

North Shore #162



Type: Steel Interurban Car

Built: 1915

Seats: 58

Length – 56' 0"

Width – 8' 8"

Height – 12' 5"

Weight – 90,280 lbs.



During the early 20th century, travel by electric interurban and streetcar systems in the United States was quick and popular. Many interurban systems could exceed speeds of 50 miles an hour, and so the interurban railroads were a fast, clean, and quiet form of transportation. The Chicago North Shore and Milwaukee Railroad was dubbed a “super interurban,” with the famed *Electroliners* introduced in 1941 exceeding 105 miles an hour.

The “North Shore Line’s” predecessor was the Chicago and Milwaukee Electric Railroad Company, which completed the speedy interurban line between Chicago and Evanston, Illinois, where riders could transfer to Chicago “L” rapid transit trains for the final trip into the city.

In 1915, the company ordered 15 new all-steel interurban cars to replace the slower wooden cars. These new cars were numbered 150-164, and were capable of exceeding speeds of 80 miles an hour on the line. However, the “Shore Line Route” had lots of speed restrictions and many stops placed closely together.



Don Ross photo

In 1916, the company became the North Shore Line when it was taken over by Samuel

Insull. In 1919, the North Shore Line was granted trackage rights on the “L,” which it operated on between Evanston and the Loop and Roosevelt Road. Insull also built new stations and modernized the railroad by improving speeds and service.



Roger Puta photo

A few years later, with the completion of the high-speed Skokie Valley Route and the ordering of more interurban cars, 162 and the other older cars were pushed away from express trains, and onto local service between lightly used stations and on the branch line to Mundelein, Illinois. On January 21, 1963, the North Shore Line was shut down by the Susquehanna Holding Company.

After the North Shore Line shut down, Car 162 was purchased by the American Museum of Electricity in New York, near Schenectady. However, the museum’s plans to build a large campus were never achieved, and the entire enterprise collapsed in 1970, before any construction began. Its collections were dispersed and the Connecticut Trolley Museum in East Windsor, CT acquired Car 162. The East Troy Railroad Museum acquired the car from the Connecticut Trolley Museum in 2022. Today, the car is one of only four former “Chicago and Milwaukee Electric” cars in existence and the oldest surviving North Shore Line passenger car.