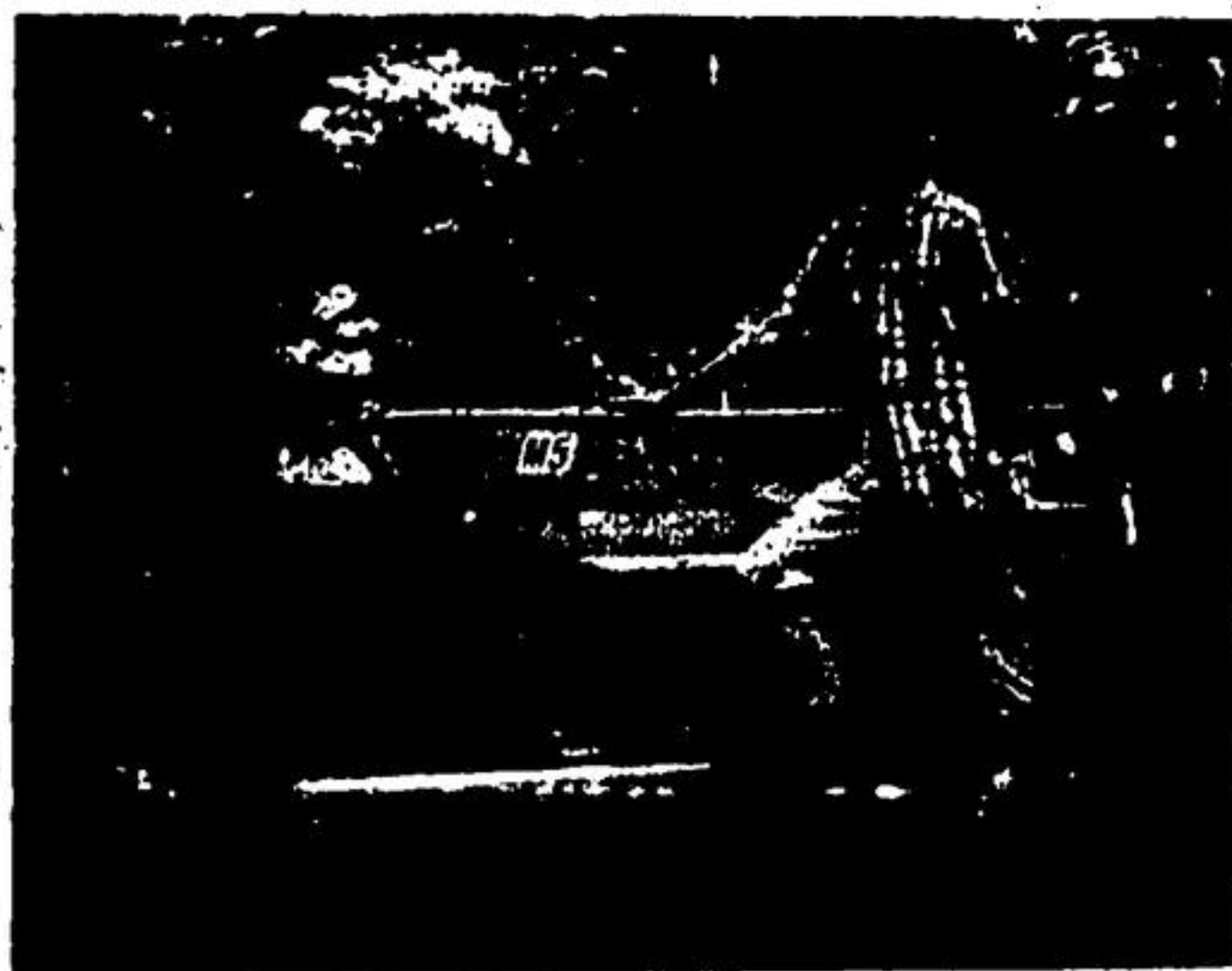


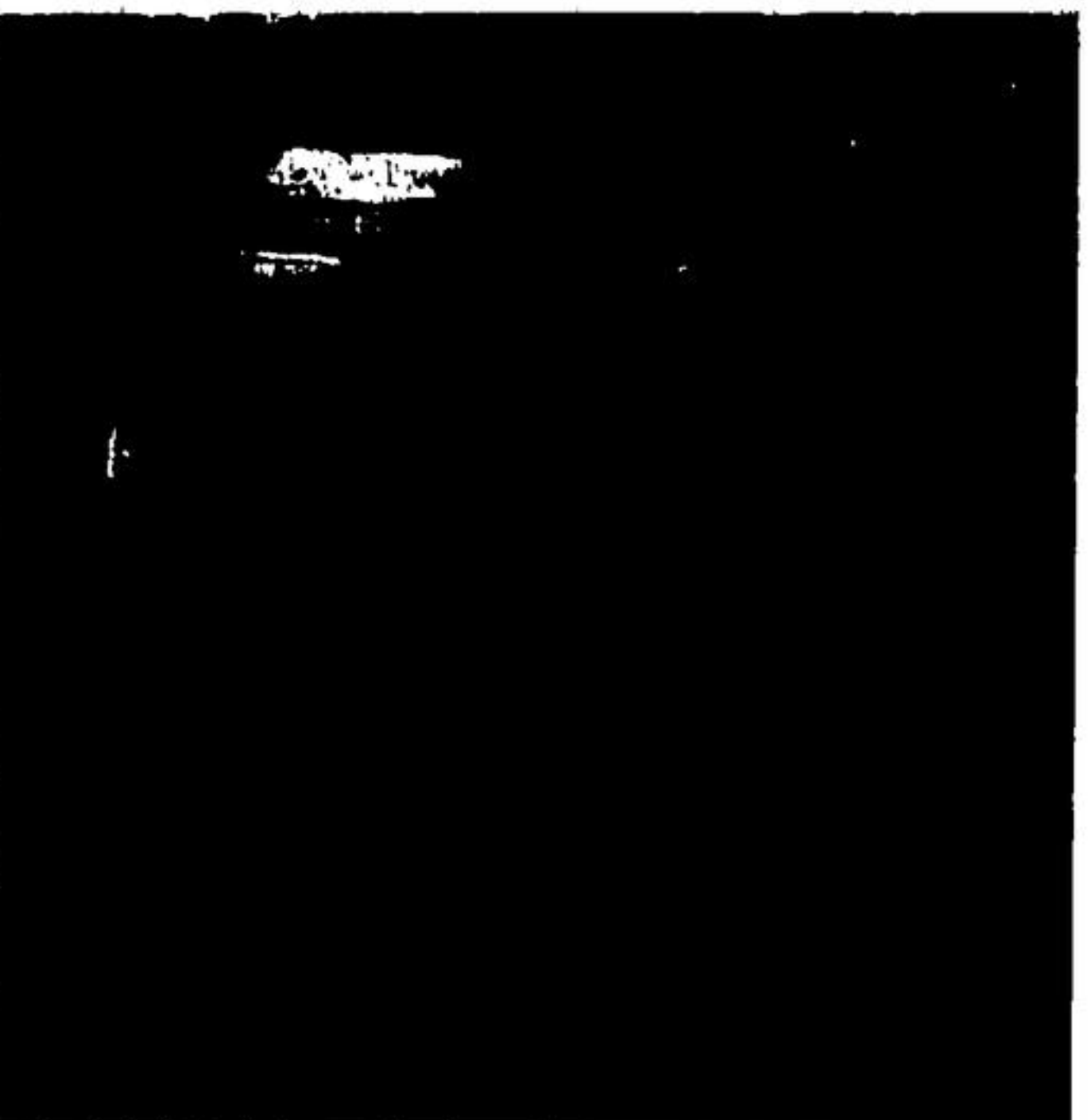
Electric railway museum in Nassagaweya unique tourist attraction for area



JOE TAY, RIGHT, hooks a ride on the unique Trackmobile the Ontario Electrical Railway Historical Association uses to pull the electrical street cars at its Nassagaweya location. Driver is secretary Bill Watson. The Trackmobile can ride either on the rails or on the road, merely by switching wheels. (Staff Photo)



SECRETARY BILL WATSON stands alongside the huge generators of the Ontario Electric Railway Historical Association took apart in Oshawa, shipped and reassembled in a cement block building on the Guelph Line. (Staff Photo)



ONLY STOP so far on the first quarter mile of track laid down in the outdoor electric railway museum is a comfort station. The O.E.R.H.A. expect to erect a facsimile of an old station on the Guelph Line. (Staff Photo)



THREE TRANSFORMERS are already installed ready to supply power to run the electric railway system. (Staff Photo)

The old Toronto Suburban Railway will come to life again on a mile and a half strip of track in Nassagaweya township between the Fourth Line and the Guelph Line.

Members of the Ontario Electrical Railway Historical Association have been working on a project in that area since 1953 to recreate an era when the electric railway was one of the most important instruments in urban and suburban development. After much toil by 100 members of the Association, the project is now at the point where completion is expected in another year.

Visualize a strip of track one and a half miles long with old-fashioned street cars and trolleys running on it from a station built on the Guelph Line below 30 Sideroad. A quarter mile of the track is already completed along with a huge steel car barn which houses several old street cars.

Power will be supplied from three huge transformers and a large generating unit purloined from the old Oshawa Street Railway.

All the labor on the project has been done by the members themselves - working mostly on Sundays. Fortunately they have a number of electrical engineers who were able to install the complex generator and transformers.

Overhead wires will be installed in September on a line of poles, partially in now. When the tracks are completed and refurbishing of old cars completed, the entire system should be ready to go into operation.

"Most of our members are from Toronto," said secretary Bill Watson, "and they come from every walk of life - clerks, engineers, some railwaymen and a sprinkling of almost all occupations." The Association is held together by a common bond - a desire to preserve the electric railway era for generations who would never have a chance to participate in it.

Impetus was given the formation of the O.E.R.H.A. in 1953 when the impending destruction of two notable examples of the streetcar-builders' art - one of them the last operable wooden trolley car in use in Toronto - was being planned. It was built in 1910. The other was a double-end four-wheeler from the 30s - the Toronto Civic Railway. The O.E.R.H.A. was launched when the two old street cars were acquired. Both are now in the Nassagaweya car barns.

The Nassagaweya property was chosen as the site for the Association's "museum" since a half mile of the former Toronto Suburban Railway ran through it. The old "radical" line fanned out from Toronto, passing through Streetsville, Georgetown, Acton, Eden Mills and ended in Guelph.

The property which had lain derelict since 1935 had reverted to Nassagaweya Township for non-payment of taxes. The original four acres has been extended by the acquisition of an additional 12 acres of land. Simultaneously the Association has been building up a large

exhibit of streetcar relics. In the barns now are an inter-urban car from Montreal, part express and part coach, embellished with stained glass clerestory windows and exotic wood panelling.

From several of the electric railways in southern Ontario have come pieces of work equipment once used for maintenance. Car restoration and building construction have kept the members of the Association busy over the past 10 years and now it looks like the project is nearing the operating stages, excitement is increasing.

"We're only here on Sundays and there's been a tremendous amount of work done in the past few years," the secretary said.

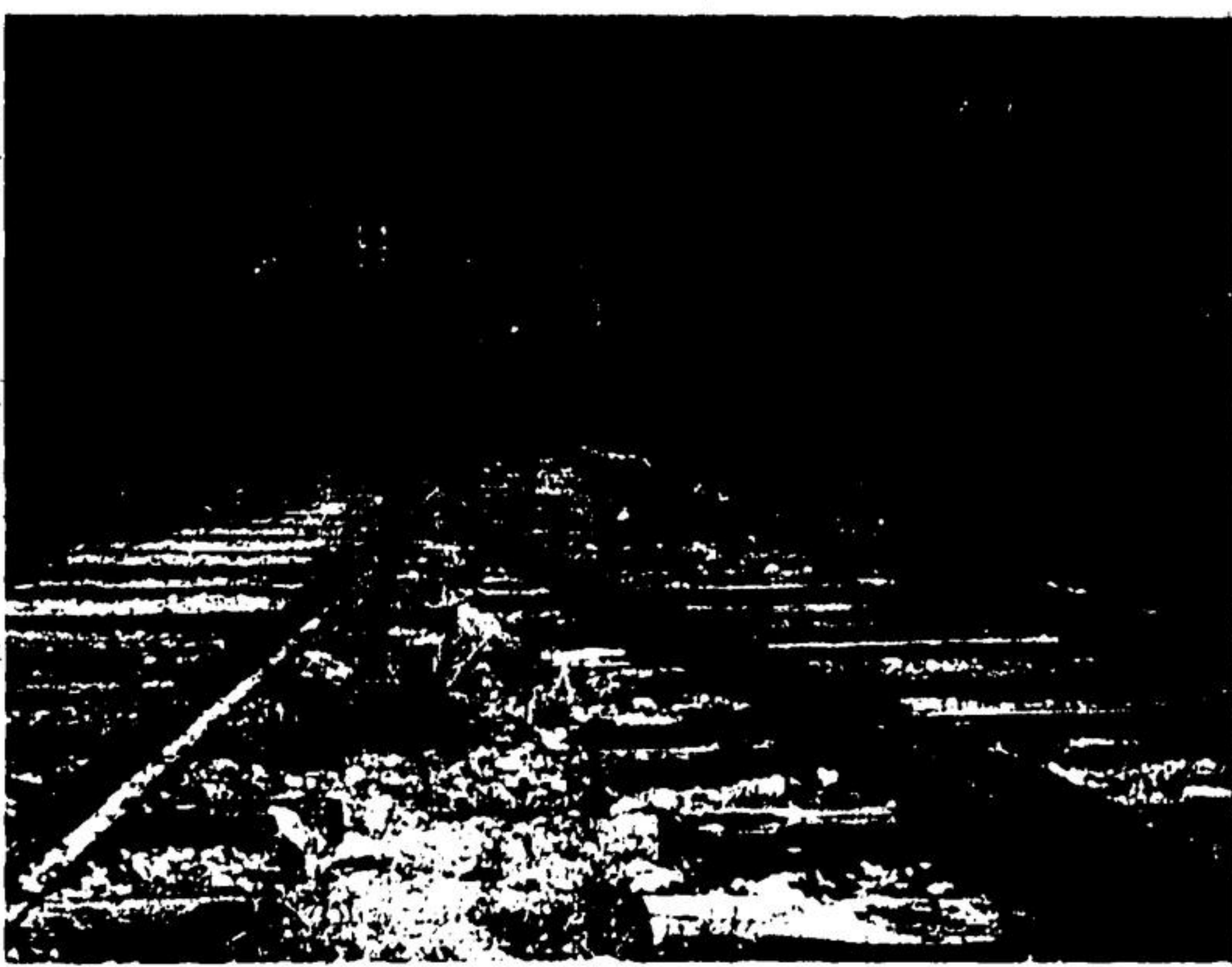
One of the members, John Mills, has written a book entitled "Niagara, St. Catharines and Toronto Railway," which tells the story of the electric railways in Ontario. His book describes among other things the old Toronto radial line which old residents here remember well. "We feel we will be adding a unique tourist attraction to the township," Mr. Watson said, "when we get the line rolling."

Visitors are welcome to the site of the antique railway system on Sundays. Members are always ready to show people around and explain the dream that's beginning to shape up as a realization.

There's no charge. Treasurer Neil McConen said any donations received go back into the pot for development of the unique museum.



FORMER TORONTO TRANSIT Commission Crane Car C-1 is moved through Acton on its way to the Ontario Electric Railway Historical Association's Nassagaweya museum. (O.E.R.H.A. Photo)



TRACKS FOR THE ELECTRIC railway museum original roadbed of the old Toronto Suburban Railway, gone to seed since 1935. Nassagaweya woods. They're laid on the (Staff Photo)



ROLLING STOCK of old trolleys and street cars wooden trolley car in use in Toronto. is moved back into the large barn where the historical display includes the last operable (Staff Photo)

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