



MOTOR BUS SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2009

Conventions

Future Conventions: The Spring 2010 meeting is slated for April 23-25 in Vancouver, BC (Canada) and the Fall 2010 convention will be headquartered in Harrisburg, PA on October 7-10, and will cover east-central Pennsylvania. Because of the lack of Sunday service in many of the locations to be visited, the optional third day will be on Thursday; Sunday will be relegated to visiting the bus museums in the area.

Spring 2009—Kansas City, MO: Headquarters were at the Crowne Plaza Downtown KC hotel on April 24 and 25. The Friday facility tour started with a stop at Arrow Stage Lines west of downtown KC. Arrow's charter service is provided with Seta and MCI coaches. Next stop was at the Unified Government of Wyandotte County in KC Kansas, who operates as *The Bus* under contract with KCATA with five fixed routes and ADA service using cutaway vans. Then it was on to Olathe, KS, home of Johnson County Transit. JCT, known as The JO operates Gillig, RTS and El Dorado buses on 21 local and commuter routes into KC MO. Home of Kansas University, the next stop was in Lawrence, KS. First stop was the Lawrence Transit garage on East 30th St., the base of operations for both the KU and local service using Gillig Phantom and low floor and Optima Opus buses. Separate staffs are provided for each operation under contract with MV Transportation. Photo stops were made at the KU campus and downtown Lawrence, where lunch was had. The tour was completed with a final stop in Topeka, KS, the state capital. Stops included the Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority's garage and the Quincy St. Station, the system's main transfer location. Buses include Gillig Phantom and low floor and NABI Optima units. Service is run Monday through Saturday.

The focus on the Saturday tour was on Missouri operations, with the first stop at the KCATA headquarters at 1200 East Eighth St., home to over 300 buses. The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority is the largest transit operation between St. Louis and Denver. Their bus fleet includes TMC RTS 06s and Gilligs—both high and low floor as well as BRT versions. Seen in the *bone yard* were a number of retired RTS buses and two old look GMs. After the garage tour the group boarded an in-service BRT bus with photo stops at Union Station, Country Club Plaza, Waldo and the downtown KC Transit Center. After the BRT tour, the group boarded the tour bus for lunch. The tour then continued north to St. Joseph, MO, a place rich in history as the start of the Pony Express mailservice; transit-wise, it was the home of one of the few small city trolley coach installations. St. Joseph Transit, marketed as *The Ride*, operated a fleet of 30-foot Gillig lowfloor buses on eight regular daytime routes and three through routed night time services from a downtown transit center. The group then returned to KC for the membership meeting that evening. Buses were provided by Arrow Stage Lines on both days.

Fall 2009—Richmond VA: Held during the Columbus Day weekend of October 9, 10 and 11, the fall convention was headquartered at the Crowne Plaza hotel in downtown Richmond, VA.

James River Bus Lines provided buses for the Friday tour that went to the most remote section of the region on a day that did not require an early return. In the Society's first visit to Virginia's mountain area, our first stop was Charlottesville, home of the University of Virginia. The first stop was at the Charlottesville Transit Service's transit center in downtown. CTS operated a fleet of Gillig and New Flyer low floor and Chance Optima buses on 11 routes daytime, with three at night. The group then proceeded to the UV campus where University Transit Service buses were seen. UTS has a fleet of Gillig Phantom, Orio, Blue Bird and Thomas buses on six main routes that are oriented to class starting times. The tour then proceeded to Lynchburg, VA, stopping at the facility of the Greater Lynchburg Transit Co.. GLTC runs 37 Gillig high and low floor and hybrid and Optima Opus buses. There are 15 routes on weekday, 12 on Saturday and eight on Sunday. Leaving the GLTC garage the group went to the River Ridge Mall for lunch. After lunch the group traveled to Roanoke where Valley Metro buses were seen at the Campbell Court Transit Center in downtown. Valley Metro runs 35-foot Gillig Phantom buses on 17 routes; it also operates Smart Way, a commuter service to Montgomery County, connecting with Virginia Tech., Christiansburg and Blacksburg using four 23-passenger Optima buses. The last stop of the day was at the Virginia Museum of Transport in Roanoke, where vintage railroad and buses were seen. The group then returned to Richmond.

Newton's Bus Service provided buses on Saturday, when the group traveled to Williamsburg, VA, stopping at the facility, which houses both Williamsburg Area Transit Authority and Colonial Williamsburg buses. WATA serves the city as well as James and York Counties with a fleet of 30 and 35-foot New Flyer buses and Ford cutaways. Colonial Williamsburg runs buses to Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktown, using 16 40-foot CNG Orion buses and three Optima Supreme diesel trolleys. The next stop was in the Norfolk VA area at Hampton Roads Transit's facilities. HRT is an amalgamation of the former Tidewater Regional Transit in Norfolk and Pentran (Peninsula Transportation District) in Hampton. HRT operates 310 buses from four facilities. The fleet includes Gillig high and low floor, Orion V, and Optima Opus buses and Chance trolleys. The group visited the two largest garages. The group then proceeded to lunch in downtown Norfolk. After lunch, the group traveled to Petersburg, VA and observed Petersburg Area Transit at the main transfer point, PAT operates 15 Gillig high and low floor buses on 12 routes. The group then returned to Richmond. The fall membership meeting was held at the Crowne Plaza that evening.

Winn Transportation provided the bus for the Sunday tour of the Richmond area. First stop was at the Greater Richmond Transit Co's. facility. GRTC operates 32 local and 11 express routes and two regional express routes.. The bus fleet consists of 187 high and low floor Gillig buses and Ford and Chevrolet cutaways. The next stop was the Greyhound terminal and mainte-

nance facility. Photos were taken of the buses assembled there. The group was then given a ride on one of Greyhound's new blue Prevost H34s. The party then went to lunch at the Shops at Willow Lawn. After lunch, stops were made at Winn Transportation and James River Bus lines facilities. Then back to the hotel and the conclusion of the convention.

2009 Convention Group Photos



Spring Convention — Kansas City, Missouri

The convention group visited Kansas locations on Friday, April 24th and Missouri sites on Saturday, April 25th, when this view was taken at the 1st stop in St. Joseph.

—Kurt Janicok



Fall Convention — Richmond Virginia

Coverage of east-central Virginia bus systems took place during the three day weekend of October 9,10 and 11. This group photo was taken at the Richmond Greyhound facility on Sunday in front of one of the new Prevost buses. —Wayne Doran