

New England Electric Railway Historical Society Seashore Trolley Museum – The National Streetcar Museum in Lowell

We've Saved a Set of "Bluebells" By Acting Quickly Now We Need Your Help to Pay For the Move

From the days of the famous Kingston Trio ballad, "Charlie on the MTA", Boston's Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, known in the days of the song as the MTA, has updated its operating fleet several times to keep down maintenance costs and improve reliability and passenger comfort. A new subway fleet has now completely replaced

the tunnel as well, and in 1924 higher-speed rapid transit trains replaced the trolleys.

Seashore has been able to acquire representatives of most of the types of cars that ran on the Blue Line, including the subway-surface streetcars and both styles of earlier rapid cars – the 1923/1924 Pullmans and 1951 St Louis Car Co. cars. The No. 4 cars, often referred to as "Blue Bells" by many of the riders because of their blue color and the distinctive chime of their electronic warning bells as the doors are closing, are now the latest generation to be retired. This gave the Museum a limited opportunity to add yet another generation of Blue Line equipment to its collection.

The Bluebells have more historical significance than their Boston heritage. When building cars for the PATH service between New York City and New Jersey, Hawker-Siddeley imitated the basic design of the St. Louis built PATH-1 cars in the design of the newer models. Hawker-Siddeley then used this new design in the creation of the No. 4 EBRT cars, as well as the 01200-series cars built for the MBTA's Orange Line, while it was still largely on an elevated structure. As of now, the No. 4 EBRT cars are the only examples of this design to be preserved in a museum.



Delivery at Orient Heights Shops

the older cars that served the MBTA's Blue Line between Bowdoin Square in Boston and Wonderland in Revere for 29 years. Originally identified as No. 4 East Boston Rapid Transit Cars this 70-vehicle fleet was built by Hawker-Siddeley Canada Limited, at the former Canadian Car Co. plant in Thunder Bay, Ontario, in 1979-1980. Later re designated as No. 4 Blue Line Rapid Transit Cars, the last few cars saw service in late 2009. The new fleet replacing these cars are designated as No. 5 Blue Line Rapid Transit Cars and are built by Siemens. The Siemens cars offer an advanced inverter-driven AC motor propulsion system, a smoother ride, improved seating comfort, a modernized operating cab, noise abatement, better accessibility, and most significantly, the ability to run six car trains with the same headway as their predecessors, which ran in 4-car trains.

The MBTA's Blue Line has seen dramatic equipment changes since its opening in 1904 as the East Boston Tunnel, when it ran 26-1/2 foot boxcars, and later Type 1 and Type 2 Semiconvertible cars, the latter in 2-car multiple-unit trains, two of which (the 26-1/2 foot cars and the Type 2 Semiconvertibles) are represented in the Museum's collection. Other streetcars types ran in



Fantrip Portrait at Orient Heights Yard

Those familiar with this line and its coastal geography as well as the location of the Orient Heights maintenance and storage facilities know the adverse exposure of equipment

there to salt air and brine laden mist blowing in from the Atlantic Ocean. Consequently, the Hawker-Siddeley fleet had a lot of corrosion damage over their 29 years in service and were retired with many of the cars badly rusted. The MBTA rebuilt cars 0622 and 0623 to test the feasibility of a rebuilding the entire fleet. These cars received thorough structural repairs, new sheathing, and fresh paint. After they were rebuilt, the MBTA decided that the program was not cost effective and decided to replace them with new equipment.

In 2009, the Seashore approached the MBTA was approached by Seashore to earmark the cars 0622 and 0623 for preservation. The request was quickly honored, however, the cars continued in service for several months until finally seeing their last run that fall. A confusing set of circumstances related to the internal release of the cars by the MBTA delayed the actual transfer of ownership and led to a rush move to Kennebunkport to take full advantage of an advantageous shipping quote offered by industry specialists, Silk Road Transport. A very low cost all inclusive move of approximately \$10,000.00 using Silk Roads highly specialized roll on roll off equipment landed 0622 and 0623 fully intact on the rails at Seashore at the end of the year.

Efforts led by our Curator of Rapid Transit, Bill Pollman, have brought these precious examples of Boston Rapid Transit Service to Seashore in remarkable condition along with a trove of spare parts and components. They are very

clean and among the very best appearing Rapid Transit Cars in our fleet.

We urgently need your help to match a pledged amount equaling the cost of shipping these cars. Your donations will be matched dollar for dollar so that we can reach the \$10,000 that we need.

Will you help? Your support for this acquisition is critical and will be deeply appreciated. Thank you.

Our best wishes to you and yours for a great New Year!!!

Saved and Home in Maine



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