

# The Bulletin



**New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association**

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## **The Bulletin**

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## **CULVER SHUTTLE DISCONTINUED MORE THAN 30 YEARS AGO**

The portion of the Culver Line between Ditmas Avenue and Ninth Avenue ceased operating more than thirty years ago, May 11, 1975. There were only two stations, Fort Hamilton Parkway and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, on this mile-long structure, which was a part of the main line until the Ditmas Avenue track layout was rearranged during the October 30, 1954 weekend. We were unable to commemorate this fiftieth anniversary because of a lack of space in the Centennial Issue of the *Bulletin/Electric Railroads*. IND trains provided through service to Coney Island, the first time that trains were through-routed between the BMT and IND.

Starting November 1, 1954, Culver trains operated between Ditmas Avenue and Nassau Street during rush hours and midday while shuttles provided service between Ditmas Avenue and 36<sup>th</sup> Street at other times. Riding declined slightly.

On May 28, 1959, Culver service was reduced again, and trains shuttled between Ditmas Avenue and Ninth Avenue at all times. Of course, riding fell off rapidly.

Effective December 12, 1960, single-track operation on the southbound track was in effect because of a snowstorm. It was made permanent on December 29, 1960.

On May 11, 1975, service was finally discontinued between Ninth Avenue and Ditmas Avenue, almost a century after trains hauled by steam locomotives started running on Gravesend Avenue, whose name was changed to McDonald Avenue in 1935.

### **THE OLDEST RAPID TRANSIT LINE**

This month, the portion of the Culver Line on McDonald Avenue turns 130 years old. It has been in continuous operation longer than any part of the New York City subway system.

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## **ALL FOUR LINES RUNNING TO CONEY ISLAND AGAIN**

On May 29, 2005, **N** service was extended from 86<sup>th</sup> Street to Stillwell Avenue, restoring full service to this terminal just in time for the summer season. The first train arrived at 12:41 AM and departed at 12:57 AM. Service to this station has been curtailed since September 8, 2002 because of construction work. At that time, **C** trains terminated at Brighton Beach, **F** trains operated only as far as Avenue X, and **N** trains were turned at 86<sup>th</sup> Street. Buses transported passengers to

Stillwell Avenue.

**F** and **C** trains, which were extended to Stillwell Avenue on May 23, 2004, provided additional service for the summer season. All four lines were finally running to Coney Island on May 29, 2005.

It was necessary to rebuild this 88-year-old terminal because it had deteriorated badly due to water infiltration. It had to be reconstructed to prevent further deterioration. The entire composite structure, including all four

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## ASTORIA LINE by Bernard Linder

### CORPORATE HISTORY

February 1, 1917	Interborough Rapid Transit Company
June 1, 1940	Board of Transportation of the City of New York
June 1, 1953	New York City Transit Authority

### OPENING DATE

February 1, 1917	Queensboro Plaza to Ditmars Avenue (present-day Ditmars Boulevard)
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### ROUTE AND SECTION NUMBER

ROUTES 36 & 37—WOODSIDE, ASTORIA, AND CORONA ELEVATED LINES

### SECTION

2	Second Avenue—Beebe Avenue to Ditmars Avenue (present-day 31 <sup>st</sup> Street—39 <sup>th</sup> Avenue to Ditmars Boulevard)
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### OPENING CEREMONIES

The first Astoria train departed from Grand Central at 2:15 PM February 1, 1917 with the Borough President of Queens and other officials on board. The Motorman tied his whistle down, the Boy Scout drum corps played, and flags flew along the route. Regular service started after the special train arrived at Astoria. The party took pictures of the train, after which the party was taken by members of the Steinway Civic Association in automobiles and sightseeing cars through portions of the Steinway and Astoria sections and back again to the Ditmars Boulevard station. The officials boarded the train again and returned to Queensboro Plaza for speeches at the Chamber of Commerce. There was a Long Island City night of entertainment at the Bohemian Hall, located at the Ditmars Boulevard station.

### SERVICE CHANGES

Subway trains started running between Grand Central and Ditmars Boulevard on February 1, 1917. During the rush hour, four-car trains ran on a five-minute headway. When Second Avenue "L" trains started running to Corona and Astoria on July 23, 1917, subway service to Astoria was discontinued temporarily. Trains from Astoria operated to South Ferry during rush hours, to 57<sup>th</sup> Street and Second Avenue during midday and evenings, and to Queensboro Plaza during midnights. When 24-hour subway service to Astoria was resumed on January 17, 1918, midnight Astoria and Corona elevated service was discontinued. Riding must have increased rapidly during the next two years. Six-car subway trains operated on an eight-minute headway.

Although the BMT had trackage rights on the IRT Astoria and Corona Lines, it could not operate through service because its subway cars were wider than the IRT subway cars. After studying several different schemes, the BMT decided to operate wooden cars, which were the same width as the IRT cars, as shuttles from Queensboro Plaza to Astoria and Corona. A test train ran on March 26, 1923 and passenger service began at 12:01 AM April 8, 1923 with four-car trains oper-

ating in the rush hour and two-car trains furnishing mid-day service. Because the track layout east of Queensboro Plaza did not have any provision for switching back trains, the BMT found the simplest solution. It installed a double crossover on the lower level Corona Line tracks at Jackson Avenue and wrong-railed trains for the short distance between the double crossover and Queensboro Plaza. Trains from Astoria discharged passengers on the north track of the lower level, where they picked up Corona passengers. Trains then wrong-railed to the newly installed double crossover, after which they followed the regular route to Corona. After operating over the double crossover, trains from Corona were wrong-railed to the upper level north track, where they picked up Astoria passengers.

To allow the BMT to operate Flushing expresses, the lines were separated at 10 AM June 28, 1938. During reconstruction, Astoria BMT trains were single-tracked between 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Queensboro Plaza. Two-track operation east of the station commenced after work on the new northbound track was completed on March 9, 1939.

On June 11, 1940, Second Avenue "L" service was discontinued north of 60<sup>th</sup> Street, while Queens trains furnished service south of 60<sup>th</sup> Street. Riding was so light that the entire line was closed from 9 PM to 5 AM weekdays and Saturdays and all day Sunday starting May 19, 1941. Service was discontinued on the portion between Chatham Square and Queensboro Plaza on June 13, 1942. The last Second Avenue "L" train departed from Astoria at 8:58 PM.

In 1949, the Board of Transportation decided that it could economize and furnish better service by running IRT trains to Flushing and BMT trains to Astoria. IRT service between Times Square and Astoria was discontinued permanently on July 24, 1949, and BMT shuttles were run temporarily from Astoria to Queensboro Plaza, alternating to the IRT and BMT platforms.

Before BMT subway trains could operate to Astoria, it was necessary to make extensive track changes west

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**Astoria Line**

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of Queensboro Plaza. A special schedule was in effect while the work was in progress during the October 15-16, 1949 weekend. Astoria shuttles continued operating on the northernmost upper level track. Temporary wooden bridges, spanning the out-of-service middle tracks, facilitated across-the-platform transfers. Starting Saturday and continuing until Sunday afternoon, a six-car Q-car train was single-tracked on the southbound track between Queensboro Plaza and Astoria while workmen cut back the northbound platforms to accom-

modate the wider BMT subway cars. At 5:20 PM Sunday, October 16, officials rode a six-car test train composed of N-2450-4025-2451-2536-2535-2534-S on the northbound track to Astoria. The three north cars were laid up at Ditmars Boulevard and became the revenue collection train when they were coupled to the other three cars. This train was single-tracked on the northbound track between Astoria and the former IRT track at Queensboro Plaza until regular service began before the Monday morning rush hour.

Routes were changed frequently, as shown in the following table:

**ASTORIA SERVICE**

DATE	ROUTE	TIME OPERATED
October 17, 1949	Fourth Avenue Local Brighton Local	All times Rush hours; Saturday morning and early afternoon
April 27, 1950	Fourth Avenue Local Brighton Local	All times Rush hours and weekday midday; Saturday morning and early afternoon
December 1, 1955	Fourth Avenue Local Brighton Express	All times Weekdays
May 4, 1957	Fourth Avenue Local Brighton Express	All times Weekdays and Saturdays
January 1, 1961	Brighton Local	Weekdays and Sunday all times; Saturday midnight and evening
January 3, 1961	West End Express	Weekday rush and midday; Saturday morning and afternoon
January 7, 1961	Brighton Express	Saturday morning and afternoon
April 21, 1962	Brighton Local West End Express	All times Weekday rush and midday; Saturday morning and afternoon (discontinued September 21, 1963)
November 26, 1967	RR/Fourth Avenue Local	All times
April 27, 1986	RR/Fourth Avenue Local Ⓝ/West End Express	All times Rush hours
May 24, 1987	Ⓝ/Sea Beach Express Ⓜ/West End Express	All times Rush hours
December 11, 1988	Ⓝ/Sea Beach Express	All times
July 22, 2001	Ⓝ/Sea Beach Express Ⓜ/West End Express	All times Rush hours, midday, early evening weekdays (A)
February 23, 2004	Ⓝ/Sea Beach Express Ⓜ/Broadway Local	All times Rush hours, midday, early evening weekdays

(A) Trains made express stops on the Astoria Line southbound (mornings) and northbound (afternoon and early evening) (discontinued January 7, 2002)

*(Continued on page 4)*

**Astoria Line**

*(Continued from page 3)*

**QB SERVICE TO ASTORIA**

Rush hour QB Brighton Locals occasionally ran to Astoria:

**ASTORIA SERVICE**

DATE	AM RUSH	PM RUSH
August 19, 1968	1 train to Astoria	—
January 2, 1973	2 trains light from 57 <sup>th</sup> Street	1 train light to 57 <sup>th</sup> Street
January 19, 1976	All trains to Astoria	—
August 30, 1976	1 train to Astoria	1 train from Astoria
May 7, 1978	2 trains to Astoria	2 trains from Astoria
April 26, 1986	Discontinued	

**All Four Lines Running to Coney Island Again**

*(Continued from page 1)*

platforms and eight tracks, was replaced with an open deck structure. The station is ADA accessible. A 300-foot photovoltaic roof supplies 210 kilowatts for the terminal's non-traction power needs. The Surf Avenue re-

tail arcade was demolished and is being rebuilt. The BMT terra cotta façade has been restored and used in the Portal Building design.

With trains running again on all four lines, NYC Transit should be able to transport record-breaking crowds to Coney Island this summer.

**TECH TALK**  
**by Jeffrey Erlitz**

On the Long Island Rail Road, M-7s at least as high as 7448 are now in service. Evidently, there are several gaps in the sequence of car numbers that have been delivered and are in service.

Work to eliminate the grade crossing at Roslyn Road in Mineola was begun in earnest during May (see page 7). Train service was suspended between Mineola and Hicksville and replaced with buses on 2 consecutive Sundays, the 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>. Work seems to have consisted of pile driving & installation of coffer dams. Roslyn Road will be depressed under the tracks. This is the first grade crossing elimination work since Herricks Road (west of Mineola) was done in the 1990s.

The Public Address/Customer Information System was activated at Woodside, Freeport, and Hicksville sometime during the past few months. Unlike those on the subway, which currently display only the day, date, time, and a few "canned" messages, the LIRR's display actual departure times of (usually) the next 3 trains, with any delays, scheduled to arrive on a particular track. 41 stations will be receiving this system in the current Capital Program.

Sperry Rail System 128 traveled over the LIRR system during the middle of May, ultrasonically detecting

rails for cracks and other imperfections. This particular detector car was built in 1928 by the joint venture of St. Louis Car Company and Electro-Motive Corporation. EMC was the predecessor of EMD, of diesel locomotive fame. It was originally Lehigh Valley Railroad 15 and was sold to Sperry in August, 1939.

The first section of new signals being installed on the Concourse Line under contract S-32308-R are being placed in service as you read this. This first section is from north of 145<sup>th</sup> Street to north of 161<sup>st</sup> Street and includes the new interlocking at 161<sup>st</sup> Street. Track circuit testing was performed over the weekends of May 7-8, 14-15, and 21-22. Signals and switches are being placed in service over the weekends of June 4-5, 11-12, and 18-19. Two new signal rooms are in this segment: 1351CIR (Central Instrument Room), at the 155<sup>th</sup> Street station, and 161<sup>st</sup> Street Relay Room. This new relay room is in the space of the former tower. As with the new interlockings on the 14<sup>th</sup> Street-Canarsie Line, 161<sup>st</sup> Street Interlocking will be only be controlled from the new Relay Room (via a Maintainer's control panel) until the new Master Tower at Bedford Park Boulevard is ready later this year.

**Culver Shuttle Discontinued More Than 30 Years Ago**

*(Continued from page 1)*

This line has an interesting history. On October 9, 1874, Andrew Culver consolidated the Park Avenue Railroad Company and the Greenwood & Coney Island Railroad Company, forming the Prospect Park & Coney Island Railroad Company. The new company started building a surface railroad on Gravesend Avenue (the present-day McDonald Avenue). Trains hauled by steam locomotives started operating from Neck Road to Ninth Avenue (present-day Prospect Park West) and 20<sup>th</sup> Street on June 19, 1875. The line was extended to Coney Island on June 27, 1875.

When the Fifth Avenue "L" was being built, Culver decided to extend his railroad to the new Union Depot at 36<sup>th</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue. On June 15, 1888, he founded the Prospect Park & South Brooklyn Railroad Company and built a railroad adjacent to 37<sup>th</sup> Street. Trains started running to the Union Depot on June 7, 1890, they were through-routed with the Fifth Avenue "L" on August 5, 1895, and the entire line was electrified on July 10, 1899. All wooden cars were equipped with shoes and trolley poles. When cars operated on the elevated structure, power was supplied from the third rail through the shoes to the motors. When the train descended to the surface, the Conductors raised the trolley poles, adjusted the single-pole, double-throw switch, and power was supplied from the trolley wire.

Trains started operating to Kings Highway on March

16, 1919, Avenue X on May 10, 1919, and finally to Coney Island on May 1, 1920 on the new elevated structure. Trolley cars provided service on Gravesend Avenue. South Brooklyn Railway delivered freight under the new elevated structure.

After the trolley cars ceased operating in 1956 and South Brooklyn replaced its electric locomotives with diesels, the overhead was no longer needed. In the early 1960s, the Branford Electric Railway Association was awarded a contract to remove the unused poles and overhead. We know that Branford removed the poles and overhead from the yard west of Third Avenue, but we do not know whether they removed the overhead under the elevated structure.

It would be appropriate if Branford's Brooklyn PCC operated under the salvaged overhead that was supported by salvaged trolley poles.

A detailed history of the Culver Line was published in the May, June, and September, 2000 *Bulletins*.

A recent newspaper article reveals that the city plans to rezone six blocks of the former Culver/South

Brooklyn right-of-way adjacent to 37<sup>th</sup> Street. If a developer is interested, hundreds of new housing units could be built on this right-of-way. This development must include "affordable" housing.

Between 1990 and 2000, Borough Park's population increased by 15.6 percent, but the available housing increased by only 4.5 percent. The rezoning of this right-of-way will enable the expansion of one of Brooklyn's fastest-growing communities.



"Standard" 2712, April 12, 1969.  
Larry Linder photograph



"Standard" 2701 at Fort Hamilton Parkway the same day.  
Larry Linder photograph

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**Culver Shuttle Discontinued More Than 30 Years Ago**

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**13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, looking south, October 28, 1959.**  
Bernard Linder photograph



**Another view of car 2701 (see previous page), also at Fort Hamilton Parkway.**  
Larry Linder photograph



**Fort Hamilton Parkway, looking north, October 28, 1959.**  
Bernard Linder photograph



**Car 2701, previously seen at Fort Hamilton Parkway, now appears at Ditmas Avenue.**  
Larry Linder photograph



**North end of Ditmas Avenue, right before the tracks were rearranged (September 17, 1954).**  
Bernard Linder photograph



**This street shot of the Fort Hamilton Parkway station was taken on April 23, 1975, less than a month before the end of service.**  
Bernard Linder photograph

# Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

## Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Due to a shortfall in funding of the 2005-2009 Capital Program, on April 25 MTA announced that it would defer certain projects. MTA had requested \$27.8 billion, but the Legislature approved a plan for \$21.1 billion. For the Long Island Rail Road, this means that the plan to construct a 16-track storage yard in Port Jefferson has been put on hold, and there will be a delay in construction of East Side Access. Also, 12 fewer M-7 cars would be purchased. The agency that will suffer the most is NYC Transit, where rehabilitation will be deferred at 12 stations. Metro-North would not be as severely affected, losing \$27 million. Projects that could be affected are expansion of parking at North White Plains, a parking garage for the Cortlandt station, and replacement of some track on the Port Jervis Line with welded rail. Previously, MTA Chairman Peter Kalikow announced that no new projects (Second Avenue Subway, Lower Manhattan/JFK Airport) would be undertaken. The 1.5-mile ⑦ extension to the far west side of Manhattan, estimated at \$2 billion, will be funded by New York City.

### MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

The special timetable that was issued for the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Five Boro Bike Tour®, is identical to the one that was produced last year.

Based on its experience in designing the M-2, M-4, M-6, and M-7 cars, the firm of Louis T. Klauder & Associates has been awarded a \$2.3 million contract for developing the technical specifications and for engineering support services for the M-8 cars.

### MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

Since the opening of Secaucus Junction for weekday service (December 15, 2003), total west-of-Hudson ridership during calendar year 2004, increased by 10.4% — by line, Port Jervis (+9.9%) and Pascack Valley (+12.0%) — when compared to 2003.

### Connecticut Department of Transportation

A new timetable was issued for Shore Line East as of April 25, 2005. According to member Bob Underwood, there was one five-minute time change. Something that went unnoticed was that fares were increased on January 1, which was the same time that this occurred on the Metro-North portion of the New Haven Line. As an example, the monthly ticket at Old Saybrook went from \$114 to \$121.

### MTA Long Island Rail Road

Effective March 14, commuters can sign up for an email notification system that will provide regular service advisories, including information about routine or planned service changes. This ranges from when new timetables are available to whether service will be adjusted due to a major construction project. The LIRR

also plans to use this system to inform subscribers about service disruptions,

For the Spring Meet at Belmont Park (May 4-July 24), the usual timetable was issued. Train service remains as in previous years, but this year the cover has a logo recognizing the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Belmont Park. The Belmont Stakes will be held on June 11, and a special timetable is to be issued.

A special timetable was produced for two Sundays, May 15 and 22, for the Port Jefferson and Ronkonkoma Lines. Train service was replaced by bus service between Mineola and Hicksville to enable the New York State Department of Transportation to do preliminary construction work that will lead to the elimination of the grade crossing at Roslyn Road in Mineola. Because the work site is east of the station, Oyster Bay service is not affected. What is unusual about this timetable is that it is in four colors: blue (Port Jefferson), pink (Ronkonkoma), black, and white.

The Sperry Car visited the Montauk Branch on May 20, and a special timetable was issued for the occasion.

General Order No. 201 went into effect at 12:01 AM May 23. Details next month.

### NJ Transit

As was reported last month, new timetables were issued on April 24. Two days before, NJ Transit issued a Customer Notice advising Montclair-Boonton Line riders that because Train #1004 (7:13 AM Lake Hopatcong) had been discontinued, there would be a new train, #292, that would originate at Watchung Avenue and make stops at Bay Street (Montclair), Newark Broad Street, and Hoboken. Train #1004's removal was made to accommodate construction work at Newark Broad Street.

At its April 21 board meeting, the NJ Transit Directors approved an average 9.9% fare increase to take effect on July 1. If there is a good side to this, the rate that had been proposed was 15%. Fares last went up on April 1, 2002. In addition, the off-peak discount has been reduced from 25% to 15%, not 12.5% as had been proposed. The change-in-terminal fee will be either \$2 or \$3, depending on the boarding location. Monthly passes will be honored on other modes of travel, bus-train or train-bus. Holders of monthly or weekly tickets will be able to travel one zone for free on connecting local bus or light rail lines. One-way fares on light rail lines and buses also went up. Because of this fare increase, New York State riders (including this Editor) on the Pascack Valley and Port Jervis Lines, who just had a fare increase on March 1, may be in store for another, because NJ Transit controls the fares into NY

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**Commuter and Transit Notes***(Continued from page 7)*

Penn.

Due to a fire in the Meadowlands, which was adjacent to the Northeast Corridor tracks, NJ Transit and Amtrak trains were temporarily suspended at about 4:30 PM April 20. I arrived at a crowded NY Penn to see every train on the monitor listed as "DELAYED." Within a few minutes of my arrival, a PA announcement was made advising customers to use PATH at 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, which was honoring NJ Transit rail tickets. So, along with a crowd of commuters, I trudged the long block over to Sixth Avenue. PATH will be billing NJ Transit for carrying 7,784 of its customers.

As my train approached the Bergen Tunnels, I saw NJ Transit's brand new TGIV car in a sporty Blue/Yellow/Silver color scheme. This unit replaced one that burned up last year on the North Jersey Coast Line.

Commuters who were on board or waiting for trains at about 7:30 PM Thursday, May 12, had their trips disrupted and/or delayed, when a major fire erupted on the bulkhead of the Portal Drawbridge in Kearney, New Jersey. Portal is a nearly 100-year old two-track bridge that spans the Hackensack River and is located between Secaucus Transfer and Newark Penn Station. It has been trouble-prone in recent years, but is an essential part of the Northeast Corridor. Although Portal spans the Hackensack River, the nearest water hydrant was 600 feet away, requiring that fire hoses be stretched about 200 feet. All train service was immediately suspended between Newark and New York, and riders were directed to use PATH trains, which honored NJ Transit tickets. The fire lasted about two hours. Amtrak crews worked through the night, and the temporary repairs that were made enabled limited service on the Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast Lines to operate on Friday morning, but at a 5 mph speed. As usually happens in cases such as this, *Midtown Direct* trains were routed to Hoboken, and passengers who normally use Secaucus Transfer were directed to Hoboken. Since I was in Minneapolis on the ERA trip, I was not affected. Modified schedules were posted on NJ Transit's website. Normal service was resumed for Friday afternoon, except for the *Midtown Direct* trains, which went back on Monday morning. Trains are restricted to 30 mph. NJ Transit officials believed that one of the catenary wires threw off some electrical sparks, which ignited the fire. Permanent repairs could take up to one year to be completed, at a cost of \$4.6 million, money for which Amtrak would have to dip into its capital budget to fund these repairs.

In the wake of the *Acela* disaster, Amtrak canceled some of its *Clockers*. NJ Transit reported that it would cover the service from Trenton and points north. Train #628 (5:33 AM 30<sup>th</sup> Street) was replaced with a train out of Trenton, and for Train #628 (7:05 AM 30<sup>th</sup> Street), NJ

Transit Train #3928 (7:51 AM Trenton) had two coaches added to its consist. For the afternoon, Amtrak canceled *Keystone* Train #653. That was protected by NJ Transit Train #8863, which made all of #653's stops to Trenton. Train #629 was also canceled, and replaced by #8865.

At the March Board meeting, four significant projects were approved. There will be a second phase of work at Morrisville Yard, which opened in March, 2004. At that time, 12 tracks, capable of storing 130 cars under catenary, were placed into service. Those trains were formerly stored at Barracks Yard in Trenton, or dead-headed to Sunnyside Yard in Queens. Morrisville Yard also includes a very modern crew facility, which I had the opportunity to visit a few months ago. Under Phase II, ten additional tracks (120-car storage), also under catenary, would be constructed.

The Edison station on the Northeast Corridor serves nearly 1,900 daily passengers, but its parking lot can only accommodate 220 cars. As a result, commuters are forced to compete for on-street parking around the station complex. The Board of Directors has authorized "all actions necessary to acquire property required for the Edison Park & Ride Project at a cost not to exceed \$3.5 million including closing costs." Once all of the parcels are acquired, the next step will be to award a construction project for the facility.

The North Retaining Wall of the Roseville Cut on the Morris & Essex, which dates to the early 1900s, will be repaired under a \$3,521,341 contract. Besides the repair of the wall, railroad and public utility lines will be relocated. This work will be performed in conjunction with the outages that are scheduled for the Newark Broad Street Station ADA Compliance Project.

Finally, a design contract to replace the overhead catenary system structures on the Gladstone Branch, west of Summit, has been awarded. Most of the wooden poles have been in service since the 1984 re-electrification.

Several railfan publications have published photos of NJ Transit PL-42ACs 4020 and 4021, being tested in the Hornell, New York area.

Since January, 2004, passenger trips at Secaucus Junction have doubled from approximately 4,000 daily to 8,000.

As a result of working with customer focus groups, easier-to-read timetables are to be issued starting this month.

Work began in March on Hack Siding, which is south of the North Hackensack station on the Pascack Valley Line. It remains to be seen how useful the sidings project will be when the next one that has been approved is south of Nanuet, over 13 miles and 10 stations away. Cole Siding in Hasbrouck Heights and Long Siding at Pascack Junction are also scheduled to be built. Perhaps one day, the elected officials in the nine towns along the line will either have a change of heart or be

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**Commuter and Transit Notes**

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voted out of office, and the Vale (Montvale) and Golf (Oradell) sidings will be constructed so as to provide the added service that has been promised for so long. Photos exist of the Oradell station with two tracks. I found one in that excellent series — **The Next Station Will Be ...** — which was published by The Railroadians of America, Incorporated in 1974 on the New Jersey & New York Railroad, which was in Volume II.

**Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation**

The January 9 timetables were replaced on April 25, in order to provide better connecting service for Train #42 (3:51 AM) the first train out of Port Jervis for commuters destined to lower Manhattan. Departure times have been changed to depart 3 minutes later, "on the fours," between 6:14 and 7:24 AM.

**Amtrak**

In last month's *Bulletin*, we reported on the problems with the *Acela* and its brakes. On April 25, the first day that the Spring-Summer schedules were in effect, I checked to see if Amtrak had issued any supplement schedules that listed the replacement *Metroliner* service — there were none. In the following weeks I stopped by several times, and the response was, "by the end of the week" or "sometime next week" or "by the 15<sup>th</sup>." From the first day of the new schedules, the television monitors and the main Train Board at NY Penn Station displayed the train numbers, which were unchanged, e.g. #2109; however, there was *Metroliner* in place of *Acela*.

A *New York Times* editorial of April 26 came out in support of Amtrak, by blaming the *Acela* on a "mishmash of a design that never quite fit America's needs." The *Times* also took the Bush administration to task for its recent proposal for zero funding, which the editors felt is more like a death sentence, a slow dismantling of Amtrak into regional services whose expenses would be forced onto already cash-starved states. The following quote deserves to be published here: "The fatal flaw in the administration's thinking is that the railroad should be self-sufficient. That's impractical and unnecessary, given the benefits it provides in taking cars off congested highways and offering an alternative to air service in the post-9/11 era." The editorial concludes: "That money should be seen as a subsidy, not a loan or a bailout. The passenger rail service in this country is a national resource, a jewel of interstate commerce."

**Museums**

Member Frank Pfuhrer sent news that the Lake Shore Electric Railway has been formed to take over Trolleyville USA, with a move, possibly to the downtown Flats area in Cleveland. The City of Cleveland is supportive of this proposal and sees it as a vital component of its Lakefront development plan.

**Miscellaneous**

The American Public Transportation Association said that U.S. public transportation ridership totaled 9.6 billion trips in 2004, an increase of 2.1 percent over the previous year. An APTA spokesman said that light rail experienced the greatest increase, 8.2 percent, due in part to the addition of several new systems and expansion of several existing systems. The spokesman added that heavy rail had the next highest increase, at 3.0 percent, followed by commuter rail, at 0.3 percent. Thanks to *Railway Age* and *Weekly Rail Review* for this report.

Transit agencies are always looking for additional revenue sources. MARTA and MBTA have signed contracts with companies that will install televisions in their subway cars. *Metro* magazine reported that MARTA would receive a minimum of \$20 million over the next 10 years, while MBTA anticipates \$3.5 million annually.

**Other Transit Systems****Rochester, New York**

In April, it was announced that due to "safety hazards" and the expense of maintenance, the portion of Rochester's abandoned subway beneath Broad Street between Exchange Boulevard and Brown Street would be filled in. It had been hoped that the right-of-way, which was originally a part of the Erie Canal, would be retained for future use if a light rail line is built. According to the article which appeared in the *Democrat and Chronicle*, Commissioner of Environmental Services Edward Doherty was quoted as saying, "It would be nice if someone had \$200 million to re-establish the canal as a tourist attraction or \$50 million to establish a light rail system, but we just can't hang onto it." Rochester's subway was opened on September 1, 1927, and closed July 1, 1956.

**Boston, Massachusetts**

April 25 was also the date that was selected by MBTA to reissue its commuter rail schedules. This time they are Blue, and replaced the November 1 edition. There were some changes on all lines except for Fairmount and Needham. Almost one month earlier, on March 26, the spring edition of the Rapid Transit Timetable was published.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on April 14 at the Uphams Corner station, which is being renovated, to start the upgrade of what is called the Fairmount Corridor. Fairmount extends 9.2 miles from Readville to South Station and serves one of Boston's poorest neighborhoods. Fairmount also has the lowest ridership of the MBTA commuter lines and there are only four stations. If additional funding can be found (this project will cost \$96 million), additional stations would be built at Newmarket, Four Corners/Geneva Avenue, Talbot Avenue, and Blue Hill Avenue. The transit agency also plans to add more frequent weekday service and start weekend service.

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Over the weekends of April 22-24 and April 29-May 1, MBTA operated shuttle service between Oak Grove and North Station while workers performed signal work between Wellington and Haymarket. Thirteen shuttles were operated in addition to the six regularly scheduled trains. This brings back memories of the weekends during January, 1991, when the LIRR operated a special 7 shuttle service between Hunterspoint Avenue and Flushing-Main Street while NYC Transit Track and Structures crews replaced the interlocking at Fisk Avenue (69<sup>th</sup> Street). Thanks to member Todd Glickman for these reports.

*Camden, New Jersey*

Cubic Transportation Systems was awarded an \$11.3 million contract for design and integration of a new multi-modal contactless smart card-based automated fare collection system that will link rail and parking services for PATCO. This new system will replace the one that was installed by Cubic in 1975 and was the nation's first automated fare collection system to use plastic magnetically encoded tickets. The new system is scheduled to be in service by the end of 2006.

In connection with the previous news item, member David W. Safford found the following interesting fact in a recent edition of **Connections**. "Accidental contact (or even nearness to) magnets can cause alteration or erasure of magnetically coded tickets such as PATCO uses. Because of recurring customer problems, PATCO is developing a whole new fare collection system which will use both and improved magnetic stripe cards and 'smart cards' (presumably similar to Mobil 'Speedpass' cards). Implementation, however, will be some indefinite time in the future."

*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

Member Lee Ordwin sent several SEPTA news items: "SEPTA's contract with the Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 234 for both City Transit and Suburban Frontier service was set to expire at 12 midnight on Thursday, April 14, 2005. The April 14 date reflected agreed-upon contract extensions for both divisions. The transit agency prepared an alternate service plan to assist riders in the event that City and Frontier service (were) curtailed. On April 8, it was announced that the City Transit contract (had) been extended to June 15, and the Suburban Contract (had) been extended to May 1. The big issue was health care coverage, with SEPTA wanting some employee contributions to help cover health care costs. Historically the city transit strike is the city system only. However, this time the Frontier Division (based in Norristown, Pennsylvania for routes serving that section) will go out as well. A strike is difficult for Red Arrow Division (now called "Suburban Victory District") riders because most transfer to the Market-

Frankford 'L' at 69<sup>h</sup> Street and that connection is broken during a strike. SEPTA will modify some routes. Regional Rail trains will continue running. Certain express trains will make local stops. During a city transit strike, Regional Rail trains would become very crowded." SEPTA stated: "All regular fares will continue to apply in the event of a work stoppage. Unless otherwise directed by authorized SEPTA staff, fares will be collected for each trip made inbound and outbound on all trains. Customers traveling during peak hours must purchase tickets prior to traveling as there will be no cash sales on board trains. In addition, riders will be assessed a \$2 surcharge when boarding other trains at a station with an open ticket office or functioning ticket vending machine. During the PM peak, customers leaving from Market East, Suburban, and 30<sup>th</sup> Street will be asked to wait in line at the concourse level where fares will be collected prior to boarding. All passes will be subject to inspection and will be validated by SEPTA fare collection personnel." A devastating PTC and Red Arrow strike early in 1963 during a bitter winter helped push for the creation of SEPTA to operate the region's transit. It was presumed a government agency would be strike-proof.

On Saturday May 14, 2005 the University City District sponsored a second "Trolley Day". The ride is free, but it appears tickets must be obtained from sites in University City. The 56<sup>th</sup> Street station will close on Tuesday, May 31, 2005 and will remain closed for about six months while the old station is demolished and replaced by a new, modern facility with elevators and escalators. During this time, Route G buses will be detoured to 52<sup>nd</sup> Street between Arch and Walnut Streets so that riders can transfer to/from the "L" at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Street station. Four weekend shutdowns are planned for June as well as two nine-day shutdowns slated for July 15-24 and August 12-21.

Lee also sent news of the celebration held in late April to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the R1/Airport Line. In this score of years, more than 20 million passengers have availed themselves of this service. This line had been planned years ago, but took a while to get started. It uses mostly little-used freight trackage and a new spur into the airport, which it reaches from the Northeast Corridor. Leaving from 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station in Center City, intermediate stops are made at University City and Eastwick. There are four stations at the airport to serve the various terminals. Running time from the Airport to 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station is about 20 minutes.

New timetables went into effect on April 4 for the Victory District (Red Arrow) routes. Significant changes include: Route 100 – Minor weekday adjustments have been made affecting some Norristown Limited, Express, and Local trips. Route 101 – weekday schedule adjustments from 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal and Media have been made with outbound (to Media) express service discon-

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tinued during the morning rush hour. Route 102 – adjustments have been made to weekday service from 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal and Sharon Hill, with outbound express service discontinued during the morning rush hour. Thanks again to Lee for this information and to David W. Safford for sending copies of the schedules.

SEPTA's web page announced new diversion information for surface routes. Data will come directly from the SEPTA control center and will cover both planned (i.e. construction and parades) and emergency (fires, traffic jams) detours. It is hoped to provide current information.

David W. Safford also provided the following report from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*: "A series of public hearings held to determine a route for new transit lines southeast of Camden has produced the same results as the last initiative, namely nearly everyone is in favor provided it is built somewhere else. The latest proposal for a grade-separated branch from the PATCO Lindenwold Line was viewed severally by the public as 'creating a barrier,' 'people coming into town to use the train,' 'creating congestion,' etc. Leaders of the major communities to be served are generally in favor, but they have to consider reelection. Prospects at the moment are for further study ad infinitum, or possibly a line safely isolated in the middle of an expressway where it can be ignored."

From *Metro*: Since 9/11 SEPTA has been steadily upgrading its emergency power system, installing emergency generators in "key substations" and emergency lighting throughout the subway tunnels. Starting April 15, SEPTA began installing new switches and communications and signal systems between Wayne Junction and Glenside. Special schedules were in effect every weekend except Memorial Day, through June 24-25. Affected are lines R1, R2, R3, R5, and R8.

Member Glenn Rowe reported that the following PCCs were sold and removed from SEPTA property in January and February: 2105, 2111, 2142, 2143, 2156, 2159 (fire), 2175, 2704, 2712, 2713, and 2716 (all from Midvale). Also, these PCCs are for sale: 2054 (Midvale), 2098 (Midvale), 2117 (Midvale), 2150 (Midvale), 2160 (work car-Elmwood), 2168 (Elmwood), 2187 (work car-Elmwood), 2728 (Elmwood), 2748 (Midvale), 2799 (Woodland), and snow sweeper C-145 (Woodland). For sale — Market-Frankford cars (stored at 69<sup>th</sup> Street) 610, 628, 632, 639, 645, 845, and 846 and Broad Street cars (stored in Fern Rock Yard) 1, 51, 166, and 1025 (museum cars) and box cars 5831 and 9138.

**Washington, D.C. area**

Thanks to member Steve Erlitz, who sent copies of MARC's April 25 timetables, along with the following explanation of the changes. Penn Line schedules have only one change. Train #438 (6:05 PM D.C.), now oper-

ates through to Perryville. Train #540 (6:35 PM D.C.) operates only as far as Baltimore. This change was made to improve the reliability for riders going north of Baltimore. The former 6:35 PM departure was frequently delayed by up to three Amtrak trains. In addition, Amtrak schedule changes on April 25 increase the chance that Train #540 would be even more unreliable. The 6:05 PM departure eliminates all but one potential interference delay by an Amtrak train and that one takes place almost immediately after leaving Washington. Starting on May 2, Amtrak began a major project to replace all the ties on one track of the Susquehanna River Bridge. This project will take 5 to 6 weeks, working 7 days per week. One track will always be out of service for the entire period and two tracks will be out in the middle of the night for about 2 hours. This single-track segment will be a major choke point for Amtrak, MARC, and Norfolk Southern freight trains. In order to minimize delays, four MARC trains had their origin or terminating point modified during the project.

Southbound: Train #503, the first train in the morning from Perryville, originates in Aberdeen instead of Perryville. Passengers driving to Aberdeen to board this train may buy a \$5 sticker for the Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge (U.S. 40) that is good for unlimited crossings for one year.

Train #513 originates at Edgewood at 6:48 AM. MARC passengers from Perryville and Aberdeen can ride Amtrak #151, arriving Washington only 10 minutes after Train 513. All MARC tickets are being accepted on #151 during the construction.

Northbound: Train #538, leaving Washington at 6:05 PM, terminates at Edgewood. Amtrak added Aberdeen and Perryville stops to Train #138, which leaves Washington 5 minutes after Train #538. All MARC tickets to these points are being honored on Amtrak #138.

Train #544, the 8:30 PM departure from Washington, terminates at Edgewood. Passengers to Aberdeen and Perryville can ride Amtrak #198, using any MARC ticket. Train #198 leaves Washington at 9 PM but arrives at Aberdeen and Perryville only 7 minutes later than Train #544 normally does.

In addition, southbound Penn Line trains in the middle of the day are subject to 5-10 minute delays following Amtrak trains coming from the north that are delayed by this bridge project.

Camden and Brunswick Lines: The summer months represent the heaviest period of track work for CSX. Every summer numerous temporary speed restrictions are imposed while work is underway. To reflect this situation five minutes has been added to the schedule of all Camden Line and Brunswick Line trains for the summer only. With the exception of Trains #870 and 891, present morning arrival times and evening departures from Washington will be maintained. CSX will not allow the expansion of the window in which commuter

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trains are allowed to operate, so Train #870 leaves Brunswick at its present 5 AM departure time, arriving Washington 5 minutes later. Train #891, which presently leaves Washington at 4 PM, will depart 5 minutes later. The switch to Train #891 is a result of a change in Amtrak's *Capitol Limited* to Chicago to a 3:55 PM Washington departure. While passengers on Train #879 will benefit from moving the Amtrak train, there is concern about the impact Amtrak will have on Train #891 and indirectly train #875. CSX and Amtrak negotiate their schedules directly and the impact on MARC is not the only or primary factor in selecting the departure time of the train. There were objections to the new departure time but it was made anyway. Unless Amtrak were willing to run train #29 much earlier or later there is no departure time in the afternoon where this train will not affect some MARC Brunswick Line train. With less than a week to go, VRE and MARC decided to continue the cross-honoring agreement through next April, at which time, it will be determined if the program is worth continuing and if a nominal fee should be charged.

WMATA (Metrorail) announced that it would operate a better than normal headway following the Washington Nationals' first home game on April 14. All trains were six cars until closing and the baseball team would pay the bill to keep the system open until the end of a game if extra innings were needed. (They weren't.) Unlike Baltimore, Metro cannot just stage trains. For the Orioles, the MTA stages light rail and Metro trains at the ballpark after the system shuts down to carry fans home if the games run past closing.

That gorgeous weather that we had during the third week of April caused CSX to impose heat restrictions that affected Virginia Railway Express trains. Due to the 90-degree temperatures and the threat of sun kinks, trains were required to operate at 20 mph below the posted speed limit.

Virginia Railway Express issued new timetables on April 25. There was one minor (five-minute) change to a VRE train, and also to one Amtrak train on the Fredericksburg and Manassas Lines.

Commuters from Zone 8 (Brooke and Leland Road) on the Fredericksburg Line would have had to pay higher fares than Zone 9 riders from Fredericksburg. However, the Stafford County Board of Supervisors, after initially indicating that the County would not fully fund the VRE subsidy, changed its mind. So, when the fare increase is approved, Zone 8 riders will pay the increase that had been planned.

**South Florida**

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (of Broward County) has voted to direct the State of Florida to build an east-west light rail system, a project which could cost \$1 billion. Another vote directed the State to build

as much of the system as possible in an "exclusive path that doesn't interfere with drivers." FDOT can now apply to the FTA for federal funding this spring. Construction would begin in 2012. Thanks to senior member Joe Gagne for sending the article from the ***Sun-Sentinel***, *Chicago, Illinois*

CTA held a community meeting on May 9, to discuss the planned renovations of the Kimball, Kedzie, Francisco, Rockwell and Western stations on the Brown Line. At the same time, CTA staff presented an overview of the Brown Line capacity expansion project with emphasis on work planned for the aforementioned stations. This line has become one of CTA's busiest rail lines, serving more than 66,000 customers each weekday, and has become overcrowded. Despite additional service provided over recent years, capacity is still not adequate to meet demand. During evening and morning rush hours customers sometimes cannot squeeze into a crowded train and must wait, sometimes for several trains. The purpose of this project is to increase capacity, and therefore improve service on this popular line. CTA plans to do this by lengthening the platforms to accommodate eight-car trains instead of the six-car trains currently in use. During the station construction phase of the project, CTA will implement staggered temporary closures of some Brown Line stations in order to stay within the project budget and preserve amenities planned for neighborhood stations. These closures will also minimize the amount of time construction crews will be present in neighborhoods. The federal government's \$423.1 million funding contribution to the \$529.9 million Brown Line project is a combination of \$245.5 million in New Starts funding and \$177.6 million from Formula funds. Non-federal funding in the amount of \$106.8 million is being provided for the project by RTA, IDOT, and CTA. Thanks to Bob Hansen for this report.

**St. Louis, Missouri**

During April, it was reported that Metrolink's eight-mile Cross County project, which is budgeted for \$550 million, will likely be more than \$600 million, at least 9% higher. Nine stations will be added from Forest Park to Shrewsbury, and the project is at 50% completion. According to the ***Post-Dispatch***, last year the construction and management team were first fired, and then sued. Construction began in April, 2003, and was expected to be completed this spring. The project is financed entirely by a quarter-cent sales tax levied in 1994. Metro is receiving no federal money for the project.

A few weeks later, ***The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*** reported that Metro awarded a \$7.3 million contract for the installation of finishing touches for four stations: University City-Big Bend, Clayton, Maplewood-Manchester, and Shrewsbury. The opening is expected by October 31, 2006.

**Houston, Texas**

At the end of April, Metro was granted formal approval

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to begin preliminary engineering on the North and Southeast corridor rail extensions. The action represents a major step toward qualifying the two rail lines for federal funding. This work is expected to be completed by mid-2006.

**Seattle, Washington**

The tunnel boring machine (TBM) that will dig the Beacon Hill tunnel is being produced in Kobe, Japan. The TBM is approximately 21 feet in diameter and 40 feet long, is being built for Obayashi Corporation, the Beacon Hill light rail station and tunnel contractor, and is scheduled to arrive in Seattle this summer. Tunnel construction will start at the west portal in the fall.

**San Francisco, California**

On April 22, the Caltrain Board approved two fare increases. The first, a 17.5% fare increase, will take effect on July 1. This will result in a 25-cent increase each in base and zone fares. The second, also of 25 cents in the base fare (5.6%), will go into effect on January 1, 2006. These increases were necessitated by a projected multi-million dollar shortfall in revenues in the next fiscal year. The following service changes will also go into effect on August 1, 2005:

- 96 weekday trains, up from 88
- 6 Gilroy trains, down from 8
- 22 Baby Bullet trains, up from 12
- Five new Bullet stations: San Mateo, Redwood City, Menlo Park, Sunnyvale, and Tamien in San Jose
- Commute-hour local service provided with a 5-minute transfer at Redwood City
- Off-peak local service pattern unchanged
- New express/limited service will give additional fast service to riders during the commute-hour period between intermediate stations
- Service suspended to Paul Avenue in San Francisco, Broadway in Burlingame and Atherton, and service reduced at College Park in San Jose. Alternative shuttle service to be developed at Broadway and Atherton
- Hourly local trains on Saturday retained but earliest morning train moved to close gap at 9 PM. The earliest Sunday train in each direction removed, for 28 trains instead of 30
- Midline ticket offices to close

**San Juan, Puerto Rico**

Member Karl Groh forwarded the following report about Tren Urbano. "TU is carrying passengers beginning April 19, free, no bus service, and 8-minute headways during the peak. This will continue until about May 23, when the full-blown service is to begin — fares charged, supporting bus service in place, regular schedule. Except due to a problem with a vent fan in

the tunnel section, the headway will continue to be restricted until a replacement fan arrives, probably near end of summer. April 19 was the first day of this 'pretend' weekday service, with real people taking real trips to go to real destinations. Tuesday — 15,600 riders; Wednesday — 19,600; Thursday — 29,000. The trend looks nice, as the word gets around and people are actually starting to try it out as a part of their daily routine. Of course, on the one hand it is free, but on the other, they can't get to it by bus, only by car and walking."

In early May, an email reported that June 6 was to be the day that fares would be charged and full service would commence.

**United Kingdom**

One rail operator has found an innovative, if not controversial, way of attempting to control fare evasion. Central Trains now publishes the names and addresses of those passengers as well as the details of how much they were fined. The "Naming and Shaming Campaign" uses station billboards to publicize this crime. On May 3, the penalty for not having a valid ticket rose from £10 to £20. (£1 = \$1.91).

"Should the Tube run later at the weekend?" was the question on a brochure that Todd Glickman sent. Riders were asked to complete the questionnaire by April 22, and mail their replies (for free). Currently, the first trains generally arrive at Central London stations at around 6 AM on Saturdays and 7:30 AM on Sundays, and the last trains depart from the West End on Friday and Saturday nights at around half past midnight. What is being proposed is to start trains one hour later on those days and at the end of the day (or night), continue them until about 1:30 AM.

**Tel Aviv, Israel**

Just in time for Passover, rail service between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem was restored. An email that I received reported that despite hourly service that weekend, the number of tickets that were sold exceeded the capacity of the trains, and there was a near riot. Jerusalem's Stationmaster had to take the next day off to recover! The success of the reopened railway astounded the authorities, but the two-lane highway between the cities is now so busy that it is logjammed most days.

**Japan**

Early last year American Airlines had a promotion whereby those who purchased two round-trip tickets from New York to either Florida or California between January 15 and April 15 would receive a free round-trip ticket to anywhere that American Airlines flies. We did the necessary flying and decided that we would use those tickets to visit Japan. Trying to schedule a trip between the numerous blackout dates became a daunting task, but we finally decided on April 5-15. At the time we had no idea, but it turned out to be the peak season for cherry blossoms! Although we read that many Japa-

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nese speak English, having no acquaintance with the Japanese language other than a few phrases, I was a bit apprehensive at the thought of having to travel throughout the country by ourselves. Fortunately, my wife found a tour that matched the dates that we would be in Japan. This tour would operate with at least two but not more than five and as it turned out that we were the only ones. While not a tour in the sense of a "Tauck" Tour, we traveled by train between the cities we would visit and on the train arrival platform, were met by an English-speaking guide. And the trains we rode were *Shinkansen* (bullet trains), but more about them later. We had 7-day Japan Rail First Class Passes and reserved seats.

The following report is not intended to be technical nor one filled with detailed roster information, but merely to include some of my observations. In a nutshell, Japan has an outstanding rail system. Every train was on-time – to the minute. Although I did see a few diesel locomotives, and DMUs, the overwhelming majority of trains are ELECTRIC, mostly EMU and of course the *Shinkansen*, which are 16- or 8-car electric trainsets. Even freight service, which operates along with passenger trains, uses electric locomotives. The weekend *Shinkansen* trains were packed, but those we rode on weekdays were not as busy. Trains, as well as the road traffic, operate on the left side (British style). During our trips between Tokyo and Hiroshima and back, it seemed that practically every few minutes we were passing another *Shinkansen* going in the opposite direction. You could feel the train shake when the first and last cars passed. We rode the 300-series and the 700-series *Shinkansens* (the ones with the "duckbill nose") and were on a *Railstar Service* train. I was even surprised to see some of the original 1964 models, which had been upgraded. (Their noses gave them away.) There are three *Shinkansen* services, *Nozumi*, *Hikari*, and *Kodama*, and we rode the latter two. *Nozumi* trains make very few stops, and do not honor JR passes. While the *Shinkansens* run on standard gauge tracks, some of the other rail lines use narrow gauge.

All railroad personnel are impeccably dressed in smart uniforms, complete with white gloves. There are procedures for train operations (pointing) that the operators adhere to. Every train car has a number (1-8 or 1-16) in addition to its traditional car number, and on each platform are several markings to inform you where to stand for boarding your specific car. Japan is a country that is into musical tones. You hear them over the PA systems while waiting for trains, as well as on-board trains.

In Tokyo, our hotel, Le Meridien Pacific, was across the street from the Shinagawa station. All but one of the hotels that we stayed in were either adjacent to or across the street from a railroad station. Shinagawa is a

large station that is served by many JR lines, and to reach the center of Tokyo, we used the Yamanote Line, which circles Tokyo much like London's Circle Line. The timetable that was posted on the platform showed that in the 8 o'clock hour, 25 (11-car) unit trains stopped at the station. On the adjacent track was the Kehin Tokhu Line, which also operated the same level of service, but uses 10-car unit trains resulting in headways on each line of 2-3 minutes, and the trains were packed. Our guide translated a sign that was next to the fold-down seats which read that the seats could not be used before 10 AM. On another day, I observed that there was an exception to this in the first car, and there may have been others, but I was unable to verify that. A small square green light illuminates when the seats may be used. The Yamanote Line served us well during our stay in Tokyo, as it brought us to our destinations; therefore, we did not do much subway riding. We did, however, ride a portion of the *Oedo* and *Hibiya* Lines, the latter to reach the Arakawa trolley line. In fact, I never did see any of the "people-shovers" that the Tokyo Metro is famous for, if they even still exist. Overhead luggage racks were to be found on all EMU and subway trains that we rode.

Member Paul Gawkowski was helpful in directing me how to reach the Arakawa Line in the northern part of Tokyo, which is nearly 12.2 km (7.6 miles) long. The fare is ¥160 (\$1US was exchanged for ¥105), and change is returned if put in two ¥100 coins in the fare-box. All-day passes are also sold. Inside the cars there are maps in English and Japanese, as well as some photos. One clearly showed the station (Shakomae) where the car house was. A simple single switch leads to it, and there is a crossover beyond that station to enable moves to the westbound track. We made a stop at the car house, and while the manager on duty was extremely accommodating, and allowed me to walk around and photograph the cars, he spoke little English. I had hoped to get a car roster, but that did not happen. I did learn that forty-one cars are used, and they are in three series: 70xx, 75xx, and 8501-8505. There is one old car, 5501, which is inoperable, and 7504 (28) is used in work service. The number 28 signifies that this was the 28<sup>th</sup> car. All active cars are so-numbered, and 8505 carries the number 44, but again, there are only 41 active cars. After our visit, we boarded the next westbound car and rode to the Otsuka station, where we transferred to the Yamanote Line.

On our only full day in Tokyo when we were not on tour, using our JR passes, we rode the Yokosuka Line to Kamakura, which is south of Tokyo. Kamakura is home to several interesting attractions. It was an approximate 45-minute ride on an EMU. I rode in the first car so I could look at the roadway. In the Kamakura Station there is the Enoden Electric Railway, an interurban that runs to Fujisawa. This line is 10 km (6.2 miles)

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long. Hase, the fifth station from Kamakura, is the home of the Great Buddha. One pays an entrance fee of ¥300 and for just an additional ¥20 one can go inside of the Buddha. That was the least expensive part of our trip! The interurban cars seem to be of recent vintage, although there were builder's plates inside the cars, they were totally in Japanese. Returning to Tokyo, we opted to ride in one of the recently delivered bi-level cars, which have been inserted into the consists of various trains. As it turned out, this car was designated as a "green car," which meant that we were entitled to ride that car by virtue of our JR (First class) passes. As the train was departing from Kamakura, I decided to check out the lower level, and there were a few passengers seated there. When I looked into the adjacent (single-level) car, it was very crowded, to the point that there were many standees. For most of the ride we had the upper level to ourselves.

In Hiroshima, the Hiroshima Electric Railway operates a system of eight lines, 1-9 (there is no #8), using a mixed fleet of 129 new and old cars. Fares are ¥150. Lines 1, 2, 5, and 6 terminate at the Hiroshima station. Hiroshima has been totally rebuilt following the detonation of the atom bomb at 8:15 AM August 6, 1945. Only one building remains from that time, including the structure of the dome, which tops the remains. This building, which was constructed in 1915 by a Czech architect, was declared an historic site. In 1966, a law was passed to preserve it, and is referred to as the "A-Bomb Dome." Across the street is the Municipal Baseball Stadium, home of the Hiroshima Carp. While in Hiroshima, we rode the JR Sanyo Line to Miajima-guchi and transferred to the JR ferry which took us to Miajima, a famous site. One could also ride the #2 trolley to Miajima, although there are 39 stops.

Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, has two subway lines: Karasuma (13.7 km – 8.5 miles) and Tozai (12.7 km – 7.8 miles). We rode a little of both, and noted that the latter has platform screen doors. We rode on a Sunday evening, and the service was very frequent.

After we left Kyoto on-board a *Shinkansen*, we stopped for a few hours in Hemeji to visit one of the many preserved castles and to have lunch. Later we boarded another *Shinkansen* for the ride to Odawara. Our guide escorted us to the (private) Odakyu Line. We stayed in a Ryokan, of the Japanese tourist hotels. The next morning, we rode on the Hakone Tozan train (40 minutes), a Swiss-inspired design, but Japanese-built train at the Hakone-Yumoto station for a ride to Gora. This train makes three switch-backs, and each time the driver and conductor walk from one end of the train to the other. Upon reaching Gora, you change to the Hakone-Tozan cable car (10 minutes). The two cars are numbered HT-1 and HT-2. There are four intermediate

stations. Sounzan is the last stop, where you transfer to the Hakone Ropeway for a 10-minute ride to Togendai. At this point you board a boat for a sight-seeing cruise on Lake Ashi. Wait a minute — up to this point I have not told you why we did all of this. The answer is that this is as close as you can get to Mt. Fuji, except for climbing it. Unfortunately, this trip coincided with one of the two days that we had rain, and we did not get to see it. We were told that Mt. Fuji is only visible about 25% of the time; nonetheless, we were somewhat disappointed. A 40-minute motor coach ride brought us back to Hakone-Yumoto, where we boarded another Odakyu Line train for the trip back to Odawara. The types of train service at the Hakone-Yumoto station was reminiscent of Zermatt, Switzerland, where in addition to the regular trains, there is also a premium service. Here it is called the Odakyu Romance Car. According to a brochure, there are four different kinds of trains, all streamlined, but I only saw two of them. We had a short wait for a *Kodama Shinkansen* train that would return us to Tokyo.

More than a week after we returned came the news of the horrific commuter train crash in Amagasaki, a suburb of Kyoto, where 107 people were killed and 460 others were injured. Subsequent reports told that the train's driver was operating at a higher speed than was authorized because he was running 90 seconds late. I saw a report, on one of the Sunday morning news broadcasts, that investigators believed that because of the speed (more than 83 mph) at which the train was traveling, it was possible that the train actually became airborne and left the tracks. The speed on the curve was 44 mph. One week later an Inquest was held in Amagasaki, and it was determined that two years ago, the West Japan Railway Company had reduced the amount of time required to travel between Itami and Amagasaki.

Member Dennis A. Cavagnaro, who went to "Expo 2005" near Nagoya, sent two photos of the newly instituted "Women Only" cars, which have recently entered service in Osaka. Dennis also wrote that this practice is spreading throughout Japan. In 1909, the Hudson & Manhattan Tube experimented with "Women Only" cars, but that idea was short-lived and soon abandoned.

**From the History Files**

*80 Years Ago:* On June 6, 1925, the Staten Island Rapid Transit's South Beach line was electrified. Service ended on this branch, as well as the North Shore Branch to Arlington, on March 31, 1953.

*40 Years Ago:* On June 10, 1965, the New York Central Railroad tested New Haven FL-9s 2032-2033 on it Harlem Line. Who knew at that time that when both railroads would merge, operation of these locomotives would be an everyday occurrence until a few years ago?

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

## Around New York's Transit System

### Diversion Valves on R-62As assigned to 7

Flushing Line cars 2010-2017 and 2019-2045, which transfer cars between Subdivision "A" (IRT) and Subdivision "B" (BMT/IND), are equipped with four car-borne tripping devices, two per truck. Brake pipe air will flow to the car-borne tripping device that corresponds to the indicated subdivision.

On interdivisional transfers, the position of the diversion valve must be changed on the open end of the first and last cars only at the following locations:

- Queensboro Plaza for operation between the Astoria and Flushing Lines
- Concourse Yard and 207<sup>th</sup> Street Yard for operation between Subdivisions "A" and "B."

### Operation of Car Body Lights

Train Operators must turn off the main car body lights when trains are operating on the structure from 9 AM to 4 PM October 1 to April 30 and 9 AM to 5 PM May 1 to September 30. Car body lights should be illuminated during the above hours if there is insufficient daylight. Car lights should be turned off at the first station leaving the tunnel and turned on at the last station before entering the tunnel. Car body lights should remain illuminated if the running time in the open is five minutes or less and in the Brighton and Sea Beach cuts. Lights must be extinguished when Train Operators store trains.

### Headwear Options for Uniformed Personnel

If an employee decides to wear headwear, NYCT-issued uniform hats or other specified NYCT-approved issued headwear must be worn. The bill of the hat must face forward. A uniformed employee may also wear a turban, a headscarf or khimar, or a tam made of NYCT-provided blue fabric with an assigned logo affixed to the front. Uniformed employees may wear other types of headwear that fits completely under the uniform hat or other approved headwear listed above and is not visible.

### Ventilation of Subway Stations

To reduce heat and humidity on station platforms, fans at the following locations will be activated by local supervision between 6 AM and 10 PM from May 1 to September 30, 2005. Fans must be operated in the supply mode. They must be activated when the ambient tem-

perature exceeds 90° F.

Fans are located at the following places:

- Archer Avenue Line: Parsons Boulevard, Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica-Van Wyck
- 63<sup>rd</sup> Street Line: 21<sup>st</sup> Street-Queensbridge, Roosevelt Island, Lexington Avenue
- Broadway-Seventh Avenue Line: 181<sup>st</sup> Street, 168<sup>th</sup> Street

### Kiosks Replace Discontinued Fare Booths

Token booths, which will be removed from entrances that are open part-time, will be replaced by kiosks painted red. Agents will not be on duty in these kiosks, which will have signs explaining that *MetroCards* must be purchased at vending machines and Station Agents can be found elsewhere in the station.

The new red booths were to be installed on May 22 at the following stations: Jay Street-Borough Hall, Union Square, 23rd Street-Park Avenue South, Herald Square, Penn Station, Rockefeller Center, Chambers Street-Centre Street, and Delancey Street. The rest will be installed over the next year. All stations will have at least one agent on duty at all times.

### NYC Transit's Best-Kept Secret

A secret shuttle operates between Essex Street and Prospect Park when there is no service on the Lexington Avenue Subway between Brooklyn Bridge and Brooklyn. This service is not publicized; the reroute notices on the stations do not mention this line, whose trains display 1 signs.

### South Ferry Station to be Rebuilt

The South Ferry station will be rebuilt. Instead of operating around the loop, 1 trains will terminate at a new three-track station that will be built south of the existing station. Weekend service has been rerouted. Buses replace trains between Chambers Street and South Ferry, while 1 trains terminate somewhere in Brooklyn. 4 trains operate around the City Hall loop and make local stops on all or part of the route. 5 trains are turned on the crossover south of Brooklyn Bridge. The subway is closed south of this station and the passengers can continue their journey to lower Manhattan or Brooklyn on the "secret shuttle" described in the previous item.

## CAR ASSIGNMENTS AND DEVIATIONS THEREFROM by Bill Zucker

A train of R-68As was in service on B on April 12 and 13 and on W on April 26, 2005.

A train of R-32s was in service on W on May 20.

R-62As assigned to S (42<sup>nd</sup> Street) were formerly

maintained at Livonia Shop. Effective April 10, 2005, they were transferred to Jerome Shop.

One train of R-62s occasionally appears on 4.