to make charcoal for the iron furnaces also adjacent to the Colebrookdale's tracks. Glasgow station, in present day Stowe, was located off of Glasgow Street in an area that would offer a perfect picnic ground for the railroad. To the right is Glasgow Manor. To the left, under a small bridge, is a facility that would make a wonderful enginehouse for the railroad.

Leaving Glasgow, we hug the Mantawny before crossing Route 100.

As it begins to rain, we arrive at Manatawny Park and pull to a stop at Pottsgrove





Manor. Home to iron master John Potts, it is a fitting destination for this iron-bound journey into the past. Just ahead is the Colebrookdale's final bridge, a 1908 connection to the Reading Railroad, shown here at the upper right. The first iron bridge in America was produced very near the Colebrookdale's connection to the Reading in this location.

The Colebrookdale is an under-utilized resource for our area. In a time when much of our region begins to look like everywhere else, we compete for investment on the basis of what makes us unique. We owe it to ourselves and our future to capitalize on resources like the Colebrookdale.

We should look to coordinate trips on the railroad with community events in Pottstown and Boyertown. Special events on the railroad, such as Santa Clause arriving in town by steam train, and Easter Bunny Runs will also bring people to the area.

We will need to explore how the Pottstown and Boyertown terminals can be transformed into gateways, with retail and food options for passengers and a community gathering space for locals. Such a space could provide for concerts, a





The original Boyertown station.

community holiday display, and a starting point for carriage tours. Tourist railroads elsewhere in our area serve as successful examples and inspiration for the future.

V. BOYERTOWN STATION AREA

SOME THOUGHTS REGARDING THE BOYERTOWN RAIL YARD

The parcels formerly occupied entirely by the Colebrookdale Railroad's yard in Boyertown, Pennsylvania, present a tremendous opportunity to the Borough of Boyertown for the benefit of the community's citizens for years to come. The size and location of the site offers the potential to be an interest-generator, adding uniqueness and vitality to the downtown area. This document is meant to merely introduce some thoughts for further contemplation and discussion.

As the Borough moves forward with its re-development plans, it is important that it keep as its objective an outcome that will allow for the greatest return on its investment. The site is capable of supporting multiple complimentary uses. It is exceedingly important that any re-development of the yard facility in Boyertown neither foreclose nor detract from this potential.

The County of Berks has recently purchased the historic Colebrookdale Railroad and intends to restore and enhance freight service on the line. The County is also interested in exploring the operation of a tourist railroad from Boyertown to Pottstown. The line is exceedingly scenic and has attractions adjacent to the railroad property at both the Pottstown and Boyertown stops. Initial plans for the tourist railroad have met with resounding acclaim from elected officials, businesses, and citizens in Pottstown and Boyertown.



VISIONING what can be done with the Boyertown yard and working closely with the Borough are key processes for the railroad's success. A proposal is shown in more detail on the last page of this document.

Any redevelopment of the property should look to capitalize on influx of passengers brought to Boyertown by the train. It should welcome them as they arrive and orient them as they explore the town. It should offer an indication as to the character of Boyertown and invite them to explore and enjoy what it has to offer. Additionally, it should provide for the facilities necessary to retain tourist traffic through repeat visitors and word-of-mouth recommendations. Namely, clean and sufficient restroom facilities, wheelchair accessible boarding facilities, retail and display space, food service, ticket sales, group tour gathering space, tour bus loading areas, and a strong system of signage establishing connectivity with places important to visitors.

As proponents of a tourist railroad operation centered in Boyertown, we would like to work with the people and elected officials of Boyertown to plan a re-development of the site that:

1. Capitalizes on the site's railroad past
2. Creates a community space from which passenger operations could arrive and depart
3. Serves as a welcome center, information center, and gathering that informs and orients visitors
4. Provides important community services, such as a library, and gathering space.

If the facility as described above is intelligently integrated with Boyertown's existing tourist, recreational, and service resources, the cumulative effect will no doubt be immeasurably greater than the sum of the parts.

As the attached graphics and photographs attempt to illustrate, a facility located



approximately in the historical location of the former Boyertown depot (roughly southwest of Durango's) would anchor the central business district and visually complete the commercial corridor now split by the railroad crossing. It is appropriate that such a facility take the form and location of a train station; the train station was the heart of Boyertown historically, just as it was for communities across the nation. Attached photos show how the train station area invigorates the downtown area of other tourist railroad operations. The "Boyertown" station sign on the building would greet not just train riders but also motorists on Philadelphia Avenue, who though perhaps initially intending to just pass through, might decide instead to explore realizing they had arrived someplace special. A key goal should be the creation of a facility that will get people out of their cars and orient them to walking around the town.

A train-station inspired redevelopment offers an interesting and appropriate historical motif. A "mall" area created in and around the station could also offer space for the library and community center, ight retail, etc. All stations had outbuildings and various associated structures, so a collection of small structures would have historical precedent architecturally. A community Christmas tree space, a space for small concerts (similar to Cape May, New Jersey's gazebo) and a community garden would bring visitors to the space even when trains were not operating.

A Matter of Economics

As you may remember, a series of rail excursions were operated on the Colebrookdale line in the early 1990s. That these trips were sold out is not altogether surprising; Pennsylvania's railroad heritage has a particularly important place in the American psyche historically and ideologically. Indomitable highways of the human spirit, railroads like the Colebrookdale were built in an age of unprecedented optimism. Fired with the passion of purposeful endeavor, the great steam locomotives built in our area for service the world over continue to stir the emotions, arouse enthusiasm, and awaken zeal. This remarkable power imbued in our past—to stir the emotion, to arouse enthusiasm, to awaken zeal—is key to finding solutions to the economic, social, and environmental challenges facing towns like Boyertown and the Commonwealth generally today. Recognizing this in 2005, Pennsylvania's Economic Development Cabinet adopted the Keystone Principles, a blueprint for sustainable economic development for the Commonwealth. The Principles prioritize the "[c]onservation] of Pennsylvania's exceptional heritage resources" and the re-use of existing facilities.

The preservation and re-use of our heritage is essential to growing—and thereby sustaining—the Commonwealth's heritage tourism industry. Tourism is Pennsylvania's second-largest industry, and with about 117 million visitors annually, Pennsylvania is the fourth most visited state in the country, tied with New York. The total impact of travelers' spending on Pennsylvania's economy is about \$34 billion a year, and tourism is responsible for more than 563,000 jobs. Heritage tourism is the fastest growing sector of Pennsylvania's tourism industry and the greater Philadelphia area—in particular, the Philadelphia-to-Lancaster corridor of which Boyertown is a part—is the most visited region.

As former Governor Rendell recently stated, "When communities understand their heritage, they can celebrate it and harness it to increase tourism, create jobs and create wealth. Tourism can then grow in a spirit that is faithful to a community's people, their history and their cultures, and improve the quality of life."

In addition to tourism and the jobs it creates, there is another equally important reason to forward historically-themed, railroad-oriented redevelopment of the Boyertown rail yard. Unless our current system of land use decisions changes dramatically, sprawl will continue to cover our area with vast tracts of "sameness." To be economically competitive in a globalizing world, a community must position itself to compete with an increasingly-expansive pool of similarly situated places across the world. A large measure of that competitiveness will be based on the quality of life the local community provides. The built environment of a community is a major component in creating quality of life. In short, what makes a community unique even in small but positive ways will give it a more significant advantage than that same bit of uniqueness would have had in a pre-globalized time.

Again, it is important that any redevelopment of the yard Boyertown might undertake not foreclose the future possibility of the site reaching its fullest potential. The options and ideas proposed in this very preliminary document suggest some ideas of what that fullest potential might look like. It seeks to suggest how Boyertown can best capitalize on this and other present and future resources in a way that will provide increasing returns



Achieving the greatest return from the Boyertown Rail Yard requires protecting and enhancing the site's ability to support multiple complimentary uses.



Re-development should encourage, not detract from, the potential of a tourist railroad to bring many thousands of visitors annually to Boyertown.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT CONSIDERATIONS

ORIENTATION OF COMMUNITY CENTER

The Community Center and attached boarding platform should be placed at a location where it will be the heart of a circulation pattern that feeds to Boyertown attractions. The railroad will be the main artery to this heart for arriving visitors. The Center CANNOT place a service entrance/"backside" toward the tracks; such a placement will have a deleterious impact on the impression made on visitors and effectively block the capacity of the artery to feed the town. Designing the Center with multiple "front" facades, much as incorporated by the old Boyertown train station, will address this concern. The Community Center lawn should incorporate a space for a community Christmas tree and tour group meeting areas.

CONNECTIVITY

Access routes should direct visitors arriving by car for the Railroad and Community Center to a dedicated parking lot. Arriving busses should be directed to a loading/unloading area by the Center, then to a parking area. A system of signage and brick walkways should guide pedestrians and passengers from the parking area, to the Community Center to the train, then from the train to points of interest in the town.

ACCESSIBLE AND VISIBLE TRAIN BOARDING PLATFORM

A passenger platform with wheel chair ramps should be provided. It should be covered allow passengers to board or disembark onto dry land. The boarding area should be visible to drivers on Washington Avenue and Philadelphia Avenue. An archway in the Community Center will offer access to the platform. The platform should be at least 160' in length (2 passenger cars) and be connected physically and aesthetically with the Community Center.

ACCESS AND SUFFICIENT PARKING FOR TOUR BUSES AND CARS

The site must be laid out to permit the loading and unloading of full-sized tour busses. Busses could unload/load at the library/community center. Passengers will pass through the center to access the boarding platform. We anticipate 2-3 busses for any given train.

PASSING TRACK AND TRAIN SERVICING AREA MUST BE INCLUDED

The passing track just south of Durangos crossing over Third Street needs to be re-laid. *No rail passenger service can occur without this track.* The switches are still in place. The area between this track and the existing mainline is needed for railcar and locomotive servicing and must be of sufficient width to accommodate a truck turn around between the tracks. The track can be placed at-grade in the Center area, facilitating multiple use.

AMENITIES

The redevelopment should offer restrooms of sufficient capacity for everyday use and special events. Space for retail and food service associated with the railroad is important. Such retail and food could feature local vendors. Display space for local attractions and business to advertise is important.

AESTHETIC TEMPLATE

Pages 9-14 offer some options for a railroad-oriented aesthetic that is appropriate for the site and will be suitable for a tourist railroad operation while concurrently adding visual interest for regular users.



Open Archway allows passengers to find train; enhances connectivity. Reminiscent of Boyertown casket works over-road walkway.

Library/Community Center. Also, RR ticket sales, retail, light food

Community Garden, gazebo, fountain

Parking

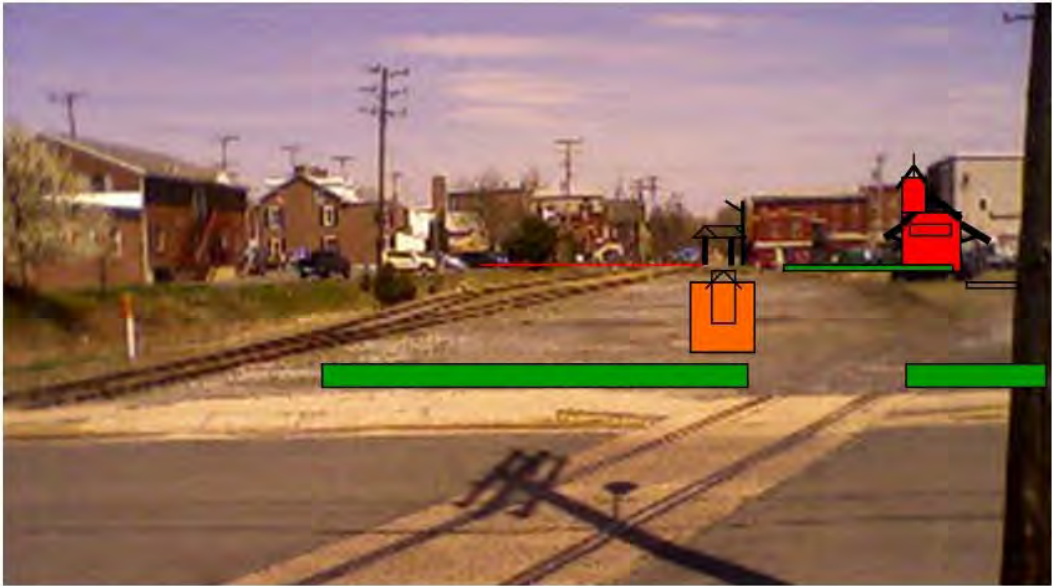
Image RA Department

Resources-PAMAP/USGS

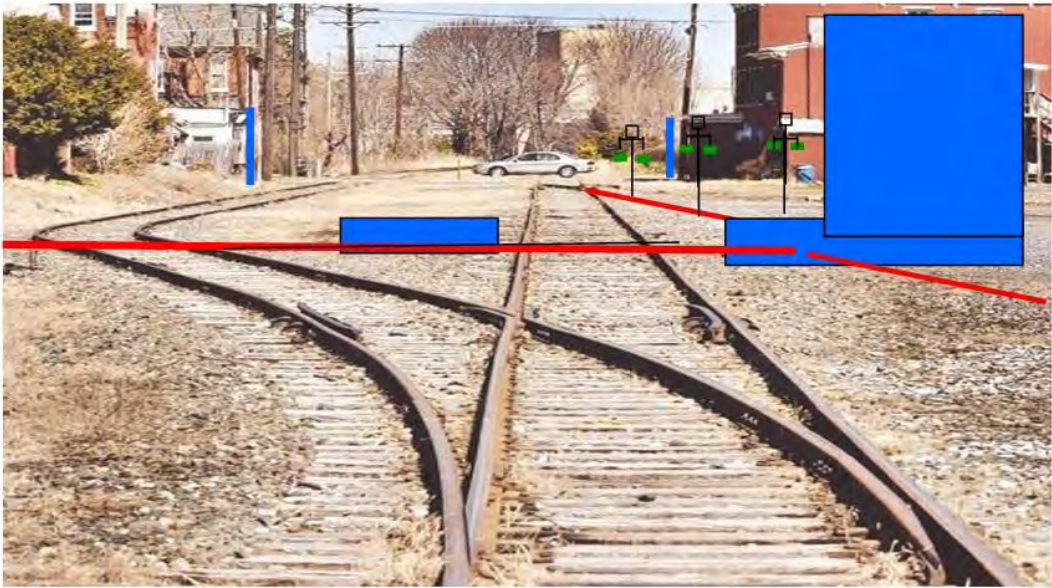
Google

Imagery Date: Apr 2004 40°19'54.23" N 75°30' elev 403 ft Eye alt 1076 ft

- Brick walkways. Create traffic patterns to both draw people to station plaza area and out into the community to utilize businesses. Should be lined with historically-appropriate lighting, plantings, historical markers written in conjunction with Boyertown Historical Society. Blue Keystone Town Markers could mark junction of brick walkway with Philadelphia Ave. Brick should be patterned in placement to add interest. Some brick walkways from the era when the original station was in place can be found along Washington Ave.
- Junction track. Currently severed. It is very important for the success of integrating tourist railroad operations with this project that this track be re-introduced to service. It is the track that interfaces with the re-developed station area. It can be laid flush with the ground surface, so as to facilitate the movement of both rail equipment, people, and automobiles. Its absence poses serious problems for the operation of both freight and passenger service, and eliminates a crucial second run-around track. Placement of track at-grade is ideal if, as here, use will be limited. It brings trains into a more intimate level and heightens visitor engagement. See the River Street Rambler experience in Savannah; train tracks were to be torn up along historic waterfront; tourists rebelled and now it is a popular attraction to have the train come.
- “Station” boarding platform; historical railroad style; incorporate a tower or semaphore signal to give height and mass to sufficient to visually-connect with views from Philadelphia Ave. House information/visitors center, community space, other public uses. Building and platform to bear sign with town name.
- Decorative plantings; trees along parking lot edge; create garden/park atmosphere, but do not want to form a wall to town; larger green area is community garden space, with art, fountain, performance space.
- Historic Phoenix Steel Crane; denotes southwestern boundary to the station plaza site. Plaque demonstrating its historical significance will add visual and educational interest. Special plantings and a sign announcing this is Station plaza could be located here.
- Access for train servicing.
- Denotes principal flow of pedestrian traffic.

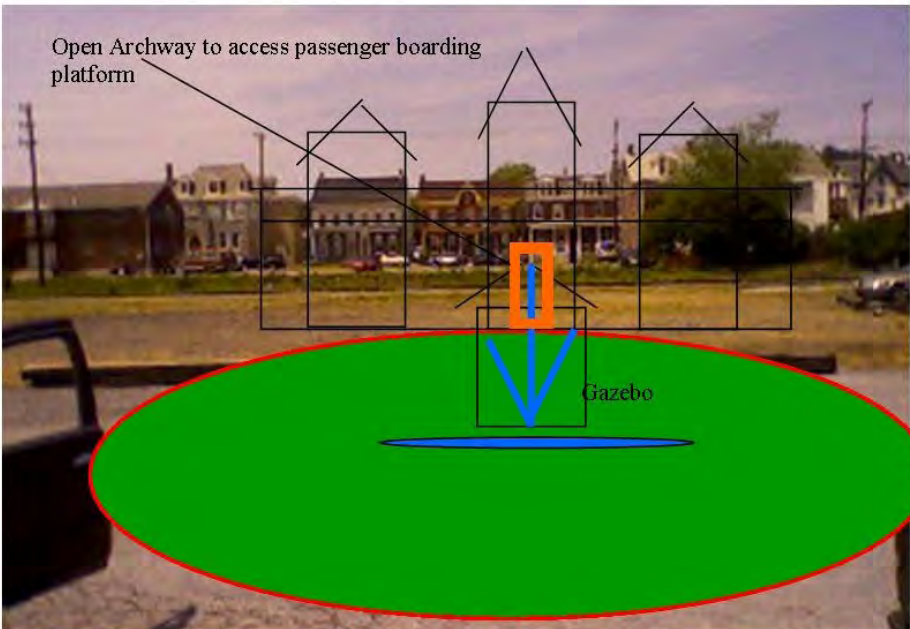


Proposed placement of library/community center (in red) at historic location of railroad. Semaphore tower and boarding platform (center) announce station plaza to passersby and integrates visually with rest of town. Note track embedded in road surface; this should be continued for this track for the reasons mentioned on the previous page. See previous page also for explanation of various elements. Structure in orange in train service access area.



- "Station" and station platform
- Brick walkways
- Historic lighting with planters; perhaps gas lights? Businesses sponsor lampposts.





Site of "Station" with community commons area in front of it. Junction track joins commons with station. Commons has community garden, fountain, etc. Possibly gazebo.



Classic, uniquely-Pennsylvania town marker sign; could post at the ends of the proposed brick walkways, particularly where meets Philadelphia Avenue. Creates visual interest and directs traffic along corridor.





Four of many successful examples of integrating the historic railroad motif into the downtown to create vibrancy and encourage investment. Note the track in the street at left. The Junction track must be replaced to achieve this benefit.





The new-construction at Port Clinton, PA, could provide a good example for Boyertown.

Open arcade allows passengers to access train boarding area.



Some design aesthetics from local sites for your consideration. Notice the brick pattern, details, and vivid earth-tone colors. Notice also the use of illumination to create visual interest. Such effects—used on buildings, shrubbery, fountains, etc. can invigorate nightlife and extend the period of commerce.



VI. POTTSTOWN STATION AREA Map of Boarding Facility

The Colebrookdale enters Pottstown and Boyertown in the heart of each community, adjacent to major thoroughfares. The Pottstown end of the line is adjacent to Route 100, King Street (Route 663 here), and High Street. Route 422 is a five-minute drive and is the most-highly travelled road in the region. At least three bus routes utilize King Street, so the area where King Street crosses the Colebrookdale can use transit-oriented development funding for the construction of retail, food, etc., and other enhancement of the area. The Urban Land Institute has recommended that Pottstown reconfigure this area as a western gateway to Montgomery County. The Colebrookdale and its associated development could be a key feature of this initiative.

Within easy walking distance of the tracks are Pottsgrove Manor, Manatawny Park, and the new Carousel. A park train or a trolley could be used to link the Carousel with the Colebrookdale, augmenting an easy walking path. The Carousel's new miniature golf course could thematically tie-in with the railroad and the park train. Ideally, the Colebrookdale's bridge over High Street could be painted to advertise the tourist railroad.



VII. TENTATIVE AND PRELIMINARY COSTS AND INCOME

The costs below are a very preliminary, back-of-the envelope snapshot of what it will take to start a tourist operation with a fighting chance of success. **Only the implementation plan discussed earlier should be relied upon for actual proformas.**

The first set of numbers ("I") represents a projection on the investment necessary to establish the infrastructure and equipment for a sustainable operation. The second set of numbers ("II") projects the costs to establish just enough to run a series of excursions which might be thought of as "phase I" of the plan. As such, most of the costs from II can be subtracted from I.

A steam locomotive is a primary draw and numbers relating to renting or purchasing a steam locomotive are projected in item III.

Costs quoted reflect a 10% contingency.

A. START UP COSTS FOR DEDICATED TOURIST ATTRACTION

\$450,000 to cover passenger car acquisition, delivery, and restoration. Coach, dining, lounge, open car with handicapped accessibility.
 \$250,000 to cover creation of platforms/ boarding shelters at each end.
 \$400,000 to cover retail, commercial, and community space
 \$550,000 to cover enginehouse facility for maintenance and restoration (real estate, building, machinery)
 \$85,000 to cover creation of a siding in Boyertown devoted to locomotive servicing
 \$75,000 to cover reinstalling the yardside passing track and yard lead in Boyertown.
 \$95,000 to cover extending the passing siding in Pottstown.
 \$95,000 to cover building 2 additional yard tracks in Boyertown for coach storage.
 \$75,000 to cover miscellaneous track work/ditching etc.
 \$80,000 to create, furnish a picnic grove around MP 4.
 \$250,000 to cover start-up needs (co-marketing with other attractions, brochures, press releases and advertizing, uniforms, insurance deposits, etc., etc., and other first 2-year expenses)
 \$300,000 to cover salaries for first two years. Most labor is volunteer.

Total: \$2,705,000

Total with Steam Locomotive: \$3,150,000-\$3,780,000

B. INITIAL EXCURSION COSTS (subtract these costs from above)

\$250,000 to cover acquisition, transport, restoration of coaches. Matched by donated materials and labor. While it is possible coaches could be rented, the investment required for a rental fee, for transporting, and for restoring them would essentially be lost, making acquisition a more attractive option. Volunteer labor and donated materials would enhance the value of equipment that could later be used on the tourist line or sold.
 \$40,000 to cover insurance (2 years)
 \$60,000 to cover start up needs (brochures, press releases, locomotive and crew from EBRR, 2 years)
 \$35,000 to cover steam locomotive rental (optional)





Total: \$385,000

C. STEAM LOCOMOTIVE COSTS

1. INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATION COSTS FOR STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

- * Infrastructure costs: This amount includes enhancements to enginehouse, coaling ramp and front end loader for re-coaling, water facilities in Pottstown, Pine Forge, and Boyertown: \$250,000
- * Insurance costs: \$25,000
- * Fuel, Crew Training , Maintenance and Inspection \$50,000

Steam locomotive infrastructure and operation total: \$325,000

2. PURCHASE AND RESTORATION COST

Steam Locomotive Option 1: Queen Anne Railroad #3. Small loco.
 \$35,000 purchase cost
 \$25,000 transport cost
 \$60,000 restoration cost

Stream Locomotive Option 2: Chinese Steam Locomotive.
 Newly built (1980s) to American plans
 \$450,000 ready to run

Steam Locomotive Option 3: CPR 4-6-0 972 or 1098.
 Acquisition/Transport/Restoration approx
 \$750,000

Totals:
 Option 1: \$445,000
 Option 2: \$775,000
 Option 3: \$1,075,000

The advantage to the smaller locomotive in Option 1 is that it could be travelled to other locations for special events, as is done by the owners of the Flagg Coal #75. This represents an additional source of income. The disadvantage is that it may be less of a draw and is of limited speed and power, problematic as the operation becomes more successful.

3. STEAM LOCOMOTIVE RENTAL (IN LIEU OF OWNED LOCOMOTIVE)

Steam Locomotive Option 4: Rent steam locomotive CNJ 113 (6 month rental)
 Newly-restored, local appeal
 \$35,000 transport from Minersville and return
 \$10,000 fuel, insurance, etc.

Steam Locomotive Option 5: Rent Flagg Coal 75 (2 weekend rental)
 \$30,000

STEAM OPTIONS: Photographs of the locomotives mentioned in the various options above. Top to bottom: Queen Anne Railroad #3, a new Chinese steam locomotive built to American plans, CPR 4-6-0 972, CNJ 113, and Flagg Coal 75.



D. ANNUAL INCOME PROJECTION

A partnership agreement with local school districts, as well as Klien, Werner, and other local tour bus companies will guarantee a higher passenger count, though the return per-passenger will be lower.

Assume \$15.00/per passenger

Year 1 Ridership:	25,000:	\$375,000
Year 2 Ridership:	27,500:	\$412,500
Year 3 Ridership:	30,000:	\$450,000
Year 4 Ridership:	32,500:	\$487,500
Year 5 Ridership:	35,000:	\$525,000
Year 6 Ridership:	37,500:	\$562,500
Year 7 Ridership:	40,000:	\$600,000

Additional income from retail, food, liquor sales; steam locomotive rental (Steam Locomotive Option 1), special event ride premiums, extra-fare car premiums, facility rental, etc., can increase annual income in some cases by 50%. A proper projection of income should only come through the Implementation Plan for which funds are currently sought.

E. ANNUAL EXPENSE PROJECTION

Note that Start Up Costs ("I") incorporate expenses for first two years

Insurance:	\$35,000
Marketing and Promotions:	\$40,000
Maintenance, passenger cars:	\$25,000
Maintenance, steam locomotive:	\$25,000
Maintenance, other property:	\$25,000
Capital improvements	\$50,000
Fuel, equipment rental:	\$25,000
Misc.	\$25,000
Wages :	\$200,000
Total:	\$450,000





ESTABLISHING IDENTITY:
Though faded, the Strasburg Railroad logo placed on the line's crossbucks provides unobtrusive but effective advertising for the railroad. The Colebrookdale Preservation Trust should look to do something similar along the Colebrookdale line.

Weight: Approx 150,000
Length: Approx 80'
Seating: 80
Small food service and retail area
Capable of delivery by rail, reducing transport cost and increases re-sale value.
Located in PA
Condition: Excellent
Work required: cosmetic; light rust; roof inspection and tar patch.
New doors and interior paint for aesthetic purposes if desired.
Rarity and Interest: 7 of 10

VIII. PASSENGER CARS FOR THE COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD, THE SECRET VALLEY LINE

Once up and running, the railroad will need 6-7 cars to run trains with sufficient capacity to make the endeavor sustainable. The range of equipment must include coach, open car, first class and dining ultimately. At least one car should be a combine to accommodate over-sized wheelchairs. At present, there is not sufficient space to store that many cars. To do the initial excursions we'll need 2-3 cars, one of which should have some handicapped accessibility. Because of the cost involved in moving equipment, we should seek cars for these initial excursions that we would want to keep for the tourist railroad fleet. Cars should be of the open-window variety with clerestory. Cars of the 1900-1916 era would be preferred because of their stained glass and woodwork. The cars shown below present some current and future options. Issues to consider with each car are condition, distance to move to Boyertown, and quality of the piece once restored.

Each of the cars pictured are available at a considerable value. While each requires some work, that is not uncommon for cars of this uniqueness and age.



CANADIAN CAR AND FOUNDRY 1920S LONG DISTANCE COACH

Identical to long-distance Pullman cars found on American railroads across the county in the 1920s, this car was used until very recently in Pennsylvania. It is a high-capacity car, seating over 80 persons. High-speed trucks and upgraded mechanicals mean this car can be moved over mainline railroads, reducing shipping cost and greatly increasing utility and value. It incorporates a small snack bar and dining area as well as large restrooms.

Built in the 1920's as a long-distance coach for the Canadian National Railroad, rebuilt for suburban commuter service by the CN and sold in the 1980's into private ownership. Converted into a coach snack car for use on a tourist railroad. Some of the mechanical details include: APEE bearings, open windows, good body, ISSH, drop equalizers, cast shoes, E couplers, body mounted cylinders, good wheels, triple brake valve, walk over seats, small concession area, large restroom. Video of identical cars can be found at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xev0_E-_jE. This car will need little to no work to enter service. Cost to move both cars is approx \$8-10K.

In time, some backdating to its as-built appearance will be desirable. This will include interior re-decoration and new vestibule doors.

Asking \$28K. Could get it for less, esp. if purchased with the combine car depicted later.

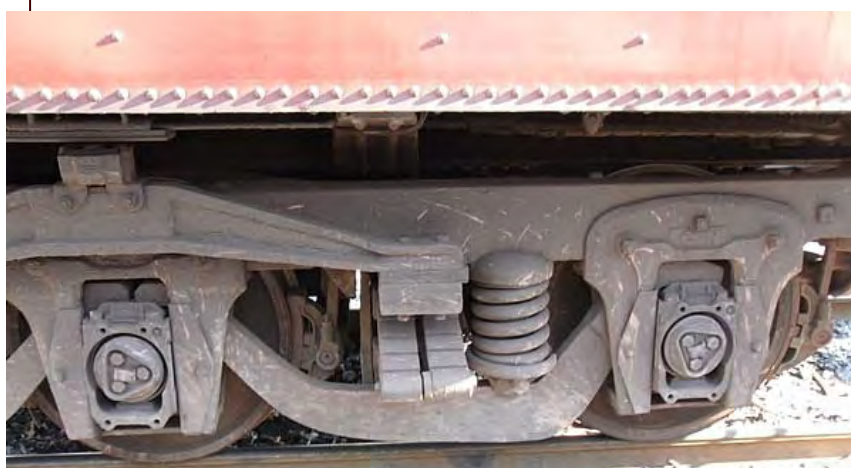


CANADIAN CAR AND FOUNDRY 1920S LONG DISTANCE COACH, CONTINUED





CANADIAN CAR AND FOUNDRY 1920S
LONG DISTANCE COACH, CONTINUED





CANADIAN CAR AND FOUNDRY 1920S LONG DISTANCE COMBINE

A combination coach baggage car identical to the cars built by Pullman for day train service for railroads across America, this car dates from the 1920s.

Combine cars offer a wonderful range of flexibility for tourist railroads. The side doors allow for modern wheelchairs to access the train. The large baggage compartment provides a space for concession sales, a large bathroom, and tool storage. High-speed trucks and upgraded mechanicals mean this car can be moved over mainline railroads, reducing shipping cost and greatly increasing utility and value. This car will require roof work. The generator should be removed from the baggage area and the interior will need to be cleaned up. May wish to have a new combine door for aesthetic reasons only. The work needed is not beyond that which volunteers could do.

Weight: Approx 150,000
 Length: Approx 80'
 Seating: 28 plus handicapped accessibility.
 Small food service and retail area possible in baggage area if generator removed.
 Capable of delivery by rail, reducing cost and increasing re-sale value.
 Located in PA
 Condition: Good
 Roof needs work. Interior needs paint and other upgrades.
 Rarity and Interest: 7.5 of 10
 Price: \$15K negotiable. Asking price for entire car is less than the value of the generator and trucks that are included.

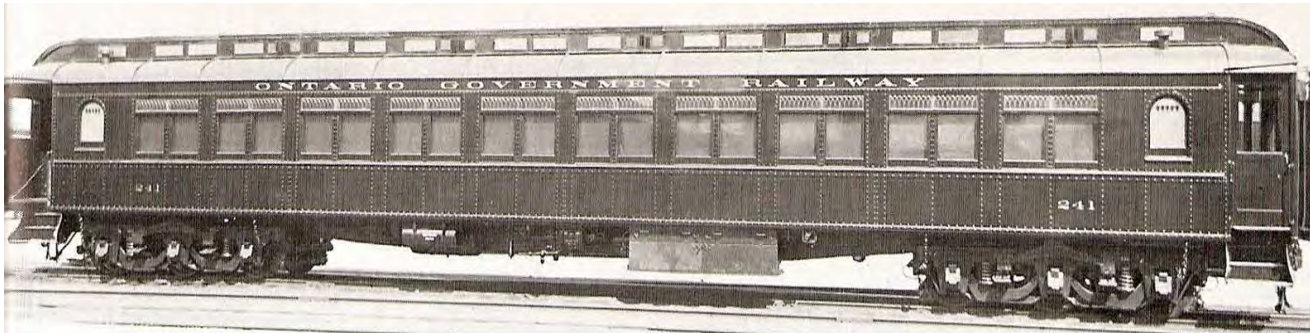
Built for the Canadian National Railroad as a combination coach baggage car, this car was rebuilt by CN and used for mixed train service on branch lines with light express and passenger business. The car was sold by VIA into private ownership and converted into a power car for an excursion train. Condition of body is very good but the car will need roof work. This series of car had a wood base on the roof covered in canvas. The rubber on the roof will need to be replaced. Some of the mechanical details include: Steel body, great trucks, APEE bearings, truck mounted cylinders, OSSH, comp shoes, E couplers, 26-C brakes, Detroit 240v 3 phase (approx 50-75kw), approx 250 gal fuel tank, oil fired forced air heat, 24 seat coach area. Located in Gettysburg, PA. Can be delivered by rail to the Colebrookdale. Asking \$15K. Could get it for less, particularly as a package with the high-capacity coach shown previously.



CANADIAN CAR AND FOUNDRY 1920s LONG DISTANCE COMBINE, CONTINUED



1914 MAINE CENTRAL RAILROAD PULLMAN PARLOR CAR



This car is a truly rare find and will be the shining gem of any train on which it travels. It could serve as a first class car, a lounge, or a dining car. Such cars are the greatest revenue generators for a tourist railroad. The car pictured above is a sister to the Maine Central parlor.

Built in 1914 as an 87 seat smoker coach #252 by Pullman for the Maine Central Railroad. Rebuilt by the Maine Central in 1955 as a class room instruction car. Used by the MC system-wide as a mobile class room, it also includes living quarters for the instructor. The car was finally retired in 1985 and sold to the current owner. Some of the mechanical details include: steel construction, friction bearings, UC valves, tread cast shoes, oil fired heat (caboose stove), bolted pedestal trucks, body mounted cylinders, 110v electrical, can not be shipped by rail car will need to be trucked from it's current location.

Ideally, new trucks would give the car greater utility. *The car owner is willing to donate it*, though it may cost up to \$40,000 to move it to Boyertown. Restoration will include an interior clean up, new seats (or tables and chairs if used as a dining car), light body work, new paint.



Weight: Approx 136.300 (less 20 tons if trucks left in NH. Alternatively, trucks could be scrapped or sold giving \$3000 in income). Hamburg trucks discussed alter could suit this car.

Length: Approx 77

Height: 11'4" at eaves, 14'7" overall

Seating: Open Plan. 60 in dining, 40 in lounge. 80 if coach seats re-installed

Must be trucked or put on RR flatcar. \$20-\$40K

Located in NH

Condition: Fair

Rarity and Interest: 10 of 10



1914 MAINE CENTRAL RAILROAD PULLMAN PARLOR CAR, CONTINUED



1920s CENTRAL RAILROAD OF NEW JERSEY COMMUTER CARS (2)



CNJ cars, Steamtown

Built in the 1920's by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company for the Central Railroad of New Jersey, these cars gave many years of faithful service in northern New Jersey. They became part of the Steamtown Collection then were sold to a non-profit in Pennsylvania.

Both cars have wooden interiors with inlay, which makes them among the nicest of the series of CRRNJ cars preserved. However, unlike the Maine Central car or the Lackawanna car pictured on the next page, other examples of these cars exist. Both cars will need some steel work on the vestibules. One car will need new windows; the other has new windows that will need to be installed. All seats and steam heat lines are intact. The work is not beyond that of which volunteers are capable. Cars are available for \$24,000 for the pair. Friction bearings, located in Pennsylvania. Note: The photos below are not of these cars, but of sister cars. The cost to move the cars is estimated to be \$8-10K.



Weight: Approx 120,000
 Length: Approx 75'
 Height: 11'4" at eaves, 14'7" overall
 Seating: 65
 May be trucked; possible that an arrangement could be worked out with Reading and Northern and Norfolk Southern to deliver by rail. Trucking cost \$40,000 for the pair. Rail cost \$15,000 for the pair.
 Located in PA
 Condition: Good
 Exterior needs paint. Interior needs ceiling work and new windows (included for one car).
 Rarity and Interest: 6 of 10
 Price: \$24K for the pair.



1914 BARNEY AND SMITH DL&W PARLOR CARS (2)



Originally built as steam-hauled parlors and converted by Thomas Edison to run on the electrified lines out of Hoboken on the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western, Parlors 3454 and 3453 were first class accommodations for over 75 years. They led the last two MU-powered trains out of Hoboken in 1984 for New Jersey transit and were the oldest continuously operating passenger cars in the county at that time. Built with leaded transoms over each pair of windows (similar to the Maine Central car in this respect), they bear the traditional elements of pre-WWI cars. They are available for free but will need to be trucked from Boonton, NJ. It is likely moving costs will be \$15-20K. Both cars have amazing woodwork, with columns and intricate inlay. 34543 has beautiful stained glass 3454 has an exceptionally early air conditioning system. Because both cars have an open plan, they are useful as dining or lounge cars and will be handicapped accessible.

Weight: Approx 118,600
 Length: Approx 74'5"
 Height: 11'4" at eaves, 14'7" overall
 Width: 10' 0.5" at eaves
 Seating: Open plan.
 Must be trucked or RR flatcar.
 Moving cost likely \$20K for each car.
 Located in NJ
 Condition: Fair/Poor
 Sill replacement and roof work required. Interior clean up.
 Rarity and Interest: 10 of 10
 Price: Can be donated to the Colebrookdale



1914 BARNEY AND SMITH DL&W PARLOR CARS (2), CONTINUED



1914 BARNEY AND SMITH DL&W PARLOR CARS (2), CONTINUED



Essential Parts for Passenger Car Restoration



The most difficult aspect of restoring and maintaining historic equipment is the lack of availability of spare parts. While it is exceedingly unfortunate that so many historic passenger cars continue to be scrapped, what is equally unfortunate is that this scrapping represents a source of spare parts that is more often than not untapped. Trucks, buffers, couplers, steam heat lines, sets, window hardware, grab irons, doors, and brake valves are among the parts that should be considered for salvage from scrap-destined cars.

There are a number of cars headed for scrap in Hamburg, Pennsylvania. Among them are two former Union Pacific cars with roller bearing trucks that would greatly ease the restoration and operation of historic equipment on the Colebrookdale. While there are other items among the lot to be scrapped that would be beneficial (as mentioned above), the two truck sets should be a must-save in the interest of the future. We estimate each truck of the four trucks weighs 12 tons and the approximate scrap value is \$2,820 per truck.

It is possible a rate could be worked out with the owner and/or the scrapper to salvage additional items for less cost. The materials would need to be trucked away and stored either along the Colebrookdale or elsewhere. We have several locations that are possibilities.



IX. A POTENTIAL STATION FOR THE COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD



Millwood's train station dates from the early 1880s and is of a remarkable design evocative of those of famous Philadelphia architect Frank Furness, though no connection to Furness has been uncovered as of this writing. It was originally built by the New York and Putnam Railroad, which later became the Putnam Division of the New York Central Railroad, for the town of Briarcliff Manor.

The original Millwood station house, built in 1888, burnt to the ground soon after it was opened and was replaced by a baggage car. The baggage car remained the station until 1910, when philanthropist Henry Law built a new station for Briarcliff Manor and donated the original Briarcliff Manor station to Millwood, where it exists to this day. It's compact size—16ft by 30ft—made it possible to move.

The last passenger train to run along the Putnam Division was in May, 1958. Freight service ended in 1962 when the rails were removed after this section had been abandoned. Pavement has since taken its place, and it is now a bicycle and pedestrian path, the North County Trailway, similar to the Schuylkill River Trail in our area.

The building has served numerous purposes over the years, including an office. It remains an object of interest for many passers-by. Development pressures have made the land where the station sits valuable and the owner has decided to build a large, modern structure in its place. While the town would like to have the station restored (it is the centerpiece of "Station Place" in Millwood, they do not have a preservation ordinance applicable to the structure. They have asked that the structure be restored or demolished and the owner has opted for the latter option. The both the owner and the town would prefer that the building be saved, even if that requires it find a new home. They are willing to work with any interested party. The owner is willing to donate the building.

A Berks County-based house mover of international renown has quoted a price of \$18-20K to move the building to Pottstown or Boyertown. The building will require restoration work once in place. It would make a perfect station building for tourist passenger operations on the Colebrookdale Railroad. It could, at the same time, easily also serve as a centerpiece for a redevelopment of the Pottstown or Boyertown station areas as a coffee shop, an ice cream shop, a place for Santa during the holidays, etc.

The building could be easily enlarged by new construction or the addition of a historic railcar.











IX. ABOUT THE COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD EMBLEM:

Evocative of the traditional heralds used by British railroad companies, the Emblem recognizes the Coalbrookdale, England, origin of the ironmasters whose pioneering work gave rise not only to the Colebrookdale Railroad but the Secret Valley industries that built the nation. The shield shape is based on the trivet produced and font used by the later Colebrookdale Iron Foundry, whose founding family also founded the Colebrookdale Railroad.

Converging railroad tracks form a chevron, medieval symbol of strength, and meet at a stylized railroad spike with "1869" inscribed on it; 1869 was an important year for railroads--and railroad spikes. In that year, the last spike was driven on both the Colebrookdale line and the Transcontinental Railroad. Here, then, the spike brings with it connotations not only of railroad heritage generally but more specifically through its central placement the idea of "unity" as ascribed to the Transcontinental Railroad's golden spike, whose driving was hoped to unite a nation east and west, and, equally importantly just four years after the Civil War, north and south.

The tracks and spike meet at a Pennsylvania Dutch-styled tree of life. The Pennsylvania Dutch connection requires no explanation for a Berks County railroad; however, the tree also represents the environmental stewardship supported by the railroad. The circular pattern of the tree and the Emblem generally work with the tracks and spike to evoke the semaphore peace symbol.

