Shore Line’s CSL Dispatches

Dispatches 6, 8 and 9 represent Shore Line’s coverage of streetcar operations in Chicago from 1945 to 1958, with service provided initially by the Chicago Surface Lines and later by the Chicago Transit Authority. The neighborhoods were the fabric of Chicago, and with 3560 streetcars on the roster in 1945, the CSL served most of them on what was purportedly was the world’s largest streetcar system operated under one management. Chicagoans forever identify themselves by their neighborhoods, linked by the streetcars. In 300 pages with over 350 photos (64 in color), including popular Then/Now photos; six maps and thoroughly-researched narratives, the Dispatches provide the important story of Chicago, its neighborhoods and its streetcars in the immediate post-World War II period. These Dispatches are a study of Chicago as much as they are of the streetcars that carried the people. Edited by Richard F. Begley with George E. Kanary and Walter R. Keevil. Most photos are from the W.R. Keevil Archive.

Available Publications and Membership Application

Dispatch Series Special Publications

NEW! Chicago’s Railroads in Transition: The Photography of Lou Gerard, Dispatch No. 10. In 1960, there were 19 intercity railroads in Chicagoland, 17 of which provided passenger service. Commuter service was provided by nine railroads along with two interurban electric railroads. Sixty years later the area is served by Metra, South Shore, Amtrak and six Class 1s plus several short lines. Over six decades, the railroad and transit industry in Chicagoland has undergone massive changes and rationalization. Lou Gerard’s notable photography documents this incredible transition in this Dispatch. Lou’s career was with Chicago Transit Authority’s rail operations. He takes you to his work, his strong relationship with the nation’s last interurban; local service both pre-Metra and Metra; freight railroads; Amtrak; steam excursions; and his huge interest in Great Lakes boats. This is a must for your library. Over 200 photographs, mostly in vivid color in 100 pages. $25 Cover Price.

Available individually or as a Bundle (one copy of all three Dispatches), they should be a part of your library.

See Special Offers on Dispatch Series Bundle Sets on page 5.
This is a complex story full of business, political and financial intrigue covering the early days of the railroads serving Evanston and Wilmette. John Evans did not want Chicago & North Western to have exclusivity. He obtained a horse-car franchise that ended up as The Milwaukee Road commuter service. Plans to electrify manifested in the Northwestern Elevated Railroad, today’s CTA Purple Line, coming to Evanston. Competition grew. From the north came North Shore Line’s predecessor. From the south came a streetcar line that evolved into Evanston Railways.

One Hundred Years of Enduring Tradition — South Shore Line Dispatch No. 3. Very different from all other railroad publications, Dispatch No. 3 covers the history of the South Shore Line as told by the people who were involved since 1926. We reflect on the first 100 years of the South Shore Line. Discover fascinating new information, enjoy in-depth discussions of why “The Last Interurban” survived and understand how a successful public-private partnership was created. 84 pages in color and duotone. Cover illustration by Mitch Markovitz.

The Chicago “L’s” Great Steel Fleet — The Baldies — Dispatch No. 5. In the early 20th Century, overwhelmed with riders, managers of Chicago’s elevated railways were faced with two huge challenges, an insufficient car fleet and tremendous congestion on the Loop. Through routing of trains and terminals short of the Loop eased the congestion. Providing sufficient rolling stock resulted in ordering the famous fleet of 4000s, 250 of which were called “Baldies” due to their bare steel arched roofs. Now, 100 years after the delivery of the first cars, Bruce Moffat discusses what was then a revolutionary car design with rolled steel components.

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