



Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee (North Shore Line) Car 761

Car 761 was one of 25 new interurban coaches ordered from the Standard Steel Car Company in Butler, PA in 1930 for the Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad – also known as the North Shore Line – which ran frequent high-speed trains between the Loop in downtown Chicago and 6th Street in downtown Milwaukee from 1916 through January of 1963. Railroad historian and photographer William Middleton described the North Shore Line as a “super interurban.” There are still many people today who remember the North Shore Line fondly and remember riding on the line.

Car 761 was capable of speeds exceeding 80 miles per hour and often ran in trains up to seven cars long. The car was first modernized in 1949, and further updating – including the special “Silverliner” trim – was completed in 1957 during a subsequent modernization program designed to mimic the fluted stainless steel sides of the newest passenger railcars of the era. The car was in service on the North Shore Line through January 21, 1963, when the North Shore Line ceased operation.

After the North Shore Line shut down, the car was purchased by an individual in Michigan and then passed through several ownership changes until it came to the Michigan Transit Museum in 1977. The East Troy Railroad Museum acquired the car in 2001. A restoration effort began shortly thereafter and continued off and on for several years. A new roof, interior heat, new doors and rewiring had been completed in 2014. When volunteers discovered significant structural damage on the east end of the car, the project ground to a halt. After a qualified welder/ironworker joined the volunteer team in 2019, the Museum’s board agreed that the project could resume. That same year, several volunteers who had previously worked on the car returned to the museum.

Following an 18-month restoration effort by more than 20 volunteers, car 761 returned to operation in 2021, 58 years after it last ran under its own power. It took more than 1,000 volunteer hours and \$42,700 to complete the project.

“The restoration project was extensive and the results are outstanding,” said Ryan Jonas, President of the museum. “Volunteers who are old enough to remember riding on the North Shore Line say it’s almost spooky walking into the car because it looks so much like it would have back in 1963. It’s like going back in time.”

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CNS&M 761 at Army Lake siding, on the East Troy Electric Railroad (Jenny McCarthy photo).

Vital Statistics:

Length - 55' 3"
Width - 8' 8"
Height - 12' 7"
Weight - 103,800 lbs.
Construction - Steel
Gauge - Standard (4' 8.5")
Roof Type - AR
Ended - Double-Ended

Seats - 52 passengers
#Wheels/Conf. - 8 (B-B)
Trucks - Baldwin 84-30AA
Brakes - AMU (M23)
Compressor - DH-25
Motors - WH 557R5 (4)
Control - WH HLF-28A3
Voltage - 600 VDC

Ownership History:

Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee #761 - 1930-1963
Robert Owen, Romeo, MI - 1963
Cadillac & Lake City Railway - 1963?-1970?
Robert Owen/Whistle Stop Museum, Rochester, MI - 1970?-1977
Michigan Transit Museum - 1977-2001
East Troy Electric Railroad - 2001-present

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