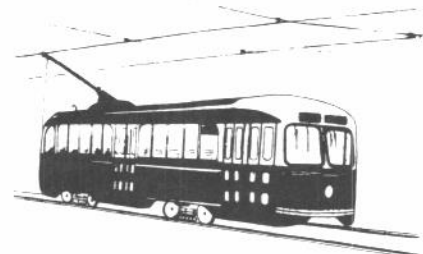


# NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN



ELECTRIC RAILROADERS' ASSOCIATION

VOL. 16 - NO. 2

GPO Box 1892 New York, N.Y. 10001

APRIL 1973

THE DECLINE & ABANDONMENT OF THE THIRD AVE EL \* Starts on Page 2 \*-\*-\*-\*

NEW CARS FOR STATEN ISLAND -&- FOR NEW HAVEN COMMUTERS - Stories Below

## SIRTOA R-44'S IN SERVICE

ON Wednesday, Feb 28, the first of the new Staten Island cars went into service. The first train, consisting of cars 404, 405, 408, left St George at 3:15 PM with officials and operated to Grasmere, where St. George-bound passengers were transferred from a regular train to the R-44 train which returned to St George. Except for some outside grab handles, they are the same as the subway R-44's, meaning only 12 forward-facing seats in the control cars. They also have roll signs, not illuminated destinations as originally planned. (See list on page 5 of this issue). These are the first new SIRT cars since the mid-1920's when the line was first electrified. Reports say that door controls will be modified so that doors can be controlled individually but they were not built with these controls. On March 7 in the AM rush hour, there were 21 regular SIRT cars, 6 R-44's and 3 LIRR cars in service, much better than usual in recent years. On April 28, National ERA ran a trip, first a roundtrip to Tottenville in LIRR cars 2517 & 2509; then to Great Kills, Clifton and back to St George in SIRT 346, 359 & 393; finally R-44's 400-401-402. The LIRR cars were withdrawn from SIRT service in late April. The R-44's may be the last cars built by St Louis Car, a company with a long history in the car building field, which is planning to go out of this business.

## COSMOPOLITANS IN SERVICE

On April 16, NY Governor Rockefeller, Connecticut Governor Meskill and MTA Chairman Ronan were at Stamford, Conn, for the inaugural run of the Cosmopolitans which left Stamford about 8:30 AM. Consisting of cars (S) 8405-4, 8505-4, 8403-2(N), it arrived at Grand Central Station about 12 minutes late because of signal troubles. A broken third rail on a different track outside of Grand Central caused several trains to be backed up and commuters on the stalled trains thought they were being delayed by the official's train. A second train of cars 8503-2, 8507-6, 8501-0 was put in service shortly afterwards. The Cosmopolitans are like the Metropolitans except for the pantographs and electrical equipment on the roof to convert the 11,000 Volt A-C to 600 D-C. They also have a red band instead of the MTA blue, and the Connecticut cars have the Conn insignia instead of the big blue "M". General Electric is building 144 of the Cosmopolitans or M-2's and the bodies are by Canadian-Vickers. Budd built the bodies for all the M-1's and M-1a's. A list of numbering of the Metropolitans and Cosmopolitans appears on page 5.

## PATH TUBES ON STRIKE

The Path Tubes went on strike April 1 and all service ceased. PATH made no attempt to operate and Public Service (now officially known as Transport of New Jersey) put an extra 150 buses in service to carry passengers between Manhattan and Hoboken and Jersey City. Penn Central inaugurated a shuttle of Jersey Arrows between Newark and Pennsylvania Station, New York. Unknown to most persons, there are two daily shuttles

NEWS CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE -- (PATH Strike)

of old M-U's from Newark to New York. These do not appear on the timetables and we assume they are put in when gaps develop in the service. Therefore, the shuttle because of the PATH strike is not unique.

#### COLLISION AND REROUTES

On Feb 12 after the AM rush hour, two empty trains collided on the southbound express track at Church Ave station of the Smith-Culver Line ("F"/"GG"). R-1/9 train of cars (S)1236,1105,1128,1183,1324,1077,1188,1254,1416,1155(N) actually hit the R-40 train just north of the station and pushed the latter into the station. The R-40 had cars (S)4306-7, 4181-0, 4317-6, 4264-5, 4421-0(N) and 4420 was cut up on the spot. Car 1236 was badly damaged and will be scrapped as 754. Except for 4421, the other cars were all back in service shortly thereafter.

There were some interesting reroutes in the last several months.

Nov 3-Northbound "GG" rerouted over layup track between 21 St-Van Alst and Court Sq, then southbound track to Queens Plaza, reversed to crossover in 60 St Tunnel connection, reversed and via northbound track and regular route to Forest Hills. Nov 5-Southbound similar reroute.

Nov 6-8 Southbound "E" and "F" trains single track on northbound express track between layup track north (east) of Queens Plaza and 23 St-Ely Ave. Nov 9-12 Southbound "E" & "F" wrong rail through 53 St Tunnel.

Nov 13-15 Same northbound. Both these latter were later repeated.

The above were all during owl hours for radio cable installation.

Nov 13-Dec 7 IRT #1-Broadway Local cut back at Chambers St with single track shuttle to South Ferry for rebuilding of Cortlandt St southbound platform (World Trade Center). #6 Lex-Pelham cut back at Brooklyn Bridge with Bowling Green-South Ferry Shuttle. (Owl hours)

Nov 20-27 (Owl hours) Southbound "F" single track from Lex-53 St via 57 St-6 Ave, "B" via Broadway to 57 St-7 Ave and "E" as "EE" via Broadway to Whitehall St (Similar to Dec 4-5, 1971) for switch and cable work.

Nov 28-Dec 2 Same with "F" single track northbound for radio cable.

Dec 17-21 Northbound Brighton "D" trains single track from Prospect Park to Dekalb Ave, reversed to Pacific St and reversed again.

Dec 26-29 Northbound West End trains single tracked between 9 Ave and 36 St-4 Ave, reversed after using crossover to get to local track and then proceeded normally. All these during owl hours.

March (midday) Brighton Local terminated at Brighton Beach, single track shuttle to Coney Island on southbound (Coney Island bound) track.

April 15 - Southbound "D" rerouted via West End or Sea Beach nonstop from DeKalb Ave to Coney Island (about 6 AM to 7 PM). Southbound service provided from Franklin Ave to Coney Island (24 min headway, irregular) using 6 car R-27/30's; a southbound shuttle from DeKalb Ave to Prospect Park (4 car R-32's), both carrying passengers only southbound.

April 29 - same as April 15 in opposite direction. Switches at Prospect Park to and from Franklin Ave ("O" tracks) were replaced. R-44's were used on the "D" on April 29 but not seen on April 15.

#### RADIO SYSTEM IN SERVICE ON DIVISION "B" (BMT-IND)

September 27 - Fulton St. Line - Jay St (& Court St) to Lafayette Ave.

Smith St. Line - Jay St to Carroll St.

CROSSTOWN LINE + Fulton St to Carroll St

October 12 - Crosstown Line - Greenpoint Ave to Fulton St

November 1 - Queens Blvd Line - Parsons Blvd to Sutphin Blvd and

Forest Hills to 63 Drive

November 4 - 8 Ave-Fulton-Rockaway "E" 50 St to Lefferts & Rockaways

6 Ave-Houston-Smith-Culver Line - 50 St to 7 Ave-9 St and  
Church Ave to Coney Island

Division "B" completed Jan 10 except Franklin Shuttle to be redone.

# THE DECLINE AND ABANDONMENT OF THE THIRD AVE EL

BY BERNARD LINDER

On Saturday night, April 28, 1973, the last regular passenger train operated on the Third Avenue Elevated Line in the Bronx and this meant abandonment of the final part of the Manhattan Railway Company lines. Thus, while talk goes on about the importance of rapid transit and plans for new lines are discussed, another existing line bites the dust and another area loses its rapid transit. The last regular train consisted of cars (S)5778, 5760, 5793, 5802(N) and left Gun Hill Road 11:42 PM, 149 Street 12:06 AM and arrived at Gun Hill Road 12:23 AM (April 29). It was followed with a light train with cars (S)5782, 5791, 5768, 5754(N). On Sunday, April 29, National ERA operated a post-abandonment fantrip on cars (S)5443, 4902, 5466, 5292, 5290(N) making two trips over the line. The last trip left Gun Hill Road 4:04 PM, 149 St 4:50 and arrived at Gun Hill Road 5:46 PM following a number of photo stops. However, work trains will be operating over the "L" until about July 31, to salvage signals, certain turnstiles and third rails, etc.

The first portion of the Third Ave El (in Manhattan) opened Aug 26, 1878, and the first part was electrified March 24, 1902. The recently abandoned section opened between July 1, 1887 and Oct 4, 1920. (Foregoing written by Arthur Lonto, the following by Bernard Linder.)

When the last Third Avenue "L" train ran on April 28, 1973, it marked the end of an era of rapid transit in New York City. The elevated was the sole form of rapid transit until the first subway opened in 1904. the subway was extremely popular and the extensions gradually siphoned the traffic from the old elevated lines, most of which were discontinued at Unification in 1940. The Third Avenue El, which was the busiest, became a rarity and managed to survive in Manhattan until May 12, 1955, and in the Bronx until April 28, 1973.

This article will give an analysis of the rise and fall of passenger traffic on the Third Avenue Elevated Line from 1908 to 1971. New York's population was increasing before World War I and 3 Avenue "L" riding increased about three million passengers a year between 1908 and 1916. A partial rush hour express service north of 42 Street had been operating for several years and in order to increase the capacity of the line, the third track was made continuous between Chatham Square and Fordham Road. Extended rush hour service (3 hours in the morning and 3 hours in the afternoon) started operating south of 149 St on January 17, 1916, and from 149 St to Tremont Ave on July 9, 1917. All day express service south of 138 St was begun in November, 1917. This new express service resulted in an increase of nearly 14 million passengers from 1916 to 1917. Passenger traffic reached a record maximum of 158,557,789 in 1917. When the Lexington Ave Subway was extended to the Bronx on August 1, 1918, everyone knew that 3rd Ave "L" traffic would decline. The "L" passenger total for 1919, the first full year of Lexington Ave Subway operation, was 20 million less than the 1917 total.

The extension of the el to White Plains Road on October 4, 1920 and the beginning of evening express service in 1923 helped boost riding 3 million in 1921 and again in 1924. However, these increases were only temporary and the decline in riding averaged 1½ million riders a year during the 1920's.

New York City's transit riding fell appreciately during the Depression and the 3rd Ave "L" was no exception. The decline averaged 10 million passengers per year from 1930 to 1935. Improved business conditions during the next five years helped reduce the average annual decline



to 2 million passengers. The closing of the Second Ave "L" north of 59 St on June 12, 1940, and south of 59 St on June 13, 1942, did not help traffic on the Third Ave "L" which continued declining slightly, reaching a new low in 1944. Wartime shortages of Automobiles and gasoline and the wartime business boom must have helped boost riding 13 million passengers in two years, making the 1946 total the highest since 1933.

Postwar riding fell on nearly all transit systems and the 3 Ave El riding declined rapidly. This decline was accelerated by the abandonment of major portions of the line between 1950 and 1955. On December 22, 1950, service was discontinued between South Ferry and Chatham Square and between Gun Hill Road and East 241 St. Weekday evening and all Saturday and Sunday service south of 149 St was discontinued on March 14, 1952. City Hall station was closed on December 31, 1953 and all service south of 149 Street stopped running on May 12, 1955. As a result of these abandonments and the decline in postwar riding, the 1956 total was less than one tenth of the 1946 total. Passenger traffic showed a slight rise from 1958 to 1961 and then jumped nearly 600,000 the next year. This rise may have been caused by the discontinuance of the transfers between Bronx bus lines. Passengers may have taken the el and then made a free transfer to other rapid transit lines to reach their destination. This gain was short lived; riding dropped nearly a million passengers the next year and then declined slowly reaching a new low of less than six million passengers in 1971. The rush hour traffic which had dwindled to 5300 passengers per hour could be handled by buses. When the "L" stopped running on April 28, 1973, it suffered the saddest fate imaginable. It was replaced by a bus line.

The accompanying table shows the number of passengers carried during the years when significant changes occurred.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NO. OF PASSENGERS</u>	<u>IMPORTANT EVENTS</u>
1908	122,624,928	
1916	144,867,775	Increased express service 1/17/16
1917	158,557,789	Rush hour express 149 to Tremont 7/9/17
		All day express November 1917
1918	155,939,350	Lexington Ave Subway opened 8/1/18
1919	138,259,825	
1920	140,677,209	Extended to White Plains Road 10/4/20
1923	135,882,711	Began evening express service
1924	138,664,426	
1929	128,115,490	
1930	126,866,274	Start of the Depression
1931	118,862,621	Depression
1932	106,324,846	
1933	93,865,418	Concourse Subway opened 7/1/33
1934	85,357,741	
1940	75,569,381	Discontinued 2 Ave "L" north of 59 St 6/12/40
1941	74,316,570	6 Ave Subway opened 12/15/40
1942	74,055,969	Discontinued 2 Ave "L" south of 59 St 6/13/42
1943	73,241,653	
1944	73,196,306	
1945	77,208,140	Increased wartime riding
1946	86,481,483	" " "
1947	84,751,787	Postwar decline in riding
1948	78,134,965	Nickel fare dies, fare becomes 10¢ 7/1/48
1949	68,356,142	
1950	61,842,886	Discontinued South Ferry to Chatham Sq and Gun Hill Rd to E 241 St 12/22/50
1951	52,604,662	

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NO. OF PASSENGERS</u>	<u>IMPORTANT EVENTS</u>
1952	38,537,145	Discontinued south of 149 St evenings and all day Saturdays and Sundays 3/14/52
1953	32,965,044	Closed City Hall station 12/31/53
1954	25,122,912	
1955	13,104,498	Discontinued south of 149 St 5/12/55
1956	8,357,406	
1957	8,048,512	
1961	8,143,769	
1962	8,704,685	Discontinued bus transfers Jan 1962
1963	7,727,184	
1971	5,946,696	

(Figures are paying passengers entering at all stations on the line and does not include passengers transferring from other lines.) B.Linder

## THE NUMBERING OF THE METROPOLITANS

<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Railroad</u>	<u>Builder</u>	<u>Year</u>	by HENRY T. RAUDENBUSH
9001-9270	M-1 Long Island RR	Budd	1968-70	MTA Contract 930
9271-9620	M-1 Long Island RR	Budd	1970-1	MTA Contract 930A
8200-8279	M-1A P-C(NY Central)	G-E	1971	
9621-9770	M-1 Long Island RR	G-E	1972	} one contract
9175-6(II) to replace burned unit				
8280-8327	M-1A P-C(NY Central)	G-E	1972	
8328-8377	M-1A P-C(NY Central)	G-E	1972	

**-COSMOPOLITANS-**

8400's	M-2	P-C (New Haven)	G-E	1973 (NY State)	
8500's	M-2	P-C (New Haven)	G-E	1973 (Connecticut)	
8600's	"	(Cafe or Bar cars)(New York)			Note: Cafe cars are
8650's	"	(Cafe or Bar cars)(Conn)			designated "C" but are electrically "B" cars.

Even numbers are "A" (Batteries, Motor-Alternator and carpet floors)  
 Odd numbers are "B" (Air compressors, toilets and tile floors)  
 M-1 have LIRR shoes, destination sign spaces and wiring, Cab signals, ATC, and Identra.  
 M-1A have NY Central (underrunning) shoes, provision for cab signal & ATC.  
 M-2 have pantographs, NY Central shoes, cab signals and ATC.  
 Builder indicates prime contractor. All have G-E electrical equipment and M-1 and M-1A have Budd bodies. M-2 bodies are by Canadian Vickers.

STATEN ISLAND R-44 ROLL SIGNS by Douglas Grotjahn

<u>-FRONT END- (Top)</u>	<u>-SIDE EXTERIOR- (TOP)</u>	
Special		All exterior signs are white-on-black.  Side signs have map on interior except "Special" which says "Special" in black letters on white background.
St. George	St George Great Kills	
Great Kills	St George Tottenville	
Tottenville	Special	
<u>-BOTTOM-</u>	<u>-BOTTOM-</u>	

## RENUMBERING OF THE PENNSY GG-1's -by Harold J. Fagerberg

NEW #	ORIGINAL	NEW #	ORIGINAL	NEW #	ORIGINAL
900	4892	910	4910	920	4925
901	4897	911	4911	921	4926
902(II)	4899	912	4912	922	4928
903	4900	913	4913	923	4929
904	4901	914	4914	924	4931(temp.931)
905	4902(temp.902)	915	4915	925	4932
906	4903	916	4918	926	4933
907	4906	917	4919	927	4934
908(II)	4907	918	4920	928	4937
909	4908(temp.908)	919	4924	929	4938

The 30 electric engines will all be repainted AMTRAK colors, some have already been painted. The original plan was to drop the "4" from the number, thus 4908 was 908, 4902 was 902 and 4931 was 931, but with the gaps, it was decided it would better to renumber the units.

The entire Penn Central was shut down by a strike on Feb 8, but an Act of Congress ended the strike after one day. Unless a workable plan for the giant railroad is found, the judge overseeing the bankruptcy has threatened to order liquidation of the system.

## RENUMBERING OF IND R-1/9'S by Bill Zucker

Since all cars below 900 are to be scrapped shortly, NYCTA has switched numbers on useable R-4's with new cars that are out of service. In each case, numbers have been switched, there are no 3-way changes.

721	1593	815	1595	846	1200
729	1437	816	960	852	1100
754	1236	818	1054	858	1788
779	1173	819	1769	874	1644
788	918	829	1009	881	1761
801	935	830	1112	884	1621
805	1019	833	1099	893	1609
807	1715	834	1044	894	1430
814	1711	844	1186	898	1274

## STATEN ISLAND RAPID TRANSIT - PLATFORM LENGTHS when taken over by NYMTA

TOMPKINSVILLE	300 (Feet)	BAY TERRACE	220 (Feet)
STAPLETON	385	GREAT KILLS	220
CLIFTON	300	ELTINGVILLE	220
GRASMERE	300	ANNADALE	220
Old Town	140 (140)	HUGUENOT	225
DONGAN HILLS	250	PLEASANT PLAINS	250
JEFFERSON AVE	155	RICHMOND VALLEY	225
GRANT CITY	220	NASSAU	90 (132)
NEW DORP	270	ATLANTIC	90 (210)
OAKWOOD HEIGHTS	245	TOTTENVILLE	360

MTA is letting a contract to lengthen the short platforms by the number of feet shown in parenthesis after the old length. Thus all the stations will be able to accommodate 3-car trains of R-44's (225 Ft).

The BULLETIN staff wishes to thank all who have contributed items to the BULLETIN, especially those who wish to remain anonymous.