

= PRR 4859 =

PRR 4859 is a GG1 @-@ class electric locomotive located in the Harrisburg Transportation Center in Harrisburg in the U.S. state of Pennsylvania . It was operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad and its successors , Penn Central and Conrail . 4859 pulled the first electrically powered train from Philadelphia to Harrisburg on January 15 , 1938 . It was used in various freight and passenger service until November 22 , 1979 , when it pulled the last GG1 @-@ powered freight train on November 22 , 1979 . Originally located in Strasburg , it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 and was moved to its current location in 1986 . It was designated the state electric locomotive of Pennsylvania in 1987 by the Pennsylvania General Assembly and was re @-@ listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004 .

= = Background = =

The GG1 was developed in 1930s by General Electric as the replacement for the Pennsylvania Railroad 's then standard electric locomotive , the P5a , and was based largely on the New Haven EP3 . The GG1 was capable of a top speed of 100 miles per hour ( 160 km / h ) , powered by its twelve 385 horsepower ( 287 kW ) traction motors . The prototype GG1 , PRR 4800 , was tested against Westinghouse 's submission , the R1 . The Pennsylvania selected the GG1 over the R1 , as the R1 was not articulated and the GG1 's traction motors were similar to ones already in use . An order for 57 GG1s was placed in November 1934 and the first locomotives were delivered in April 1935 .

Raymond Loewy was hired by the Pennsylvania to " enhance the GG1 's aesthetics . " Loewy had the production locomotives ' bodies be welded together , instead of riveted the way 4800 was , to give the GG1 a more streamlined appearance . Loewy also formulated the Brunswick green paint scheme and the gold pinstripes , nicknamed " cat 's whiskers " , which was eventually applied by the Pennsylvania to all of its locomotives for the next 20 years .

= = History = =

4859 was built in December 1937 at the Pennsylvania Railroad 's Altoona Works in Altoona , Pennsylvania . The Philadelphia ? Harrisburg line was opened on January 15 , 1938 , with 4859 pulling the inaugural train , Train # 25 The Metropolitan . Its departure from Philadelphia was accompanied by a cacophony of various train whistles and fire sirens leading some residents , who were unaware of the event , to believe that Nazi Germany was invading .

4859 was regearred to have a top speed of 90 miles per hour ( 140 km / h ) when it was shifted to freight duty in 1964 . Although used primarily for freight , 4859 coninuned to pull " clockers " , or short @-@ haul passenger trains , from New York to Philadelphia and commuter trains on the New York and Long Branch Railroad . 4859 , accompanied by PRR 4887 , pulled the last freight train to be powered by a GG1 from the Enola Yard in Enola , Pennsylvania to Edgemoor , Delaware , before being retired by Conrail on November 29 , 1979 .

= = = Preservation = = =

After its retirement , 4859 was purchased in for \$ 13 @,@ 000 by the Harrisburg chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society and donated to the Harrisburg Redevelopment Authority . It was sent to the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum in Strasburg in the early 1980s , where restoration of 4859 was carried by the workshops of the nearby Strasburg Rail Road . The body and chassis were sandblasted , primed and repainted back to its original 1938 appearance . The main transformer was removed and drained of the hazardous polychlorinated biphenyl ( PCBs ) used as coolant .

4859 was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 19 , 1982 , while still in Strasburg . The deed to 4859 was transferred from Redevelopment Authority to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on November 13 , 1986 . Two days later , the engine was

moved into the Transportation Center and rededicated . The Pennsylvania General Assembly designated 4859 the official state electric locomotive on December 18 , 1987 , while also designating two K4s locomotives as the state steam locomotives in the same bill . 4859 was listed on National Register of Historic Places for a second time on May 5 , 2004 . " Soft " materials , like insulation , were removed from the cab in 2005 on orders from the United States Environmental Protection Agency to remove residual contamination from the PCBs . In 2010 , 4859 received some cosmetic restoration of its truck assemblies which were re @-@ painted black to eliminate a noticeable coating of rust . On April 5 , 2014 , the locomotive and its caboose were temporarily moved west of the Transportation Center , approximately 1 @,@ 000 feet ( 300 m ) , to a siding , and covered with tarpaulins to allow Amtrak to perform renovation work on the station 's catenary , signals , switches and tracks . By October 17 , 2015 , the renovations were complete enough to allow 4859 to return to the station , though the project overall remains in progress .