

REPORT of the

CENTRAL ELECTRIC RAILFANS' ASSOCIATION

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED

NOVEMBER, 1939

A summary of the first year of the operation of CERA, showing the growth of interest in the hobby of the study of the equipment and operation of Street, Rapid Transit and Interurban Electric Railroads everywhere.

The collage features several overlapping elements:

- Top Left:** A document titled "C-E-R-A MAP NO. 1" with a small diagram of a track layout.
- Top Right:** A document titled "CHICAGO RAPID TRANSIT COMPANY METROPOLITAN DIVISION" dated February, 1939.
- Middle Left:** A sign for "NORTH SHORE LINE".
- Middle Right:** A sign for "IN THE WEST" with a small train model above it.
- Center:** A large, detailed model of a train engine, numbered "165" and marked with a "B".
- Bottom Left:** A sign for "CHICAGO SOUTH SHORE AND SOUTH BEND RAILROAD" with the text "Bulletin of the CENTRAL ELECTRIC RAILFANS' ASSOCIATION (Division of national Electric Railroaders' Association)" written diagonally across it.
- Bottom Center:** A sign for "SHORE LINE" with "FANG" written above it.
- Bottom Right:** A newspaper clipping titled "IN THE EAST" with the text "Important Cl... 4:01 A. M. ... 1, 1938. A... laylight say".
- Bottom Left (Small):** A small image of a train engine with the text "BULLETIN 7" below it.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC RAILFANS' ASSOCIATION

1240 EDISON BUILDING

CHICAGO

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY: Instead of billing each member for his fees for the period December 1, 1939 to November 30, 1940 the Board feels that the time, expense and effort that would be required for this could better be utilized in the preparation of this first annual report, outlining the events which have taken place during the year past and serving as a reminder that ALL initial memberships will require renewal for the year to come. **THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER NOTICE**, so make a note to send your remittances to the Financial Officer, Central Electric Railfans' Association before the holiday season catches you. If you are filing the bulletins for future reference you will be glad to know that material for a Northern Indiana Railway bulletin is now on file and will be worked into shape within the next few weeks. Other bulletins promised will deal with the Indiana networks. **RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION NOW.**



REMINDEES OF SOME EVENTS OF THE LAST YEAR

HISTORY: Increasing interest in electric railway operation and lack of an organization to foster this hobby locally led to the formation of CERA, during the summer of 1938. The first steps were taken by the founders in two pioneer trips, one to Valparaiso on the Gary Railways and the other to Milwaukee on the North Shore Line. These trips revealed a large group of enthusiasts eager to have a club as a meeting place to discuss and learn more about electric railways.

Accordingly a small fund was staked by the founders and a group of prospective railfans was solicited to attend the inaugural meeting, at which plans for the CENTRAL ELECTRIC RAILFANS' ASSOCIATION were laid and a series of monthly meetings arranged. Trips followed, based on the pioneers as to form and in the practice of issuing an elaborate souvenir publication that would be of value not only to those on the trip but would also make a good addition to the record files of remote railfans.

For the benefit of such railfans who would care to have copies of the Bulletins a membership classification, **SUBSCRIBING**, was created that included annual subscription to the Bulletins and a rate of \$1.00 per year was set for this class.

Railfans in the Chicago area, it was thought, would derive most of the benefit of local CERA activities, especially the meetings, so it was decided that a separate classification, **ACTIVE**, should cover their membership. This class of member submits to more rigid entrance requirements, including the examination as to knowledge of electric railway matters and election by previous Actives. He also pays a higher fee. During the first year the fee for Active membership was \$1.00 per year, not including subscription to Bulletins, but by act of the Membership October 20, 1939 the rate was reduced to \$1.50 including subscription and the former Active-Subscribing classification was superceded thereby.

MEMBERSHIP: Starting with the nucleus of 6 charter members CERA has grown steadily thru the year till it has today 83 members in full standing in addition to recognition among railfan clubs throughout the country as an exceptionally active group. The attendance at the first meeting of the current season, October 20, 1939 was 75, which is believed to set a record for electric railway fan groups, if not among railfan clubs of all sorts.

MEETINGS: Meetings were held at first on irregular dates each month but it was soon found that a regular meeting on the third Friday of each month gave less interference to the activities of other groups. Thru the courtesy of the various electric railways around Chicago the appropriate space of passenger cars set out in convenient terminals was utilized for CERA gatherings. Table I sets forth details of meetings. No formal meetings were held during summer months, but members gathered on the several trips to keep posted on the latest electric railway developments.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC RAILFANS' ASSOCIATION

BULLETINS: CERA Bulletins originated on the first trip, even before the club itself, and were such a popular means of keeping a record of trips and of the history and other facts concerning electric railways that the policy of issuing them has been incorporated into CERA's fundamental activities. Bulletins issued on the occasion of trips are distributed to the passengers and copies of all Bulletins are distributed to all members. There is also a small cash sale of Bulletins to persons interested in obtaining single copies. The total expenditure for the production of Bulletins beginning with Bulletin 1 on the North Shore Line has been \$160.00, and the total expenditure for printing of notices, tickets, forms, and other incidentals brings a sum of \$200.92 for the year.

At first the Bulletins were only descriptions of electric railways, containing history, map, roster, car plans and photographs but other types of Bulletins such as maps, drawings and straight detailed rosters were tried experimentally and found to make the whole more diversified and interesting. When the first of these were issued they were not numbered in the Bulletin series but a suggestion from one of the members was adopted to make all publications in the future Bulletins, and members will thus be able to know whether they have the full set, by referring to the numbers. Table III gives details of Bulletins.

TRIPS: As already mentioned the first two trips were held prior to the actual formation of CERA, and the third trip was run at the time the actual membership included only the charter members. The fourth trip, taken in regular cars, was given a number as recognition of the passing of a line. Trip 5 was proposed and managed entirely by the company over which it ran, as CERA was at that time preoccupied with the problems of getting organized, but was endorsed and supported by CERA. Table II gives details of the various trips. During the current year there was a total income of \$1350.98 and total expense of \$1296.72 on account of trips, not including the cost of bulletins.



Subway Service

EXECUTIVE BOARD: For the initial period CERA affairs were administered by a self-appointed Board of 3 from the founders, Frank E. Butts as Registration Officer, George Krambles as Publicity Officer and Bernard L. Stone as Financial Officer. At the first annual election May 19, 1939 the three original officers were elected and in addition the two following men were chosen to fill vacant posts: Wallace M. Rogers as Secretary and John J. Brown as Special Representative for Street Railway Matters. In addition to the regular monthly meetings of CERA the Board assembles at least once a month for the purpose of dispatching CERA business, planning programs and trips as selected by the members and budgeting CERA's expenditures.

OTHER ACTIVITY: During the year CERA carried out some work in the direction of propagating interest in electric railways and in the railfan hobby. CERA interested Mass Transportation Journal, trade paper of the industry, in railfan events and was instrumental in the establishment of this paper's well known "Railfan Doings" section, a regular monthly feature. General publicity has been carried on to acquaint railway operating people with railfans for mutual benefit. Envelope stuffers, begun originally to utilize otherwise wasted space in small printing jobs ordered by CERA, have been used to acquaint our correspondents with CERA aims.

CERA offers its assistance in any practical way to any operating railway company and this service was availed of by one road that utilized a drawing, issued first as a bulletin of CERA, together with a complete cover design for its current public timetable. On a recent trip CERA was given the opportunity to be the first to ride a modernized car of this same road and on this trip the opinion of each railfan as to the modernized car was solicited on a questionnaire. These have since been given careful scrutiny by officials of the company.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER CLUBS: Shortly after the inception of CERA it was proposed by E. Jay Quinby, National Secretary of the Electric Railroaders' Association that CERA become a regional division of the national group, thus establishing a common bond of friendship between CERA members and members of other ERA groups thruout the country. This suggestion was welcomed by the founders and put into effect at once.



CR&ICRR Old-timer
Now replaced by C&LE cars

In Chicago it was found that many members of the Railroad Club of Chicago were desirous of participating in CERA activities as the time and facilities of the Railroad Club were taxed by the vast amount of steam road material at their disposal, so it was decided to work in close cooperation with that group in all matters, especially in planning trips and time of meetings. For purpose of coordination thru the enthusiastic support of Mr. Ray Colombe, President of the Railroad Club, the Chicago Council of Railfan Clubs was formed to decide any inter-fraternal questions.

During the year there were received a number of inquiries from other railfan clubs as to CERA policies and methods and these were welcomed and given careful attention with a view to exchange of this information to improve club functions. Chief among these other clubs was the Railroad Boosters* of Los Angeles whose Melching & Eichstaedt brothers and their neat informative paper "Wheel Clicks" gave many good ideas.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC RAILFANS' ASSOCIATION

TABLE I. MEETINGS

NO.	DATE HELD	PLACE	ATTENDANCE	PROGRAM (See Note)
1	Oct 14, '38	CSS&SBRR	40	Movies of Texas interurbans. Inaugural meeting
2	Nov 11, '38	CNS&MRR	45	Dinner in dining car 409, movies of CNS&M, talks about road.
3	Dec 16, '38	CA&ERR	45	Movies of CRTCo Car Maintenance, 1st examination for members.
4	Jan 13, '39	ICRR	42	Inspection of IC terminal
5	Feb 10, '39	CSS&SBRR	52	Movies of American Transit Assn. 1937 progress.
6	Mar 17, '39	CNS&MRR	65	Dinner in diner 409, Slides & talk on traction lines of Ills.
7	Apr 21, '39	CA&ERR	47	Movies of the first CERA fan trips, talks.
8	May 19, '39	ICRR	55	Movies of other fan trips, 1st annual election of Board.
9	Oct 20, '39	ICRR	75	Movies of Western Interurban & Street Rys.

Note: In addition to the program outlined, there was a business session at each of the meetings.

TABLE II. CERA TRIPS

NO.	DATE HELD	RAILWAY	ATTENDANCE	DESTINATIONS & REMARKS
1	*#May 1, 1938	Gary Railways	75	Gary-Valparaiso, 1st Elect. Ry. trip nr. Chgo.
2	*#June 19, '38	Chgo., N. Sho. & Milw. RR.	180	Chgo.-Milwaukee-Mundelein (Entire Inter'bn Sys.)
3	Aug. 20, '38	Indiana Railroad	15	Chartered car over Ft. Wayne loop from Indpls.
4	Oct. 16, '38	Gary Railways	15	Gary-Valpo. account last Sunday of operation.
5	* Oct. 23, '38	Chicago Surface Lines	75	Kedzie Barn-South Shops
6	*#Feb. 12, '39	Chicago Rapid Transit Co.	85	Met. Division, Westch'r & Mt. Carmel lines
7	* Mar. 19, '39	Gary Railways	27	Gary-Hobart-Indiana Hrbr., day AFTER abandonment
8	*#Apr. 23, '39	Chicago & West Towns Ry.	47	Cicero-LaGrange-Oak Park
9	*#Jun. 25, '39	Chgo. S. Sho. & S. Bend RR.	156	Chgo-S Bend, side trip NIRY S. Bend-Mishawaka
10	* Jun. 4, '39	Chgo. N. Sho. & Milw. R.R.	34	Chgo-Wauk.-Mund. for members only
11	May 28, '39	Cedar Rapids & Iowa Cy. Ry.	11	Test run C&LE car for benefit of CERA.
12	*#Aug. 6, '39	Chgo. Aurora & Elgin RR.	85	Chgo-Wheaton-Aurora-Batavia
13	* Aug. 20, '39	Illinois Terminal Co.	72	Decatur-Springfield (See note)
14	* Sep. 3, '39	Indiana Railroad	24	Indianapolis-Louisville and branches.
15	* Sep. 4, '39	Indiana Railroad	21	Indianapolis-Terre Haute and branches.
16	*#Sep. 17, '39	CNS&M-TMilw. Elec. Ry. & T.Co	80	Chgo-Kenosha-Sheboygan. Transfer in Keno via WG&E
17	* Oct. 29, '39	Chgo. N. Sho. & Milw.-TMER&TCo	48	Chgo-Milw. inaugural trip CNS&M modernized car 716, and side trip Milw. to TM training school and car barns.

Note: Trip 13 run in connection with Railroad Club of Chicago trip over Wabash Railroad between Chicago and Decatur in which Wabash train was transferred to ITS and hauled to ITS shops with electric engine. The CERA special train out of Decatur consisted of the regular ITS passenger motor and parlor cars.

* Indicates Special CERA souvenir pass was issued. # Indicates bulletin issued.

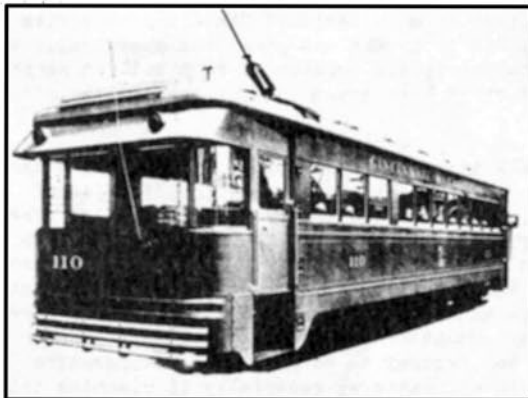


TABLE III. CERA BULLETINS

NO.	DATE	TITLE OF BULLETIN	SALE PRICE
*	May, 1938	Gary Railways, Valparaiso Division	15¢
*	June, 1938	North Shore Line, Fan-Trip Timecard	15¢
1	Nov., 1938	North Shore Line Descr. Bulletin	10¢
*	Jan., 1939	North Shore Line Sketch "High Iron"	5¢
2	Feb., 1939	Chicago Rapid Transit Co., Met Div'n	15¢
*	Mar., 1939	Map of Traction Lines of Illinois	15¢
3	Apr., 1939	Chicago & West Towns Railway	15¢
4	Jun., 1939	Chgo. South Shore & S. Bend R.R.	25¢
5	Aug., 1939	Chicago Aurora & Elgin R.R. Roster	15¢
6	Sep., 1939	The Milw. Elec. Ry. & Tr. Co. Roster & Drawing of articulated dining car	15¢
7	Nov., 1939	Annual Report for 1938-1939	--

*Issued prior to present numbering system.

Gary Ry. bulletin now out of print, stock remaining on others.

Report prepared by
Publicity Officer
November 17, 1939
CERA form 58.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Brown
Frank E. Butts
George Krambles
Wallace M. Rogers
Bernard L. Stone
EXECUTIVE BOARD, CERA

Duplicate copies of this Bulletin (#7) may be secured upon request from the Publicity Officer, CERA, 1240 Edison Building, Chicago.