



Newsletter

Volume 3 Number 2
April 2015

National Train Day Re-branded Amtrak Train Days Coming to Memphis May 30th

National Train Day was created by Amtrak in 2008 as a way to spread information to the American public. In the past seven years, over 300 communities in all 50 states have celebrated their love of trains on National Train Day. The Memphis Railroad and Trolley Museum is proud to have organized the celebration in Memphis for the past three years,

This year, Amtrak is expanding the celebration to better support all communities and evolve it into a traveling, community-centric experience under the new name of Amtrak Train Days.

Amtrak Train Days kicks off at Chicago Union Station on May 9th, and then hits the rails, traveling to locations across the country. Amtrak Train Days will be celebrated in Memphis on May 30th. The MRTM is striving to make it the best ever.

Still over two months away as this is being written, we already have a few things confirmed. [Double D Smokehouse & Saloon](#) has once again agreed to set up their mobile smoker for trackside dining. If you prefer, you can take a short walk down G.E. Patterson and enjoy their

cuisine at their restaurant.

Mr. Hamilton Smythe, former owner of the Memphis Yellow Cab franchise, will have his 1931 White Motor Company Touring Bus at this year's celebration. This touring bus was used at Yellowstone National Park and has been beautifully restored. We are discussing giving visitors a ride in the touring bus around the parking lot or neighborhood in exchange for a donation to the museum.



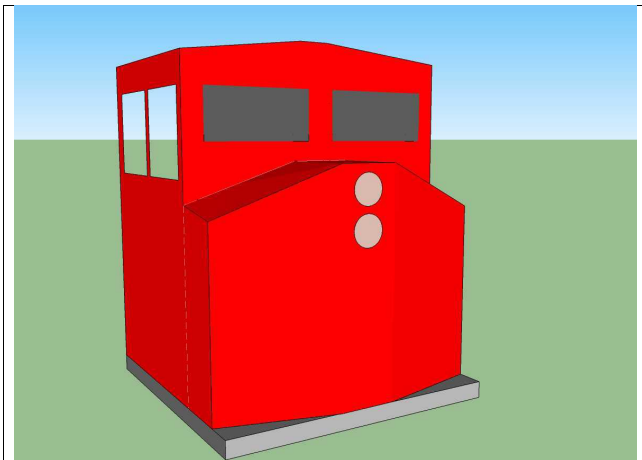
1931 White Touring Bus

We have been advised by Amtrak that due to budgetary restraints that they will not have Amtrak equipment at any of the Amtrak Train Days this year.

We expect to have freight locomotives from all the railroads serving Memphis on display as we have in previous years. We are also exploring the use of the MATA boardroom as well as Hudson Hall (the old waiting room) on Train Day. This will allow our exhibitors more room to set up their booths, exhibits and layouts.

We will be sending out a special newsletter shortly before the event outlining all the activities on Amtrak Train Days.

Train Simulator On Track for Train Days Arrival



Conceptual drawing (top) and actual simulator under construction (bottom)

Work is well underway on a train simulator that will allow museum visitors to drive a virtual train in a mock up locomotive cab. It is our objective to have it ready for Amtrak Train Day. Based on Microsoft Train Simulator, the engineer will drive the train using a control panel while seeing the road ahead on a wide screen TV.

Initially the controls will be a series of push buttons, but plans are to use an actual locomotive control stand when one can be acquired. Anyone that can help us securing a control stand can email us at contactus@mrtm.org.

Once we get the thing up a running we will need people man the simulator, setting up the activities and showing visitors how to run it. Again, if interested email us at contractus@mrtm.org



Interior of train simulator in NS Railroad's Exhibition Car. Control stand is the device on the left with all the levers and buttons.

You Can Help Thomas and His Friends

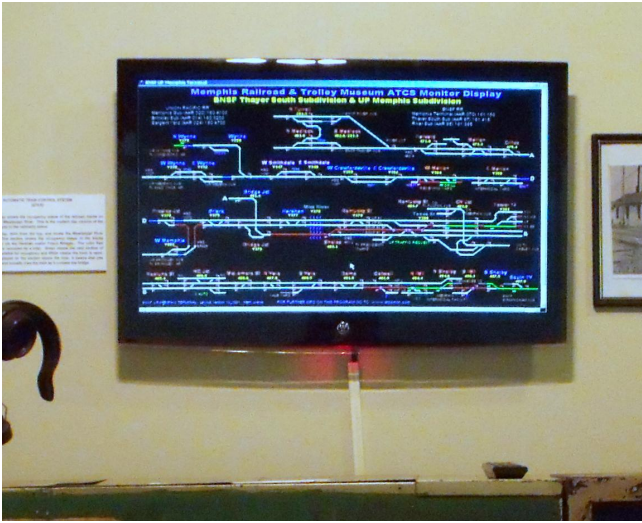


The engines and rolling stock on our Thomas layout take quite a beating. The engines and cars are just not built for the heavy usage they get at the museum. Motors get tired, gears and wheels wear, couplers fall off.

Repair parts can be purchased in most cases, but they can be expensive and sometime you have to buy a whole assembly to get a single gear. Some parts like wheels for the cars aren't available at all.

That's where you can help. Maybe you have some old Thomas locomotives or cars that are broken or maybe just been outgrown. If you do, just drop them by the museum. We can sure use the parts to repair our locomotives and cars. We're looking for HO equipment, the kind that runs on metal rails, not the wooden track variety.

ATCS Opportunities



ATCS Display at the Museum

On your visit to the museum you probably noticed the ATCS Monitor display. The display shows activity on the BNSF and UP railroads in the Memphis vicinity in real time. It is fed by our server in the penthouse of Central Station and is available worldwide via the internet. (Software required).

With the exception of the CSXT (they don't use ATCS in the Memphis area), the same information is available for the other railroads in the Memphis area. What's missing is the server to pick up the signals. We attempted to pick up the signals from the CN Railroad at Central Station, but their antennas are directional and weren't pointed in our direction.

If you are in proximity of the CN railroad in east Memphis or possibly along the Norfolk Southern, you might be able to host an ATCS server. A server consists of a PC with an internet connection, a radio with an antenna to pick up the railroad's transmissions. Signals are line of sight, so the taller the antenna the better. Servers are not limited to the Memphis area. One is needed around Wynne, Arkansas and all of the CN in West Tennessee and North Mississippi is on ATCS as well as the BNSF in Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas and the NS in Mississippi and Alabama.

E-mail us at contactus@mrtm.org if interested. We'll put you in contact with the right people.

Central Station Renovation



Central Station

On March 27th, developers Henry Turley and Archie Williams unveiled plans to redevelop Memphis' Central Station into a hotel complex which would include restaurants and shops with apartments and a movie theater on adjacent property.

In a meeting with the MRTM, representatives of the group gave us a "heads up" on the plans and plans for the museum.

We were assured that it was their intention to keep both the museum and the farmers market at Central Station.

One of their chief concerns was keeping our doors open during the redevelopment (electricity, restrooms, etc.)

The museum considers this as a positive development. The hotel, movie house, restaurants and shops will greatly increase foot traffic on South Main Street and means more visitors to the museum.