

Trolley Comes to Town

The iron horse invaded our nearby pastoral landscape and scared the cows to death in the 1840's, but in 1900 it came right through the center of town and Albert Philbrick's dear dog Carlo was so angry he attacked it and was killed. Well it was a long walk/ride to town and a long wait for the stage and a horse and wagon cost \$1.50, so many welcomed the modern world in 1899 when the Portsmouth Electric Railway arrived in Rye Center eventually making its way down Central road and hooking up with the soon completed Ocean Boulevard rail to Hampton Beach. The trolley linked people up all over the seacoast and coastal Maine – a great inter-city rail system as you still find in Europe. But it ended in 1927. Why could it not co-exist with automobiles? (Don't ask!) Was this indeed progress, or was it like a devils bargain – as the old Sumerian myth says: If you accept the gifts of civilization can you use them with wisdom and restraint? If you can't, will you be able to bear the consequences. The horseless carriage prevailed over most passenger rail. You be the judge.