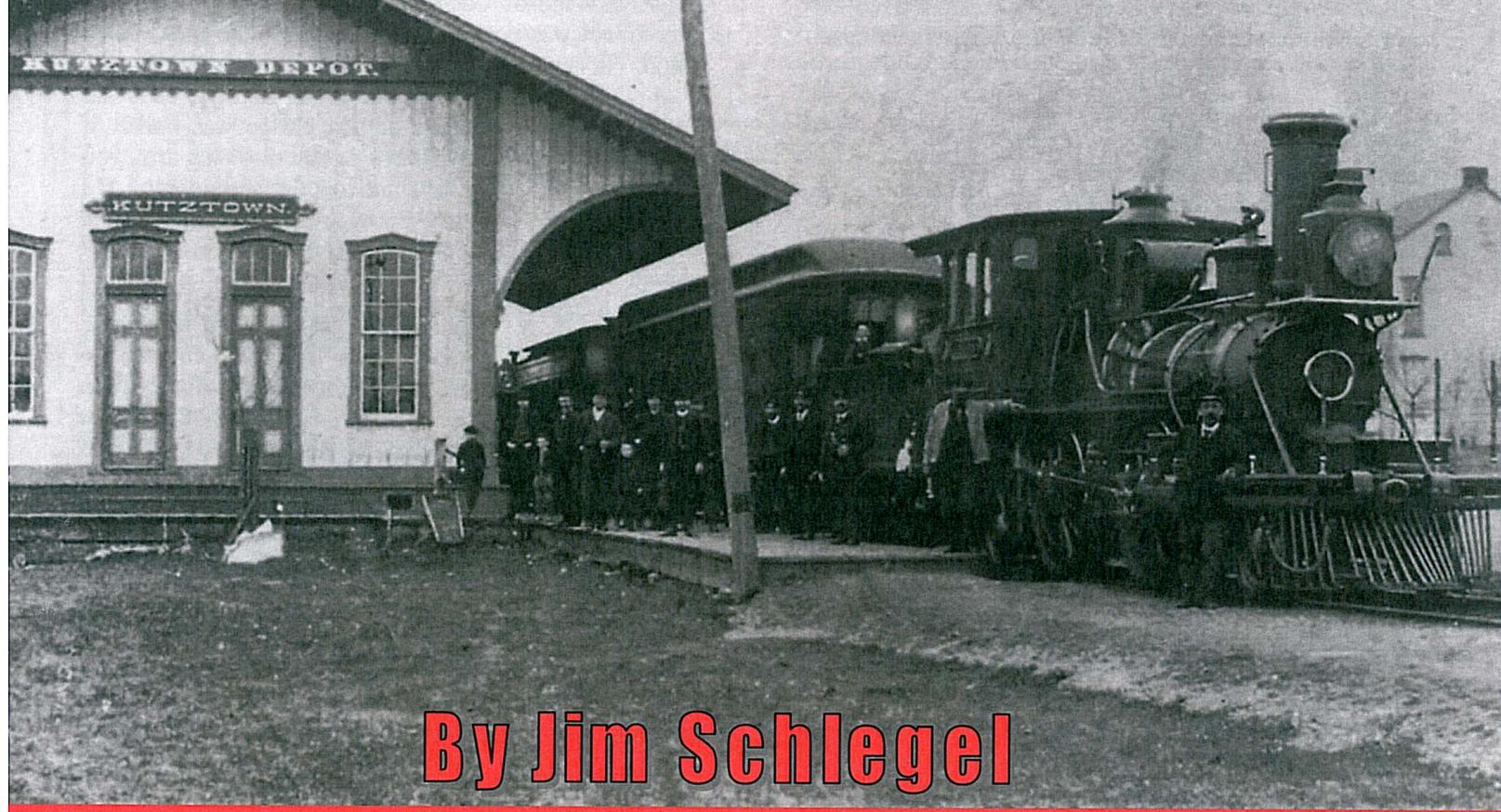


A Name Reborn: The Allentown & Auburn Railroad



By Jim Schlegel

A Philadelphia & Reading passenger train prepares for departure from Kutztown, PA circa 1890.

JIM SCHLEGEL COLLECTION

Back in 1961 when I was an 11 year old boy growing up in Kutztown, Pennsylvania, I was standing at the East Main Street grade crossing watching in awe as the Reading Company's East Penn Local crossed Main Street to stop and do a reverse shifting move into the Hauck Feed and Grain siding with a Reading GP-7. I stood there looking up at the engineer, who looked down at me and he said, "Hey kid would you like to come up in the cab"? I said, "Sure"! I quickly climbed up in and this began my long interest in the Allentown Railroad. The engineer's name was Harry Guistwite. He was the man who taught me railroading and who also started me on a journey that would last a life time on the 4.4 miles of the Allentown Railroad.

It is hard to believe that such a short railroad would have a history that has been 160 years in the making and is still continuing on. I remember one day asking Harry why his train was called the "East Penn Local". His response was that his train did all the local freight work for all the business between Reading and Allentown on The East Penn Branch of the Reading Railroad. I asked

him if the branch into Kutztown was called the "Kutztown branch?" His response was "No, It's the Allentown Branch of the Reading Railroad." I recalled this was hard for me to understand. Why was the branch into Kutztown called the "Allentown Branch" of the Reading Railroad when it didn't get even close to the city of Allentown? So I asked him why it was called that and he told me a brief story of how back in the 1800's there was going to be a railroad built from somewhere in Schuylkill county to Allentown, Pa, and the whole purpose of the railroad was to move Anthracite coal into the Lehigh Valley. He also told me that the only portion that ever got finished was from Topton to Kutztown, PA. He also said that the Reading Company may someday finish the route from Port Clinton to Kutztown in order for the Reading to have a short cut from the coal fields of Schuylkill County to the Lehigh Valley. Well even back in 1961 we all knew that it would never have happened. But Harry believed it was still a possibility because the Reading was still charging folks that used the right of way from Kutztown to Port Clinton right of way usage fees. And from what I understand this was

done all the way up even to the end of the Reading and also into the Conrail era. Many years later as I became a family man and my two sons and I shared the common interest of railroads, I started to take a new interest in the Allentown branch of the Reading Railroad. I discovered a whole lot more about this little line. Here is the rest of the story.

The Allentown Railroad's real name was the Allentown & Auburn and it was chartered in 1853. It had a very interesting start. A lot of money was invested in the line whose sole purpose was to move Anthracite coal from Schuylkill County to the Lehigh Valley and The New Jersey and New York markets. According to Jim Holden's book, *The Reading Railroad History of a Coal Age Empire, Vol 1: The Nineteenth Century*, This little rail line had some interesting investors and it was to be part of a much bigger picture. One of those investors was Cornelius Vanderbilt of New York Central fame. On page 125, Jim Holden writes that it first drew attention when some investors from New York and Allentown received permission to incorporate and build a railroad from Allentown and the Lehigh Valley to a point somewhere between Reading and Port Clinton on the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad. But then different amendments began to appear. One stipulation was that if the Main line did not go into Kutztown a spur must be built to it. The rail line was to connect with the Central Railroad of New Jersey at Allentown in the east and then connect with the Dauphin and Susquehanna in the west. This would have given the CNJ a route to the west via the PRR at Rockville.

Construction on the railroad began in 1855. The head civil engineer who was hired to build the railroad was a man named George Roberts. George had his men survey the line. Grades were built, as were bridges and a tunnel near Windsor Castle (Located between Virgenville and Hamburg, Pa.) The route went in a south westerly direction from Allentown, Pa. The villages and towns it went through or went near were Dorneyville, Wescoesville, Trexlertown, Breinigsville,

Topton, and when it got to Topton it headed west to Kutztown. After Kutztown it continued to follow the Saucony creek to Virgenville. At Virgenville it would cross the Maiden creek and continue to Windsor Castle. Between Windsor Castle and Hamburg the 1,100 foot long tunnel was bored. You can still see the west tunnel portal. It has been filled in at the east portal. On the

north side of Hamburg a beautiful stone arched bridge was built. If you have a good throwing arm, you can stand on the shoulder of I78 and throw a rock on it. It then continued on west to Port Clinton.

By July of 1856, the CNJ was prepared to abandon, in favor of a rival route from Allentown to Reading, the future East Penn Railroad. However, the other investors continued on with the Allentown Railroad. The Auburn & Port Clinton Railroad was merged into Allentown Railroad January 1st 1857. Later on in 1857, the financial panic brought all work to a halt. All this work was accomplished, but rails were never laid. The Dauphin & Susquehanna was foreclosed and reorganized on April 1, 1859. (117 years before the same birthdate of Conrail). It was renamed to the Schuylkill & Susquehanna, and taken over by the P&R. The East Penn Railroad started up, connecting Allentown with Reading. From Reading, traffic could pass north to Auburn, and then over the Schuylkill & Susquehanna to Rockville, and then on to the Pennsy, or it could go west over the Lebanon Valley Railroad. In addition, The P&R was planning to buy the Schuylkill Canal. On July 12, 1860, The P&R gained control of the Allentown Railroad. The P&R saw no reason to complete the Allentown & Auburn.

PERKIOMEN BRANCH						
EAST Grade Read Down	Distance from Emmaus Junction	Method of Operation	STATIONS	No. of Main Tracks	Station Signals	WEST Grade Read Up
+ .83	0.0	TIME TABLE AND TRAIN ORDERS	EMMAUS JCT.	1	PS	- .83
+ .83	1.8		EMMAUS.....			- .83
+ .83	4.4		VERA CRUZ.....			- .83
- .79	6.4		DILLINGER.....			+ .79
- .79	7.9		ZIONSVILLE.....			+ .79
- .79	9.7		HOSENSACK.....			+ .79
- .78	12.7		PALM.....			+ .79
+ .34	15.5		PENNSBURG- E. GREENVILLE } T.O.			- .34
- .66	17.1		RED HILL.....			+ 6
- .66	20.4		GREEN LANE.....			+ .56
- .78	21.8		PERKIOMENVILLE.....			+ .78
Level	23.6		HENDRICKS.....			Level
- .31	24.6		SALFORD.....			+ .31
- .19	25.8		SPRING MOUNT.....			+ .19
- .37	26.7		ZIEGLERSVILLE.....			+ .37
- .29	27.5		SCHWENKSVILLET. O.			SC + .29
+ .29	29.8		GRATERSFORD.....			- .29
+ .51	31.0	RAHNS.....	- .51			
- .71	32.6	COLLEGEVILLE T.O.	CV + .71			
+ .48	33.8	YERKES.....	- .48			
+ .34	35.2	ARCOLA.....	- .34			
- .78	37.0	OAKS.....	+ .78			
+ .28	38.6	PERK'N JCT. T.O. Y.L.	PK - .28			

Siding capacity based on 44 ft. cars: Oaks, 44; Schwenville, 64; Penns.-E. Greenville, 54; Palm, 29; Dillinger, 98.

ALLENTOWN BRANCH						
WEST Grade Read Down	Distance from Topton	Method of Operation	STATIONS	No. of Main Tracks	Station Signals	EAST Grade Read Up
- .54	0.0	"Train on Branch" Signal	TOPTON.....	1	FH	+ .54
- .26	4.4		KUTZTOWN.....			+ .26

CATASAUQUA AND FOGELSVILLE BRANCH						
WEST Grade Read Down	Distance from Catasauqua	Method of Operation	STATIONS	No. of Main Tracks	Station Signals	EAST Grade Read Up
+1.28	0.0	Yard Rules 1/2 Mile & Train Order	CATASAUQUA.....	1	CN	-1.28
+1.28	1.4		MICKLEY'S.....Y.L.			-1.28
- .58	3.3		SEIPLE.....			+ .58
+1.22	6.3		WALBERT.....			-1.22
- .62	8.1		CHAPMAN.....T.O.			+ .62
- .85	11.1		TREXLERTOWN.....			+ .85
- .81	12.5		MERKLE.....			+ .81
+1.26	14.1		ALBURTIS T.O.Y.L.			AF -1.26

JIM SCHLEGEL COLLECTION

The civil war came and went, and the business people and the residents of Kutztown wanted to have railroad service. They were tired of using horse and wagons to move everything to Topton and Lyons to do business. So in 1868, at a public meeting, the citizens of Kutztown drew up a petition requesting to finish the railroad from Topton to Kutztown. They contacted their local

legislators in Harrisburg and begged them to get someone to finish a railroad. The P&R was told to get to Kutztown. It was met with a favorable response (Incidentally, this was not the first or only time someone tried to get a railroad to Kutztown. According to the 1965 Sesqui-Centennial book of Kutztown, all the way back in 1837 there were resolutions to incorporate the Hamburg and Allentown Railroad. This never came to fruition.) So they connected to the Allentown & Auburn's graded right of way, laid track, and finished the line to Kutztown. On January 10, 1870, the first trains operated into Kutztown on the Allentown Railroad. The station was built in 1869 and was opened for the first day of operation. Lewis Hottenstein bought the first ticket. The departure of the first Kutztown Flyer" was a gala occasion.

There were two other locations that rail was laid upon on the route of the Allentown & Auburn. These other railroads also became part of the Reading system. The Catasauqua and Fogelsville built a spur from Trexlertown to Breinigsville. From Breinigsville, it continued onto Farmington and then Klines Corner. Farmington had a large ore wharf and Klines Corner had ore pits. This line was ripped out in the early 1920's. Another section was an industrial spur from East Penn Junction to Mack Trucks in Allentown.

According to the 1965 Sesqui-Centennial book of Kutztown, "For many years, this line of road, for its length was the most profitable part of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad". According to Moody's Steam Railroad and Steamship lines financial reports The Allentown Railroad made \$288,981.00 profit for 1927, and \$469,451.00 for 1928. There was a daily local freight, The East Penn Local, in addition to extras as needed. There were four daily passenger trains, two of which went all the way to Allentown. The passenger trains operated until 1934. They actually lasted longer than The Allentown Reading Traction Company's trolley cars. It was the Allentown & Reading transit busses and the private automobile that stopped passenger operations into Kutztown. This was not the end for passenger trains on the branch. According to some local citizens of Kutztown whom I had a chance to talk with, they told me that for many years the Reading would run special excursion trains to Hershey Park from Kutztown. In addition there were many Church and Sunday school groups that would run Sunday afternoon picnic trains to Kutztown from both Reading and Allentown. The church goers would hold their annual Sunday school picnics at the Kutztown Park. The last one of these passenger trains was in the summer of 1957. The most interesting of the special passenger trains was during WWII. The United States Army Air Corp would bring pilot cadets to Kutztown Normal school for class room

instructions via special passenger trains. They would disembark the trains at the Kutztown Station and they would march in formation up Main Street to the school. When the class room instructions were finished a few weeks later, they went to their assignments via the Allentown railroad. Since that time, three different short line operators have done passenger business on the line. The current one is the new Allentown & Auburn Railroad.

Freight service lasted to the end of the Reading and beyond to 2013. As I was growing up, the Reading's East Penn local arrived every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday morning around 9:00AM. There were many businesses that counted on the railroad for freight service. You had the Kutztown Foundry & Machine Corporation, Beck's Feed & Grain mill, Hauck's Feed and Grain, three different tractor & implement dealers, Miller's Lumber Mill and Coal Yard, three coal dealers, and three electric plants. One was the Allentown & Reading's Traction co. plant. One was Kutztown Power & Light. Two were small coal burning plants, and one was a gasoline burning plant that was across the creek from the railroad. The railroad would also spot tank car loads of gasoline on the public siding on the west side of the station, and the gasoline would be pipe lined over to the plant. There was an iron ore furnace. There was a dairy across from the station with a siding for milk cars. There were two printing houses in town that received their paper via the railroad and were trans-loaded onto trucks for delivery. There were two shoe factories. One of those shoe factories was the founding factory of today's Saucony Athletic shoes that would receive leather via the rail to the public siding for trans-loading. Near the end of the line there was a stock yard for pigs and cattle. Back in the old days Kutztown was a small town with a lot of different manufacturing and agriculture businesses. The station also handled less than car load freight. There were many small businesses that received their goods or shipped their goods via the Kutztown Train station's freight house. I still remember The Reading Railroad's truck company, Reading Transit being loaded and unloaded at the station.

There were other businesses that used the railroad including stone quarries and a cement ready mix plant. The one commodity that not many people know about was ammunition. During WWII, the U.S. military had an ammunition dump on state game lands about four miles west of town. The right of way came within a quarter mile of the dump. It was once speculated that the railroad would be finished to this spot for the movement of ammunition cars. It was decided not to do that, but the ammunition was brought to Kutztown on the rail, trans-loaded onto trucks, and driven the rest of the way to the ammo dump. Former President of the Kutztown

Borough Council Mac Idle told me about this. He was a teen ager during that time. My Dad also told me about it, but I didn't know until about five years ago that they brought the ammunition there via the Allentown Railroad.

It was the early 1970's, and the railroads here in the north east were in bankruptcy or about to go bankrupt, and the Federal Railway Administration was formed to find a solution to the problem. After years of hearings and planning, The Allentown branch of the Reading Railroad's future did not look good. FRA was seriously planning to abandon the branch. But there were still businesses in Kutztown that relied on the railroad for its crudes, grain, lumber, tractors, implements, and coke. Once again the local businesses of Kutztown and the Mayor of Kutztown, Mr. Donald Buchman contacted Congressman Gus Yatron and petitioned the Federal government to keep our railroad. For my part, I sent many letters to both Don Buchman and Gus Yatron. In the end, The Allentown Railroad became Line 910 in the Final System Plan. On April 1, 1976 Conrail started up and the first new operator of the line was Conrail. Conrail operated the line for a few years. Business on the line really started to decline as much of the local business that relied on the railroad started to either move away or just plain close. Conrail was seeing less and less freight and they really did not want to operate the line. The line, along with the Perkiomen Branch and the Colebrookdale Branch were turned over to PennDOT when Conrail took over operations. The three lines were called the Perkiomen Cluster. In 1983, PennDOT put the lines up for bid for a new operator. The first new operator was a short line called the Anthracite Railroad Company. It was an interesting name for a line that was originally built to haul anthracite coal. Business continued to decline. In 1989, the railroad went up for bids again. The Blue Mountain & Reading Railroad took over the line in June. It was during this operation that the line was rebuilt in 1993. In 1990, the Borough of Kutztown celebrated the 175th Anniversary of the town and the BM&R operated trains sponsored by both the Kutztown 175th Committee and the Hawk Mt. Chapter of the NRHS. Freight business continued to decline for reasons other than the customers closing up. In 1994, the line again went up for bids. The BM&R pulled out. PennDOT solicited bids for a new operator and John Nolan's East Penn Railroad got the bid to operate the Perkiomen Cluster beginning July 1, 1995. John Nolan operated the branch for many years. During his tenure East Penn was sold to York rail of which John Became a vice president. He then bought the operation back and he named it Penn Eastern Rail Lines. Then he sold the operation again to a new East Penn Railways whose reporting marks are ESPN. During the time of John

Nolan's tenure there were two different excursion operators of the branch. Both did their best to make it happen. I was a conductor for both operators. Sadly, the fortunes just were not there to obtain. In 1998 one of the excursion operators arranged to have Thomas the Tank Engine come to the branch. In two weekends over the Thanksgiving holidays the line hauled 12,642 paying passengers on the Thomas trains. During the tenure of John Nolan the line started to see an increase of activity with both car loads of scrap steel into the foundry and car loads of finished product outbound from the foundry. This was a McConway & Torley coupler plant (Owned by Trinity Industries). It was formerly the Kutztown Foundry and also at one time an Ingersol Rand operation.

In the year 2013 it was announced that the McConway and Torley plant was going to close. Part of the reason was they had changed from making railroad couplers and draw bars. They re-tooled and started making steel ingots for some use in the mining industry. Well we all know the mining industry is being slowly drawn down. Another reason for the closing is it is believed that the company is busting out the Union. A couple of observations I have noticed. The plant has never been put up for sale, and the company continues to maintain the plant. There is still a small crew of superintendents working there. Loading and unloading trucks at night time, there are guards 24/7. Here in Kutztown we believe that it is in mothball status and the place will reopen someday.

Over by Topton there is a cement block building along the right of way that was erected in 1976 by The East Penn Traction Company headed up by Edward Blossom. This building sits on the right of way of the railroad. Ed had a vision of hanging catenary from Topton to Kutztown and running trolley cars for the Nations Bicentennial back in 1976. History shows it never happened. For many years up until 2000, Ed restored trolley cars there. One of his crown jewels was a Lehigh Valley Transit car that today is in the Trolley car museum in Scranton, Pa. Whenever I go to Scranton I stop by to see it. In addition to the trolley cars that used to be there, the Lehigh Valley Chapter, NRHS had their Chestnut Ridge Mack Truck rail bus there. The chapter spent many weekends there restoring the bus.

In the year 2000, PennDOT put the Perkiomen Cluster up for sale. They were no longer interested in owning these branch lines. The bidding process began and the Borough of Kutztown made a bid for the Allentown railroad. Berks County made a bid for the Colebrookdale branch. East Penn Railroad made a bid for the Perkiomen Branch. As far as I know there were 3 bidders for the Allentown Branch, and The Borough of

Kutztown was the successful bidder. They purchased the Allentown Railroad for the sum of \$150,001.00. They formed a Transportation Authority and called it the Kutztown Transportation Authority. When the borough did this, Mayor James Sawyer came to me and said the Borough bought the railroad and he asked me to head up the Transportation Authority. The first thing that came out of my mouth was (and not exactly in these words) "Are you guys nuts?" He then explained to me that they really were not interested in owning an operating railroad. The reason they wanted the railroad was to obtain control of the right of way. For approximately 1.75 miles the borough's 69K electric lines that come from the borough's substation into Kutztown to the Foundry travel along the railroad's right of way. The borough over the years has paid over \$120,000.00 in user fees to whoever owned the right of way. This purchase also helps Kutztown prevent any outside utilities from entering the Borough. In Addition the borough's well heads and Water Treatment plant is along the right of way. By Kutztown purchasing the railroad we can keep a closer eye on the protection of our water supply by keeping hazardous materials cars from being stored along the line. In addition, the actual railroad roadbed helps to keep nitrates from flowing into our water supply from the farms that are located on the north side of the right of way.

The Borough has since the early 1920's owned its own electric, water & sewer, and most recently a fiber optics company. By doing so, the borough can keep the actual municipal taxes low. When you buy electric from the Borough of Kutztown you not only get electricity, you get municipal services, such as snow plowing, road maintenance, parks, police, etc. When electric deregulation came along the 24 municipalities in Pennsylvania that have their own electric companies were grandfathered into being the only providers for electric in their communities. If you live or have a business in Kutztown you must purchase your electricity

from the Kutztown Borough. This is why the Borough of Kutztown purchased the Allentown Railroad.

As was mentioned before, the Kutztown Foundry closed in May of 2013. As chairman of the Kutztown Transportation Authority I requested a meeting between myself, the Borough Manager, and East Penn Railway to find out what the plans were for East Penn as far as the railroad operation was concerned. East Penn wanted out. I asked if they would be willing to turn the railroad over to the Topton Rail Car business. They were willing. Contacts were made and Mike Bast and Pete Cole formed a new railroad company. They went back to the original name of the company that was to operate this piece of railroad. They named it the Allentown & Auburn. The details of the agreements between Allentown & Auburn and the Kutztown Transportation Authority are a public document and can be viewed at the Borough Hall in Kutztown. In October of 2013, the Allentown & Auburn Railroad was re-born.

Since Easter of 2015, the first trains of the second Allentown & Auburn Railroad have begun to roll. This is a feat that the first Allentown & Auburn Railroad never accomplished. The trains consist of 3 cabooses and a flat car with sides. The main engine is an EMC SW. For two weekends, a small 0-4-0 Saddle Tank steam locomotive from Viscose Company was used to pull trains to help celebrate the borough of Kutztown's Bicentennial. All the trains have been well patronized and many positive comments have been received by both the railroad and the borough of Kutztown.

What does the future hold? Well, I'm not a fortune teller, but time will tell. As my late father used to say, "All good things come to those who wait for them." The Allentown & Auburn is led by a very dedicated president. He has a staff of professional railroaders and very supportive volunteers who go out of their way to help make this little operation a success. Someday freight will return to the line. I'm sure of it. I see a "High Ball" in the Allentown & Auburn's future. (JS)

A Reading local works at Eastern Lime at Hinterleiter on the Kutztown Branch on July 1, 1964.

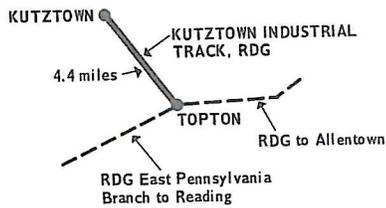
FRANK BERGWALL



KUTZTOWN INDUSTRIAL TRACK

USRA Line No. 910

Reading



The Kutztown Industrial Track extends from *Top-ton* (Milepost 0.0), to *Kutztown, Pa.* (Milepost 4.4), a distance of 4.4 miles, in Berks County, Pa. At Topton this line connects with the Reading's East Pennsylvania Branch to Allentown and Reading.

Traffic and Operating Information

Stations (with their 1973 carloads) served by this line:	
Kutztown	408
Total carloads generated by the line	
Average carloads per week	7.8
Average carloads per mile	92.7
Average carloads per train	3.9
1974 operating information:	
Number of round trips per year	104
Estimated time per round trip (hours)	3.0
Locomotive horsepower	600
Train crew size	4

Public Comments on Preliminary System Plan

Detailed analysis by the Kutztown Rail Service Committee found that the line had net revenue, after improving track to FRA Class II standards, of \$160,922.

Testimony showed 60 jobs would be lost if service ended.

The Pennsylvania PUC believes that cars at Topton were not included in USRA's calculations. (*Note: Top-ton is not on this branch. It is on the East Pennsylvania Branch.*)

Testimony stated that this is the only rail service available to the borough of Kutztown. Shippers would be forced to use trucks if service on the line were discontinued.

Kutztown Foundry and Machine Corp., receives coke, pig iron and molding sands, all commodities best handled by rail.

Reading says the average annual maintenance cost of this track is \$13,500.

Berks Products Corp., at Kutztown, would be satisfied with service once a week.

Pennsylvania DOT questions use of a 5-man crew. Other lines in the area use 4.

Pennsylvania Office of Planning and Development says the branch handled 447 cars in 1973.

Testimony indicated the possibility of reducing the number of annual trips to 52.

Consideration must be given to the total revenue that would be lost to ConRail if this line is not included in the Final System Plan. In 1973, the 408 cars on this line generated a total revenue of \$296,492; however, only \$66,893 was attributed to the line.

Information for Line-Transfer Decision

Revenue received by RDG	\$66,893
Average revenue per carload	\$164

USRA INFORMATION MIKE BEDNAR COLLECTION

Variable (avoidable) cost of continued service:	
Cost incurred on the branch line	56,130
Cost of upgrading branch line to FRA Class I: (1/10 of total upgrading cost)	0
Cost incurred beyond the branch line	35,388
Total variable (avoidable) cost	91,518
Net contribution (loss): total	(24,625)
Average per carload	(60)

This line would require no upgrading to meet the requirements of the Federal Railroad Administration's minimum safety standards (Class I track, which has a maximum safe operating speed of 10 m.p.h.).

Service to this line generated a loss of \$24,625 in 1973. Recovery of this loss would require approximately an 80-percent increase in traffic or a 37-percent rate increase. The existence of an additional 39 carloads on this line in 1973, as indicated by the Pennsylvania Office of Planning and Development, would reduce this loss to approximately \$21,600. Analysis of this line based on ConRail (merged) operation resulted in a loss of approximately \$65,500. Reducing the number of trips using ConRail operations reduced the loss to \$47,787.

Disposition

The Kutztown Industrial Track is *not* designated for transfer to Chessie System or to Consolidated Rail Corp. and is available for subsidy pursuant to section 304 of the Act. Public officials have recommended that certain rail rights-of-way be used for other public purposes if rail service is discontinued. For line-specific recommendations, see section C of this appendix.

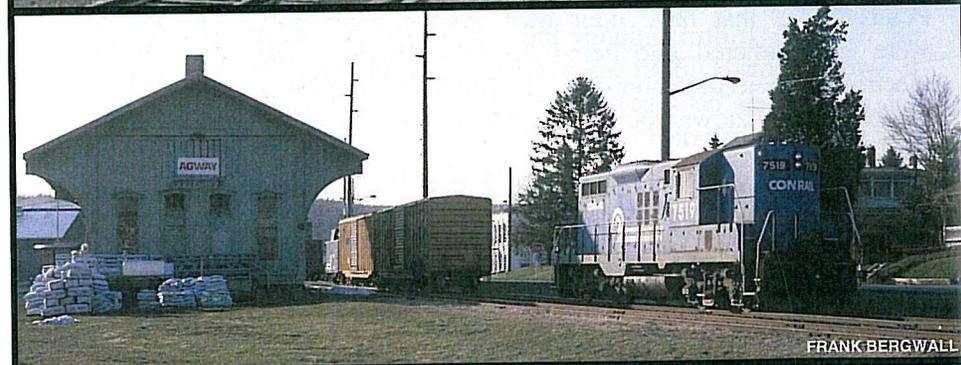


The engine crew of Harry Guistwite, Joe Benner and Lenard Guist were very friendly toward this author. They taught me much about railroading and the history of this line into Kutztown. The crew had an Alco RS3 for power this day.
JIM SCHLEGEL

Not much has changed in these views of the Kutztown station environs over the years. Witness the Reading Company in July 1974, Conrail in May 1982, and East Penn Railway in December 1996. About the only change was the diesel.



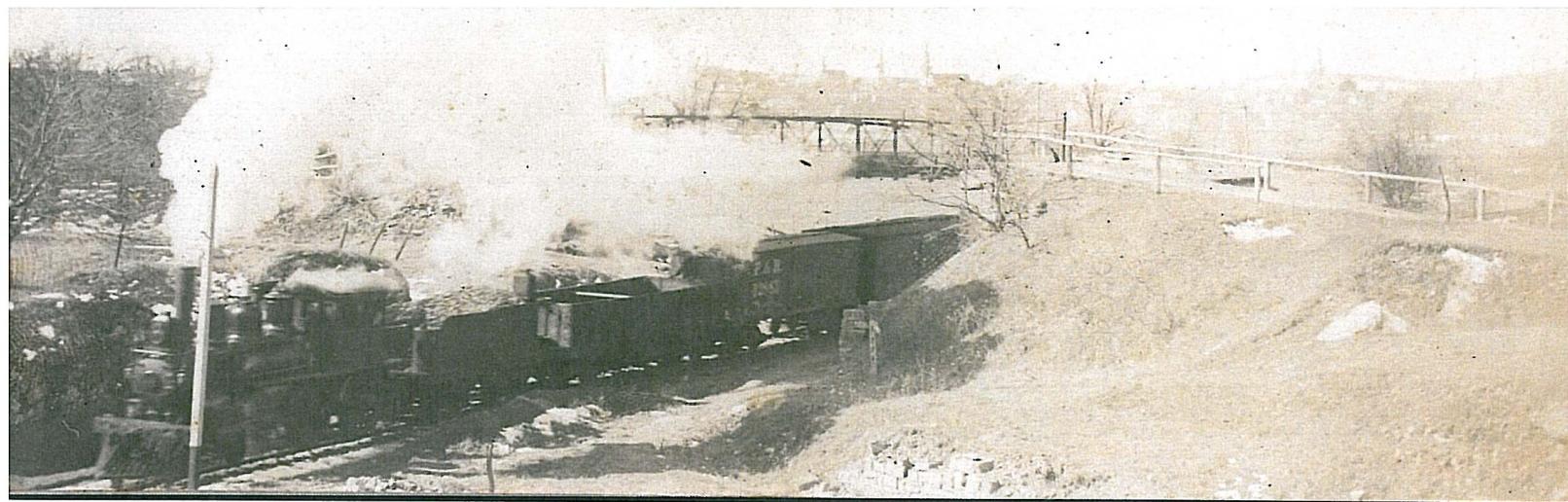
JIM SCHLEGEL



FRANK BERGWALL



DOUG PETERS



Located approximately a half – mile south of Kutztown station, a freight train passes beneath the old Bowers Road bridge circa 1890. The bridge was torn down and not replaced.

JIM SCHLEGEL COLLECTION



Conrail operated the Kutztown Branch until 1983. Subsequent operators included the (top left) Anthracite Railway from 1983 until 1989, seen on May 26, 1985 interchanging with CR at Tipton with their initial power and then (bottom left) with their former CR SW1 8556 on April 30, 1989 at Tipton. Blue Mountain and Reading (top right) operated the line from 1990 until the end of 1994. BMR kept their SW1 at Kutztown, as seen on July 23, 1989.

DOUG PETERS

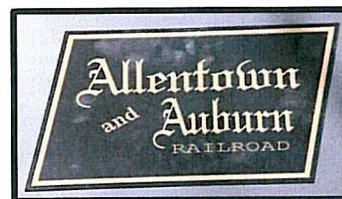
Blue Mountain & Reading borrowed equipment from the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society to mark the Borough of Kutztown's 175th Anniversary in 1990. The special train is at Swoyers on August 4, 1990 using RCT&HS GP30 5513. DOUG PETERS





During East Penn's tenure from 1995 - 2013, freight was sporadic, but excursions were fairly regular. Motive power included a GE 44-ton locomotive numbered 44, and a former Guilford GP9. 44 was first painted in a green scheme, seen (top left) at Kutztown on July 4, 1999 and then repainted into red (top right) at Topton on December 18, 2004. The former Guilford GP9 is seen south of Kutztown on November 22, 1998.

DOUG PETERS



The reborn Allentown & Auburn began operations in 2015. Their motive power is former Rail Tours/Stewartstown RR 11, formerly MA & PA 83, prior Steelton and Highspire 23, original PBNE 206. Originally built as an EMC SW in March 1937, it was rebuilt in 1957 into an SW900m. On April 4, 2015, in black primer (below left) it is seen pulling an Easter Bunny excursion at Swoyers. By summer of 2015, it was repainted into a Reading - inspired scheme (below right) seen at Kutztown on August 1. To mark the Borough off Kutztown's Bicentennial, Viscose Company's 1924 Baldwin 0-4-0 was brought in for excursions, seen at the Kutztown station (bottom left) and at Topton (bottom right). Check out today's Allentown & Auburn at <http://allentownandauburnrr.com/>.



JIM ROWLAND



JIM ROWLAND



JEN ROWLAND



JIM ROWLAND