



The Rescue of Trenton Transit #288

Presented by J.R. May
Liberty Historic Railway, Inc.

March 25, 2021

Talking Points

I am not a historian – this will cover the car and efforts to save it, not an indepth 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
- * Have done this before – PRR Seaside Car, Jackson and Sharp 124, PRR N6b, and then the Trenton 288.
- * Discovery of the Trenton 288
- * History of the Trenton 288
- * Uncovering the Trenton 288
- * Moving the Trenton 288
- * The future of 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 resuting 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@monmouth.com.

LHRy Funded Projects



'It's deja vu all over again''

The rescue of Trenton #288 was not my first rodeo....

The sad saga, dating to Spring 2000, of a Pennsylvania Railroad Class PB Passenger Coach, better known as "The Seaside Car"

#3750/191759

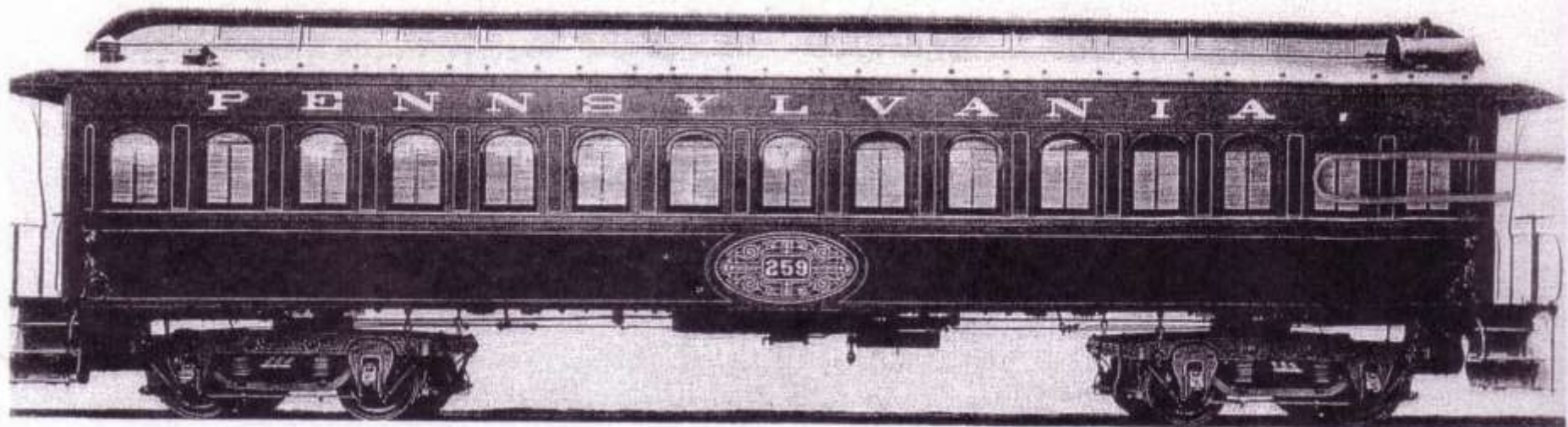
And the lessons learned.

Spring 2000













Lessons Learned

- Can't rush such a project. We had a tight timeline due to the summer season.
- We should have taken formal ownership sooner.
- Risk would have been that we could not move the car. However, we found during the demolition that there were some good and valuable timbers within the car.
- Again, if time had permitted, an Archaeological demolition should have been performed. This alternative would involve a careful, documented demolition of the car, including measured drawings and archival photographs. This lesson learned was later used on the PRR N6b caboose (cabin car) project.



The Rescue
of
Trenton #288

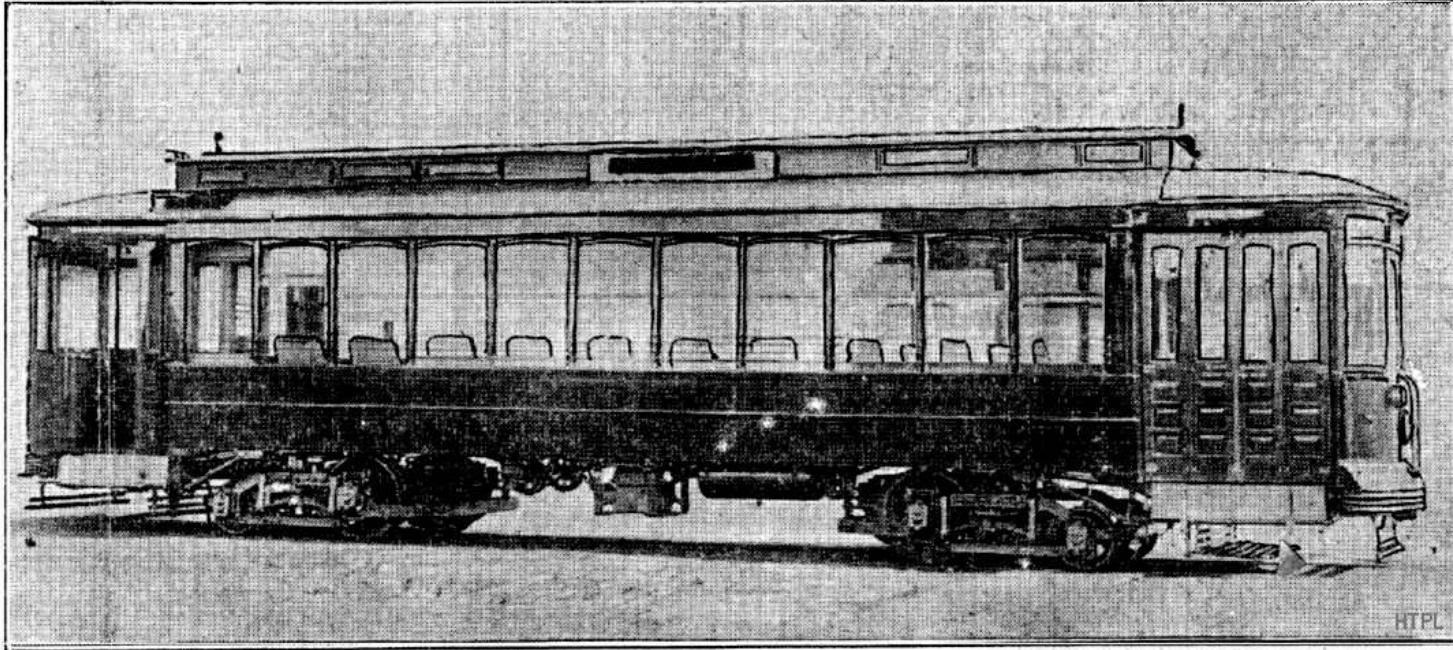
Trenton 288 Background

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.

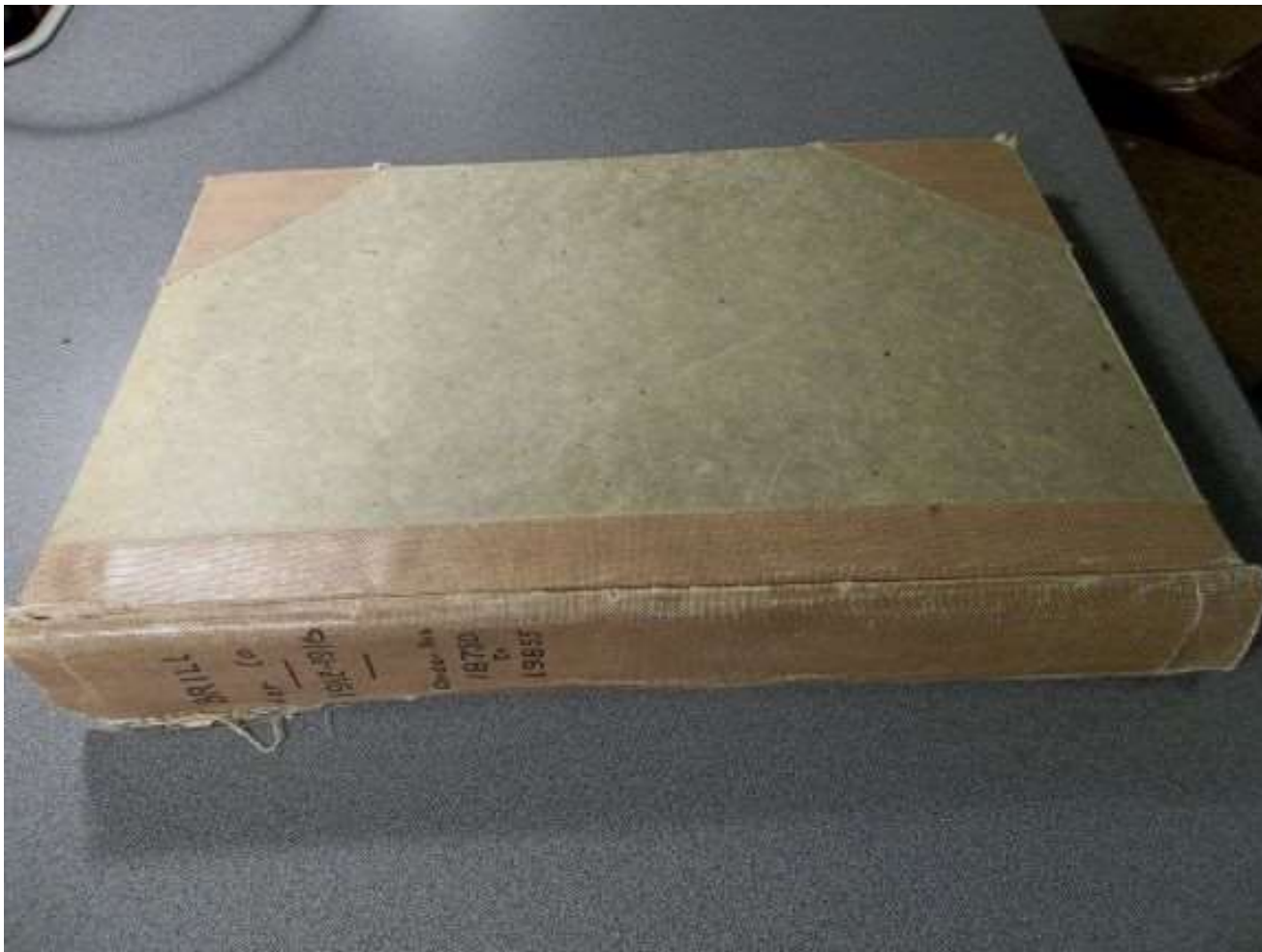
The platforms will be larger than those of the present cars, so that in unseasonable weather, passengers will not be kept standing in the streets. The lower step, which will be close to the ground, obviating the present high climb, will fold up when the doors are closed and this, together with the automatic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

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6034

Payroll 6013, 6014

5763

20/1/35

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Trenton and Mercer Co. Trac. Co.



17.2 1935
1935
6013

Photo No. 5963



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



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**



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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 Site

Smith St, Hamilton, NJ

October 2018





Google

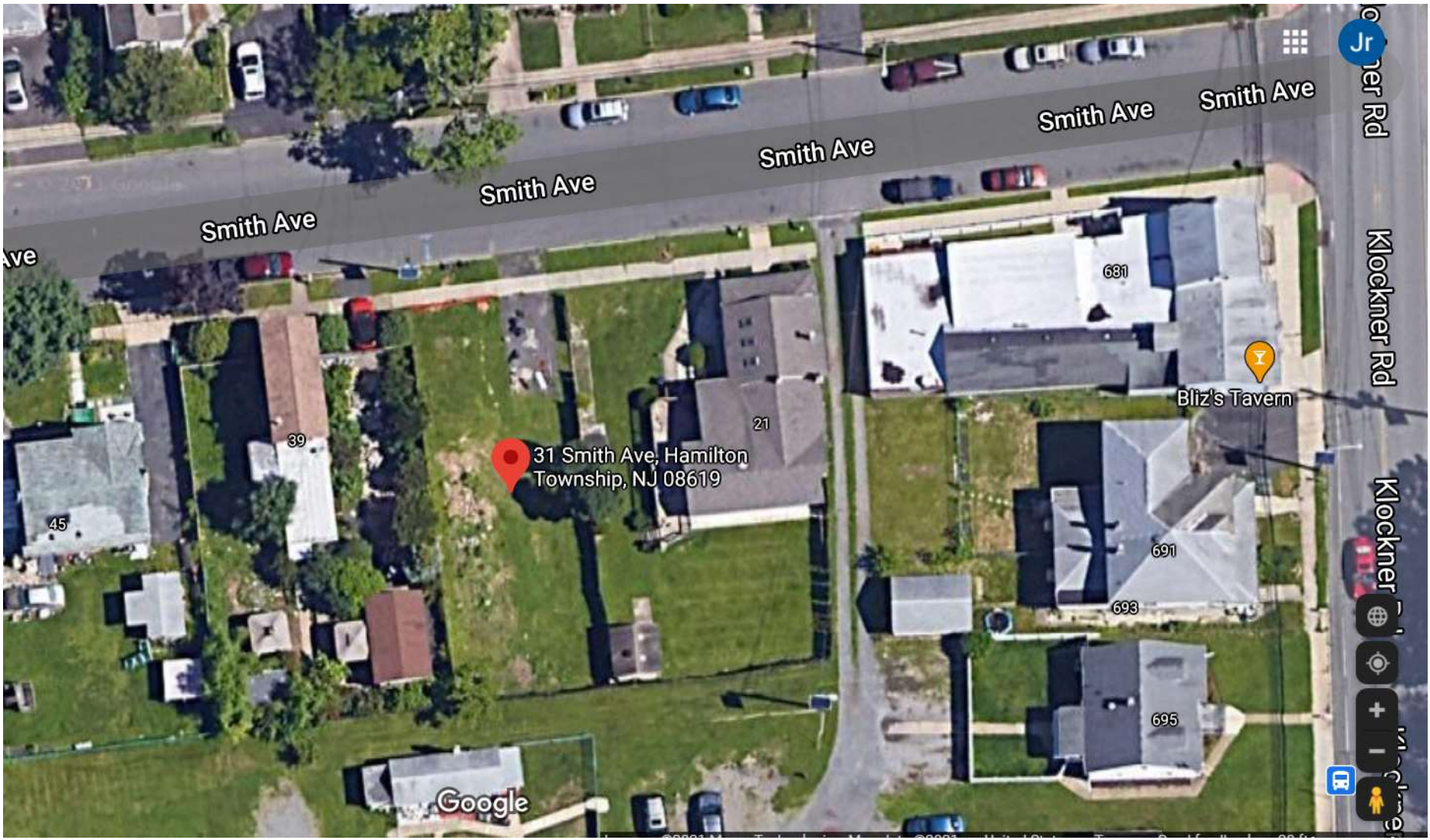




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31 Smith Ave, Hamilton Township, NJ 08619

Bliz's Tavern

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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 wanta 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

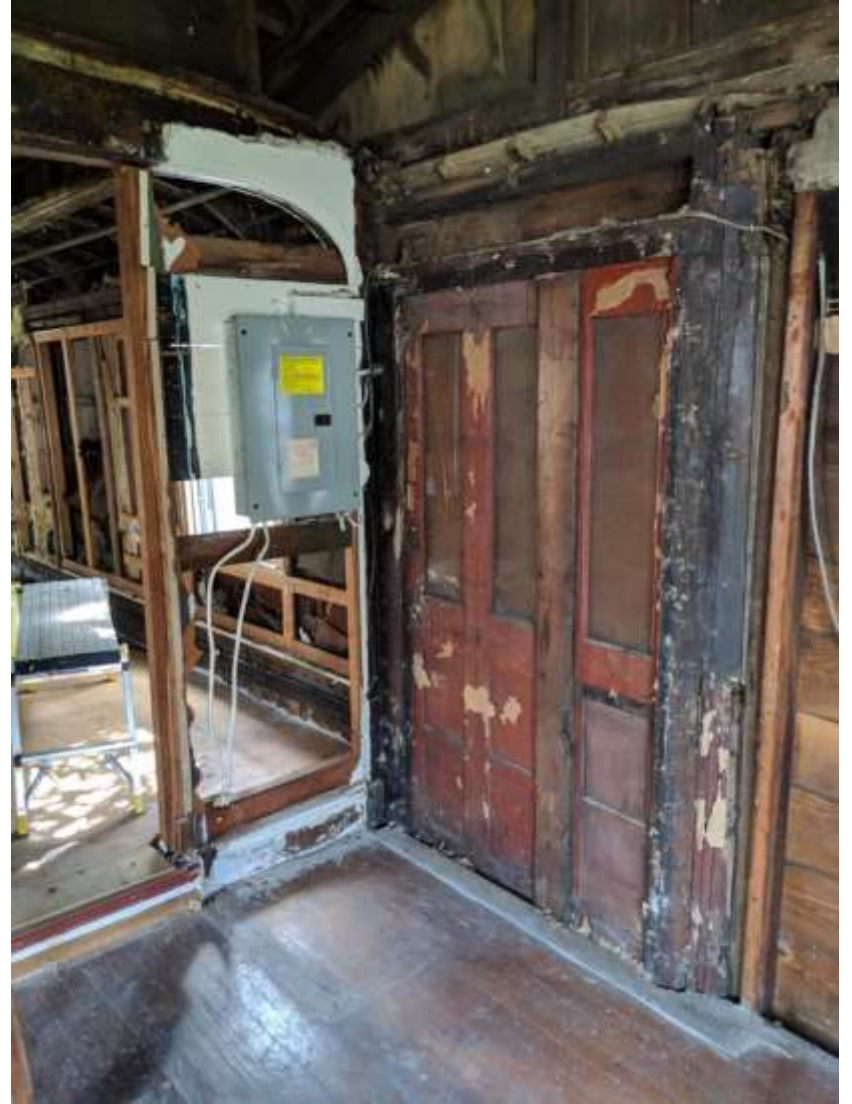
\$20-\$70 each!

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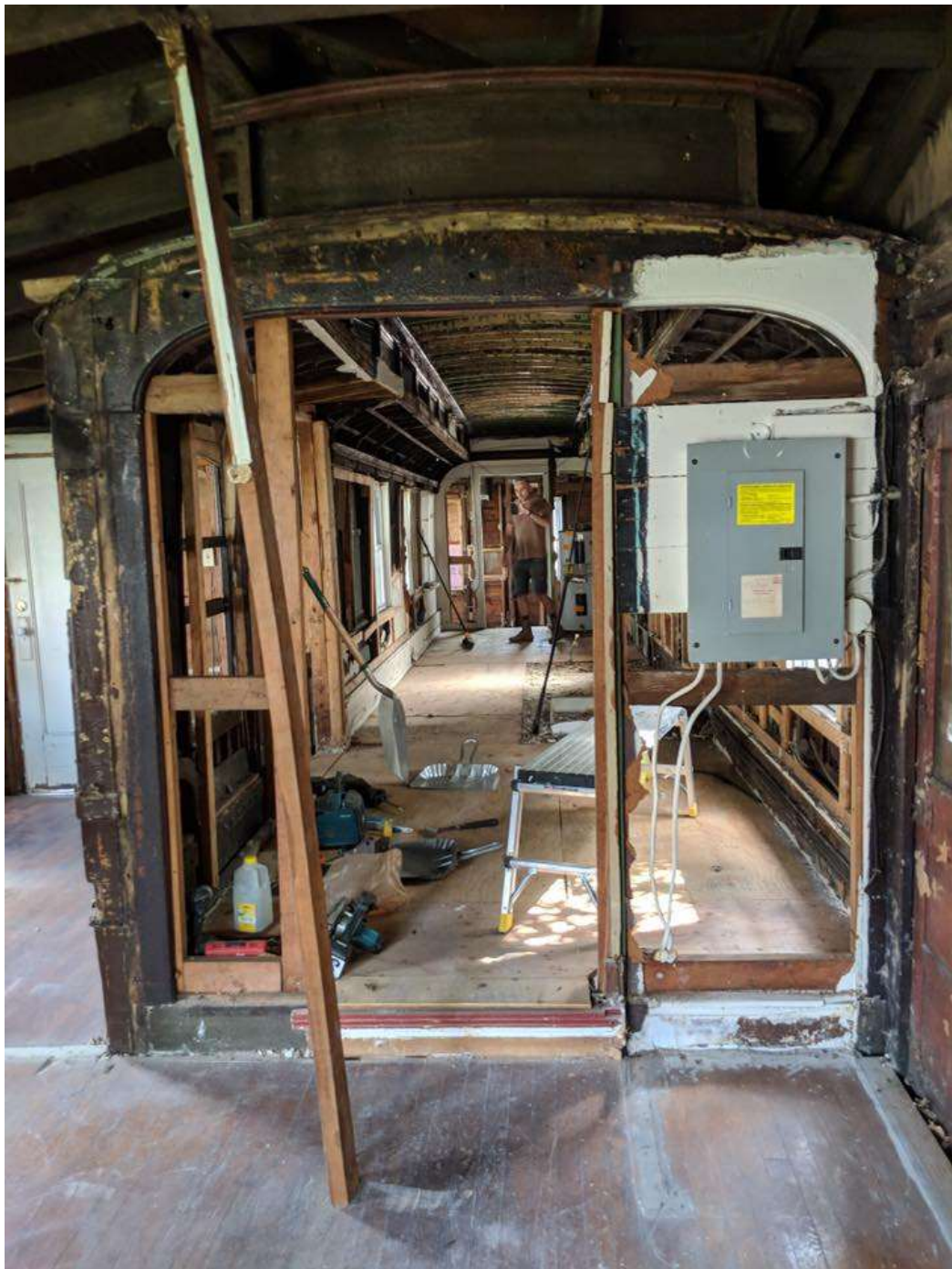
The Interview

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.

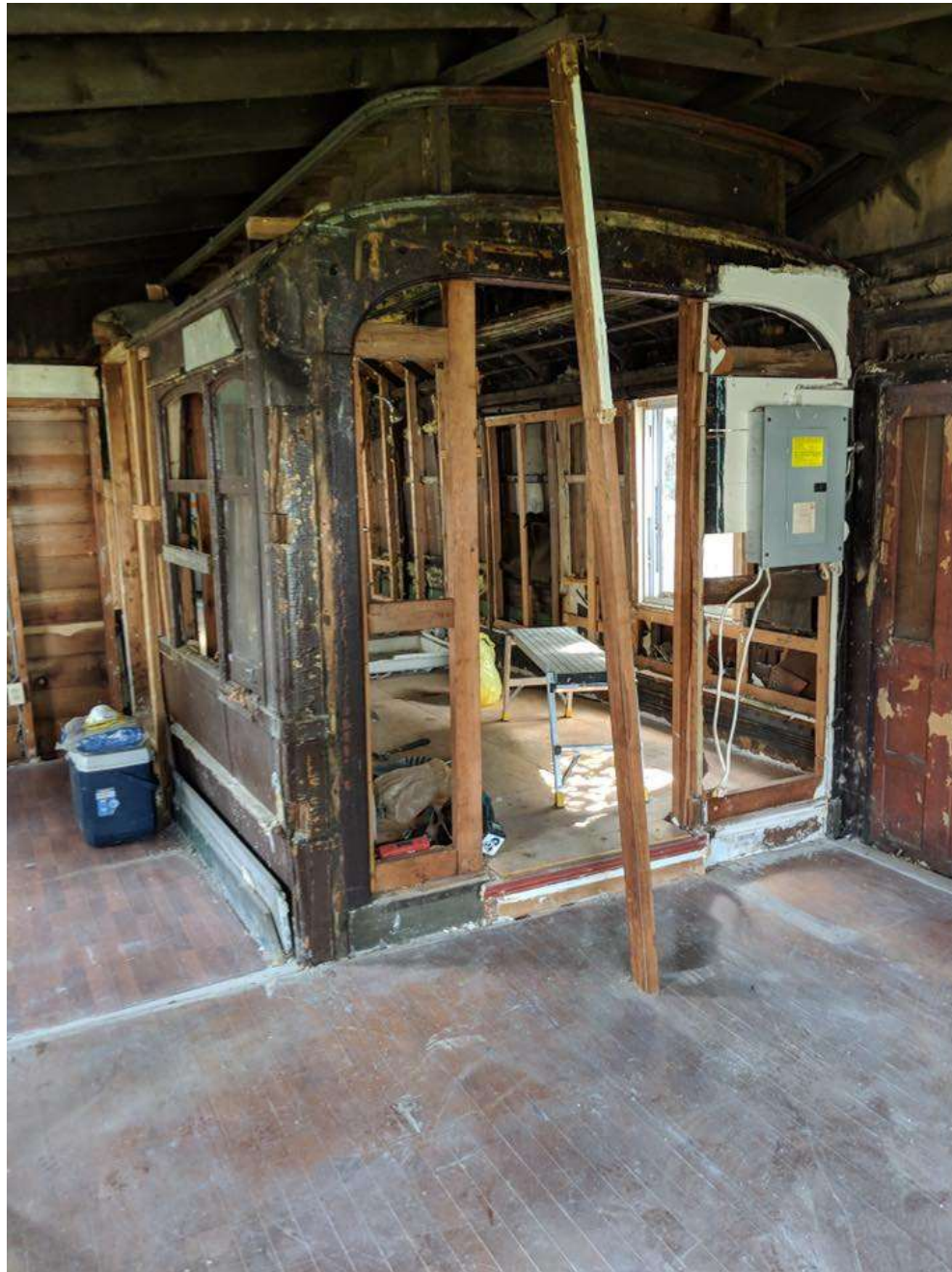
















Demolition and Move Preparation

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























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Current Status of the #288



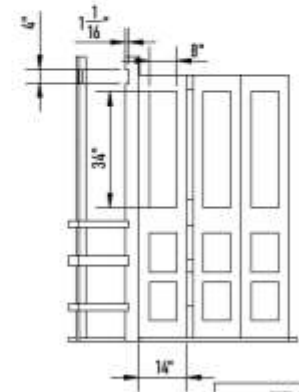
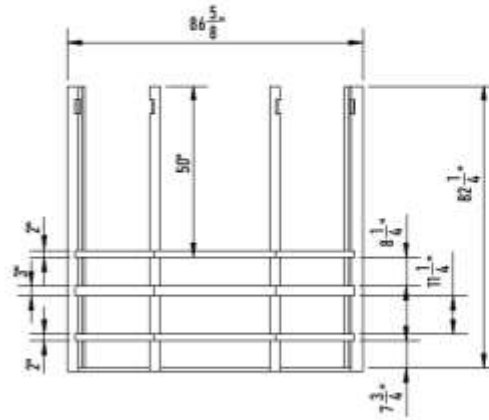
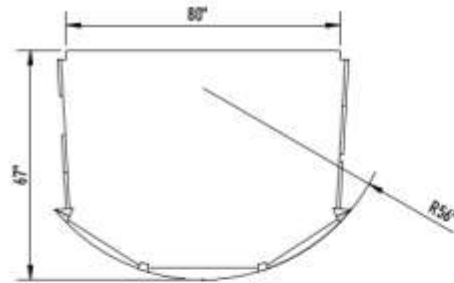
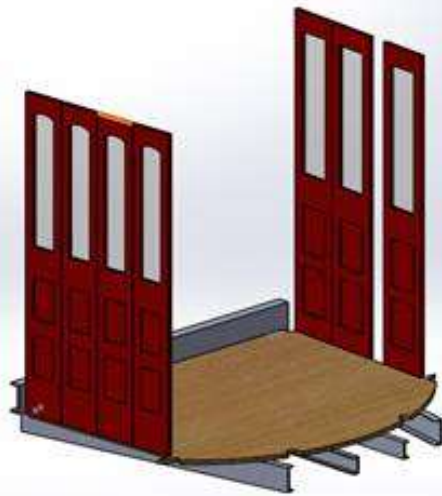












TRENTON 288

DRAFT
FRAMING
DRAFT

The Path Forward for #288

What is needed to take this project forward? In short, we need a building to put it in where the restoration work can begin.

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

We have contractors ready to work on it. We have volunteers with an interest in working on it.

But....it has to be indoors. We are open to ideas.

The LHRy goal was to save the #288 and to support its restoration. Long term, we are open to ideas on where it might call its permanent home.

Thanks for the help, Ed.