

The Bulletin



New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

Vol. 48, No. 1

January, 2005

The Bulletin

Published by the New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated, PO Box 3001, New York, New York 10008-3001.

For general inquiries, contact us at nydiv@electricrailroaders.org or by phone at (212) 986-4482 (voice mail available). ERA's website is www.electricrailroaders.org.

Editorial Staff:
Editor-in-Chief:
Bernard Linder
News Editor:
Randy Glucksmann
Contributing Editor:
Jeffrey Erlitz

Production Manager:
David Ross

©2005 New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated

In This Issue:
A Small Company Controls a Large Trolley Network
...Page 2

ANOTHER CENTENNIAL— ORIGINAL SUBWAY EXTENDED TO FULTON STREET

One hundred years ago, January 16, 1905, New York's first subway was extended 0.3 miles to Fulton Street. Trains were probably single-tracked on the northbound track.

When the original subway was planned, there was not enough money available to extend it south of City Hall. With \$8 million available in January, 1901, the Board of Rapid Transit Railroad Commissioners planned an extension to Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. August Belmont was the low bidder for Contract Two, which was awarded on September 11, 1902. This contract specified that traffic on the streets of lower Manhattan could not be disrupted. Traffic was so heavy that it was necessary to maintain the street surface in a condition suitable for ordinary traffic in the daytime.

The contractor complied by making openings in the sidewalk at two points near the curb and erecting temporary platforms over the street, 16 feet above the sidewalk. These excavations were made by the drift and tunnel method. The excavated material was hoisted from the openings to the platforms and dropped through the chutes to the wagons. Until the street surface was restored, temporary plank decks were placed and maintained during the drifting and tunneling operations. Because the roof of the subway is only five feet below the surface of the street, gas and water mains were relocated on temporary trestle structures above the sidewalk. They were placed in their former position when construction was completed.

The contractor had difficulty building this section because of the sandy subsurface, the vehicular and street car traffic, the network of

subsurface structures, and the high buildings. The biggest engineering problem of Contract Two was the construction of the subway in front of Trinity Church. The 286-foot-high Trinity Church spire rested on a shallow masonry foundation built on a deep layer of fine sand. This foundation was located nine feet laterally behind the exterior wall of the subway. The bottom of the spire foundation was nine feet below the street, fifteen feet higher than the 24-foot-deep subway foundation. The 57 feet of subway bordering the Trinity Church foundation was constructed in three sections. Steel channels were used as sheet piling around the subway excavation. These steel channels were left in place after the construction was completed to prevent settlement from voids created by removing the sheet piling. No measurable movement of the spire occurred during or after construction.

Experience gained in excavating for Contract One allowed the engineers to proceed faster. Planking on lower Broadway permitted uninterrupted excavation and construction with hardly any interruption of traffic.

Under Contract One, the entire street was excavated, usually one side at a time, and work was performed in an open cut nicknamed Parson's Ditch, using hand labor, horse-drawn carts, steam hoists, and drills. When the work was completed, the excavation was backfilled and the street was paved. Temporary wood bridges spanned the open cut.

Street car tracks were supported on temporary trestles while work was progressing. Trenches were dug at 40-foot intervals trans-

(Continued on page 3)

A SMALL COMPANY CONTROLS A LARGE TROLLEY NETWORK by Bernard Linder

NORTH MOUNT VERNON RAILWAY COMPANY

This small company was the predecessor to the Interurban Street Railway, which controlled nearly all the trolley lines in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Westchester County.

The North Mount Vernon Railway Company, which was incorporated April 20, 1892, built two miles of track in Mount Vernon, similar to the route of the present-day Route 40 bus, described as follows: From New Haven station via North 3rd Avenue, Oakley Avenue, North 4th Avenue, East Lincoln Avenue, and North Columbus Avenue to Burke's Corners. The company started operation with battery cars, which were unsuccessful and were replaced by horse cars two years later. The company never made a profit. When it failed to make a report in 1897, it was reported to the Attorney General as delinquent, and operations were suspended. The company was sold at foreclosure for \$15,000 at White Plains on February 26, 1898, and was incorporated again on April 16, 1898.

INTERURBAN STREET RAILWAY COMPANY

This company, which was incorporated on November 25, 1901, is substantially a reorganization of the North Mount Vernon Railway Company.

On November 29, 1901, the company took a lease of the property and franchise of the Peoples Traction Company, whose routes were unconstructed.

On February 14, 1902, the company took a lease of all the lines controlled by the Metropolitan Street Railway Company for a period of 999 years. Interurban was in substantial control of the entire street surface railway system in Manhattan, the Bronx, and the southern part of Westchester County with the exception of the surface railway from the Bartow station to City Island.

Under this lease, the company agreed to furnish the lessor \$23 million to pay the latter company's debt, and to pay a rental of seven percent per annum on Metropolitan's capital stock, which was worth \$52 million. About the time this lease was made, this company's entire capital stock was acquired by the Metropolitan Securities Company, a holding company incorporated on February 14, 1902.

On February 10, 1904, the company's name was changed to New York City Railway Company.

On September 24, 1907, Adrian H. Joline and Douglas Robinson were appointed receivers. To separate the interest of the two companies, William W. Ladd was appointed receiver on August 1, 1908.

NEW YORK, WESTCHESTER & CONNECTICUT TRACTION COMPANY

This company, which was incorporated on February 12, 1895, intended to build a trolley line on Boston Road

from the Bronx River (near Pelham Parkway in the Bronx) to the Connecticut line, but was able to build only 700 feet of track, on which it never operated any cars. It was unable to perform any additional construction until 1899 because it was in continued litigation. The company then bought at foreclosure the North Mount Vernon Railway and started operating it on January 16, 1900. It relinquished its track to the Interurban Street Railway on December 9, 1901 by filing a deed of disclaimer as to rights that were formerly possessed by North Mount Vernon, after which Interurban acquired the property through a complicated transaction described above. William W. Ladd was appointed receiver on August 1, 1908.

A 1909 inspection revealed that the line, which was built with 7-inch girder rail, was plagued with frequent derailments because of the poor alignment of the tracks. The poles were rotted, the span wires were attached to trees, and the overhead was so low that it was a hazard to traffic.

On April 29, 1909, the receiver sold the property — 1.52 miles of trolley line in Mount Vernon, two cars, tracks, and a tumble-down car house. It was sold at foreclosure at the White Plains Court House to John Johnston of Brooklyn, evidently acting for Westchester interests. He paid \$500 subject to \$25,000 unpaid franchise taxes and other claims that judgment creditors of New York City Railway had filed.

In 1910, the owners refused to pay \$16,000 in back taxes. If the city accepted, they were willing to pay \$10,000 give free transfers, and repair the road. The indebtedness was about \$31,000.

Johnston conveyed the property to the New York, Westchester & Connecticut in a deed dated May 1, 1912, but continued operating it until July 13, 1912, after which the company continued as a Third Avenue Railway paper subsidiary (without a railroad). Although the tracks on Lawton Street from Main Street to Huguenot Street and on Fifth Avenue, New Rochelle were owned by New York, Westchester & Connecticut, the cars were operated by Westchester Electric.

The subsidiary, whose two lines — F/Mount Vernon-Tuckahoe and G/Pelham — were converted to bus in the early 1930s, was leased to the Westchester Street Transportation Company on November 11, 1936. From 1932 to 1936, buses 534-539 were listed as owned and operated by the New York, Westchester & Connecticut Traction Company. They were not kept separate, but were operated on most Westchester County bus lines. During the 1930s, the same transfer was apparently issued on both lines. The line was not listed, but the

(Continued on page 3)

A Small Company Controls a Large Trolley Network

(Continued from page 2)

transfer was labeled, "New York, Westchester, and Connecticut Traction Company." Among the transfer points was, "At Columbus and East Lincoln Avenues to Pelham or Tuckahoe bus."

The 1942 *Moody's Transportation Manual* states that the Public Service Commission authorized purchase of the stocks of four subsidiaries on June 27,

1942. (We do not have the names of the subsidiaries.) Subsequently they were formally merged into the Westchester Street Transportation Company. Checking the transfers, we find that New York, Westchester & Connecticut still issued transfers on July 18, 1942. The Pelham line transfer dated May 18, 1943 indicated that the Westchester Street Transportation Company was the owner.

The 1957 *Moody's* stated that New York, Westchester & Connecticut was officially inactive.

**FIFTH AVENUE & SIXTH STREET LINE
by Bernard Linder**

Owners:

STREET CARS

July 1, 1909 Third Avenue Railroad Company
January 1, 1912 Third Avenue Railway Company

Route:

July 1, 1909 Cars started operating from Wolfs Lane via East 6th Street (Sanford Boulevard), South 5th Avenue, East 3rd Street, South 4th Avenue (South 5th Avenue in the opposite direction), and East 1st Street to New Haven Station (South 2nd Avenue)

This line was built and operated because the New Rochelle-Subway line did not issue transfers to most other lines. When the New Rochelle-Subway line started giving transfers, riding on this line fell off.

1923 Franchise car was operated
August 6, 1926 Discontinued

WILLIE ROSENBERG PASSES AWAY

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of longtime member William (Willie) Rosenberg. Willie, who was a premier transit photographer in earlier years and an active participant in many fantrips, had not been

well for several years and was housebound. Willie passed away on November 17, 2004 and a moment of silence was observed in his honor at the New York Division meeting on November 19.

Another Centennial — Original Subway Extended to Fulton Street

(Continued from page 1)

verse and below the tracks. Concrete footings were poured in the trench and the transverse bents were erected. Longitudinal steel beams were placed on both sides and between the tracks. After the subway structure was completed, brick piers on the roof of the structure supported the street car tracks.

When the IRT trains started running to Brooklyn in

1908, riding fell off on the BRT's elevated and trolley lines that crossed the Brooklyn Bridge or terminated at the ferry depots. Many Brooklyn residents took the IRT instead.

The source for portions of this article is the *Historic American Engineering Record*, which is in the public domain. Portions were written by the following historians:
Clifton Hood—*The Impact of the IRT on New York City*
Charles Scott—*Design and Construction of the IRT: Civil Engineering*



NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY CENTENNIAL UPDATE— NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 2004 by Benjamin W. Schaeffer

The NYC Subway Centennial celebration continued into November and December, 2004 with a special promotion in Manhattan's Chinatown section. Visitors showing a *MetroCard* to participating businesses were granted various discounts.

especially subway enthusiasts, the MTA New York City Transit subway museum car fleet continued to roll into the system's second century. Excursions were run for March of Dimes fundraising and to celebrate the Centennial and holiday season. Details appear below:

To the delight of tourists, holiday shoppers and

DATE(S)	ACTIVITY	CARS USED	ROUTE
Saturday, November 6, 2004	NYCT/March of Dimes excursion	Lo-V	Eighth Avenue Line; 207 th Street Yard tour
Sunday, November 7, 2004	NYCT/March of Dimes excursion	R-1/R-9 and Locomotive #6	BMT/IND lines
Sunday, November 21, 2004	NYCT/March of Dimes excursion	Lo-V	IRT lines
Saturday-Sunday, November 27-28, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	R-1/R-9	Broadway Local: 57 th Street-Seventh Avenue to Whitehall Street (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, November 27- 28, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	SMEE	Flushing Line (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, December 4-5, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	R-1/R-9	Broadway Local: 57 th Street-Seventh Avenue to Whitehall Street (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, December 4-5, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	SMEE	Lexington Avenue Line: Grand Central to Utica Avenue (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, December 11-12, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	R-1/R-9	Broadway Local: 57 th Street-Seventh Avenue to Whitehall Street (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, December 11-12, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	SMEE	Broadway-Seventh Avenue Line: E. 180 th Street to Times Square (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, December 18-19, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	R-1/R-9	Broadway Local: 57 th Street-Seventh Avenue to Whitehall Street (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, December 18- 19, 2004	"Subway Centennial" (Passenger Service)	SMEE	42 nd Street Shuttle (10 AM-5 PM)
Saturday-Sunday, December 18-19, 2004	NYCT/March of Dimes Excursion	Lo-V	IRT lines in Manhattan and the Bronx

Correction/Addendum to the table in the article on page 5 of the December, 2004 issue:

On Thursday, October 28 and Friday, October 29, the R-1/R-9 museum train operated from Ditmars Boulevard to Canal Street making all stops, providing extra **W** service from 10 AM to 3 PM.

Also, Subutay Musluoglu provided the following information as to the consists of two of the October excursions:

Vintage Train on the 42nd Street Shuttle - October 27, 2004:

Grand Central-5760 (R-12)/6609 (R-17)/9306 (R-33)-Times Square

Vintage Train on the Broadway and Astoria Lines between Canal Street and Ditmars Boulevard - October 28, 2004:

S-100 (R-1)/381 (R-1)/484 (R-4)/401 (R-4 ex-491)/1575 (R-7A)-N

A RIDE ON THE RiverLINE by Bob Wright (ERA #5489) Photographs by the author

NJ Transit's new Camden-Trenton light rail line, originally known by the cumbersome title of Southern New Jersey Light Rail Transit System (SNJLRTS), and now called the River LINE, opened for business in the early hours of Sunday, March 14, 2004. The LINE was completed several months behind schedule at a price tag of over \$1 billion. As has been reported in many places, the LINE is the first non-electric light rail line in the United States. Twenty diesel-powered cars provide the service, which extends 34 miles from Camden's Delaware River waterfront on the edge of the city's downtown to the NJ Transit station in Trenton. Most of the LINE uses the Conrail (ex-Pennsylvania) Camden & Amboy Branch, which has been freight-only since the mid-1960s.

This report will provide an overview of a ride from one end of the line to the other. Our ride will begin at the southern end, in the City of Camden, and proceed northward to Trenton.



A Trenton-bound run has just left the platform at Walter Rand Transportation Center in downtown Camden and is about to cross Broadway.

The Entertainment Center station, the starting point of our tour, is the southern limit of the LINE. It is adjacent to the Tweeter Center on the Camden waterfront, on private right-of-way. The station features two side platforms. Track continues in concrete paving a few hundred feet south of the platforms to permit cars to cross over and reverse. Cars can be stored here for short periods of time. This has been done when two-car trains are broken up for lighter service needs, the second car remaining to either be coupled to another later, when service dictates two-car trains again, or to deadhead back to the storage facility.

As our car departs the Entertainment Center station, the tracks separate to use the right lanes of Delaware Avenue. This four-lane road has tracks in the outer (curb) lanes, with traffic permitted to use all lanes. The tracks cross the entrance/exit of the busy Waterfront parking garage, which serves the nearby attractions,



A Camden-bound run has just crossed Broadway and is approaching the platform for the Walter Rand Transportation Center stop.

and we pass beneath it on our northward journey.

The Aquarium stop is at Federal Street. In addition to the popular New Jersey State Aquarium, this stop serves Campbell's Field (one block north), the home of the minor league Camden Riversharks baseball team. Our car proceeds north and passes within sight of the Field but does not stop at it. Just before the Field's parking lot, at Cooper Street, we turn east into Cooper Street, with the tracks again in the outer lanes of the street as on Delaware Avenue. The next stop, for Rutgers University (Camden campus), is at 2nd Street.

A couple of blocks east, our car turns right into 4th Street. The tracks take up the entire width of the street, which, again, is shared with traffic. After crossing Federal Street for the second time this trip, our car swings into a diagonal paved right-of-way to access the Walter Rand Transportation Center (WRTC), the main stop in downtown Camden. Part of this right-of-way is atop the PATCO High-Speed Line's tunnel. All stops thus far have featured outer platforms.

At the WRTC, there are transfer capabilities to/from 23 different NJT bus routes and PATCO. This is also the main stop for Camden's downtown business district, which is not as prosperous as it was 40-50 years ago. The LINE changes to a due east orientation straddling the north edge of Mickle Street/M.L. King Boulevard to

(Continued on page 7)

A Ride on the RiverLINE

(Continued from page 6)



A Camden-bound run pauses at the Walter Rand Transportation Center platform in downtown Camden. The RiverLINE interfaces with over 20 NJ Transit bus routes and PATCO at the Center.

cross Broadway, the WRTC bus entrance, and Haddon Avenue.

The shape of the LINE's traverse of Camden so far resembles a question mark. All of the trackage we have used so far was built specifically for the LINE's entrance into Camden. Past Haddon Avenue, the paved track ends and the LINE parallels the PATCO open-cut, passing Center Tower, PATCO's operations center.

Our car climbs from street level onto an embankment after passing under I-676, then crosses over Federal Street and Admiral Wilson Boulevard (U.S. 30). On the embankment, the LINE begins to parallel Conrail's track to Pavonia Yard in East Camden. The Yard quickly appears on our left. The LINE's tracks are separated from the Conrail trackage through the yard, in many places by a highway guard rail. The first physical crossing of Conrail in this area occurs when a spur leading to the south intersects the LINE's tracks.

On our right, just before the 36th Street station, the storage and shop facility for the LINE comes into view. A few cars are usually sitting in the small yard adjacent to the stop. 36th Street features an island platform, the first one we have seen on the LINE so far.

North of 36th Street, the tracks pare down from the multiple arrangement entering Pavonia Yard to three, then to two, with a single track for the LINE for the first time. This single-track territory continues to just north of Hatch tower, where the route to the Delair lift bridge climbs an embankment to our left. The Delair bridge is the main rail connection between Philadelphia and South Jersey, and it leads to the Amtrak Northeast Corridor. The bridge route is used by NJ Transit's Atlantic City Line. At this point, the LINE begins its shared track

arrangement with Conrail's operations for the rest of the way to Trenton.

Our car enters double track again just south of the Route 73/Pennsauken station. This stop features outer platforms. The schedule usually calls for a meet between cars in different directions here. Leaving Pennsauken, the LINE is on embankment and it vaults over Pennsauken Creek and busy NJ 73 before its return to single track, paralleling Broad Street in Palmyra on our left.

The Palmyra station is a single platform on the right. This same setup continues through the Riverton station, with the same side platform station arrangement. North of Riverton, the LINE returns to double track for a short segment with several active railroad sidings. The Cinnaminson station is in this double-track section, and it features an island platform.

Past Cinnaminson, the LINE is back to single track, although the right-of-way is sufficiently wide for two



At the Clinton Avenue/Trenton station at the north end of the LINE, two cars rest, awaiting their next trips. The Trenton rail station is behind the photographer.

tracks for much of this stretch to Riverside. South of the Riverside station, the LINE reverts to double track. The Riverside station, with its outer platforms, is next to the historic Watchcase Tower, the site of the project field office.

Leaving Riverside, our car crosses Rancocas Creek on a new arch bridge, which replaced a single-track swing bridge dating to the turn of the century. The new bridge collapsed during its erection, making local headlines (and only reinforcing the idea of the LINE as an expensive boondoggle in the minds of its opponents). This mishap slowed the LINE's progress significantly.

At the Delanco station, there are outer platforms once again. North of Delanco, however, the nature of the line changes dramatically, with no parallel roadways and more rural surroundings than experienced in the ride so

(Continued on page 8)

A Ride on the RiverLINE

(Continued from page 7)

far. The LINE almost becomes a “ride in the countryside” type of operation. Single track begins south of Beverly, with the Beverly/Edgewater Park station platform on the left side. Just north of the station, the LINE enters another double track segment.

We enter the Burlington South stop, which has outer platforms. This station is close to the Burlington-Bristol Bridge, and the LINE crosses the Bridge’s approach roadways at grade just north of the station, within sight of the Bridge’s toll booths.

The old and unused Burlington railroad station remains on the left, just north of the bridge roadways. Single track begins north of the railroad station and the track enters the median of Broad Street, Burlington’s main drag, for the Burlington Towne Centre stop. The track is in the unpaved median and the station platform is on the right.

Our car leaves Burlington and Broad Street on single track and once again enters a largely undeveloped area. The LINE spans Assiscunk

Creek and double track picks up after the crossing, passing through a large U.S. Pipe complex on the left, followed by a small Conrail yard (Burlington Yard). US 130 is not far away on the right, through the wilderness. A short segment of single track picks up north of the Yard, then expands to three tracks (two for the LINE, the leftmost for Conrail), as the LINE traverses an industrial area with many rail spurs. The three tracks slim down to two just south of the Florence station, which features an island platform and large parking lots on both sides of the tracks.

The tracks split again north of Florence, with the LINE staying on the east track and Conrail to our left. The significance of Florence and its large parking lots becomes more obvious as we pass beneath the Pennsylvania Turnpike Extension connection to the New Jersey Turnpike. The Extension’s Florence interchange is nearby, creating a generator for all those parking places. The tracks merge north of the old Florence railroad freight station, although the right-of-way is graded and available for two tracks.

The legendary and huge Roebling Wire Works ap-

pears on our left. The abandoned complex is adjacent to the Roebling station, with its platform on our left. The station features another sizable parking lot. Leaving the station, a couple of industrial switchers sit in the former rail yard, abandoned. The yard is mostly disconnected from the LINE.

The LINE’s namesake, the Delaware River, comes into view on our left, and we follow the shoreline, returning to double track. The Tullytown landfill, seeming mountain-like, and USX’s massive Fairless Works can be seen on the Pennsylvania side of Delaware River. I-295 crosses the LINE overhead on its own way to Trenton.



South of the Entertainment Center stop in Camden, a short stretch of tail track exists for train layover and storage. A two-car train, led by car 3510, awaits its next trip. Several of the cars, like 3510, are wrapped to highlight towns and points of interest along the LINE.

Past the I-295 overpass, our car enters the last stretch of single track before Trenton. The Bordentown station’s platform is on our right, in a picturesque location with a marina, along the river bank at the mouth of Crosswicks Creek to our left. A curved bridge carries the LINE over this creek. A pedestrian walkway on our left crosses the bridge alongside the track, but it curiously goes nowhere and ends abruptly on the north end of the bridge. Once the LINE leaves this bridge, our car begins a

speedy ride through a swamp and wetlands area. We pass beneath the large I-195/295 interchange, where the last segment of single track ends. The only development in this desolate area is a power plant on the left. Our car will open it up through this area. Suddenly, the woods end, and the outskirts of Trenton’s urban area begin, with NJ 129 on the left.

The first stop in Trenton is Cass Street, which features outer platforms. Cass Street is close to the New Jersey State Prison, which passes on the left. Shortly after Cass Street, our car pulls into Hamilton Avenue, which also has outer platforms. This stop is near the Sovereign Bank Arena. NJ 129 ducks into a cut to pass under several intersecting roads, which the LINE crosses at grade. North of Hamilton Avenue, a small storage building is on the right. The building has walls on the north and east faces, with cyclone fence separating it from the LINE’s tracks. Two storage tracks are provided.

We slowly cross over the Amtrak Northeast Corridor, then leave the Conrail right-of-way on a relatively steep

(Continued on page 17)

TECH TALK by Jeffrey Erlitz

The news this month was the achievement of beneficial use for contract S-32315, the signaling of Canarsie, or Rockaway Parkway, Yard. This work was accomplished over weekends from November 13 to December 19, 2004. Another aspect of the "old days" of the BMT is now passing, that of yards with hand-operated switches. This leaves Fresh Pond and 36th Street Yards as the only yards left that are essentially all hand-operated. It is hard to believe that until the 1960s, Coney Island Yard was mostly hand-operated. I know of no plans to interlock Fresh Pond or 36th Street Yard at this time.

Speaking of the Canarsie Line, Train Operators have been getting training on the new CBTC (Communications-Based Train Control) system that, hopefully, will start to be placed in service this March.

The new crossover from middle Track J4 to northbound local Track J1 south of Essex Street was placed in service on November 14, 2004. This was part of the Nassau Street Reconfiguration project.

When the diamond crossover in the 11th Street Cut (south of Queens Plaza) was removed back in August, only the Mauell control panel at Queensboro Plaza Master Tower was updated to reflect this change. Over the weekend of November 5-7, the computer workstations at Queensboro Plaza were finally updated to also reflect the change.

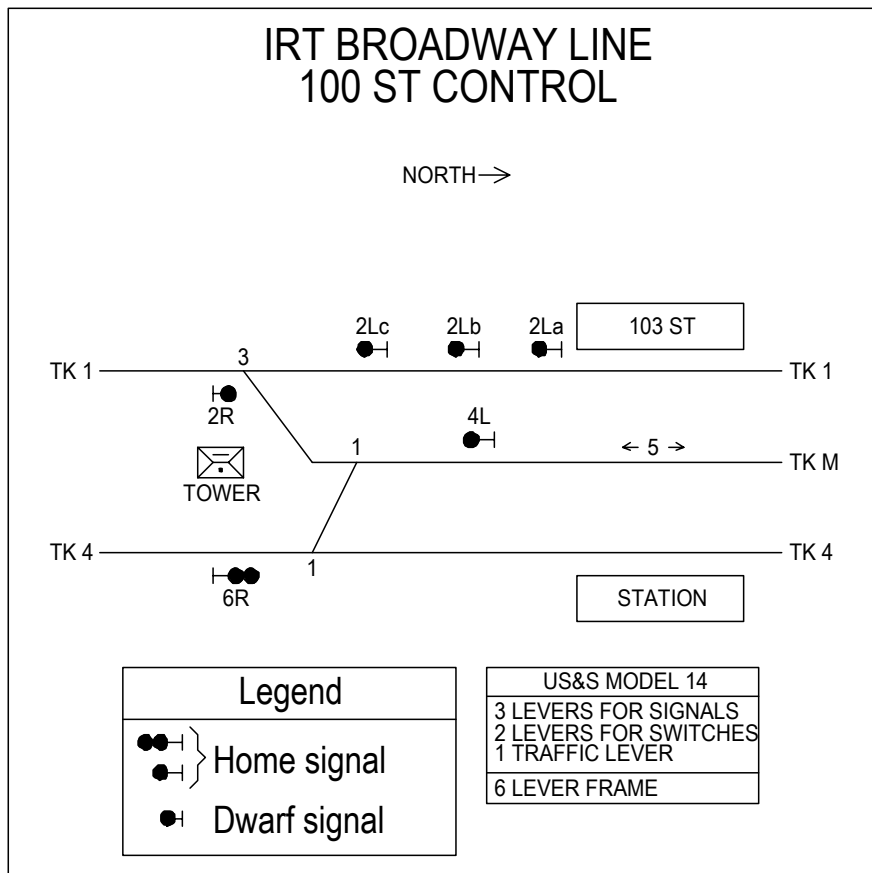
On November 17, the diamond crossover at Rockaway Park was replaced with a new facing-point-only single crossover. It was felt that the trailing-point portion of the diamond was redundant since there is another crossover next to the yard lead.

Work continues on the Automatic Train Supervision contract (S-32333) on the IRT. Between June 29 and

July 17 the ATS circuits were placed in service at the Dyckman Street, 211th Street, and 215th Street Relay Rooms. As was done earlier, all of the new code systems were energized, but the operation of these controls from the Rail Control Center is temporarily disabled. In addition, the ATS circuits were placed in service at 149th Street-Grand Concourse on September 7-11.

Having temporarily run out of data on old BMT interlockings, we now move on to show the layouts at IRT towers that are no longer in existence. 100th Street Interlocking was the first one on Line BB heading north from 96th Street and was part of the original signal system from 1904. The IRT did not have approach signals

like the BMT and IND. Two, three, and sometimes even four extra home signals were occasionally positioned along a track in advance of a switch to provide additional protection. Most of the time, these additional home signals were all controlled from the same lever, as in the example to the left. On southbound Track 1, lever 2 controlled three home signals, all single-headed, in advance of switch 3. This diagram also shows another typical IRT design, the use of single-headed home signals protecting converging moves.



In the field, these single-headed home signals were differentiated from automatic signals by their red number plates. When this interlocking was replaced under contract S-104 in 1966, the interlocking was renamed 103rd Street.

Next month I really hope to finally get to the Queens Super Express Bypass, Route 131-B.

Jeff may be contacted via email at jbe456@optonline.net.

Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

In search of ways to increase its revenues (there are expectations that more than \$1 billion could be realized), proposals came forth for raising a whole slew of different taxes, mostly related to mortgages and sales. The MTA is also considering the hiring of a real estate consultant to review its land holdings and buildings, and to draw up plans for marketing them to developers and business owners. According to *The New York Times*, in November, 2004 the agency issued an 11-page Request for Proposals to renovate a handful of historic train stations in the suburbs for retail shops and offices, similar to what has been done at Grand Central Terminal. At the Hastings, Pelham, Port Chester, Spring Valley, Tarrytown, Tuckahoe and Yonkers stations, the entire buildings, except for a ticket booth, rest rooms, and a public waiting area, would be available for commercial use. In fact, I did see such a sign at the Tarrytown station. Also available are rail yards, including the air rights, ventilation plants, electric substations, bus depots, and "other properties" belonging to the NYC Transit System. The MTA Board approved the fare increases at its December 16, 2004 meeting.

MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

The last time that fares went up (May 1, 2003), Metro-North and the Long Island Rail Road increased the penalty for purchasing a ticket on board a train when either a station ticket office was open or there was a ticket vending machine (TVM) at the station. Metro-North also established a way for riders to purchase tickets from its website (at a discount). As a result of these measures, TVM sales now exceed ticket window sales, and *WebTicket* sales now exceed onboard sales. Since September, 2002, there has been a 75% reduction in the number of cash fare tickets sold onboard trains. As an example, in July, 2002, nearly 800,000 tickets were sold on board trains, and this past September, there were fewer than 200,000. There has also been a shift from cash/checks to electronic methods of payments. In September, 2004, cash/checks accounted for 43% of ticket revenues, down from 62% when compared to September, 2002.

Due to passenger complaints about poor on-time performance, revised Harlem Line schedules went into effect on December 5, 2004. Metro-North reported that these changes are in response to passenger requests for a review of the October 31 schedules. Metro-North officials determined that a new schedule should improve the reliability of service. So, several minutes of run time has been added to Trains #314, 357, 359, 510, 512, 515, 557, 609, 612, 613, 616, 618, 622, 624, 628, 630, 910, and 918. The October 31 New Haven Line timeta-

ble now carries a "Revised December 5, 2004" date.

Several months ago, when it had been expected that the ACMUs would have been retired by the end of October, 2004, Metro-North's Group Travel Department scheduled a farewell trip to those cars for Sunday, December 5. As you all now by now, many of the cars have been "un-retired." One of the stops that the "Farewell Train" made on December 5 was at Mt. Vernon East, a New Haven Line station. It is believed that this is the first and only time that these cars have ventured here. The operation of third rail-equipped equipment at this location has only been possible since the late 1980s when the third rail was extended to about 1,000 feet west of the Pelham station. Regularly scheduled electric trains use the overhead catenary to receive electric power.

As of October, 2004, 100 M-7s had been delivered (with 92 accepted for service), and in November, 104 had been accepted.

The firm BT² ta was awarded a \$13.8 million contract to overhaul the 24 former west-of-Hudson Comet IIs that have been sitting at Highbridge Yard for several months. Work to be done includes reconfiguring them for east-of-Hudson service, installing new operator controls, braking and ATC systems, as well as new seating, door controls, toilets and floors. BT² ta was the only company to submit a bid, and Metro-North negotiated two options for the overhaul of 40 Metro-North and 30 CDOT Shoreliner coaches that have been in service since the mid-1980s. These options will be exercised when funding becomes available. The company is reportedly located in Bath, NY.

On October 23, 2004, the waiting room and ticket office at the Yonkers Station was opened following the rehabilitation of the station.

Over the past few years I have noticed that some of Metro-North's stations have what are called "pigeon spikes," actually straight pieces of wire that have been placed at locations where these birds are likely to roost. *The New York Times* (Westchester Section – October 3, 2004) reported on this program. James Wiley, Metro-North's Superintendent of Stations, told the *Times* that his crews had equipped 60% of 100 stations with this and other methods to deter pigeons from residing at the railroad's stations. Their droppings are known to carry up to 36 diseases and damage those places where pigeons inhabit. Since the spring of 2002, Metro-North has spent \$150,000 annually on this effort. Nationwide, control of this and other types of birds can exceed \$100 million each year.

(Continued on page 11)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 10)***Connecticut Department of Transportation**

Deliveries of Virginia Railway Express cars continued in November. Member Bob Underwood reported that an article in the (New Haven) **Register** mentioned that with 11 more arrivals on November 19, 2004, there were 26 on the property. However, at that time, only two were in service and four were expected to be in service "very soon."

MTA Long Island Rail Road

The November 15, 2004 timetables were re-issued with a "Revised 12/20/04" date. On the cover is an advisory that these timetables include extra Year-End Holiday services and that revised weekday schedules will be in effect on January 17, 2005, Martin Luther King Day.

With receipt of 7340, nearly half of the M-7 order has been delivered.

Member Jeffrey Erlitz reported that on Saturday, December 11, 2004, the East Williston station was demolished. Apparently there was a one-day notification, and Jeff wrote that "the whole thing fell like a deck of cards when the clamshell took its first 'bite' out of the shed. It seems it was too far gone to be rebuilt, termites and whatnot. The agency closed back in 1996."

NJ Transit

A few days before Thanksgiving, 2004, service advisories were published for all rail lines detailing the service that would operate Wednesday thru Friday, November 24-26. On Wednesday, regular train service was operated, and those that had early getaway service ran those trains. Two additional trains that were not listed in the timetables were operated on the Northeast Corridor Line. On the day after Thanksgiving some earlier PM trains were operated on the Bergen/Main, Northeast Corridor, Pascack Valley, Port Jervis, and Raritan Valley Lines. Only on the Pascack Valley Line did the getaway service result in cancellation of three later trains.

Thanks to a \$10 million grant from the Port Authority, NJ Transit has funding to extend the existing platforms on the Eighth Avenue side of New York Penn Station to the future Moynihan Station (Farley Post Office).

I reported last month that NJ Transit had installed 8 new monitors that list the track assignments, and that it was on the concourse, but what I omitted was that this was at New York Penn Station. Several members caught me on that one!

Talk about a quick response. After the October 31, 2004 schedules went into effect, commuters arriving at Secaucus Junction between 8 and 8:30 AM complained that there only three connecting eastbound trains (to NY Penn) that stopped at Secaucus during that half hour time period. Once this was brought to the attention of NJ Transit operations personnel, two additional trains, #3924 and 6616, were added as of December 2.

In the next few paragraphs there is news about proposals to return passenger service to areas that lost that service many years ago. Over the intervening years, the population has grown, and with that growth has come traffic congestion.

The Lackawanna Coalition, which calls itself "an independent organization advocating for better transit," has published the Fall, 2004 edition of its **RAILGRAM**, which includes a summary of the project to restore passenger service on the Lackawanna Cut-off. Passenger service ended on this line on January 5, 1970 when the Erie-Lackawanna discontinued the Hoboken-Chicago *Lake Cities*. While under Conrail management, the line was sold and the tracks on the New Jersey section were eventually removed during the 1980s. A few years ago, NJ Transit repurchased this section. As proposed, four peak hour trains would operate between Scranton and Hoboken (133 miles) on 45-minute headways. Running times are forecast at 3 hours 10 minutes! There could also be four off-peak trains at other times of the day. Weekday ridership by 2025 is forecast at 2,800 for the peak-hour trains. The "Cut-off" itself is 28 miles of fast, straight right-of-way, although no track is presently installed, but the 60 miles between East Stroudsburg and Scranton is "replete with steep hills and restrictive curves" not conducive to 3,000 hp diesel-electric locomotives and Comet cars that have been planned for use on the line. The Coalition is recommending that different type of rolling stock, which could run at higher speeds, such as the *Talgo* train (which is being successfully operated in *Pacific Cascades* service and in other countries), be used because it is better suited to the hilly and curvy nature of the line. Between Port Morris and Hoboken, these trains would run along with M&E trains, the 45 miles to Hoboken. Another possibility could be the Colorado Railcar DMU.

NJ-ARP reported on another NJ Transit project that would restore passenger service to an area presently un-served – West Trenton and Newark. Over this route, years ago, ran the Reading Railroad's *Wall Streeter* and *Crusader*. Trains #5600/5601 made their last runs from Reading Terminal in Philadelphia on December 30, 1982, just two days before NJ Transit assumed full responsibility for operating the rail service in the Garden State from Conrail. At that time, the New Jersey stations were West Trenton, Hopewell, Belle Meade, Bound Brook, and Newark. This time around, there would be a connection with the Raritan Valley Line at Port Reading Junction, west of the Finderne station, rather than at Bound Brook. Stations are proposed for Hillsborough, Belle Meade, Hopewell, Route I-95, and West Trenton. The present planning calls for five peak hour trains in each direction, with one reverse peak and one off-peak as well, all terminating at Newark.

Continuing on the theme of the two previous news items, New Jersey's two U.S. Senators, John Corzine

(Continued on page 12)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 11)*

and Frank Lautenberg, have secured \$400,000 that will partially fund a study to restore passenger service from Phillipsburg on the Raritan Valley Line. Now, the challenge will be to come up with the remaining \$600,000. At a news conference held on November 23, 2004, elected officials announced the project. The **Star-Ledger** reported that there are concerns about the number of cars that daily clog I-78 and Route 22 in Warren County. Presently, Hackettstown is the only rail station within the county, although if the Lackawanna Cutoff is restored, there will also be a station at Blairstown. Passenger trains made their last runs to Phillipsburg on December 28, 1983, at which time Highbridge, approximately 20 miles east, became the western terminus. The October 30, 1983 timetable shows Trains #5700-5705 operating between Phillipsburg and Newark, and Train #5707 operating as far as Highbridge. All other service ended at Raritan.

I asked member Larry Kiss for some additional information and he wrote that there was no passenger service between Hampton and Phillipsburg between April 29, 1967 and April, 1974. There were two other passenger services to New York. They were the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western via Washington, Hackettstown, and Dover to Hoboken (last train ran in 1939) and the Lehigh Valley to Newark and Penn Station (last train ran in 1961). The LV trains in the late 1950s were very fast: 1:30 to Newark and 1:45 to Penn. By the way, the LV trains stopped in Easton, Pennsylvania, just across the Delaware River.

There is nothing new to report on the M-O-M (Monmouth-Ocean Middlesex) project.

A new rail station costing \$7 million will be built in Morris County. The (Newark) **Star-Ledger** reported this is the culmination of a three-decade effort by Morris County transportation officials to create a transit hub west of the Route 80-Route 15 interchange at exit 34, where eastbound traffic consistently backs up. Lakeland Bus Lines currently provides commuter service from the Mt. Arlington Park-and-Ride. The station would have two high-level platforms, 285 feet in length and covered by canopies. It is expected that construction would begin by early next year and the station would open in 2007. Mt. Arlington is located between Dover and Lake Hopatcong on the non-electrified Montclair-Boonton Line. Passengers would have to change at Dover for *Midtown Direct* service.

Due to construction activities associated with the Broad Street extension of the Newark City Subway, several bus lines that operate on Broad Street were re-routed for an approximately three-month period, beginning November 9, 2004.

NJ Transit has committed eight of the former Newark City Subway PCCs to the City of Bayonne for future use

on a planned rail line serving the to-be-redeveloped Military Ocean Terminal. The plan envisions a streetcar line serving a new mixed-use development, which would include housing, commercial activities, and a cruise ship terminal, supplementing similar facilities in Manhattan. The line would be double-track throughout, with loops at each end, and would include a storage and maintenance facility on the site, all laid out to facilitate the use of single-end PCC cars.

There are two potential plans for the west end of the line. The simpler contains a loop adjacent to Hudson-Bergen's 34th Street light rail station, with the existing overhead walkway used as a transfer link between the two lines. The more elaborate scheme would place the new line on a bridge over Highway 169, the Conrail Chemical Coast freight line and Hudson-Bergen, with a tail to the west for a future street-running loop through parts of downtown Bayonne. Connections between the two lines would be easier with this configuration.

The date for start of construction is not known at this time; however, there are immediate plans to transfer the eight PCCs to the Hudson-Bergen LRT Communipaw facility, where they could be stored under cover until such time as they would be needed for this new operation. Whether all eight would be used at Military Ocean Terminal or some would be set aside for other planned operations, such as Union County, is not known. At this point, 9 of the 11 cars for San Francisco Muni have left the Newark City Subway's Grove Street facility for Brookville Equipment Company in Pennsylvania for their partial rehabilitation. (*Editor's Note: Brookville was the firm that rehabbed SEPTA's PCCs for Girard Avenue.*) With the 8 leaving for Hudson-Bergen, 5 would be left of the final operating fleet of 24.

Just as I was completing this column, member George Chiasson emailed the car numbers of those PCCs that are destined for SF Muni. They will be renumbered 1060-1070 after receiving a mini-overhaul at Brookville. Their New Jersey numbers were: 2, 9, 11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23. No. 14 was shipped to San Francisco in February, 2002 and will make another transcontinental trip to Pennsylvania. The pilot car is due to be shipped to SF Muni this summer, with the remainder of the cars between this October and June 2006.

New LRVs have been arriving at HBLRT. As of December, 2030-2043 were on the property. It is believed that 24 have been ordered, including replacements for 2001 and 2019, which were transferred to the Newark City Subway in 2002 as its 117 and 118.

Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation

One year after the reopening of the World Trade Center station, daily ridership has reached nearly 39,000. Projections that were made prior to the first day, November 23, 2003, called for 26,100 passengers. Before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the daily

(Continued on page 13)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 12)*

ridership was 67,000.

Port Authority of New York & New Jersey

After one year, the Port Authority has declared the AirTrain project a success. Last January, the daily ridership was just under 5,000, but in the last few months, that number has risen to 8,000. Pre-opening projections called for 11,000 daily riders, and that does not include an additional 20,000 who use the system to ride between terminals at no charge. The \$5 fares are only collected at Jamaica and Howard Beach. If you think that most of the riders are employees who work at the airport, the PA says that its surveys indicated that that group totals fewer than 10%.

On December 9, the PA Commissioners approved plans to spend \$4.5 billion on operations and improvements for the year 2005. Some of these dollars are for initial funding of the PA-5s and overhaul of the PA-4s. On the rail side, \$100 million has been allocated for the permanent World Trade Center station. PATH fares and bridge/tunnel tolls will remain unchanged for this year at least. PA Chairman Anthony R. Coscia said that he did not know how far beyond (this) year the agency could put off raising the cost of commuting.

Amtrak

This year, my sister-in-law flew into LaGuardia Airport, so what has become a Thanksgiving Day morning tradition for me, train-watching at PATH's Harrison station, was modified slightly. Because the family was invited to cousins who live near New Brunswick, we arranged to meet her and my children at Newark Penn Station. In the half-hour that I was at Harrison, 12-12:30 PM, I did not expect to find any leased commuter equipment, and there was none. There were however, several NJ Transit trains composed of 12-car Arrow-IIIs and ALP-44/ALP-46s with up to 10 cars. My children told me that the train was very crowded. Other relatives who rode on a following train told of standing all the way to New Brunswick! All of the Amtrak trains were either *Acela* or Amfleet/AEM-7 consists.

Who is being vindictive? In a surprise move, 21 of 32 Republican Congressional representatives who wrote a letter in support of Amtrak funding had all or most of the highway funding for their districts slashed by the Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, Ernest Istook (R-OK). Apparently, Chairman Istook issued this threat to his colleagues last February and has now taken the steps to carry it out. This came to light after passage of the bill. The text of his letter to the 32 members who supported funding for Amtrak was: "as you submit these important priorities for your district, please bear in mind that any request for Amtrak funding, even if submitted in a separate document, must and will be weighed against your other requests, and I will consider it as a project request for your district." Rep. John

McHugh (R-NY) reportedly came "close to physical blows" with Mr. Istook. Thanks to **The Hill News**, a student publication of St. Lawrence University, for this report.

A week later, **Weekly Rail Review** reported that Rep. Istook re-thought his decision, and stated that, "I will do everything in my power to rectify this as promptly as possible, and to give your requests every proper consideration." The National Association of Railroad Passengers reported that Mr. Istook reconsidered due to, "elements of pressure, including a reported near-physical confrontation between him and one of the slighted Republican legislators."

Museums

The November issue of the Shore Line Trolley Museum's **Tripper** recognized those who have been members for 20-25 years. Included were the following Division members: Joseph E. Casey, Jr., Nestor Danyluk, Nate Gerstein, Norman I. Greenberg, Rand Joseph, Bruce M. Lane, Daniel P. Morelli, Joan M. Overton, William A. Padron, and Robert J. Powers.

Metropolitan Area

Whenever I ride on Metro-North's Hudson Line, as the train passes through Yonkers and I see the former Third Avenue Railway trolley barn, I keep reminding myself that I should visit the site to see exactly what has been done to that edifice. **The New York Times** (Westchester section – October 31, 2004) answered my questions in a story that was written about this three-story brick building and its rebirth as a residence. It was constructed in 1900 in the Renaissance Revival style, and remained dormant for most of the years after its use as a trolley barn ended in November, 1952. In the 1970s and 1980s, I believe that the Yonkers Department of Public Works or some other such department used this facility, before it was abandoned. The present owner purchased the 90,000 square foot building and spent \$9 million to convert it into 40 loft-style apartments. Rents go for \$2,500-\$3,000 per month, depending on view and location.

After I returned from the November, 2004 Division meeting, as the Hudson Line train that I was riding passed by the Kawasaki plant in Yonkers, I observed METRA *Gallery* cars (8750 and 8754) plus NYC Transit R-142S 7785 and R-143s 8205/8206.

Miscellaneous

In November, Lionel, the famed toy train manufacturer, filed for bankruptcy protection. A spokesman reported that day-to-day operations would continue despite the filing.

Scheduled for 2005

The list below shows the transit projects that are scheduled to come on-line in 2005:

January 15—NJ Transit: HBLRT North Line extension to Weehawken

March—Portland City Streetcar (Oregon): 0.6-mile Riv-

(Continued on page 14)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 13)*

erPlace extension from Portland State University to SW Moody Street

Summer—San Diego Trolley: Mission Valley East Extension, 5.8 miles

Summer—Valley Transit Authority (San Jose): Vasona Extension

Summer—NJ Transit: HBLRT extension to Tonnelles Avenue

Fall—GO Transit (Toronto): Extension of rail service from Bradford to Barrie

November—Valley Transit Authority (San Jose): Extension of Amtrak/CalTrain/ACE to Campbell, 6.8 miles

Unknown—TRAX (Salt Lake City): 4-block extension from Delta Center to Intermodal Station

Unknown—San Juan, Puerto Rico: Tren Urbano (10.7 miles) (holdover from 2004, was supposed to have opened in late December)

Unknown—Sacramento: Folsom extension

Other Transit Systems*Boston, Massachusetts*

The subject of the email from member Todd Glickman was: "This is BIG." Upon opening it, there was an article from the **Boston Globe** reporting that the MBTA has finally thrown in the towel with regards to the Bredas. General Manager Michael H. Mulhern was quoted as saying "we bought a lemon," and with that the MBTA halted all payments to Breda and is refusing to take delivery on the remaining 53 LRVs that were ordered nearly a decade ago. In addition, it will take Breda to court to recoup the millions of dollars that were spent to alter the wheels. The "T" has already paid \$140 million of the \$225 million contract with Breda and spent \$9.5 million modifying the Green Line. Forty-seven of the cars are in service, and sub-contractors have been hired to repair these cars. There is a possibility that the remaining \$85 million could be used to purchase cars from Kinki-Sharyo, the company that built the two previous orders of LRVs. A "history" of the cars' problems was published in the October, 2004 **Bulletin**. To make up for the lack of new cars, the MBTA might keep some of the 86 Kinki-Sharyo cars, which are about 18 years old, in service a little longer. But the 34 Boeing cars, which are closer to 30 years old, will have to be retired soon. In other car news, the new Blue Line cars are over a year late, due to the truck manufacturer going out of business, and the new cars for the Orange Line are on hold after it was determined that the Blue Line cars cannot be retrofitted for service there.

In the May-June, 2004 issue of **Rollsign**, provided by member Gary Grahl and published by the Boston Street Railway Association, there was a report about the Blue Line's new (Logan) Airport station. On June 3, with elected and MBTA officials in attendance, ceremonies were held to open this station, which is located approxi-

mately 500 feet east of the old station. Construction on this \$23 million project began in April, 2000. The new facility features monitors with flight information and can accommodate passengers with luggage and those who have disabilities. There are turnstiles with adjacent luggage slides and wider escalators and elevators.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Unable to reach an agreement over additional transportation funding, the Pennsylvania state legislature recessed. What this means is that a bill that would have provided \$110 million to transit agencies around the state, including \$62 million to SEPTA, was not approved. So, without this additional financial aid, on December 2, 2004, SEPTA's Board of Directors voted to implement its contingency plan, which would result in the layoff of 1,400 employees, raise fares an average of 25%, or end weekend services. **Cinders** reported that the fares could go up on January 1, with the service cuts following on January 23. Less than two weeks before the end of the year, Governor Edward Rendell was trying to piece together some short-term funding.

Philadelphia-area resident and member David W. Saford wrote that, "the State Legislature and the Governor are playing 'chicken' to see who is going to carry the can on SEPTA funding. The object of the game is to force the Governor (a Democrat) to divert highway funds to bail out SEPTA. This will give the legislature (Republican-dominated) the chance to claim that the Governor is responsible for their constituents' highway problems. And of course it won't solve the problem because these would be one-time funds, so back again next year. What else is new? In the meantime SEPTA has pink-slipped a third of its employees (effective the end of the year) and continues to maintain that it will cut all weekend service and 20% of weekday service and raise fares 25% as of the end of (2004). To this, the majority leader (John Perzel, of Philadelphia yet!) maintains for the press that this is all a put-up by SEPTA and if the Governor wants to waste the public's money, let him. I suspect that I will (eventually) report an Amtrak-like settlement that will do credit to no one but will carry SEPTA marginally through the next year."

The Delaware Valley Rail Passenger, which is published by the Delaware Valley Association of Rail Passengers, reported that SEPTA was testing several versions of plastic seat inserts on its M-4 cars. Once a decision is made, they will replace the original hard-to-maintain fabric seats. The cost to do the entire 220-car Market-Frankford fleet is expected to be about \$5 million.

Although Route 15/Girard is still being operated by buses, three of the Brookville-rebuilt PCCs, now known as PCC-IIs, were operated in the University City district on October 16, 2004. They were routed from 40th and Market Streets via the diversion route through the Penn Campus to Baltimore Avenue via Route 34 to 49th

(Continued on page 15)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 14)*

Street-Woodland Avenue and back to 40th and Market Streets via Route 13 on Chester Avenue. A big crowd turned out for the free rides. The cars operated on 20-minute headways.

David W. Safford reported that when SEPTA has completed its project to add 260 more spaces to the Warminster (R2) parking lot, its total of 800 will make it the largest on the system.

All Regional Rail lines received new timetables on October 31, 2004, and express service, which was suspended in June, returned as of November 22. Thanks to member Gregory Campolo for sending copies of the timetables.

In early December, at the request of the contractor, PKF Mark III, SEPTA terminated the contract for the reconstruction of the Cobbs Creek portion of the Market-Frankford "L." As of November 1, 2004, this project was 712 days behind schedule.

CORRECTION: Some of the roster information about the SEPTA 400-series cars that appeared in the December, 2004 *Bulletin* was incorrect. Here is the correct data, courtesy of member Andres Kristopans. Cars 280, 284, 293, 295, 299, 301, and 304/305 (the original PRR-series numbered ones) were rebuilt and renumbered as 400s. Then Reading-series numbered cars 9018, 9021, 9022, and 9024-9028 were renumbered 280 (2nd), 284, 293, 295, 299, 301, 304, and 305 in order to put all single cars in a series (276-305). No cars went from 9000s to 200s to 400s. By the way, note that original 304 and 305 were a pair, while second 304 and 305 are single cars! Also 453/454 are former 121/122, not as shown, and the note should read, "431-434 and 437/438 were initially renumbered 411-416, changed when it was decided to rebuild more single cars."

From *Cinders*: SEPTA has agreed to sell the former Pennsylvania Railroad Octoraro branch to the East Penn Railways for \$353,700. This 26-mile branch was conveyed to SEPTA when Conrail started in 1976, as a possible commuter route to and from Oxford, Pennsylvania. In the intervening years, a succession of different freight carriers have operated the branch. With no news on the purchase of Silverliner V cars, would you believe that this project can be traced back 20 years? *Cinders*, in its December, 1984 issue, reported that SEPTA was proceeding with a design for new Silverliner V cars, and hoped to order 50 of them.

Lindenwold, New Jersey

The October, 2004 edition of *PATCO NEWS* highlighted the construction in progress of a new car wash building capable of holding a six-car train. It is located to the north of the existing shops, and the exterior wash will be completely automated. Water used is being filtered and recycled into the brush scrubbers. The facility was to be on line by mid-December. Thanks again to

David W. Safford for this report.

PATCO issued a new timetable on October 2, 2004.

Baltimore, Maryland

Light rail service was restored to Cromwell/Glen Burnie and BWI Airport as of December 5, 2004, following completion of the double-tracking project in that section. On January 3, the work moved to the north end of the line, and shuttle buses replaced the trolleys from North Avenue to Hunt Valley. The entire project to construct a second track (9.4 miles) should wrap up next year.

Washington, D.C. area

On Thursday, December 16, 2004, Metro riders got a free ride courtesy of ING DIRECT, an on-line savings bank, from opening until 9:30 AM. This first-time promotion was done with the hope that riders would use these savings to open a savings account with this banking institution.

South Florida

Tri-Rail issued a new timetable, actually a booklet, in August, with a completely new look. Besides the train schedules, there are also fare and transfer information, sights of interest, and advertising. Thanks to member Dennis Zaccardi for sending it.

Lorain, Ohio

Lorain, Ohio, has proposed construction of a heritage trolley line as part of a development of its waterfront, which is on Lake Erie. The city has purchased the former Baltimore & Ohio dock area. In the first phase, the line would be one mile in length, and Phase II would extend service to a three-mile loop. Details may be found at <http://www.lorainportauthority.com/projects.shtml>.

Chicago, Illinois

METRA offered two holiday fare programs at the end of last year. A "Thanksgiving Holiday Ticket" allowed unlimited travel for two days, November 25-26, 2004, for \$5. The other, "Family Fares," which allowed up to three children under the age of 12 to ride free with a fare-paying adult, was in effect from December 20 through December 31.

In spite of the CTA's budgetary crisis, the operation of holiday trains continued for the 13th year in 2004. The train ran between approximately 2 and 9 PM on weekends and 4 and 6:30 PM on weekdays, as follows: December 11, Red and Purple; December 12, Brown and Orange; December 13, Green; December 17, Brown and Orange; December 18, Green; December 19 and 20, Blue; and December 23, Red. Thanks to Bob Hansen for the report.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Thanks to member Neil Carlson for sending a copy of materials and a report related to the four-mile extension of the Route 55-Hiawatha Line to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport and Mall of America. Prior to December 4, 2004, there were 12 stations to Ft. Snelling. The new

(Continued on page 16)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 15)*

ones are #13 – Lindbergh (main) Terminal, #14 – Humphrey, #15 – Bloomington Central, #16 – 28th Avenue, and #17 – Mall of America. The timetable shows the travel time between most stations to be two minutes, with only one each requiring three and four minutes. A typical midday run takes 25 minutes to reach the main airport terminal and 36 minutes to the Mall of America. Neil wrote that there was a symbolic meeting of northbound and southbound trains at Bloomington Central Station. Although he did not attend the ceremonies, he learned that Lt. Governor Carol Molnau, who is also the Department of Transportation Commissioner, gave a positive speech about the light rail system. In fact, ridership was 97% above projections before this section opened. A number of changes were made to bus routes in south Minneapolis, and the Route 180 express bus from downtown to the Mall of America has been eliminated. Riders will now reach the Mall for 50 cents less and will not get caught in highway traffic. With this schedule change, all bus service on W. 44th Street was eliminated. This line was part of the Como-Harriet streetcar line, which was the last operating trolley line in the Twin Cities. The line at one time went way beyond Brookside to Hopkins, Deephaven, Excelsior, and Tonka Bay, all western suburbs of Minneapolis. A small piece of this line, between Lakes Harriet and Calhoun, is operated by the Minnesota Transportation Museum. In closing, Neil wrote, “December 4 will go down as one of the best days in the long history of transit in the Twin Cities. I just hope that more legislators can become educated on what great transit can do. As silly as it may sound, we need Jesse (Ventura) back. The light rail line would not be here if he had not been elected Governor. Thanks should also go to the Hennepin County Commissioners; they have been great supporters of the light rail system. Hennepin County has also had the foresight to buy several abandoned pieces of railroad rights-of-way for possible future transit use. They include a small section of the former Milwaukee Road in Minneapolis, two former Chicago North Western (ex-M & St. L.) lines from Minneapolis to Chaska and Hopkins to Victoria, the former M & St. L. Kenwood and Cedar Lake rail yards, and, in conjunction with the State of Minnesota, the former Dakota Rail (ex-Burlington Northern, previously Great Northern) line from Wayzata to Hutchinson. At the Airport, the trolley is the designated connector between the two terminals, and no fare is charged. The last northbound arrives at 2:23 AM and the last southbound reaches the Mall at 1:49 AM. Service returns at 3:40 AM (southbound) and 3:47 AM (northbound).”

Neil emailed that after one week of operating the extended line, weekday ridership had jumped to 19,900.

St. Louis, Missouri

My sister-in-law gave me a copy of the September, 2004 edition of the Metrolink map, and it shows the two proposed extensions: Shiloh-Scott to Mid America Airport in Illinois and the 8-mile Cross County Extension from Forest Park-DeBaliviere to Shrewsbury-Landsdowne/I-44. Construction on the former began in 2003 and should be completed next year. At that time, there will be 37 stations. The extension to Mid America Airport is presently unfunded.

Little Rock, Arkansas

I received a report that was prepared following the first week of operations of the *River Rail* line, which opened on November 1. The line was heavily patronized; only time will tell if this was because no fare was charged, or because of the novelty, or both. About two weeks later the Clinton Presidential Library opened, becoming yet another attraction in Little Rock. Plans are underway to add two more cars, with all of the paperwork being done within the next few months.

Phoenix, Arizona

Washington Group, operator of the Hudson-Bergen LRT, was awarded the contract to operate Phoenix's LRT, another DBOM (design, build, operate, and maintain) project.

Los Angeles, California

Beginning July 1, Connex North America will be the new operator of Metrorail service under a five-year contract. Amtrak, the original and current operator, reportedly could not accept “loosely written liability language” in the contract (December, 2004 *Bulletin*). On July 1, 2003, Connex, operating under the name Massachusetts Bay Commuter Rail Corporation, became the operator of Boston's commuter service, also under a five-year contract. Connex is a consortium that is composed of Bombardier and Alternate Concepts Inc. Here too, Connex was the successor to Amtrak.

Western Transit reported that the leased *Sounder* cars have been renumbered. Cabs 210, 213, and 231-232 are now 2210, 2213, and 2231-2232, while trailers 104 and 106-108 are 6104 and 6106-6108. Metrolink is also leasing one locomotive, F-59PHI 901.

San Juan, Puerto Rico

When my wife and I booked a one-week Caribbean cruise about 6 months ago, we selected San Juan as the port from which we would sail. I had hoped that the Tren Urbano would be operating, but that turned out not to be the case. One of our members emailed a report that Puerto Rico's Transportation Secretary announced in early November that the system would be running prior to January 2, 2005, when the new government was to take over. One of the officers from my unit in Vietnam lives in San Juan. I phoned and asked him to get any information about the opening date. He joined us for breakfast at our hotel, and then drove me around to see several of the stations and the maintenance yard, which was full of cars, some of which had been

(Continued on page 18)

NOSTALGIA CORNER

In the September, 2004 issue, we looked at the area of the E. 105th Street station on the Canarsie Line as it was before reconfiguration in 1973. This month, we

move to the area of the Rockaway Parkway terminal and yard.



The south face of the crew quarters and tower, taken on December 9, 1946.

Bernard Linder collection



The east side of the platform, tower, and crew quarters, facing south from the layup tracks, also taken on December 9, 1946.

Bernard Linder collection



The north face of the tower, taken the same day.

Bernard Linder collection



The platform and canopy over the southerly part of the station, facing southeast from property alongside the west track.

Bernard Linder collection

A Ride on the RiverLINE

(Continued from page 8)

grade to reach the Corridor's track level. Almost as quickly, our car ramps up to street level to parallel Clinton Avenue. The "terminal" at Clinton Avenue, across the street from the Amtrak/NJT station, has two outer platforms connected at the stub end. Our journey ends

here.

The vehicles pick the correct track as they leave the Conrail right-of-way, where a double crossover is located. Provisions exist for a future extension to the Capitol Complex paralleling Clinton Avenue, if funding and/or demand warrant such. In the meantime, several NJ Transit bus routes offer a "Capitol Connection" transfer rate to connect the several blocks to the Complex.

Around New York's Transit System

Transit Fares to Increase

At its December 16, 2004 meeting, the MTA Board voted to increase fares on many of its services effective February 27, 2005. The \$2 base subway/bus fare will not change, but fare discounts will be less steep. 30-day MetroCards will go from \$70 to \$76 and 14-day cards will go from \$21 to \$24. In addition, the base express bus fare will rise from \$4 to \$5. These actions, along

with increases on commuter rail fares and automobile tolls, are expected to raise \$234 million in 2005 but are not expected to solve the MTA's financial problems; further increases in 2007 are already being discussed.

With these increases, the average fare paid will increase from \$1.27 to \$1.33, which is still less than the fare was in 1996 (\$1.50), before *MetroCard* discounts took effect in 1997.

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 16)

wrapped in advertising. There is also an underground section.

Bangkok, Thailand

Here is a first — a report about the recently opened Bangkok subway, from Todd Glickman. The first subway in Thailand opened in August, 2004 (the "Skytrain" elevated system opened five years ago). The name "Chaloem Ratchamongkhon" means "Celebration of the Auspicious Kingship." This first line (two additional ones are planned) runs for 20 km (12.4 miles) and has 18 stations. Operation of the MRT was awarded to the Bangkok Metro Public Company Limited (BMCL) by the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand on August 1, 2000.

Trains run seven days from 6 AM to midnight, with frequencies of five minutes during rush hour and ten minutes at other times. Stations are clean and bright. Three-car unified articulated trains are run, though the stations are long enough to accommodate six-car trains for future expansion. Platform screen doors are employed, so that stations may be kept air conditioned. This, however, does not permit one to view the trains' exterior. I assume that they look much like the Skytrain, since the interiors are nearly identical.

There are two types of fare media. Contact-less smart cards (using RFID technology) are stored-value cards, and fares are deducted based upon distance traveled. Cards may be purchased with a minimum of 300 Baht (approximately 40 Baht to the US dollar), including a 50 Baht deposit. Funds can be added, with a card's maximum value allowed at 1,000 Baht. When exiting the system, the card's remaining value is shown on the exit gate.

For single rides, one may purchase a "token" either at the ticket window or through a vending machine. A simple touch screen system allows you to choose the value required for your journey. Tokens also use RFID technology, so they can be "tapped" at the entrance gate; they are deposited into the exit gate at the end of the journey. Normal adult fares range from 14 to 36 Baht (approximately \$0.35 to \$0.95) depending upon dis-

tance traveled. Children (90 to 120 cm tall) and seniors (65 years and older) are half fare. For the first year of operation (through August, 2005), a 15% discount is offered all passengers. Currently, there are no multi-use plans (i.e. daily/weekly unlimited or non-distance sensitive fares such as are offered on the Skytrain), but it is expected they will be introduced next year.

At three of the stations, one can interchange between MRT and Skytrain, but separate fares and fare cards are required, since the two operations are run by separate corporations. Automated announcements in both Thai and English announce the next station and messages to "mind the gap when alighting." There is an operator in the train, but ATO is used and he/she monitors operations. A uniformed guard is also on-board each train; additional guards patrol the stations. The end-to-end MRT ride takes approximately 30 minutes. In Bangkok traffic, this can be two hours in a car! It is a great system, and I hope they move ahead with the other two lines. The speed and comfort is wonderful. A full photo essay will be sent to <http://www.nycsubway.org> in the near future.

Sydney, Australia

According to *The New York Times*, government officials, in an attempt to apologize for "atrocious service," allowed "long-suffering" passengers to ride the entire network for free on November 22, 2004. The estimated financial losses for doing so were estimated at around \$1.5 million, as thousands took advantage of the offer.

From the History Files

65 Years Ago: On January 15, 1940, the Philadelphia Transportation Company became an operating entity as it succeeded the Philadelphia Railway Company and its underlying companies.

40 Years Ago: On January 4, 1965, the Boston & Maine Railroad discontinued most interstate service to New Hampshire and Maine. What remained were commuter trips to Concord via Lowell, Dover via Haverhill, and Newburyport to Boston. In subsequent years the MBTA which officially began subsidizing commuter operations on January 18, 1965, greatly expanded its commuter services.

News items and comments concerning this column may be emailed to NYDnewseditor@aol.com.