

THE H&F RAILWAY

In 1896, Frederick and Hagerstown each became the homes of several small electric “trolley” railways. By 1904, two of these companies had connected to provide a direct link over the mountain ridges between those two cities. In 1913, the various companies on each end of the line combined into one system known as The Hagerstown & Frederick Railway.

From 1896 when the first trolleys traveled the streets of each city until 1954 when the last trolley departed Frederick for Thurmont, the H&F trolleys were a beloved sight to area residents. The line provided a vital link for the area’s farmers, merchants, and residents in a time before paved roads were common.



Brill interurban combine 171 near Lewistown. This car was constructed in 1919 and was one of the last trolley cars to operate on the H&F Railway in 1954.

Outside of transportation, the company operated two amusement parks (which one could ride to on the trolley) and served as an electrical utility.

By the 1920s when many similar systems were shutting down, the Hagerstown & Frederick was on its way to becoming the region’s primary electrical utility, finally renaming itself The Potomac Edison Company in 1923. Under the reformed company, the trolleys continued to operate with little change for nearly 30 more years under the Hagerstown and Frederick Railway name.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- A century ago, you could ride a trolley between Frederick, Hagerstown, and many of the surrounding communities
- Trolleys pulled freight cars over Catoclin Mountain between Frederick & Middletown
- Braddock Heights was founded due to the construction of a trolley line
- Trolleys carried milk, produce, and even goldfish from farms to town
- The development of area trolley lines led to the creation of the local power grid
- It is still possible to find evidence of the last trolley service to operate in Maryland all around this region

Frederick and Washington Counties are rich with history. The H&F Railway was a large part of that history; a part that the H&FRHS strives to preserve and promote.



For decades, trolleys were a common sight at the intersection of Washington and Potomac Streets in downtown Hagerstown.

Collection of Alex M. Postpischil



THE HAGERSTOWN & FREDERICK RAILWAY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.



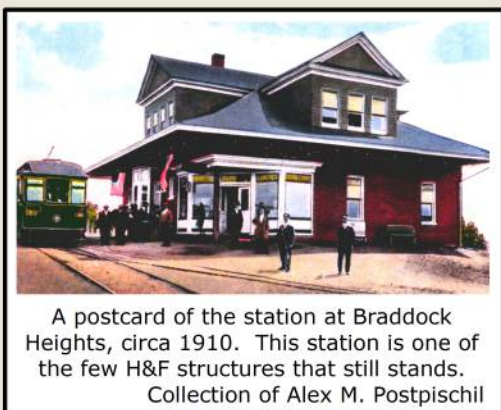
Find Us At

HFRHS.org

A NEED FOR PRESERVATION

As our region has grown, much of this history has been lost to apathy and development. Less than a dozen original structures still stand and fewer than 6 cars remain in restorable condition.

As time passes and the trolley heritage of the area becomes more distant the risk of losing what still remains of the H&F Railway to urban sprawl and lack of awareness grows even greater.



A postcard of the station at Braddock Heights, circa 1910. This station is one of the few H&F structures that still stands.
Collection of Alex M. Postpischil

THE SOCIETY

Founded in 1999 by three model railroaders, the H&FRHS was created because of that need to preserve this vital part of Western Maryland heritage, history and culture.

The Society is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)3 educational organization and is open to anyone with an interest in the railroad: historians, collectors, modelers, railfans and local residents.

OUR MISSION

The Hagerstown and Frederick Railway Historical Society is dedicated to promoting and preserving the heritage of the trolley line that served Washington and Frederick Counties in Maryland. We offer historical and technical data, as well as educational information to members and the public.

Cover: Interurban 171 at the Frederick Patrick Street Car barn.
Photographer unknown, HFRHS Collection.

H&FRHS MEMBERSHIP

Donors and Members are the backbone of the HFRHS and take pride in keeping H&F history alive. Membership in the H&FRHS offers...

TROLLEYWIRE NEWSLETTER

Our quarterly publication containing information on the local trolley history, upcoming events, existing H&F cars and structures, member projects, and Society information.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

We provide information about where to find research data and information about the railroad. We also maintain an archive of H&F documents, maps and other materials that our members can visit by appointment.

ONLINE CONTENT

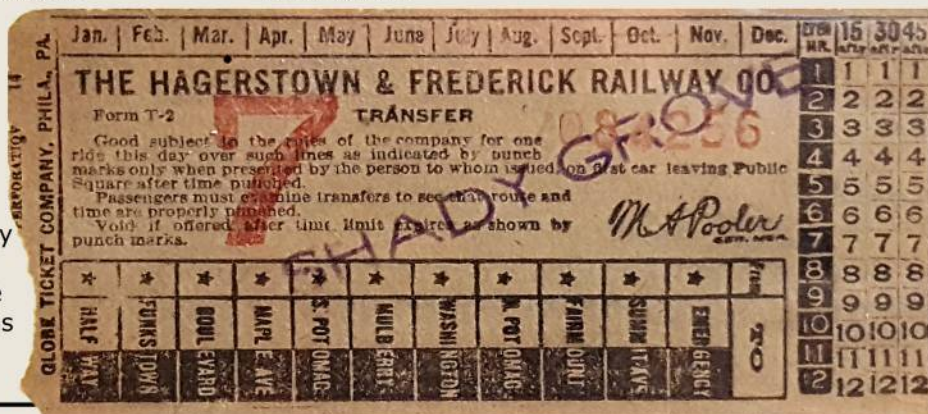
Members discuss projects and history on our online message board, and our website provides members access to research material and Trolleywire back-issues.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We work within the community to educate the public about the H&F and its impact on the area communities.

ACTIVITY & LEARNING

Our society provides members with trips to explore right-of-way, structures, and rolling stock. We also inform members of similar activities by other area organizations.



The H&FRHS collection preserves many documents and passes, including transfer tickets such as this rare example from the Hagerstown area.

Membership Form

Name (s) : _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip(+4) _____

Phone: _____

Main Interest: _____

Email: _____

Skills that would help the Society: _____

Membership Level (one year periods ending 12/31, half price after 7/1)

Individual - \$20

Family - \$30

Corporate / Benefactor - \$50 & Up

*Please note that 50% of dues are tax deductible

Please remit US funds and return this form to:

Hagerstown & Frederick Railway Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 1314, Frederick, MD 21702-1314