

Atlantic City Railroad

The **Atlantic City Railroad** was a Philadelphia and Reading Railway subsidiary that became part of Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines in 1933. At the end of 1925 it operated 161 miles (259 km) of road on 318 miles (512 km) of track; that year it reported 43 million ton-miles of revenue freight and 204 million passenger-miles.

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Atlantic City Railroad



System map (West Jersey and Seashore Railroad lines in red, Atlantic City Railroad lines in purple)

Overview

Headquarters	<u>Camden, New Jersey</u>
Locale	<u>Camden and Winslow Junction, New Jersey</u> , to <u>Atlantic City and Ocean City and Cape May</u>
Dates of operation	1889–1933
Successor	<u>Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines</u>
Technical	
Track gauge	4 ft 8 ¹ ⁄ 2 in (1,435 mm) <u>standard gauge</u>

History

Effective 1 April 1889, the Philadelphia and Reading Railway consolidated all of its railroads in Southern New Jersey into the Atlantic City Railroad.^[1]

Speed records

On 20 July 1904, the regularly-scheduled train no. 25, which ran from Kaighn's Point in Camden, NJ to Atlantic City NJ, with Philadelphia and Reading Railway class P-4c 4-4-2 No.334 and 5 passenger cars, set a speed record. It ran the 55.5 miles (89.3 km) in 43 minutes at an average speed of 77.4 mph (124.6 km/h). The 29.3 miles (47.2 km) between Winslow

Jct and Meadows Tower (outside of Atlantic City) were covered in 20 minutes at a speed of 87.9 mph (141.5 km/h). During the short segment between Egg Harbor and Brigantine Jct, the train was reported to have reached 115 mph (185 km/h).^[1]

Predecessor railroads

Camden, Gloucester & Mt. Ephraim Railway

Incorporated on 17 June 1873 by a group from Gloucester City, which wanted a rail line to link the busy passenger ferry landing at Kaighn's Point in Camden to the Gloucester City industrial area 3.9 miles (6.3 km) away, then from that point another 1.3 miles (2.1 km) to Mount Ephraim Borough.

A 3 ft (914 mm) narrow gauge was required, as much of the right of way used existing city streets with sharp curves. Work began in January 1874 and the line from Kaighn's Point to Gloucester City opened on 14 February 1874. The line to Mount Ephraim Borough opened in May 1876. In the middle of November 1884, the Philadelphia and Reading Railway acquired the Camden, Gloucester & Mt Ephraim Railway. The Philadelphia and Reading Railway converted the track to 4 ft 8½ in (1,435 mm) standard gauge in 1885.^[1]

Philadelphia and Atlantic City Railway

During 1875, four of the Camden and Atlantic Board of Directors left, led by Samuel Richards who was an officer of the C&A for 24 years, to build a second railroad from Camden, New Jersey to Atlantic City NJ, by way of Clementon NJ.^[1] Incorporated on 24 March 1876. 3 ft 6 in (1,067 mm) narrow gauge was selected because narrow gauge was successful at the time and saved in lower operating cost. Work began in April 1877. The track work was completed in 90 days. On Saturday, 7 July 1877 the final spike was driven and the 54.67-mile (87.98 km) line was opened. On 12 July 1878 the *P&AC RY* slipped into bankruptcy. The Philadelphia and Atlantic City Railway was acquired by the CNJ and the Philadelphia and Reading Railway for \$1,000,000 on 20 September 1883. And the name was modified to **Philadelphia and Atlantic City Railroad** effective 4 December 1883. The first thing done was to convert the line to 4 ft 8½ in (1,435 mm) standard gauge, which was completed on 5 October 1884. The *Philadelphia and Reading Railway* acquired full control on 4 December 1885.^[1]

Williamstown Railroad

This railroad was chartered on 13 March 1871 by the owners of one glassworks in Williamstown to build a line from Atco to Williamstown, and later to Glassboro NJ. The 9.5 mile line was completed in 1873. The line slipped into bankruptcy in November 1881. The Williamstown Railroad had graded a line to Glassboro NJ but the rail was only laid 1.7 miles to Robanna NJ. The *Williamstown Railroad* was acquired by the CNJ and the Philadelphia and Reading Railway on 6 October 1883 at foreclosure sale. And the name was modified to Williamstown & Delaware River Railroad effective 7 December 1883.^[1]

Williamstown and Delaware River Railroad

In the summer of 1883, the Williamstown & Delaware River Railroad track was laid to Glassboro. Now the line was 15.73 miles long. Also in 1883 a branch 1.20 miles long was built in Glassboro NJ as the Glassboro Railroad to the Whitney Brother's glass works. The Philadelphia and Reading Railway acquired full control on 4 December 1885. In 1887 a new extension was built to Mullica Hill NJ.^[1]

Cultural context

At the end of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century, railroads were primary channels for accessing New Jersey shore beaches. PRR property railroads carried beachgoers from Philadelphia and Camden.

Railroads acquired in 1901

The Atlantic City Railroad was reincorporated on 14 June 1901 as a merger with other railroads.....^[1]

Camden County Railroad

The *Camden County Railroad* was incorporated on 17 September 1889 with the purpose of extending the *ACRR's* Gloucester Branch ex Camden, Gloucester & Mt Ephraim Railway between Mount Ephraim Borough and Spring Mills, home of the Bateman Manufacturing Company where two plants were in use constructing farm equipment. As of 31 December 1890, 5 miles of railroad were completed south of Mt. Ephraim. The remaining 2.19 miles were finished on 10 May 1891. Spring Mills saw its first train during the third week in March, while the first carload of farm equipment and tools did not leave Bateman Manufacturing until the beginning of April. Stations were constructed along the *Camden County Railroad* at Bellmawr, Runnemede, Glendora, Chews Landing formerly South Glendora, Blenheim, Blackwood, and Spring Mills, renamed Grenloch (in Gloucester Township, New Jersey) upon completion of the line. After construction was complete, the *Camden County Railroad*, which had been established with the sole purpose of constructing this extension, was leased to the *Atlantic City Railroad*.^[1] Atlantic City Railroad Timetable No. 3, effective 14 April 1892, was the first to show trains operating on the Gloucester Branch between Mt. Ephraim and Grenloch.

1915 Pennsylvania Railroad publication touting New Jersey and Delmarva peninsula beaches.

Blackwood, and Spring Mills, renamed Grenloch (in Gloucester Township, New Jersey) upon completion of the line. After construction was complete, the *Camden County Railroad*, which had been established with the sole purpose of constructing this extension, was leased to the *Atlantic City Railroad*.^[1] Atlantic City Railroad Timetable No. 3, effective 14 April 1892, was the first to show trains operating on the Gloucester Branch between Mt. Ephraim and Grenloch.

- ACRR Gloucester Branch
- P-RSL Grenloch Branch

Cape May, Delaware Bay and Sewell's Point Railroad

This particular line existed from 1863 until the 1920s,^[2] and ran from Sunset Beach in Lower Township, around the Point to South Cape May (now known as South Meadows), into Cape May City, out to Sewell's Point (now the Coast Guard Training Center), and back around to Schellenger's Landing, where visitors could then connect to Philadelphia-bound trains.^[3]

Ocean City Railroad

Ocean City Junction to Ocean City

Seacoast Railroad

Winslow Junction to Tuckahoe, Sea Isle City and Cape May

Railroads acquired in the 1930s

Stone Harbor Railroad

Acquired in April 1932, the SHRR ran from Cape May Court House to Stone Harbor; it was merged with the PRSL in 1936.^[1]

Wildwood and Delaware Bay Short Line Railroad

Acquired in July 1930, the W&DBSLRR ran from Wildwood Junction to Wildwood; it was merged with the ACRR (by then PRSL) in 1934.^[1]

Railroads operated or leased

Pleasantville & Ocean City Railroad

9 June 1880 Pleasantville & Ocean City Railroad incorporated in New Jersey; William Massey, Pres. (Val)

26 October 1880 Pleasantville & Ocean City Railroad (3 ft 6 in / 1,067 mm narrow gauge) opens between Pleasantville and Somers Point, N.J.; operated by Philadelphia & Atlantic City Railway; opening excursion runs from Philadelphia to Ocean City; Ocean City Association operates connecting steamboat between Somers Point and Ocean City. (Val, Lee)

May 1882 William Massey sells the Pleasantville & Ocean City Railroad to the West Jersey and Atlantic Railroad.

1 June 1882 The West Jersey and Atlantic Railroad leases the Pleasantville & Ocean City Railroad and converted to 4 ft 8½ in (1,435 mm) standard gauge on 4 June 1882.

Brigantine Railroads

7 August 1889 Brigantine Beach Railroad incorporated in New Jersey to build from Pomona on the Camden and Atlantic Railroad to Brigantine Island.

21 April 1890 Pomona Beach Railroad incorporated in New Jersey to build from Camden and Atlantic Railroad to the Atlantic City Railroad at Pomona, to connect the Brigantine Beach Railroad with the ACRR.

18 August 1890 Brigantine Beach Railroad and Pomona Beach Railroad are leased to Atlantic City Railroad.

27 January 1891 Pomona Beach Railroad consolidated with Brigantine Beach Railroad, that now runs from Brigantine Beach to Brigantine Junction 13.90 miles.

1893 Brigantine Transit Company built as an electric trolley line, The road extends along Brigantine Beach NJ a distance of six and one quarter miles.

27 June 1895 The secretary of Brigantine Transit Company, George H. Cook buys the Brigantine Beach Railroad at foreclosure sale.

1 April 1896 the Brigantine Beach Railroad reincorporated as Philadelphia & Brigantine Railroad; George H. Cook Pres.; The Philadelphia & Brigantine Railroad lease Brigantine Transit Company.

30 September 1897 Atlantic City Railroad canceled the lease of Philadelphia & Brigantine Railroad.

12 September 1903 Storm destroys trestle leading to Brigantine Island on Philadelphia & Brigantine Railroad. (Coxey)

9 October 1903 Philadelphia & Brigantine Railroad abandons all service. (Coxey)

Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines

On 2 November 1932, the Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading Company joined their southern New Jersey railroad lines into one company, The Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines which the Pennsylvania Railroad had a 2/3 ownership, And the Reading Company had a 1/3 ownership.^[4]

On 15 July 1933, The Atlantic City Railroad leased the West Jersey & Seashore Railroad and changed its name to Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines.^[4]

See also

- [Central Railroad of New Jersey](#)
- [New Jersey Southern Railroad](#)
- [Pennsylvania Railroad](#)
- [Reading Company](#)
- [1896 Atlantic City rail crash](#)
- [1922 Winslow Junction Train Derailment](#)

References

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2. Tischler, Susan. "The Treasures of Sunset Beach, Part II" (<http://www.capemay.com/Editorial/october05/sunsetbeach2.html>). *CapeMay.com*.
3. "Railroad Tracks Appear on Sunset Beach in Lower Township" (<http://www.capemaycountyherald.com/article/environment/104072-railroad+tracks+appear+sunset+beach+lower+township>). *Cape May County Herald*. 12 November 2014.
4. [Gladulich 1986](#).
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External links

- [The Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines Historical Society \(http://www.prslhs.com\)](http://www.prslhs.com)
- [The West Jersey Chapter of the NRHS \(http://www.westjersey-nrhs.org/\)](http://www.westjersey-nrhs.org/)

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