

Trans-Bridge Lines Marks Milestone 80th Anniversary

By Jennifer Lechiski

Bethlehem, PA – Trans-Bridge Lines, Inc. has transported millions of residents throughout the Lehigh Valley and northwestern New Jersey for 80 years! February marks this monumental milestone in what has been a bittersweet year for the Greater Lehigh Valley's leading motorcoach company. Trans-Bridge has been family-owned and operated since 1941, and is in its third generation of ownership and fourth generation of management.

Founder A. J. Ferraro started in the bus business in 1917. He was a driver, manager, consultant, partner, and owner of various bus companies in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. In 1941, Ferraro founded his Broadway, New Jersey based Trans-Bridge Lines, Inc., when he took over the New Jersey Interurban Coach Company with members of his family.

The company operated local transit service along the Port Colden, Washington, Broadway, and Phillipsburg, New Jersey corridor to Easton, Pennsylvania, and grew to include Allentown, Pennsylvania. The company also ran some charters and tour excursions. Then in 1943 Delaware River Coach Lines, an affiliate of Trans-Bridge Lines, began operating local transit service between Easton and Phillipsburg. The companies moved to a new facility in Phillipsburg in 1946.

1969 marked the birth of Trans-Bridge Tours, a Trans-Bridge Lines affiliate, which started as Holiday Tours, conducting retail tours through the United States and Canada. The tours grew to include One-Day, Multi-Day, and Casino Tours, as well as Air & Cruise Vacations. Trans-Bridge Lines and Tri-City Coach Lines, an additional family-owned charter coach company based in Bethlehem, merged and moved to a new facility in Bethlehem's Lehigh Valley Industrial Park in 1981. In 1991, the company purchased West Hunterdon Transit Company, which increased the service area and now covers the entire Lehigh Valley, New Hope, Doylestown, and Quakertown, Pennsylvania; Clinton, Flemington, and Lambertville, New Jersey regions. In 1997 Jim Thorpe Transportation was acquired. 80Years of Excellence 1941-2021

Today Trans-Bridge Lines is facing challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Portions of regular service have been suspended due to low ridership. The company continues to find ways to diversify by adding additional services such as recreational vehicle service, repair, and storage.

Trans-Bridge is no stranger to tough times having survived financial struggles twice in the late 40's, in 1969, and again in 1987. It suffered along with the rest of the nation after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the New York City blackout, the financial crisis in 2008-2009, and Superstorm Sandy, all of which disrupted business. Resilience is certainly a trait of this company whose management team is committed to providing area communities with safe and modern motorcoach transportation.

Trans-Bridge Lines, Inc. offers daily service to New York City, and Newark and JFK Airports from the Lehigh Valley area, Doylestown, and New Hope in Pennsylvania, and Clinton, Phillipsburg, Frenchtown, Lambertville, Flemington and Branchburg in New Jersey. Weekday service is available to Lower Manhattan, Wall Street and Jersey City from the Lehigh Valley and Clinton. Additionally, Trans-Bridge provides daily transportation to the Manhattan and Bayonne, NJ piers. The Charter Service

department supplies businesses, church groups, schools and organizations with custom designed planning for one-day and overnight trips, sporting events, shows, Atlantic City and special city tours.



Founder A.J. Ferraro
Circa 1933



New York City, 1921

Pictured boarding the bus is A.J. Ferraro, owner and operator. This bus was the nation's first all-steel body bus built by the G. C. Kuhlman Car Company of Cleveland, Ohio. Cost of this unit was \$10,139.



Current fleet of Trans-Bridge buses. Many of the coaches are out-of-service due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has hit the motorcoach industry particularly hard with no federal relief. Trans-Bridge Lines is currently running at less than 20% of its usual capacity.



On May 13, 2020, Trans-Bridge participated in Motorcoaches Rolling for Awareness in Washington, DC. The mobile rally was an effort to bring awareness to the need for relief of the motorcoach industry.



All in the Family.

Picture from left to right are: John Ferraro, James JeBrans, Joe Ferraro, and seated, Camille JeBrans.

Longtime partners, John and Joe retired in 1990. Jim, Camille, and their sons then took over ownership of the companies.



JeBrans family matriarch, Camille JeBrans has grown up in the business. It was her father, A.J. Ferraro, who started the company back in 1941. Now in its 4th generation and 3rd generation of ownership, Camille remains active and abreast of what is going on with the bus company. Camille turned 103 years old on January 26.

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