



An Update
on the
Trenton Transit #288

Presented by J.R. May
Liberty Historic Railway, Inc.
to the
North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society

March 19, 2022

Talking Points

I am not a historian – this will cover the car and efforts to save it, not an in-depth discussion of the railway on which it operated. I tend to like working on equipment and understanding the people who built it, who maintained it, the things you learn as you dig into a project. Topics to be covered will include:

- * Background on LHRy
- * Discovery of the Trenton 288
- * History of the Trenton 288
- * Uncovering the Trenton 288
- * Moving the Trenton 288
- * The Plan Ahead for the Trenton 288

Who is Liberty Historic Railway (LHRy)?

Liberty Historic Railway (LHRy) is an advocate and funding organization for the transportation preservation field in New Jersey. Through selective allotment of funds, LHRy is able to support a diverse array of historic projects, helping 501(c)(3) non-profit groups restore and interpret New Jersey's rich transportation heritage.

Liberty Historic Railway is a non-profit, public benefit corporation meeting the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for exemption from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. LHRy is further classified as a public charity under section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi), and the organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 27-1997848. Contributions to LHRy are deductible under section 170 of the IRS Code. LHRy is also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfer, or gifts under sections 2005, 2106, and/or 2522 of the IRS Code.

<https://www.lhry.org/>

<https://www.lhry.org/donate>

Liberty Historic Railway (LHRy) Funding Applications

To apply for funding from Liberty Historic Railway, the requesting 501(c)(3) organization must provide LHRy a written request. LHRy does not have a specific format for this request, other than that it must be submitted in writing on the resulting organization's letterhead.

This request for funding for your project should explain the organization's preservation plan, define the subject's historical value, describe the project's significance within the context of the preservation community at large, and detail the amount of funding required. Copies of the organization's most recent annual financial statement (including income & expenses, plus balances on hand) and IRS non-profit organization status letter are requested.

The compiled requisite materials, should then be emailed to the LHRy chairman, Bill McKelvey at mckelvey@lhry.org and the vice chair, J.R. May at jrmay@m3monmouth.com.

LHRy Funded Projects



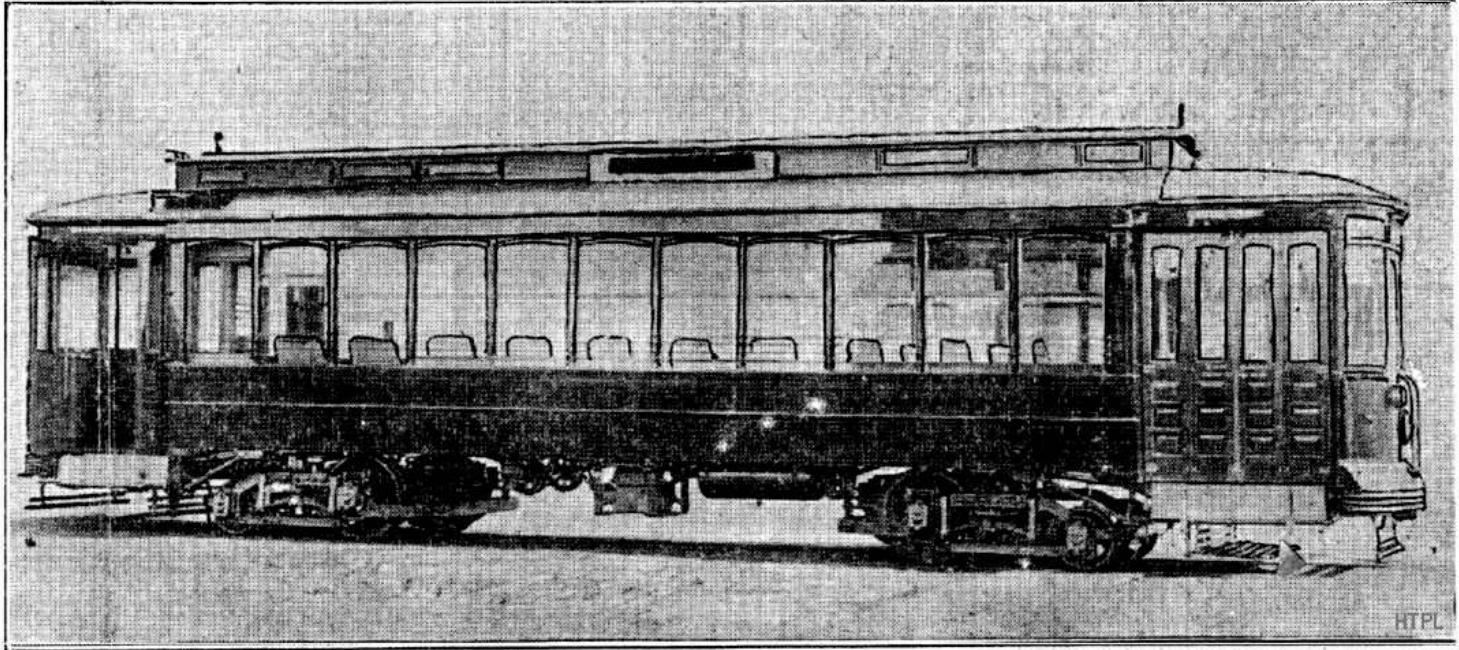
Trenton 288 Background

Trenton Transit Co./nee Trenton and Mercer County Traction Co., #288, the only surviving trolley car from the Capital City which is still in NJ.

The #288 was a 1914 product of J.G. Brill Company, Order Number 19340.

Trenton, N. J., Saturday, June 13, 1914.

TYPE OF FINE NEW TROLLEY CARS FOR TRENTON



TROLLEY COMPANY PURCHASES TEN NEW CARS, COSTING \$55,000; FIRST TO BE IN SERVICE AUGUST 1

In line with the promise of the Trenton and Mercer County Traction Company to at once proceed with improvements to the local trolley system, ten of the most modern type of street cars are being constructed by the Brill Company of Philadelphia. The first of these new cars will be put into service here August 1.

The cars will cost \$55,000, and will have steel sides and underframing, being two feet longer than the existing big cars used in Trenton. They will be the "Pay Within" type of car as distinguished from the present "Pay as-you-enter" cars.

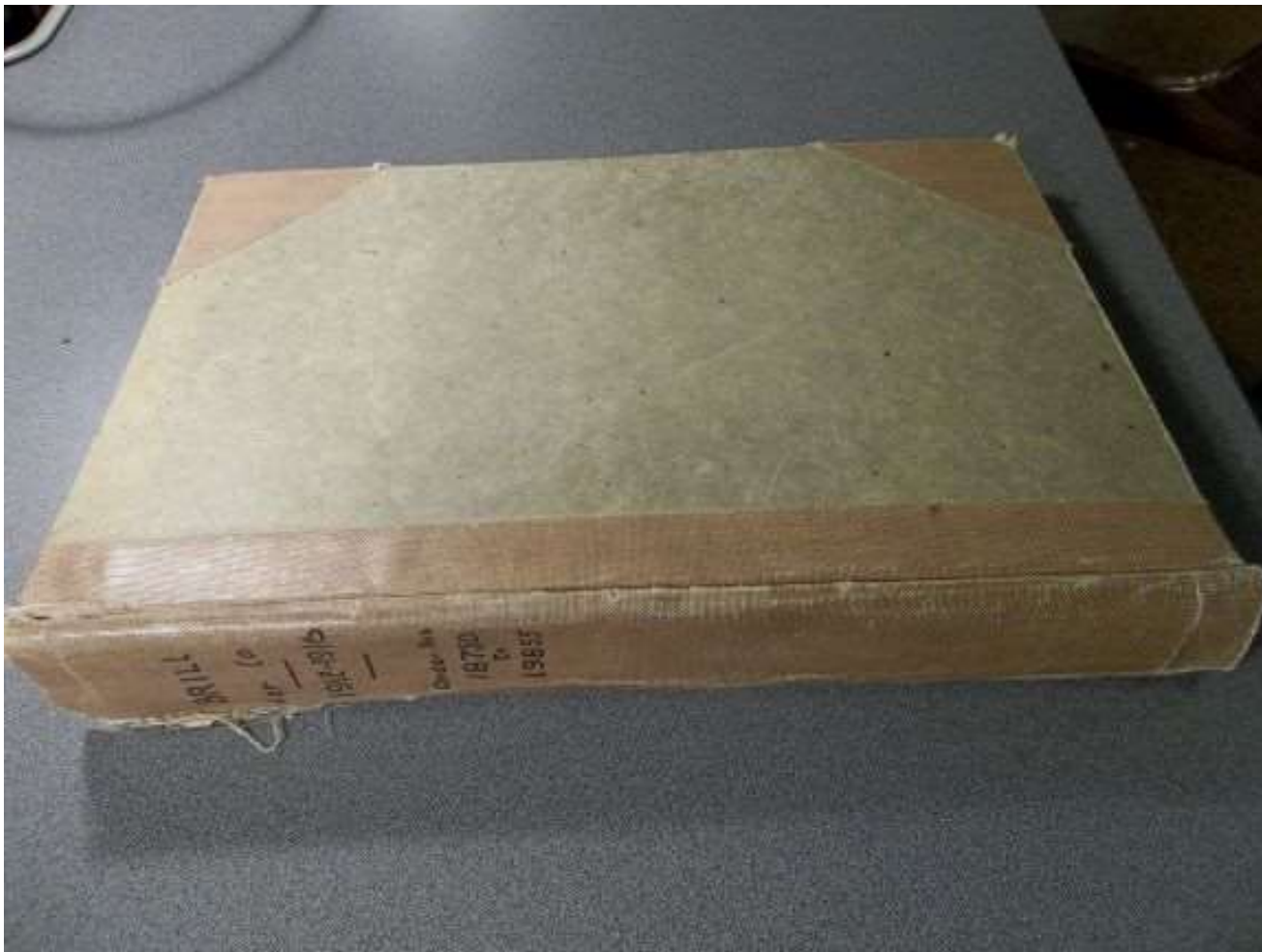
The platforms will be larger than those of the present cars, so that in unseasonable weather, passengers will not be kept standing in the streets. The lower step, which will be close to the ground, obviating the present high climb, will fold up when the doors are closed and this, together with the automatic closing of the doors will be an added safeguard against accidents.

The cars will be equipped with what is known as the "monitor" roof, which will provide the best ventilation system known in the trolley world. Altogether the cars will be of the most

up-to-date order and much more roomy than the present cars.

Rankin Johnson, the president of the company, in speaking of the matter today said:

"These new cars, which will cost the company \$55,000, are in keeping with our efforts to give a first-class service to our patrons and to put our street railway property in first-class condition. We are doing what we can to make the system here as modern as conditions will permit. We feel that we are getting better co-operation and support from the traveling public and we will do our part for the betterment of the service."



Order# 19340 was logged into the record books of the J.G. Brill Co. on April 7th, 1914. Surprisingly, many of those historic records remain, preserved in the archives of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA.

| Order | Article | For Whom | Rec'd | De'ly |
|---------------------|---|--|-------|-------|
| 19337 | 22 Transformer trucks | Norfolk & Western Railway Co | 4/6 | 6/5 |
| 19338 | 5 Transformer trucks | Norfolk & Western Railway Co. | 4/6 | 6/5 |
| 19339 | 1 #21 E truck less wh. & axles | West Ham Corporation Tramways | 4/6 | 7/1 |
| 19340 | 10-31' 4" Closed Motor Bodies | Trenton & Mercer County Traction Corporation | 4/7 | 7/31 |
| 19340 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 10-31' 4" steel underframes for Corporation | | 4/7 | 7/31 |
| 19340 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 20 No. 39 E trucks | do | 4/7 | 7/31 |
| 19341 | Electric work | do | 4/7 | 7/31 |
| 19342 | 5-16 ft. Double deck mot bodies | W. R. Grace & Company for Con- | 4/7 | 6/25 |
| 19342 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 5 #21 E trucks | ception Electric Company | 4/7 | 6/25 |

State

6034

6034

Payroll 6013, 6014

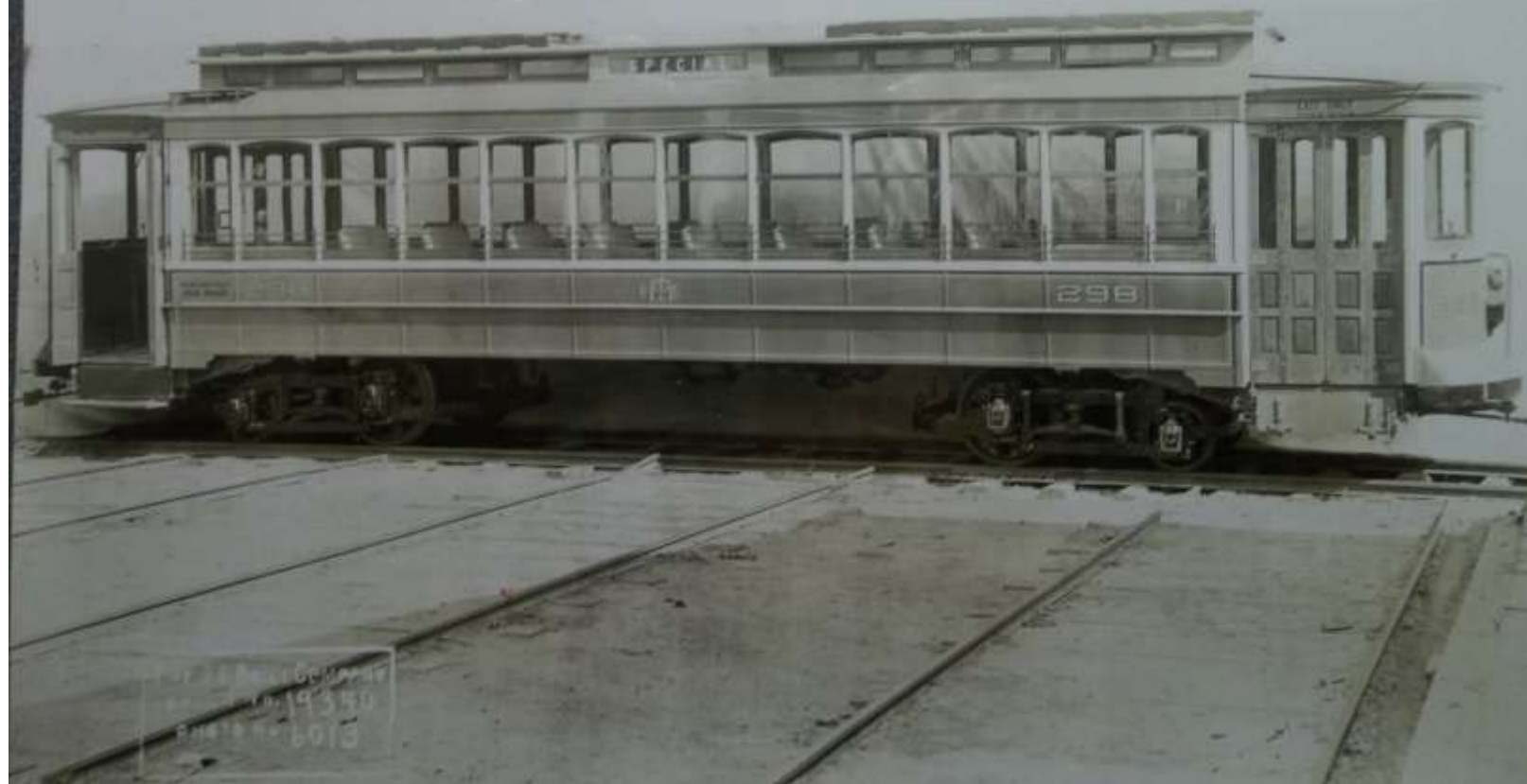
5763

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Trenton and Mercer Co. Trac. Co.



17.2 1935
1935
6013

Photo No. 5963



L. J. H. 1933
100 x 1 1/2

L. J. H. 1933
100 x 1 1/2

THE J. E. H. CO.
ORDER NO. 193
PHOTO NO. 59



The J. S. Bell Company
1901
6014

1925-26 Rebuilds

17. Cars 286-304 were used on all city routes and the Yardville and Trenton Junction suburban lines. Rebuilt as one-man cars in 1925 and early 1926, they were equipped with treadle-operated rear doors by the spring of 1927. In the final years, they shared regular assignments on the East State St.-Brunswick Ave. route and were used as trippers on the other city lines.

the first all-steel



**#292, J. G. Brill built, 1914. Taken on
Stuyvesant Avenue near Beechwood
Avenue in Trenton, N.J.. The company
abandoned service in 1934.
Collection of Jeffrey B. Marinoff**

DUKE UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES



DUKE UNIVERSITY



2273
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Hamilton Twp. Public Library Local History Collection



Duke University Library
R.C. Maxwell Collection

1916: Hamilton and Park Avenue, Villa Park

Trenton #288 Hiding In Plain Sight

Smith St, Hamilton, NJ

October 2018





Google

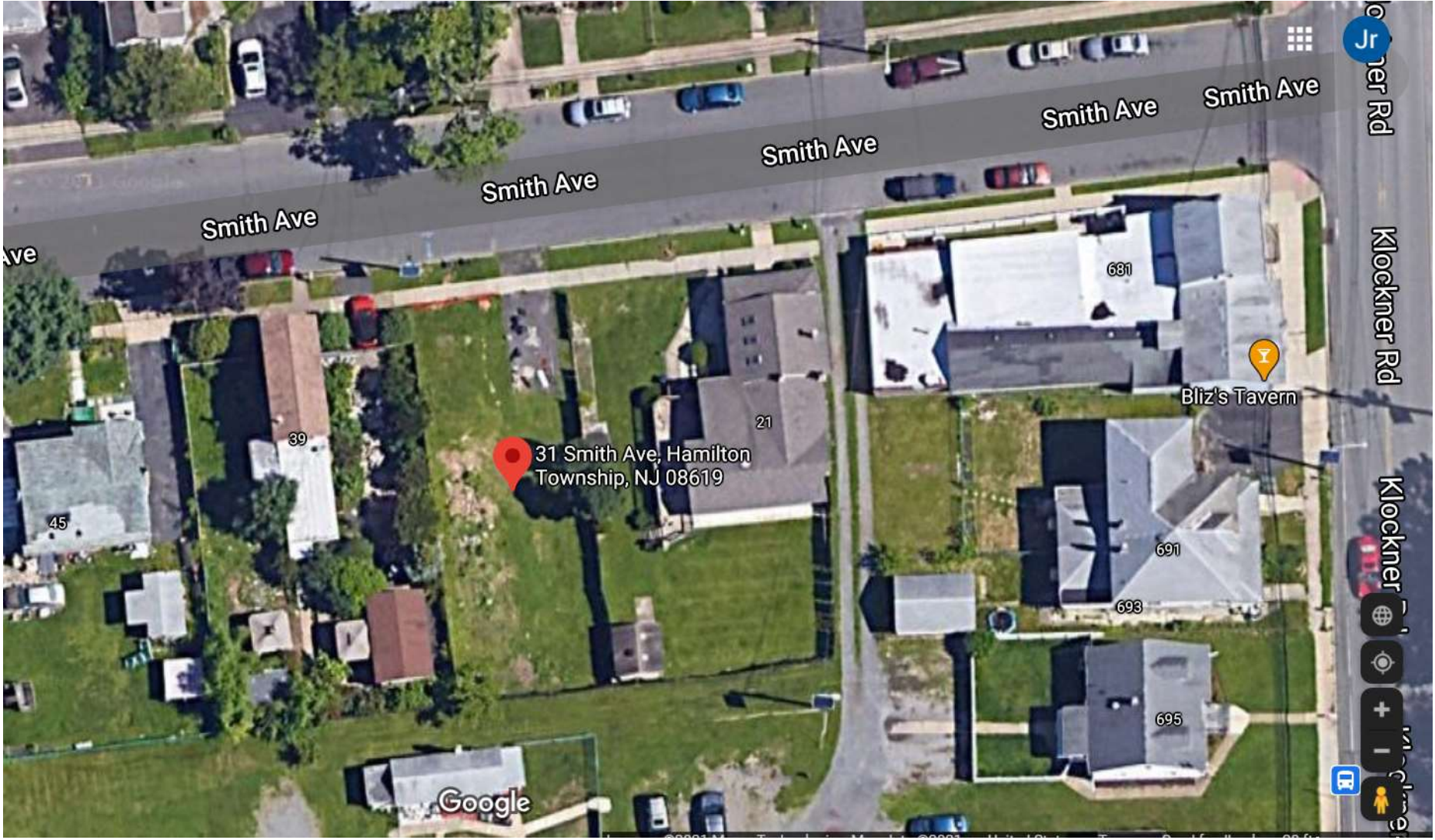




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31 Smith Ave, Hamilton Township, NJ 08619

Bliz's Tavern

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Google

Discovery to Move Timeline

- * Via a facebook posting in October 2018 by two young real estate developers, Brandon Breza and Marc Manfredi, LHRy became aware of the #288, which at that point was enclosed within a home which was planned for demolition.
- * LHRy funded the careful demolition of the house around the car, paid to prepare the site, and funded the removal of the car to a safe location in Southamptn, NJ at a total cost of over \$20,000.
- * The move occurred in December 2018, just two months after its initial discovery.
- * Really need to recognize a few key individuals who made this happen:

Ed Rizzo, Chris Lynch, Jim Hurley, Erik Levin, B and C Building Group, members and friends of LHRy who's names I do not have, Diamond Crossing Enterprise (John Nolan), Risoldis Towing, Eric Strohmeyer, and the folks at Allied Recycling who are indeed friends of NJ preservation.

**Do You Want to Live
In An Old Trolley Car?**

L

Do y'u wants buy a trolley car body?

They're sellin' 'em down at the old car barn on Lalor Street—anywhere from \$20 to \$70.

John Flynn, of Phillipsburg, who claims he's sold trolley car bodies all over the country, is disposing of more than a score of the bodies for the H. E. Salzberg Company, of New York, purchasers of the rolling stock of the Trenton Transit Company.

"They make dandy bungalows, beach cottages and cabins." Flynn said today as he announced the disposal of three of the housings.

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Trenton Evening Times
Dec 27, 1934

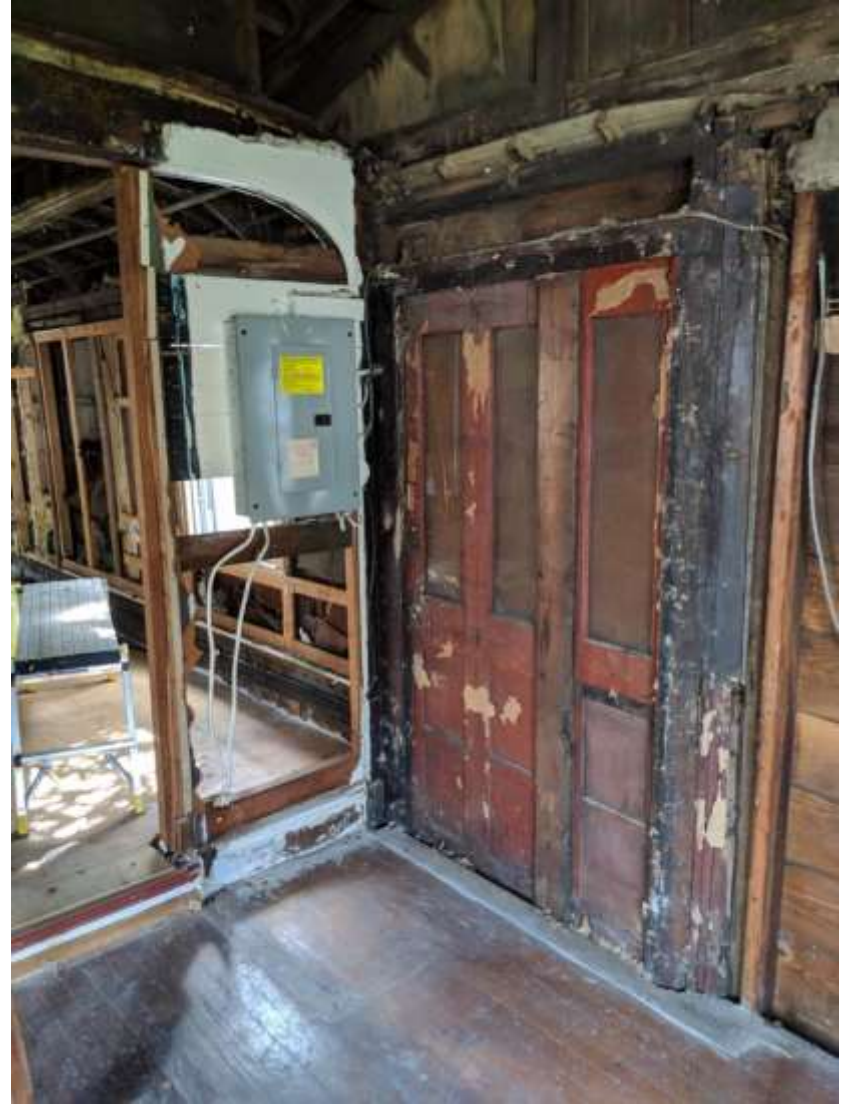
\$20-\$70 each!

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The Interview

Mrs. Evelyn A. Breece, shown in some of the photos, along with her husband and family, called #288 "home" for many years going back to the 1950's. On 28 October 2018 LHRy was able to interview Mrs. Breece and learned quite a bit about how the #288 ended up on Smith Street.

- Evelyn and John Breece were the second owners of the trolley car house. She inherited it from her father.
- They moved into the trolley house in 1952.
- In October 1955 they removed the front end of the trolley and built the porch.
- Added the second bedroom in 1957.
- They moved out in 1962 to a conventional house a few blocks away. It would then be rented out.
- The original owner of the trolley house was John Guthrie.
- John moved the trolley to its current site in 1933 for his son, William Guthrie, to live in.
- By the sounds of it, John Guthrie owned several lots on Smith Ave to include what would become a firehouse and a bar.
- The house to the right of the trolley car house was a garage at one time.

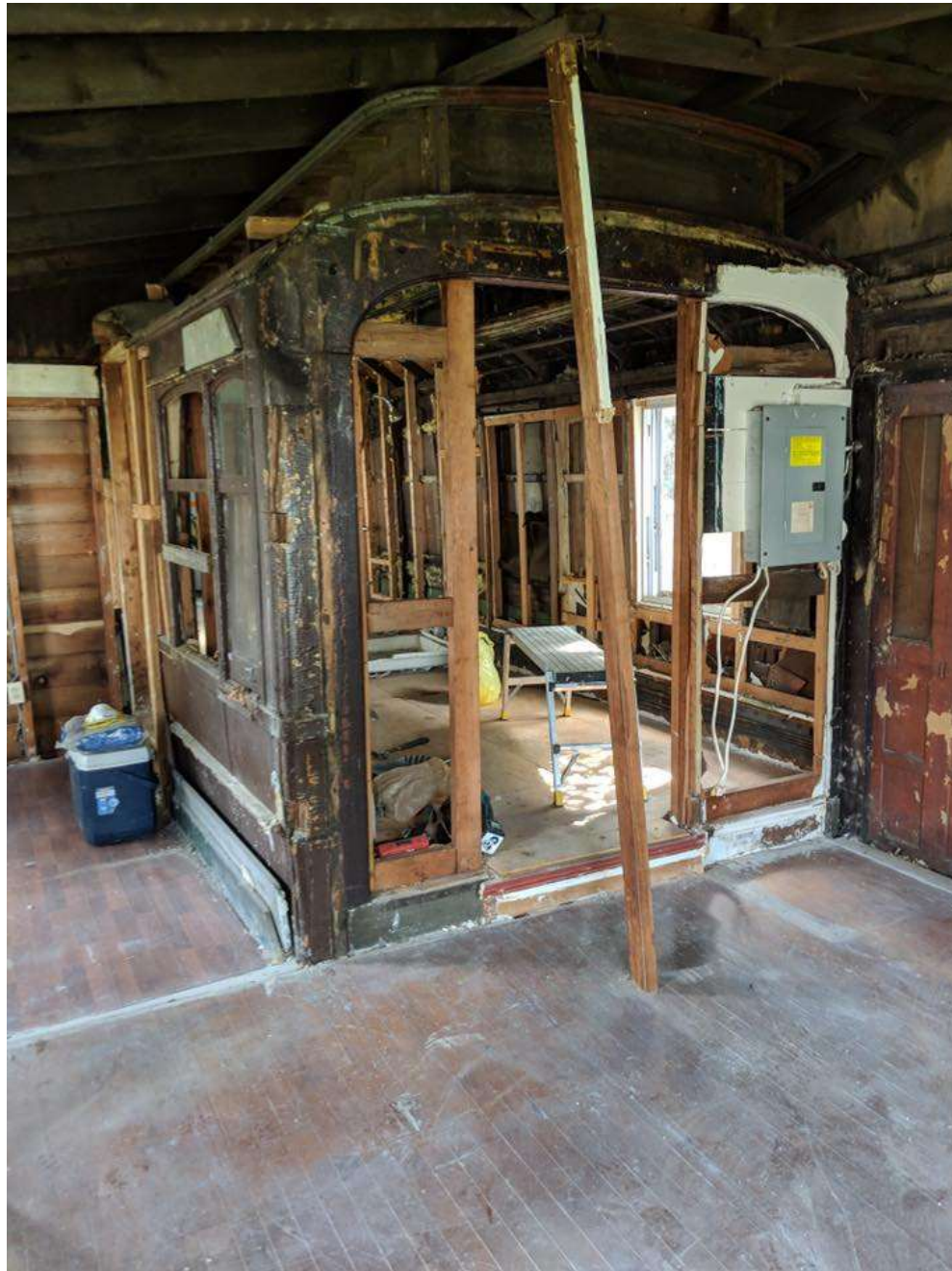
















Demolition and Move Preparation

November 2018























Final prep for the big move included screwing all the clearstory windows shut and bracing of the interior. This was done on a rainy Sunday in early December.





Interior body
bracing.



The Actual Move of the 288























A large, rusted metal structure, possibly a train car or industrial component, is being lifted by a crane onto a flatbed trailer. The structure is heavily damaged and covered in plywood. The trailer is parked on a dirt lot with debris. In the background, there are residential buildings and trees under an overcast sky.



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- Towing & Recovery
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CRANE SERVICE

NAC



Rescue
CRANE SERVICE









The Plan Ahead
for the
Trenton #288

April 2022 Update

Since our last update, we now have a secure work location at a site identified by Eric Strohmeyer.

We have trucks for the 288 to sit on while the body undergoes restoration courtesy of Mike Bast of the Allentown and Auburn RR.

We have Seashore Trolley Museum working on drawings for the missing ends.

We have a local contractor ready to work on it once moved to the restoration site.

LHRy Restoration Facility - Farmingdale

Happy to announce that as of 14 February 2022, LHRy signed a lease with Merola Tile for the use of their secure Farmingdale, NJ siding off the Southern Secondary, which will serve as the restoration site for the Trenton 288.



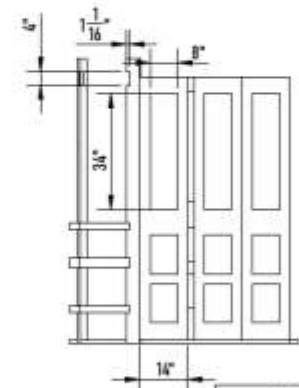
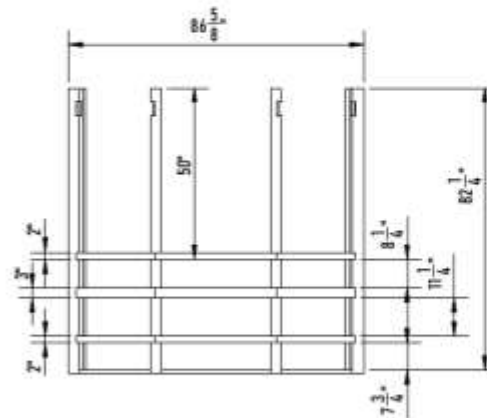
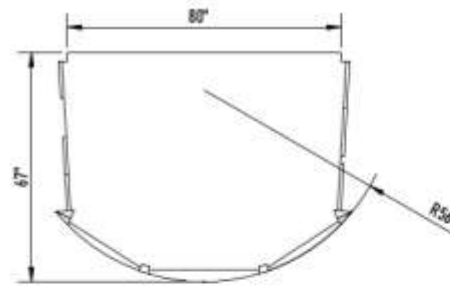
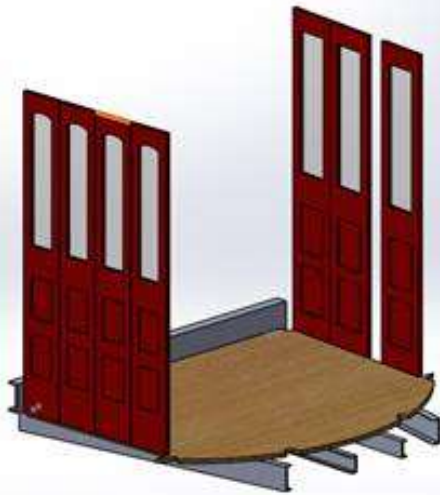


Trucks made available by Mike Bast of the Allentown and Auburn RR. Measurements show they should fit pretty well.

Trucking from Boonton to Farmingdale provided by Bill Amaducci of Polaris Equipment Co. and his crew.



Seashore efforts – thanks for their support as we prepare for the move and placement on trucks.



TRENTON 288
DRAFT
FRAMING
DRAFT







Photos of the move of the 288 to the LHRy Farmingdale site but the move was delayed a week or so.

Stay tuned!

Rebuilding of PRR N6b #492406 (981775)

Lessons learned to be applied to the Trenton 288.

Project started with an Archaeological Demolition of the cabin car. This involved a careful, documented demolition of the car, including measured drawings and archival photographs.



The Columbus, NJ work site.





Working in
Ed Rizzo's
home wood
shop.



The Tent – an architectural marvel.....





November 2020 – Tent is retired!





Allentown and Auburn RR





Next up....the cupola! Key lesson – working outdoors is doable, but takes far longer than if working in a building.