



IMAGINING

THE POSSIBILITIES





Lost in the deep woods sheltering the Manatawny and Ironstone Creeks is a mythical secret valley.

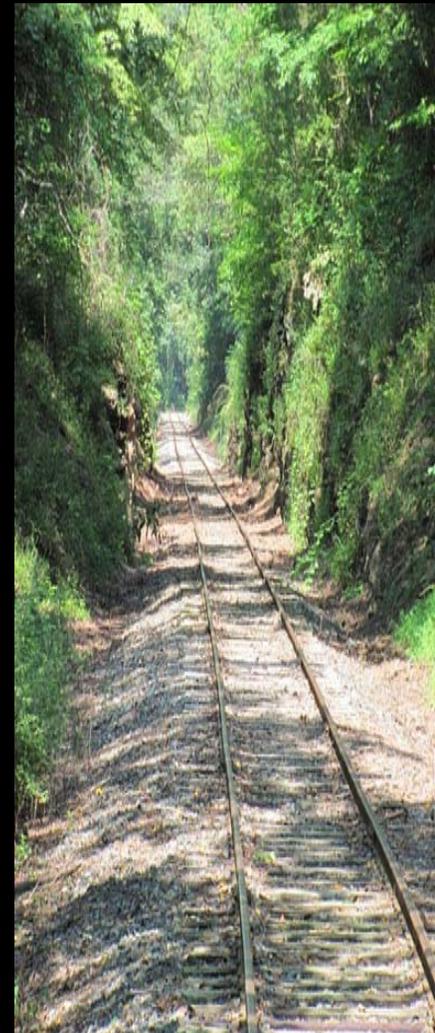
Though today only white-tailed deer, great blue heron, and bald eagles know the beauty of this legendary land, it was once the province of pioneers and patriots.

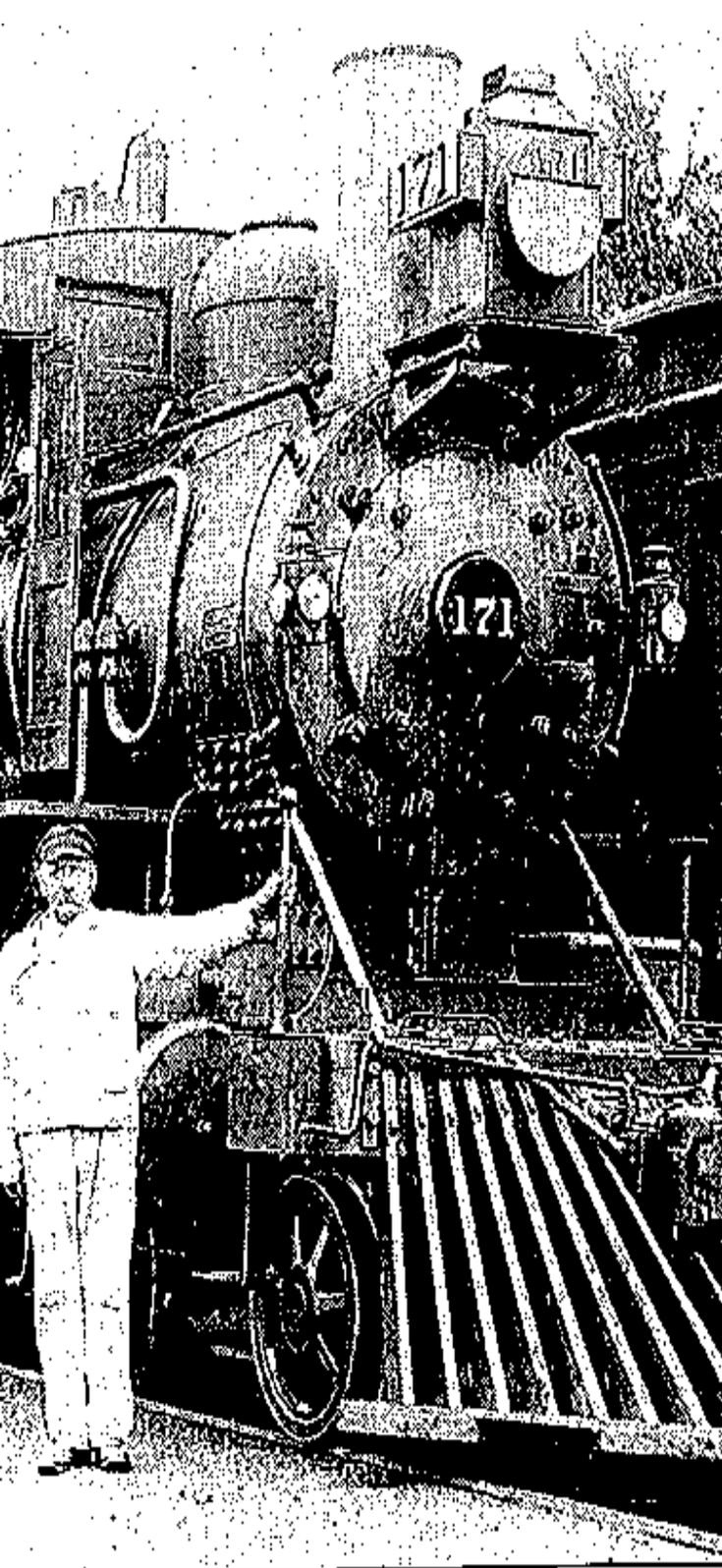




Their stories can be heard in the soft winds whispering through the tall trees and towering trestles of the Colebrookdale Railroad—a magical, forgotten railway to the heart of this Secret Valley.

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.

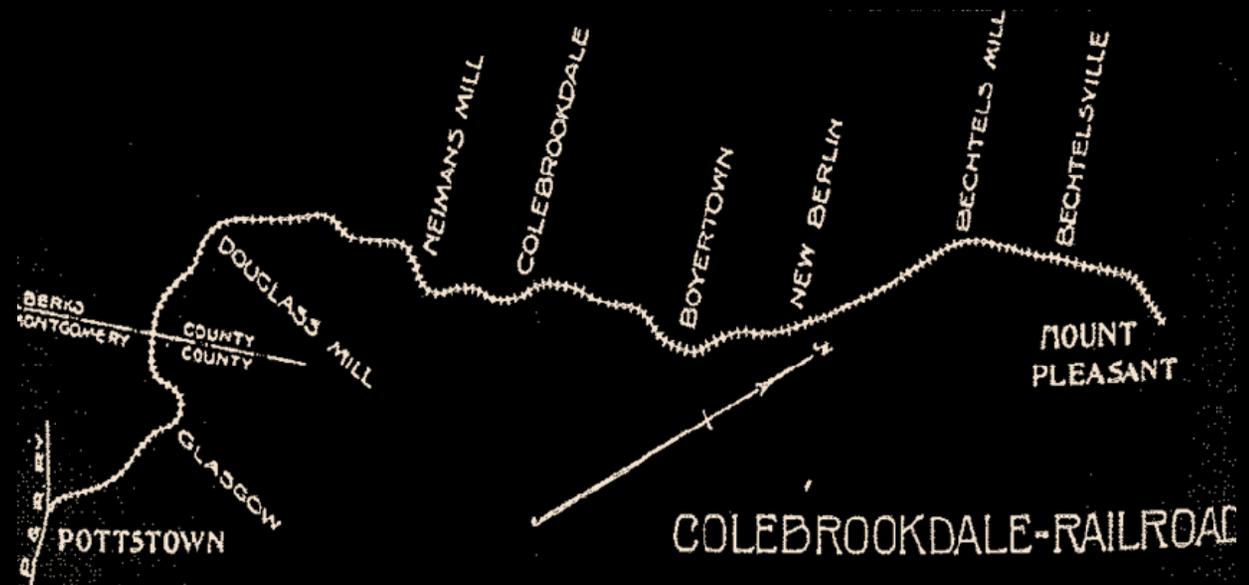
Eight-point-six miles long and a century-and-a-half back in time, the Secret Valley Line beckons you to experience for yourself the unexpected treasures of Southeastern Pennsylvania.





WELCOME ABOARD THE COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD: THE SECRET VALLEY LINE

A Tourist Railroad using an existing track that runs between Pottstown and Boyertown.



Built in 1869, we have this amazing resource right in our own backyard

CONCEPT

An Exceptional Unknown Resource

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 is an undiscovered relic of exceptional value.

Joining two growing urban centers with an 8.6 mile trip into a wilderness lost in time, it invites passengers to explore a “Secret Valley” where they will be introduced to the history and legends of the area .

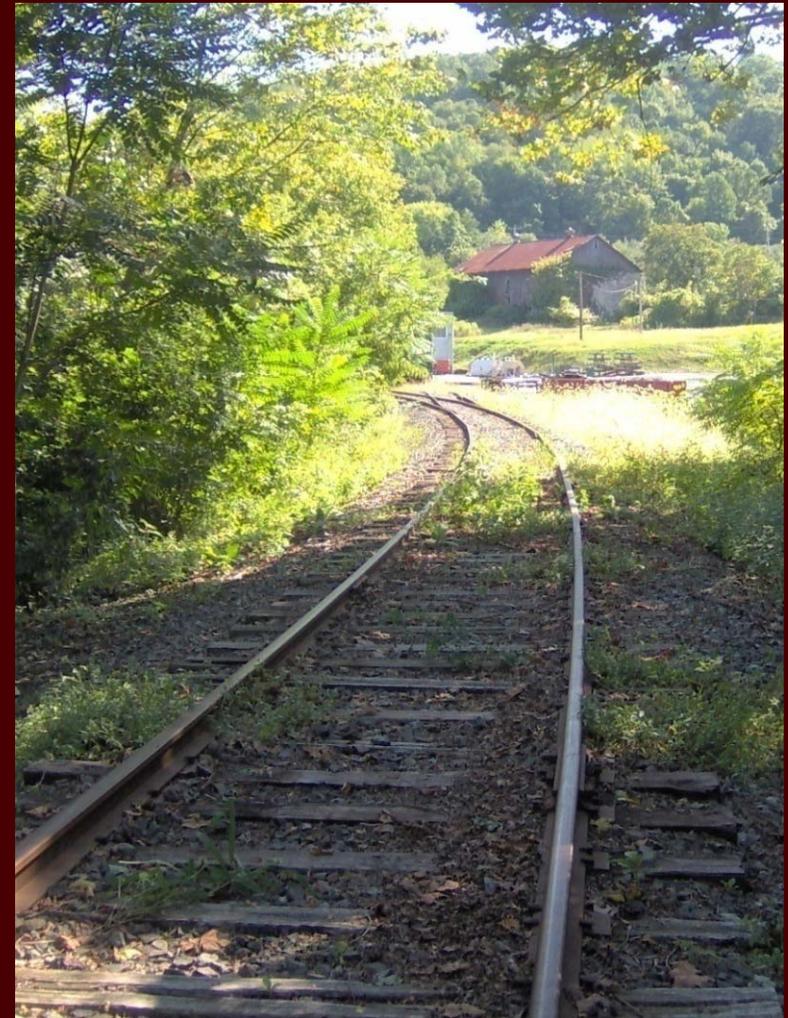


CONCEPT

An Untapped Opportunity

A recent study by the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative evidences a significant unmet tourism opportunity in the area surrounding the Colebrookdale Railroad.

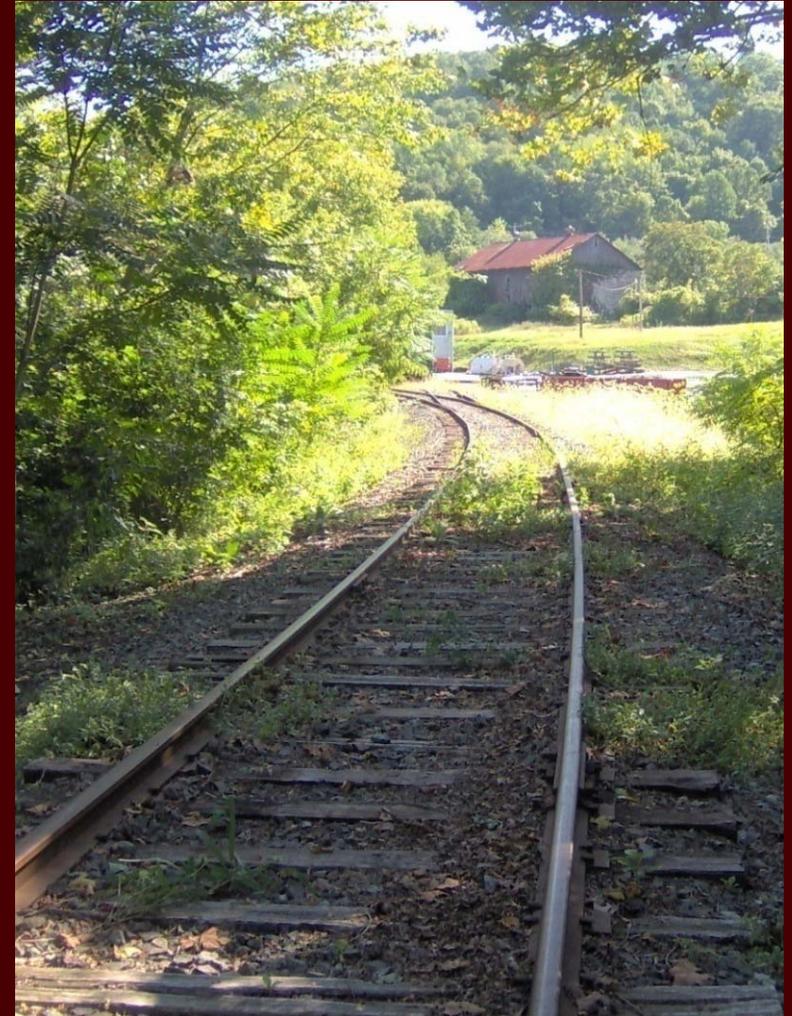
The **state's most heavily-traveled tourist corridor passes through this region**, with several hundred thousand tourists seeking recreational and heritage tourist destinations nearby. A railroad unifying a larger heritage/recreational experience can here, as it has elsewhere, been **THE** attraction that catalyzes the rest.



CONCEPT

An Untapped Opportunity

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.



CONCEPT

Location:

Pottstown-Boyertown, PA

Operation Season

May-December

Operational Frequency

Weekends

Up to 4 trains daily

2-hour round trip

Audience

Families

Tourists

Heritage Travelers



CONCEPT



Equipment:

Diesel and/or steam engines

WWI mahogany coaches

Open Cars

First Class Cars

Dining Cars

Bar Cars

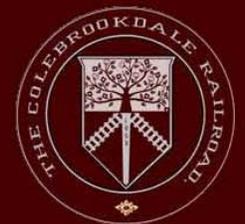
Amenities:

Food and retail at station

Ridership Numbers:

20,000 -50,000 annually?

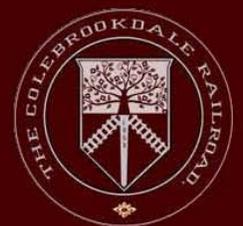
***IMPLEMENTATION AND PLANNING
STUDY WILL SAY MORE***



CONCEPT



Without community support, this project will remain only a beautiful vision.



Unpacking Success: Quality of Experience is Key. *Aesthetic ♦ Fun ♦ 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. Towns tie in with carriage rides, walking tours and local attraction guides.

BENEFITS ABOUND

- Draws tourists to our area
 - Tourists bring money
 - Tourism creates jobs
 - Tourism is a catalyst for development of Pottstown & Boyertown as gateways communities
- What tourists want are authentic experiences

Has this been done elsewhere successfully?



THREE RECENT SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES

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 rehab.

New Civil War-Themed RR in York County

Multi-million dollar project including construction of locomotives and cars, rebuilding of track, etc., as community redevelopment project.



IMPLEMENTATION AND PLANNING STUDY

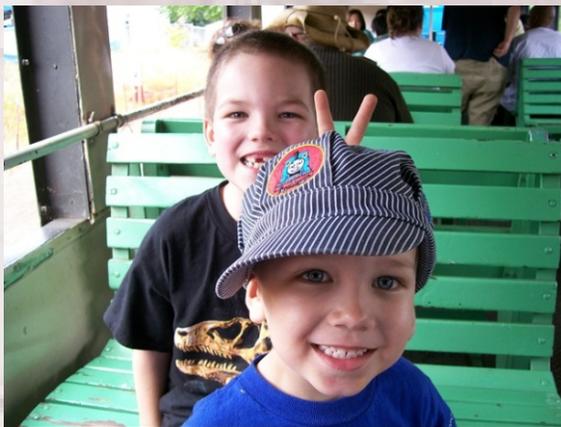
WILL LOOK AT THE COLEBROOKDALE'S POTENTIAL FOR OUR AREA.



NEXT STEPS

- STEP I: Raise the funds to conduct an **Implementation Plan** for the establishment of a Tourist Railroad on the Colebrookdale Line and implementation of phase I, preliminary excursions.
- STEP II: Acquisition and restoration of passenger equipment and steam locomotive rental for 2013 preliminary excursions. Fundraising for the same.



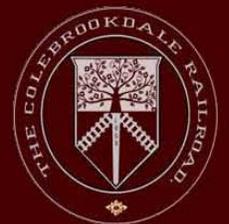


STEP I: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

GOALS: The Implementation Plan is Crucial to Both a Tourist Railroad and any Preliminary Excursions .

It will Identify:

- What a tourist RR can do for Pottstown and Boyertown
- Next steps particular to operations
- What will give a foothold but avoid a false start
- Funding sources with specificity
- Other complimentary development opportunities such as **food, retail, restrooms, parking, community gathering spaces, connections to other town attractions etc.**
- Liability insurance requirements
- Community and volunteer roles
- Special events and capacity needs
- Best entity structure to operate with the many interested parties in this situation: owner/freight operator/Federal Railroad Administration, etc.





STEP II: PRELIMINARY EXCURSIONS

Berks County, owner of the line, and the Eastern Berks Gateway RR, operators of the line, would like to have passenger excursions by 2013.

The success of these preliminary excursions could impact that of a dedicated tourist operation on the line, 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.

We have an opportunity, with strong community support, to create a first class unique experience with this magical resource





LIFTING UP THE VISION:



To Have a Positive Impact on the Community:

To Have a Positive Impact on the Community:

Must be a Sustainable Attraction—

Place with Presence more than an Event.

To be Sustainable—basic principles

1. Can be an additive building process, with incremental progress—
BUT Only One Chance to Make a First Impression!!!
 - a) we will **ABSOLUTELY NEED** repeat customers
and
 - b) **WORD OF MOUTH** recommendations
2. Strong Branding and Identity with Marketing and Promotional Retail
Eg: “The Secret Valley Line”
3. Identity tied to **UNIQUE** experience of quality equal to regional peers

Boyertown Events

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

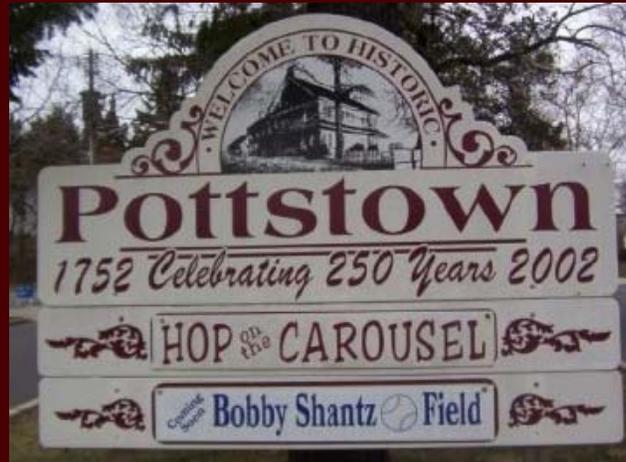
Boyertown Historical Society

State Theater

Padre Pio Shrine

Taylor Backes Glass





Pottstown Events and Attractions

Pottsgrove Manor

Manatawny Park

Carousel

Farmers Market

Schuylkill River Heritage Center

Miniature Golf Park

Tri County Performing Arts Center

Fourth of July Fireworks

Schuylkill River Trail

The Hill School

Parades and Celebrations





SECRET VALLEY LINE REGULAR FEATURES



“Secret Valley Tours” 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 advertise in coaches and along RR line using pre-WWI-styled advertisements designed by local artists. Advertisements available for sale in gift shop.

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.

“Telegraph” Messenger Service for Kids

Parents send a “telegraph” message from Pottstown or Boyertown, to be retrieved upon the train’s arrival at the other end of the line.



SECRET VALLEY LINE REGULAR FEATURES

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.

“Secret Valley Tours” Recommended Itineraries and All-Inclusive Weekend or Day Packages

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



SECRET VALLEY LINE REGULAR FEATURES

Multi-Media Experience

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.

- * Introductory video customizable for different ages and interest groups.
Think of the video program you see at Gettysburg as your introduction. Imagine a video introducing you to the magic of the train and as the video ends, the whistle sounds, and your own magical journey begins.
- * Facilitative multi-media compliment for persons with disabilities or hearing impairment
- * Educational program for school tours
- * Train Cams showing view from locomotive cab, train roof
- * Lineside cams to show you your train as you go by
- * Live webcam
- * Advertise local businesses and attractions in keeping with the theme of discovering the Secret Valley for yourself.
- * Smart Device tour for passengers wishing to learn additional or different information than that offered by the tour.



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

Halloween Pick-Your-Own-Pumpkin Trains

In conjunction with on-line farms.

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.



SECRET VALLEY LINE SPECIAL EVENTS

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.

The Great Train Robbery

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

Civil War Re-Enactments

Native American Encampments



WHAT WE NEED AT THIS TIME:

- Letters of Support affirming the concept of a tourist railroad on the Colebrookdale Railroad
- **Matching Funds for the implementation plan. Commitment needed by March 2012.**
- Sponsorship of passenger equipment, visiting steam locomotive, and operations for 2013 preliminary excursions
- Directors, Volunteers and Supporters for Colebrookdale RR Preservation Trust with enthusiasm for this project fundraising experience



APPENDIX



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 WWI coaches

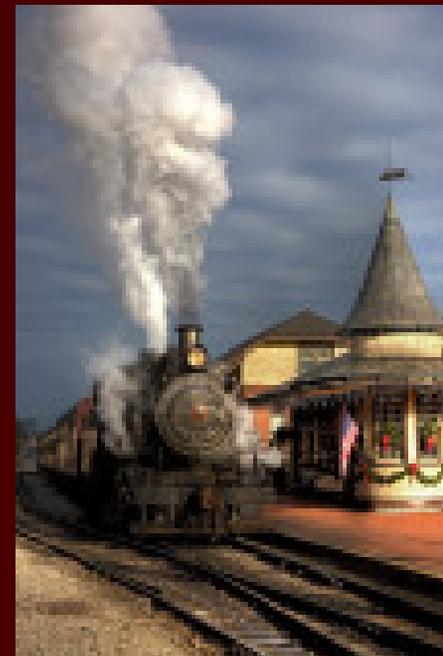
Coach, Open Car, Dining,

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 WWI coaches
Open Car,*

Amenities:

Limited food and retail at station

Ridership Numbers

15,000 annually

