

The Bulletin



New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

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The Bulletin

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CHARLES A. AKINS, 1946-2006 by Michael Glikin and Raymond R. Berger

Charles A. Akins, who all knew as Charlie, passed away on March 22 after a long battle with cancer. His service to the Electric Railroaders' Association and to its New York Division was lengthy and distinguished. Charlie first joined the ERA in 1964 and had essentially held a variety of offices in both the New York Division and our national parent organization for more than 30 years. These offices included two long periods as New York Division Chairman in the 1970s and the 1990s. He continued as First National Vice-President and held that office until his death. Charlie will be remembered in the years



ahead as a leading light of our organization; full of ideas to improve the way we operated. Until his health intervened, he participated in nearly every ERA activity, including the international trips. He rarely missed a meeting. Many considered his the connecting link between the great founders of this organization in the years before World War II and the ERA we know today in the 21st century. Charlie was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1946 and grew up

Charlie Akins.
Michael Glikin photograph

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TWO ANNIVERSARIES — IND FULTON STREET SUBWAY AND BMT FULTON STREET "L"

The BMT Fulton Street "L" ceased operating fifty years ago, April 27, 1956, two decades after its competitor, the IND Fulton Street Subway, started running.

Seventy years ago, April 9, 1936, A trains, which formerly operated to Church Avenue, were rerouted to the new terminal at Rockaway Avenue. HH shuttles started running from Hoyt-Schermerhorn Street to Court Street, where the Transit Museum is now located. E service was extended from East Broadway to Church Avenue. Rockaway Avenue was a temporary terminal. Wooden plat-

forms were built over the local tracks at the Rockaway Avenue and Ralph Avenue stations. Trains were routed to the express tracks near the Utica Avenue station and switched back beyond a temporary double crossover located between the express tracks just north (west) of the Rockaway Avenue station.

The new subway, which was under the elevated structure for several miles, was a competitor to the Fulton Street "L," which terminated at Park Row. Because the A train fur-

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TUCKAHOE-NEW ROCHELLE LINE (NORTH AVENUE LINE) by Bernard Linder

Owners:

STREET CARS

December 22, 1898	Westchester Electric Railroad Company
January, 1899	Third Avenue Railroad Company
April 13, 1900	Metropolitan Street Railway Company
January 18, 1908	Third Avenue Railroad Company
January 1, 1912	Third Avenue Railway Company

BUSES

Main Line

March 15, 1931	Westchester Electric Railroad Company
November 15, 1936	Westchester Street Transportation Company
December 17, 1956	Fifth Avenue Coach Lines, Incorporated
December 12, 1969	Bus Associates, Incorporated, whose principal stockholders were Arthur and George Bernacchia and Raymond Murphy. In 1973, Liberty's principals had equal ownership in two New York City operations — Pelham Parkway and Pioneer Bus (whose name was subsequently changed to Command Bus) — and had a 25% interest in the operation of Westchester Street and West Fordham through a holding company, Bus Associates
About mid-1982	Liberty Coaches, Club Transportation, and Westchester Street were merged to form Liberty Lines Transit, Incorporated

Route:

STREET CARS

December 22, 1898	Electric cars started operating from the New Haven station to North Avenue and Coligny Avenue (Fifth Avenue)
1903*	Extended to Coopers Corners (Wilmot Road)
1904*	Extended to Parsons Corners (Mill Road and White Plains Road)
1905*	Extended to Tuckahoe station
October 4, 1911	Began short line service to Coopers Corners
November 9, 1914	Old Tuckahoe-New Rochelle Line and Old Tuckahoe Line were combined into the Tuckahoe Line
April 29, 1916	Rerouted via Railroad Place loop
December 7, 1919	Cars were operated by one man
March 21, 1920	Cut back to Waverly Square
August 9, 1926	Cut back to Mill Road and White Plains Road. Buses replaced street cars south of Mill Road and White Plains Road
March 15, 1931	Buses replaced street cars

*Approximate date from ***Bullinger's Monitor Guide***

BUSES

March 15, 1931	Route M buses started operating from downtown New Rochelle to Wilmot Road. Shuttles provided service from Wilmot Road to Mill Road and White Plains Road
March 6, 1932	Through-routed with the shuttle. Buses operated from Mill Road and White Plains Road to downtown New Rochelle
August 1, 1939	Through-routed with Tuckahoe shuttle. Buses operated from downtown New Rochelle to the Tuckahoe station
October 13, 1940	Cut back to Mill Road and White Plains Road. Tuckahoe shuttle service was resumed
January 12, 1942	Started operating branch to Trenor Drive and Silverbirch Drive. Shuttles ran in non-rush hours and through service operated in rush hours
February 27, 1942	Discontinued branch
February 10, 1952	Extended to Main Street and Center Avenue
1969	Through-routed with the Tuckahoe shuttle. We do not know when service was permanently cut back to Mill Road and White Plains Road
About 1973	Renumbered to Route 45

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Tuckahoe-New Rochelle Line

(Continued from page 2)

September 8, 1981 Extended to the Pelham Bay Park station via Main Street (Harrison Avenue and Huguenot Street in opposite direction), Franklin Avenue, Pelham Road, Shore Road, Hutchinson River Parkway, and Bruckner Boulevard

EASTCHESTER TRANSPORTATION CORPORATION

Third Avenue Railway's first bus subsidiary was the Concourse Transportation Corporation, formed on July 19, 1920. It was only a paper corporation and it did not apply for the original Bronx bus franchise, which was awarded to another subsidiary, Surface Transportation Corporation.

When the Village of Tuckahoe decided to repave Main

Street, Third Avenue planned to replace street cars with buses. It created another bus subsidiary. It changed the name of the Concourse Transportation Corporation to the Eastchester Transportation Corporation on March 3, 1926. Buses replaced the street cars on August 9, 1926 on this shuttle, which was less than a mile long. This subsidiary continued operating the shuttle until it was merged into the Westchester Street Transportation Company on June 30, 1942.

TUCKAHOE SHUTTLE

August 9, 1926 Route O buses started running between the Tuckahoe station and Waverly Square
 November 20, 1926 Discontinued shuttle. White Plains-Scarsdale buses extended from Eastchester-Scarsdale line to the Tuckahoe station
 July 4, 1927 Resumed shuttle service*
 August 1, 1939 Route O shuttles were through-routed with Route M buses
 October 13, 1940 Resumed shuttle service
 1969 Discontinued shuttles

*Rush hour shuttle service was extended to Sprague Avenue on March 6, 1932 and to Mill Road and White Plains Road on July 1, 1935. We do not know how long these schedules were in effect

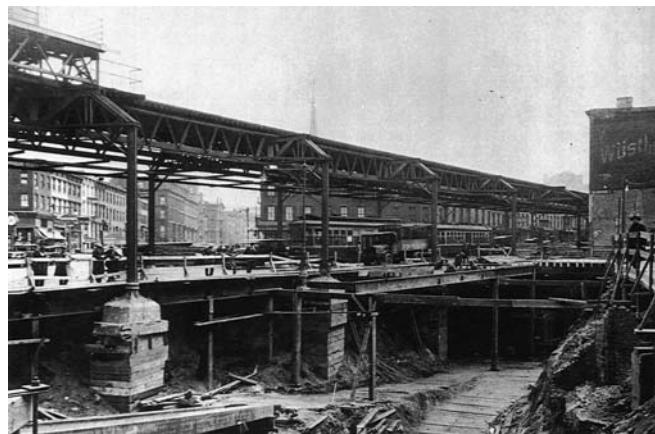
Two Anniversaries

(Continued from page 1)

nished a fast, comfortable one-seat ride to Manhattan as far north as 207th Street, "L" riding declined rapidly, as shown in the following table:

YEAR ENDING JUNE 30	FARES COLLECTED	YEAR ENDING JUNE 30	FARES COLLECTED
1935	35,372,394	1939	27,424,106
1936	35,126,452	1940	25,993,741
1937	30,735,706	1941	15,746,830
1938	27,984,900		

To provide additional feeder service to the new subway, two trolley lines were extended to the Rockaway Avenue terminal. On April 9, 1936, Jamaica Avenue cars were extended from Alabama Avenue to a new loop at Hopkinson Avenue, one block west of Rockaway Avenue. Cars continued operating to this loop until November 30, 1947. The buses that replaced them terminated at the Broadway-East New York station. On June 10, 1936, an additional branch of the Bergen Street line operated from Sheridan Avenue via Liberty Avenue, East New York Avenue, Rockaway Avenue, and Fulton Street to the Hopkinson Avenue loop. This service was discontinued on February 12, 1937.



IND under construction, April 11, 1930.
 Robert J. Wasche collection

When the Board of Transportation started operating the BMT on June 1, 1940, service was discontinued on the Fulton Street "L" west of Rockaway Avenue. Two free transfer points were established between the BMT and the IND. Each day, 17,000 transfers were issued at Rockaway Avenue and 10,500 passengers transferred at Franklin Avenue.

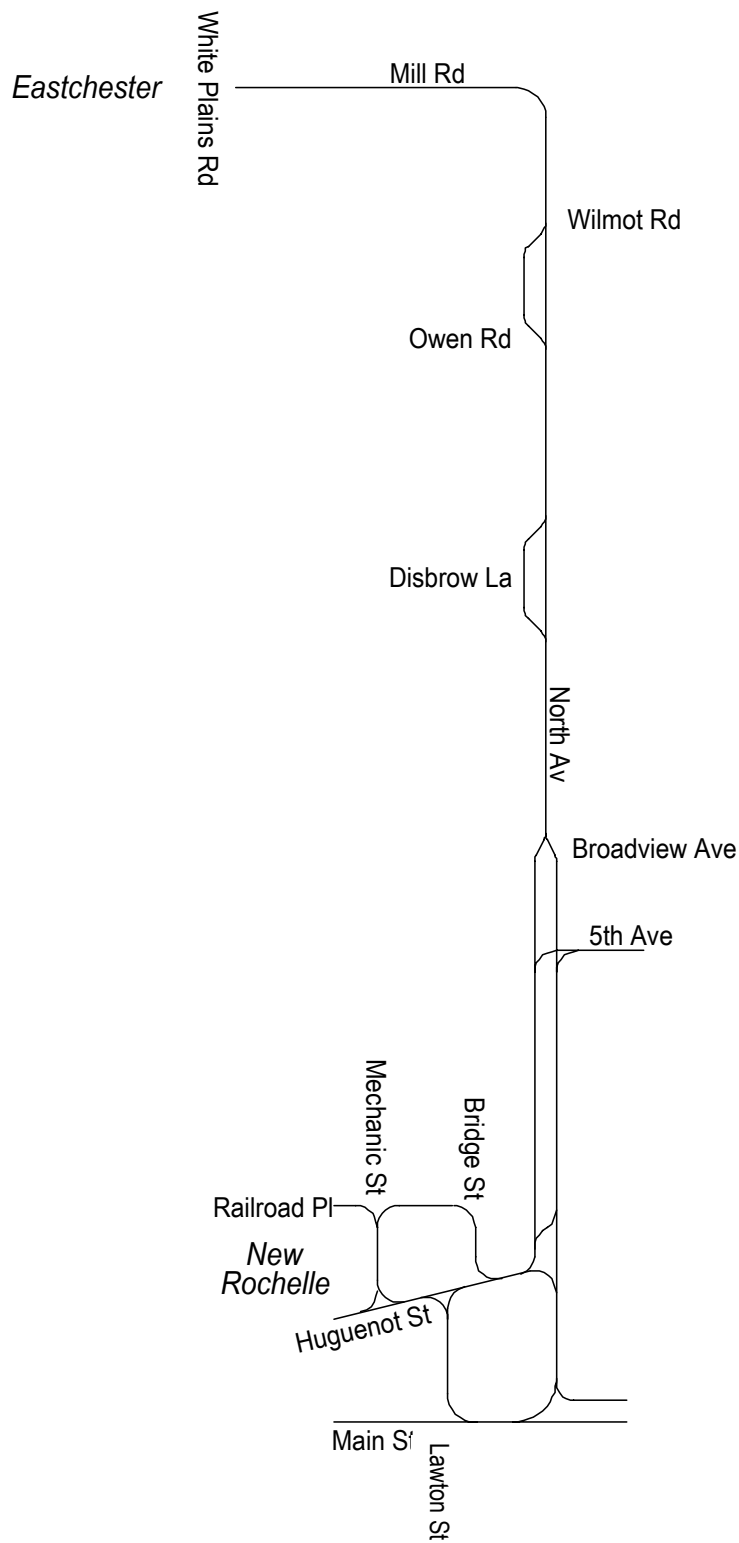
Construction of the tunnel between Broadway-East New York and Grant Avenue was completed long before service was extended to Broadway-East New York on

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Tuckahoe-New Rochelle Line

(Continued from page 3)

New Rochelle-Tuckahoe
1929



Data: B. Linder
Drawing: J. Erlitz

NEWARK CITY SUBWAY EXTENSION—PROGRESS REPORT

by Bruce J. Russell
(Photographs by the author)

Street cars last traveled through the streets of downtown Newark, New Jersey in 1938, when the last two lines, 27/Mount Prospect and 43, which ran from Newark to Jersey City, finally quit. Ten years earlier, Newark's central business district was filled with streetcars running over numerous lines, but beginning to suffer from ever-increasing automobile and bus competition. The intersection of Broad and Market Streets was either the busiest street car crossing, or one of the busiest, in the nation, with a clerestory or round roof car rattling by every minute. Some of the cars ran in and out of the gigantic Public Service Terminal, a 1915-era edifice that housed the corporate offices of Public Service Corporation, an electric utility that also operated most of New Jersey's street cars. They accessed the terminal from two levels, an upper one adjacent to Mulberry Street, and a subterranean one reached via a short 1,000-foot subway from Washington Street.

In 1935, the bed of the Morris Canal was converted into a double-track tunnel to be used by street cars headed from the Essex County suburbs into downtown Newark and the just-rebuilt Pennsylvania Station, which also served the Hudson & Manhattan Railroad, today's PATH. Using various ramps, street cars left local roads such as Bloomfield and Central Avenues and entered the private right-of-way of the so-called City Subway, owned by the city but operated by Public Service. It is possible Newark's trolley subway was inspired by existing ones in Boston and San Francisco as well as in Philadelphia. It was an instant success, and the running times of those lines that used it were substantially reduced. Interestingly, the concept of the street car or tram subway, ten years later, found favor not in the United States but in Germany. When it rebuilt its local and urban transportation systems following the terrible destruction of World War II, it built several street car subways.

In Newark, this forward momentum was not destined to last. About 1936, the company had a change in management, and the previously pro-street car group was ousted by a younger contingent that favored rubber-tired transport. Plans to replace the company's World War I-vintage trolleys with modern PCC streamliners were shelved, and the "old rattlers" were retained until, on most routes, buses took their place. In 1935, Public Service was a street railway company. By 1939, it was a bus operator that retained a few trolley lines. The 1936 to 1940 retrenchment was staggering, as line after line went bus, including many with ridership levels that clearly justified retention of rail operations. For these routes, the preferred replacement was the electric bus.

While most electric buses could only operate from overhead wires, Public Service was unique in that it purchased gasoline-electric hybrids known as All-Service Vehicles, or ASVs. These could operate as electric buses, or as gasoline ones. In practice, they would run using the wires as far as the wires existed, then, after retracting their poles, would start their internal combustion engines and proceed as normal non-electric buses. I have always wondered why Public Service was the only user of such buses. All other American systems that used trolley buses employed "straight electrics."

In 1938, downtown Newark was filled with All-Service buses, running over former street car lines. Electric buses featured two trolley poles, one to take 600-volt DC current, and one to return it. On street cars, the return is through the rails, which require bonding.

The era of the All-Service Vehicles was brief, and by 1948 they had vanished from the streets of downtown Newark, leaving only polluting diesel buses, most of them General Motors products. At that time, the economics clearly favored diesel, with the cost of electric buses being rather high. Furthermore, Public Service was rapidly losing riders, as more and more people acquired automobiles and jobs and retailing relocated to the suburbs. By the 1970s, bus ridership in Newark and throughout New Jersey was a fraction of what it had been in the 1920s.

The 21st Century has witnessed a continuation of the reemphasis on public transit that began in the 1980s. Money, both state and federal, has become available for mass transit projects. Since 1980, many new transit systems, both heavy and light, have been built. Examples are Baltimore, Miami, Los Angeles, San Diego, Portland, and Minneapolis. Currently under construction are light rail networks in Seattle, Phoenix, and Charlotte, North Carolina. The building of such systems would have been inconceivable during the Eisenhower years of the 1950s, when almost all government money was flowing into such things as the Interstate Highway System. Times change.

New Jersey was fortunate in getting federal transit dollars, and these have been used for a variety of projects, such as the upgrading of the commuter railroads now run by NJ Transit, the Hudson-Bergen LRT line, and the Southern New Jersey (diesel-operated) LRT line that has restored passenger service to the Trenton-Camden corridor, which lost it in 1963 when a single daily round trip was eliminated. One of the other beneficiaries of federal money in the Garden State has been the Newark City Subway, which is being extended a

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Newark City Subway Extension—Progress Report

(Continued from page 5)

distance of 1.3 miles from its existing tunnel to the NJ Transit station on Broad Street. This 1904 edifice was built by the Lackawanna Railroad and remains a very busy commuter facility for the Dover, Gladstone, and Montclair routes. By having a light rail connection, riders of these lines will be able to reach Penn Station as well as the Broad and Market Streets area very easily. As of now, most either walk or take a bus.

The extension, entirely on the surface, is about 75 per cent complete and may open in December. As this is written, most of the track has been installed and about 50 per cent of the wire is in place. The standard of the track construction is exceptionally high, with the rails set in a heavy poured concrete foundation. What a contrast to the era of tracklaying circa 1905, when rails were spiked onto wooden ties and then covered by square paving blocks! After 20 years the ties began to rot, resulting in misaligned track and a horrible ride. The rails on the Newark City Subway extension will not suffer from this fate. Likewise, stainless steel poles are being used to hold up the trolley wire, and will not rust out like those from the early 1900s did.

The new spur is entirely double-track, but for about half of its distance the northbound and southbound rails are on separate alignments. Hence, along Broad Street, adjacent to Washington Park, there is one curbside track. Its opposite is situated in an alley behind a row of office buildings. Prior to entering the existing City Subway tunnel, the two tracks come together and run adjacent to McCarter Highway. At two points, single-track segments will cross busy Broad Street. To make this feasible, there will be traffic signals giving priority to the light rail cars. I have sometimes wondered why the extension was not placed entirely in tunnel. This would have eliminated street crossings. Obviously, it was a question of money.

The new extension enters, or exits from, the existing subway tunnel by means of the former connection with the old access track to and from the Public Service Terminal. When the subway was built in 1935, those routes that terminated on the lower level of the Public Service

Terminal were brought onto its trackage by means of short connecting tracks. This permitted them to reach Penn Station. When these routes were abandoned in 1938, these connections became redundant, but they were never eliminated. Now, almost 70 years later, they are once more being utilized. Cars of the new extension will run over them to reach Penn Station. Once this happens, patrons of the City Subway will have a choice of two services — the main line to Grove Street, or the branch to Broad Street. One of NJ Transit's long-term goals has always been to make its services more connective, and the extension of Newark's City Subway will, like the new Secaucus Transfer facility, further it.

The extension, when it opens, will mark the return of electric streetcars to downtown Newark for the first time in seven decades. The vehicles will be the same ones presently in use, built several years ago in Japan and also running on the Hudson-Bergen LRT line. They are articulated, hence they can bend or flex in the middle, making it easy for them to negotiate sharp curves. They are also 70 per cent low-floor, meaning that getting on and off them is easy, especially for the elderly and disabled. While not streamlined in appearance like the PCCs they replaced in 2001, they are air-conditioned and comfortable. I look forward to seeing them lumbering through downtown Newark. Hopefully, test running should begin in September.

Newark has witnessed the building of several new office structures during the past 15 years, and more are planned. In addition, the New Jersey Center for the Performing Arts, or NJPAC, has been very successful. The minor league Newark Bears team now has a stadium, and a new sports arena is soon to be constructed. All of these are or will be situated along the City Subway or its extension.

This 1.3-mile branch will not be the only new street car trackage in Newark. A much more ambitious project, now on the drawing board, is the Newark-Elizabeth Rail Link/Line, or NERL for short. Building this will involve a double-track alignment either on Broad Street or a parallel one, and access to Newark Liberty International Airport. Work on NERL is still a few years off, but it will probably be built since it will further the economic revival of downtown Newark.



Station on northbound track in alley behind office buildings fronting Broad Street.

(Continued on page 7)

Newark City Subway Extension—Progress Report

(Continued from page 6)



Single track (northbound) approaching Broad Street station. Wire about to be installed.



Construction in front of Broad Street Station, terminus of the 1.3-mile extension.



Station on Broad Street, next to Washington Park. Only one track going south. Northbound is behind buildings to right.



Double-track section parallel to McCarter Highway, Newark.



Completed track (southbound) on Broad Street.



Northbound track is located behind office buildings. Wire now being installed.

CORRECTION

On page 8 of the March issue, in the R-1 to R-9 history article, we stated that Rockaway service was re-

turned from the E to the A on September 8, 1958. Actually, service went from the A to the E on that date.

Two Anniversaries

(Continued from page 3)



Fulton Street Subway construction in May, 1940. Car 1176 crosses on the Jamaica Avenue line.

Robert J. Wasche collection



East New York Depot, Jamaica and Georgia Avenues, July 4, 1940.

Robert J. Wasche collection



Car 4303 is seen outside the depot on February 9, 1941. The depot was altered to accommodate subway construction.

Robert J. Wasche collection



Schermerhorn Street, June, 1930.

Bernard Linder collection



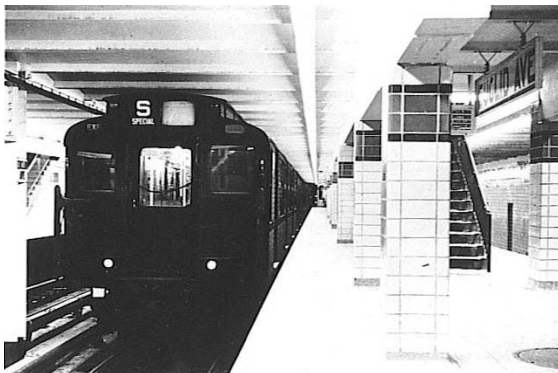
Another photograph of Schermerhorn Street from June, 1930.

Bernard Linder collection



Stairway at Hoyt-Schermerhorn station with banner announcing the opening of the new subway.

Bernard Linder collection



The brand-new Euclid Avenue station.

Bernard Linder collection



Rockaway Avenue station, Fulton Street "L," April 25, 1956.

Robert J. Wasche collection

(Continued on page 9)

Two Anniversaries

(Continued from page 3)

December 30, 1946. Installation of equipment was delayed due to the shortage of materials during World War II. Construction resumed after the war was over and the long-delayed extension to Euclid Avenue finally opened on November 28, 1948.

Member Robert Wasche sent us a newspaper clipping describing the opening ceremonies. About 250 representatives of various civic and transportation groups were present at the ceremony. Mayor O'Dwyer, who officially opened this \$47 million extension of the IND Fulton Street Line, called the money "well



spent." Accompanied by Borough President Cashmore and members of the Board of Transportation, the Mayor made a brief inspection of the Pitkin Yard in a five-car train of the new \$70,000 R-10 cars. Robert Wasche, Treasurer of the Metropolitan Transportation Club, said, "I wouldn't mind if we had these cars on all the lines."

Because this extension was built under the Fulton Street "L," riding on the "L" fell off rapidly, from 10,188,024 in 1949 to 2,842,901 in 1956. The Fulton Street "L" ceased operating 50 years ago, April 27, 1956.

Putnam Avenue, Gates Avenue, and Fulton Street cars on Fulton Street at Flatbush Avenue, 1938.

Robert J. Wasche collection

Charles A. Akins, 1946-2006

(Continued from page 1)

in its rich streetcar and rapid transit environment and as a result, he developed a lifelong interest in electric railways in that fertile ground. He was a graduate of St. Francis College in Brooklyn. Upon graduation he first worked as a New York City public school teacher. This enabled the members to see some evidence of that experience as he presided over our meetings during his periods as Chairman. Charlie then went on to employment with the Social Security Administration, where he spent a distinguished 35-year career and was the recipient of many honorary and performance rewards.

Charlie's interests outside of our hobby were many and varied. He had a great love for New York City and fully used its amenities in frequently attending the theatre and New York Philharmonic performances. He closely followed politics and current events and could

never quite finish reading each day's *New York Times*. He was a member and a contributor to St. Joseph's Church and contributed generously and frequently to other worthy causes. He was known as an experienced international traveler and was fortunate enough to see many overseas destinations. Finally, he was the type of person who developed friendships with both work and hobby colleagues and kept them for decades.

No words in the English language can adequately describe the sense of loss we have for our close colleague, our intrepid traveler, our fellow railfan, and our dear friend. His presence will be sorely missed, his brilliant thinking will not be shared and his voice unheard, but we will cherish his memory in our hearts for the rest of our lives. All of us earnestly pray that God rests his soul.

Around New York's Transit System

(Continued from page 20)

Noise Survey

NYC Transit conducted a comprehensive noise survey on Train Operators and Conductors in revenue service for the first half of 2004. This survey revealed that the rapid transit system had an overall noise reduction of 14% since the first survey was made in 1991. Train Operators and Conductors must have their hearing checked annually. They receive hearing protectors, earmuffs or plugs, which can be used on a voluntary basis on most lines. Because noise levels exceed OSHA standards at times, ② and ⑤ crews must wear hearing protectors.

Additional Route Signaling

The first LED speed sign is being installed at home

signal B1-959X30 at W. 4th Street. These signs, which are at the bottom of the signal, indicate the safe speeds for straight route and diverging route. At all other signals, a train must not go faster than ten miles per hour when moving to the left or right over a switch unless otherwise ordered or unless a diverging route sign shows some other speed.

Vandalism to Car Equipment

Trains covered with graffiti must not run in passenger service. If there is graffiti on the exterior or interior of a car in the yard or on a storage track, the train must not be placed in service until the graffiti is removed. Employees who see graffiti on trains in passenger service must notify the Control Center, which will determine whether to discharge passengers or allow the train to remain in service.

Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

2005 turned out to be a banner year for Metro-North not only because there was an increase in ridership, but the on-time performance, at 97.5 per cent, was also a record-setter. Every line contributed to this effort. Metro-North presented this news, which appears in the table below, in the February, 2006 edition of *Mileposts*:

LINE	AM	PM	OFF-PEAK WEEKDAY	OFF PEAK WEEKEND	TOTAL
Harlem	97.7%	98.2%	97.9%	98.4%	98.0%
Hudson	97.6%	98.3%	97.5%	98.3%	97.9%
New Haven	95.8%	97.2%	97.1%	97.4%	97.0%
SYSTEM	96.9%	97.8%	97.4%	98.0%	97.5%

Several events helped to contribute to these ridership gains, and they include the "Gates" Exhibit in Central Park last February, and two labor strikes – Bee Line Bus and NYC Transit (94,000 additional riders). By line, the increases were Hudson, +4.7%, Harlem, +3.8%, and New Haven, +3.2%. Ridership was up in all markets: peak, intermediate, off-peak, and weekend. One more statistic: since 1984, ridership has gone up by over 56%!

For several years Metro-North has reissued the fall timetables in mid-January to remove the extra services that are operated during the Thanksgiving-New Year's period. I came up empty-handed several trips that I made to Grand Central in January. Finally, during the third week of February, I found copies with an effective date of January 17, 2006.

En-route to the January New York Division meeting, because of a late Tappan ZEEExpress connection, I had extra time to spend at Tarrytown. On a spur track south of the station there was an eight-car train of ready-to-be-scraped M-1s, headed by ACMU 1107. The ACMU was covered with graffiti. All of the M-1s bore the letters "FICX," which stands for Frontier Salvage Company, in Ohio. For the record, the consist was: 1107-8271-8270-8285-8284-8269-8268-8277-8276.

New schedules were to be issued as of April 2. In the fall timetable change, late-night service was added, and now there is additional service into Grand Central Terminal in the 5:30-7 AM time period on all lines. (Please see the table below.) This raises the number of trains being operated by 2.7 per cent. Metro-North added the service because ridership in this time period has increased by 23 per cent in the past five years. On weekdays, a train from each line segment was added during this period and surrounding trains were rescheduled up to 18 minutes earlier or 7 minutes later to provide more

frequent service at regular intervals. Trains were also added on all lines at other times as well. At press time, these timetables were not yet available.

PREVIOUS VS. REVISED EARLIEST WEEKDAY ARRIVALS IN GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL

Line Segment	Previous Earliest Arrival	New Earliest Arrival	Minutes Earlier
Lower Hudson	5:55 AM	5:45 AM	10
Upper Hudson	6:15 AM	5:50 AM	25
Lower Harlem	5:58 AM	5:40 AM	18
Upper Harlem	6:02 AM	5:50 AM	12
Inner New Haven	6:01 AM	5:44 AM	17
Outer New Haven	6:04 AM	5:57 AM	7

Bombardier was selected to overhaul the 24 west-of-Hudson cars that it built during the 1980s. Work was to have begun in February, and to sweeten the pot, 40 of Metro-North's own Bombardier (end door) coaches have been made a part of the contract. This work will be done between 2006 and 2008. The contract includes an option for the overhaul of 40 Connecticut DOT Bombardier coaches (30 New Haven Line and 10 Shore Line East).

More car news: as of January 31, 274 M-7s were in service. Delivery of the final 36 cars began last month and should be completed this quarter. What this means is that Metro-North would have all of its contracted M-7s, for a total of 336.

Between now and 2011, the 142-car M-3 fleet will be overhauled. The selected components to be replaced are expected to insure reliability through the year 2015. The M-3s were built by Budd between 1983 and 1985.

One thing that Highbridge Yard is lacking is a car washer, and a contract to design such a facility was recently awarded.

MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

Midday busing returned to the Pascack Valley Line on March 9, to enable work to continue on Nanuet Siding. Passengers on board Train #1621 were bused from Pearl River to Nanuet and Spring Valley. This was expected to last for about three weeks.

Connecticut Department of Transportation

In her \$16.05 billion 2006 budget, Governor M. Jodi Rell announced that she included \$433 million in new transportation funding. A significant portion has been allocated for a new commuter rail service between New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield. \$11 million would be earmarked for a new West Haven rail station, a pro-

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 10)*

posal that has been kicking around for many years. That project will be matched by \$44 million in federal funds. This by no means eliminates Orange as a possible contender for a new rail station. While no decision has been finalized, a tentative DOT schedule would have construction beginning (on whichever site is selected) in 2008 and complete by 2010. The Governor's critics want the state to commit billions of dollars to a long-term solution to highway gridlock and inadequate mass transit. Thanks to member David A. Cohen for sending this news from **The New Haven Register**.

Some details of the specifications for the M-8 cars have revealed that there will be Bar Cars, although the sections will be a bit smaller than those on the M-2s. There are to be three types of cars: "A & B" married pairs as well as "A & C" married pairs. Recent car orders for the New Haven Line (M-4 and M-6) were "triplets." The weight of each car is 136,000 pounds, with a height of 14' 8" and the standard 85' length. The seating capacity for each car is as follows: "A," 110, "B," 101, and "C," 60. Here is the interesting part: the M-8s are to be capable of operating on 25k (60 cycle) v.a.c., 13k (60 cycle) v.a.c., 11k (25 cycle) v.a.c., and 700 v.d.c. They will have ACSES-compatible cab signal system and a full-spectrum radio that can access all AAR channels. The a.c. motors will be rated at 1,000 horsepower per car. Their trucks will be the same as is being used on the M-7s, and each car will be equipped with a pantograph.

Bids from Bombardier and Kawasaki were due on March 1. There was one other manufacturer that had expressed interest in the order, Siemens, but that firm has decided not to bid. With all options exercised, there could be 342 cars, enough to replace all of the M-2s (1973-1976), M-4s (1987), and M-6s (1994-1995).

In connection with the aforementioned, Member Todd Glickman sent me a link to the **Destination Freedom Newsletter** (January 23, 2006), (<http://www.nationalcorridors.org/df/df01232006.shtml#NewMetro-North>), where it was reported (by the **Stamford Advocate**) that with the multi-voltage capabilities of the M-8s, Metro-North/CDOT could extend service east of New Haven to Old Saybrook, and for the first time in decades, if the railroads can coordinate their services, Connecticut commuters could ride trains into New York Penn Station. In the November, 2005 **Bulletin**, I reported the possibility that in the near future, Metro-North will assume operation of Shore Line East service, and this would dovetail with those plans. However, don't look to purchase your monthly tickets from New Haven to New York Penn just yet, first, as this is written (in January), the M-8 contract has not been awarded, and secondly, the first cars will not be delivered until 2008. Then there is also the need

to negotiate trackage rights with Amtrak between Shell Junction (New Rochelle) and the Hell Gate Bridge.

MTA Long Island Rail Road

New timetables under General Order No. 205 went into effect at 12:01 AM, March 6, and new timetables were issued for all lines. Details were published in the February **Bulletin** by fellow columnist Jeffrey Erlitz. On the timetable covers there is an italicized "i" within a circle with a note indicating that there is either new service or impending track work. Some timetables have both references.

One evening in February, as I passed through LIRR's waiting area, I noticed that on the wall of the east gates that serve Tracks 18 and 19, new LED signs had been installed. The departure time and destination appear in the color of the branch, e.g., purple for Ronkonkoma. The signs on the west gates continue to be the "flip-type."

Due to the overnight derailment of an equipment move of passenger cars that occurred east of Jamaica, there were delays during the morning commute of March 2. The railroad reported that there were west-bound delays of up to 30 minutes, as well as eight train cancellations. By branch, they were: Far Rockaway, Hempstead and Ronkonkoma, 1 each, Port Jefferson, 2, and Babylon, 3.

New York State Attorney General Elliot Spitzer, while campaigning for Governor on Long Island, told a business group that he supported what has become a controversial plan for the construction of a third track on the 11.5 miles between Hicksville and Queens Village. Mr. Spitzer told the group that the project would help improve Long Island's infrastructure and make it more attractive to business. Thanks to member Joe Gagne for sending the article from **Newsday**.

NJ Transit

Many new transit cars and locomotives are sent to the FRA Transportation Test center in Pueblo, Colorado, where they undergo extensive testing. Several railfan publications recently published photos of a train that included of one of NJ Transit's new bi-level cars with ALP-44 4410. There are to be seven prototype cars: four will go to the test center and the remaining three are to be used for crew training. Construction of the now 231-car order will wait until the testing is completed.

On February 2, NJ Transit announced the opening date for HBLRT's North Line to Tonnelle Avenue and its two new stations—Bergenline Avenue in Union City and Tonnelle Avenue in North Bergen — would be on February 25. New timetables, bearing a "Winter, 2006" date were issued in the same format as the new commuter rail timetables. NJ Transit also produced a 3½" x 5" fold-up map with hard plastic covers, similar in style to those that were issued for the opening of Secaucus Transfer and the River Line. Two weeks earlier, on February 11,

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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the following service changes were implemented:

- Seating capacity was doubled on most peak-period trips through the operation of two-car trains. Ridership was up approximately 25 per cent in the first quarter of FY2006 when compared to last year
- Peak-period service was increased to a five-minute headway, over the previous six-minute headway
- The new direct service bypassing Hoboken Terminal also began using a new service pattern that provides a faster direct trip between stations north of Hoboken and those to the south by eliminating the need to transfer at Hoboken. This is the new route structure (although service terminated at Lincoln Harbor from February 11-24):
 - 22nd Street (Bayonne)—Hoboken Terminal
 - Tonnelle Avenue (North Bergen)—Hoboken Terminal
 - Tonnelle Avenue (North Bergen)—West Side Avenue (Jersey City)

This opening comes almost five years since service began on the initial routes between E. 34th Street and West Side Avenue, and Exchange Place. (The actual date was April 17, 2000.) The Bergenline Avenue station is in a tunnel that had prior use by the New York Central's West Shore Division.

Opening Day: Member Barry Zuckerman and Steve Lofthouse met at my home, and we drove to Tonnelle Avenue. Arriving there shortly after 11 AM, we found a significant number of cars in the parking lot, but most of the 730 spaces were still available. After exploring the station area, I asked a security guard what he knew about the opening ceremonies, and he told me that they were taking place at the Bergenline Avenue station. We quickly returned to my car and on our way to Bergenline Avenue. A parking space was found on JFK Boulevard and we walked up the street to the station entrance. It was at this time that we learned that the apparently stealth ceremony took place at 10 AM! Member Gary Grahl met up with us, and we shared the news. Needless to say, we were all disappointed. We devised "Plan B," that we would have lunch and return to Tonnelle Avenue in time to board the first car at 1 PM, and we did just that. After purchasing tickets, we observed that the trolleys were already running. A HBLRT supervisor told me that a decision was made to begin service earlier, and that the first train departed from Tonnelle Avenue at 11:50 AM.

Observations: There are two large granite markers at Tonnelle Avenue One is engraved "NEW YORK, WEST SHORE AND BUFFALO RY.," and the other, "1883." This memorializes the year of that this line was constructed.

There are also signs explaining some of the history. Riding the new trackage was the goal, so we boarded a 22nd Street car, and rode through the right leg of DeKalb Junction (by-passing Hoboken) to Pavonia-Newport. HBLRT's construction crews did an excellent job on the former West Shore tunnel, which is well-lit. Within a minute of arriving at Pavonia-Newport, a Hoboken-bound car arrived, which we boarded. After a quick stop in Hoboken we rode the first car towards Tonnelle Avenue and detrained at Bergenline Avenue, which is 160 feet below street level, to have a look at the station. There are three elevators that speed passengers to street level in exactly 18 seconds, a figure that was given to us by one of the NJ Transit employees we met. For the first two hours, all trains in Tonnelle service were two cars long, and all cars had the new branding scheme. As we detrained at Tonnelle Avenue, crews were cutting the trains down to one car. During our visit, we encountered many Division members.

Channel 4 covered this story, and during the evening news the reporter gave a live report. In addition to some scenes of the "grand ceremony," in the background people were purchasing tickets. She concluded her report by saying that riding was free all day. Not only were there no signs to communicate this information, but one of the NJ Transit personnel who was handing out copies of the maps, schedules, etc. at Tonnelle Avenue, told one young woman that the March monthly ticket that she had purchased was not valid yet. She was informed that she would have to purchase tickets for her rides today (Saturday). No effort was made to stop people from buying tickets.

Coincidentally, on February 2, before I went to help with the mailing of the February *Bulletin*, since I had a monthly NJ Transit pass, I decided to get some additional use out of it. A Tappan ZExpress bus brought me to Tarrytown with ample time to meet the express train to Grand Central Terminal. A quick subway ride (S and 1) brought me to 34th Street-Penn Station, where I caught a North Jersey Coast Line train to Secaucus and transferred to a Main Line train for the short trip to Hoboken. When NJ Transit increased its fares last July 1, it included at least a "One Zone Local Bus or Light Rail Ride," and no sooner had the North Line car I was riding departed from Hoboken when one of two fare inspectors who were aboard the car approached me to see my ticket, which was accepted. I observed that a number of cars from the second order (2030-2054) were in service. The only discernable difference between both groups of cars is that the newer ones have a non-skid gritty surface and the older group has a black rubber-type floor.

The eight PCCs which have been acquired for the Bayonne MOT project are all stored on the same track, south of the maintenance barn, and are protected by tarps. My return trip to New York was via a Main Line

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train from Hoboken and Northeast Corridor train, which I boarded at Secaucus.

The June 25, 2005 Newark City Subway timetable was revised in January. With the previous edition, the Broad Street station was renamed Military Park. This was done to avoid confusion when the Newark City Subway is extended to the M&E (Lackawanna) Newark Broad Street Station later this year. (Please see Bruce Russell's article on page 5.)

Member George Chiasson reported that MBTA had purchased five now out-of-service Pullman-Standard trailers. These cars have not turned a wheel in revenue service in 2006, and will be used for parts. They are Comet 1s 1708, 1717, 1719, 1738, and 1744..

Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation

On February 7, passengers entering the Exchange Place station became participants in a three-week test of a security system which is very similar to those that are use at airports. What was different is that no one had to empty the their pockets or remove their shoes. PA officials had planned that the maximum delay to a passenger would be no more than one minute. A dry run was made on February 6. Later this year there will be a second phase of testing, which involves methods of screening passengers from a distance, possibly using infrared scanners.

Fare collection took the next step towards the use of a single fare card in the metropolitan area on February. It was on that date that the PA began distribution of what it calls its "SmartLink" card, which enables riders to pay for their PATH fares by simply waving this card at special pads installed at designated turnstiles containing computer chips. \$73 million is being spent by the PA to develop this card and install the necessary equipment in the turnstiles and vending machines. In the future, PATH expects to replace its *QuickCards*, which were introduced in 1989, with *SmartLink*.

In early March, the PA has decided against construction of Track 6 at the World Trade Center. Work began last November (December, 2005 *Bulletin*). Although there are to be savings of several million dollars, the primary reason was that by not building Track 6, there will be more space for the memorial.

Amtrak

The 87-year-old Thames River Bridge, which connects New London and Groton, Connecticut will be replaced after the award of a \$76 million contract. This bridge is just one of ten moveable bridges on the Northeast Corridor. Each year, it opens about 2,500 times for marine traffic. Work to replace the 1,189-foot double-track bridge will take about two years.

Revenue management is a scheme that has been employed by the airlines and has been in place for many years. It is based on passenger demand and seat

capacity, and was introduced by Amtrak on many of its Northeast *Regional* trains last October. As of February 6, it has been expanded to *Acela Express* and *Metro-liner* services. This plan benefits those with flexible travel times who can take advantage of reduced fares on lower-demand trains, where the discount can be up to 15% less than the current lowest fare. Passengers are encouraged to purchase tickets early and travel during off-peak hours. The average fare is lower on departures with lower demand and higher capacity, and higher on departures with higher demand and lower capacity. Thanks to Bob Hansen for the report.

Federal transportation officials are looking to the states along the Northeast Corridor to begin contributing more money to Amtrak in order to operate its trains. The budget that was passed for this fiscal year calls for \$59 million to be generated by commuter rail agencies, but was silent on what formulas would be used to raise this money. The Bush Administration has proposed deducting whatever fees are collected from the states from its own grants. A transit agency such as NJ Transit would be hit especially hard because of its heavy use of the Northeast Corridor. Trains from its own Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast Lines provide a major portion of this use and to a lesser extent the Morris & Essex (*Midtown Direct*) and Raritan Valley Lines. The Long Island Rail Road could see higher charges for its use of Penn Station, as would Connecticut DOT for its Shore Line East service east of New Haven. A CDOT spokesman told *The New York Times* that Connecticut paid Amtrak \$900,000 per year or 90 cents per car mile for Shore Line East trains' use of the tracks and it received only 18 cents per car mile for Amtrak trains that operate over of its portion of the Northeast Corridor west of New Haven. NJ Transit spokesman Dan Stessel told of \$100 million annual capital improvement costs including the recently installed upgraded signal system between Newark and New York Penn that were made by NJ Transit.

Miscellaneous

Railway Age publishes an annual passenger car review and outlook for North American cities. Reversing the trend of recent years, the backlog of undelivered cars increased, as can be seen in the table below.

YEAR	DELIVERIES	BACKLOG
2001	1,935	3,921
2002	1,653	2,946
2003	1,286	3,973
2004	1,257	3,301
2005	1,212	2,749
2006	N/A	3,002

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Transit agencies that received new commuter cars during 2005 included: MRCOG (Albuquerque), 10, GO Transit, 10, LIRR, 214, MBTA, 16, Metra, 92 bi-level and 8 EMU, and Metro-North (East), 136. Overhauled cars were delivered to Caltrans (20), MTA MD (12), GO Transit (1), and VRE (20).

New rapid transit cars were delivered to MARTA (2), Mexico City (252), NYC Transit (20 R-160 and 20 R-142A), and WMATA (8). Overhauled cars: MARTA, 6, MTA-MD, 40, and WMATA, 54.

New LRVs to: MBTA (2), Dallas (20), Denver RTD (22), NJ Transit (28), PAT (14), Tri-Met (15), St. Louis Metro (15), San Diego Trolley (11), and SF Muni (2).

Rebuilt LRVs: GRCTA, 7, and PAT, 9.

Vintage trolleys: Tampa, 2.

DMU: Ottawa, 3.

Work on new and rebuilt cars continues for MARTA, MBTA, Calgary, Caltrans, CATS, Metra, GRCTA, CDOT, Denver, Edmonton, LACMTA, Mexico City, Minneapolis, Monterrey, NJ Transit, LIRR, Metro-North, NYC Transit, PATH, NCTD, Valley Metro, PAT, SFRTA, UTA, Tacoma, GO Transit, VRE, and WMATA.

Orders for new or rebuilt cars are likely to develop this year for: Capital Metro (Austin), NFTA, Calgary Transit, Caltrans, CTA, DART, Denver RTD, Houston Metro, Trinity Railway Express, MTA-MD, Metro-Dade, Monterrey, NORTA, NJ Transit, Metro-North, Triangle TA, OC Transpo, SEPTA, PAT, Tri-Met, UTA, Metrolink, ACE, TTC, TransLink, and VRE.

Other Transit Systems*Boston, Massachusetts*

Boston's transit system is filled with "fare" quirks, and **The Boston Globe** reported about some of them. For example there is the \$2.50 "entrance fee" to go downtown on a Red Line train at the Quincy Center, Quincy Adams, and Braintree stations. Or the \$1.25 "exit fare" to leave a downtown train from Quincy Adams and Braintree. (Quincy Center had the exit fares eliminated years ago.) The Mattapan high-speed line costs 90 cents if you exit before Ashmont, but is free if exiting at Ashmont. Outbound, the ride is free. Route 39 bus passengers can pay an extra 35 cents and receive a transfer valid at the Copley and Back Bay subway stations, but no fare is charged to bus passengers at inbound stops from Eggleston to Jackson Square. The Green Line offers free outbound service at street level stops (except Lechmere), while Riverside to Chestnut Hill is a \$3 fare. A bus pass can be used as a full fare payment when boarding inbound at or between Reservoir to Fenway on the D line, and at all inbound street level stops on the B, C, and E branches. Also, the fare from Reservoir to Fenway is \$1.50.

"T" officials are at a loss to explain all this "unfair fare silliness," which is so old and entrenched; however, this

is all under review by MBTA and the agency's Rider Oversight Committee. MBTA's current fare policy is set to be redone in early 2007, specifically within 90 days of full installation of the new automated fare collection system, and can be expected to be simplified or eliminated at that time. But MBTA is warning riders to get ready, because that will also probably result in another fare increase. MBTA has one of the least expensive public transit rides in the nation. The last fare hike, in January, 2004, raised the base subway fare from \$1 to \$1.25 and also increased other fares.

Good news for MBTA: in the last quarter of 2005, ridership rose by 4 per cent, the first increase in four years. MBTA also reported that ridership was at its lowest level in a decade during the first half of last year, with average weekday boardings of 1.12 million, down 8 per cent from a high point in 2000. While MBTA officials blamed the cancellation of the 2004-2005 National Hockey League season and station repairs, riders blamed shoddy, undependable service and an aging fleet of vehicles. MBTA General Manager Daniel A. Graubas attributed the ridership increase, which compares boardings to the same three months in 2004, to higher fuel prices driving commuters to the "T," as well as the start of automated fare collection on the Blue Line, which he said has helped stop riders from skipping fares or misusing "T" commuter passes.

With the ongoing deliveries of 33 Kawasaki bi-levels, including 5 that are funded by the State of Rhode Island, construction is set to begin this spring on the two new stations south (or railroad west) of Providence. Those stations are T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, and North Kingston. The \$225 million project marks the first expansion of rail service since 1988, when MBTA trains were cut back to Providence. Both stations will contain parking lots, and the five-story Warwick station will house car rental companies and an elevated, moving sidewalk connecting it to the airport. Construction on the North Kingstown station, which will include retail space, is expected to start by the spring of 2007. Service to both stations is slated to begin the following year. There are on-going negotiations between RIDOT and Amtrak over use of Amtrak's trackage south of Providence, the cost of which could range from \$1.5-\$3 million. Thanks to Todd Glickman for these reports.

Lindenwold, New Jersey

A new PATCO timetable was issued effective February 18. Thanks to member Gregory Campolo for sending copies.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

From **Cinders**: During December, 2005, without any advance notification, SEPTA paved over a three-block section of former Route 23/Germantown Avenue trackage between Gowen Avenue and Cresheim Valley Drive. This caused a "firestorm of protest" in the history-minded Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill communities.

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SEPTA's explanation was that the Belgian blocks in the area had begun to sink, causing several automobile accidents. By the time you read this, the weekend shut-downs on Market Street, which were suspended for the winter, will have resumed. The "pocket" siding at Newtown Junction, which is a holding track for northbound R8 trains, was placed into service in late 2005. Since last June, this line is a single-track line to Fox Chase. The other track is used exclusively for CSX freight trains. In January, the SEPTA wire train was removing the catenary over this track between Newtown Junction and the former Cheltenham Junction. Two of the Girard Avenue PCC-1Is are out of service because of accidents. They are 2321 and 2330. By mid-January, 114 of the 220 Market-Frankford M-4 cars have had their original seats replaced by new ones, which are similar to bus seats. Their metal with vinyl seat construction is expected to be more durable than the original ones with cloth seats. With 69th Street Shop turning out about four cars per week, the project should be complete this summer.

SEPTA issued new timetables for its subway-surface, subway, surface, and high-speed lines as follows: February 12 – 10, 11, 13, 15, 34, and 36, and Market-Frankford and Broad Street Lines; February 13 – 100, 101, and 102. Thanks again to Gregory Campolo for sending copies.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Due to the increasing cost of construction and materials, PAT has revised its plans for the 1.2-mile North Shore project, which includes a new tunnel under the Allegheny River. The line would extend from the Gateway Center station and add two stations near (sports stadiums) Heinz Field and PNC Park. To cut costs, PAT will defer a 0.3-mile extension to the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. An estimated \$80 million will also be saved by deferring the purchase of four new LRVs. One of our members forwarded a report from the **Pittsburgh Review**, with an article critical of this project. George White, a transportation expert who founded the Transportation System Research Center in 1990, is trying to get PAT to study the alternate plan he prepared at the request of then-State Senator Jack Wagner. His proposal uses the existing Fort Wayne railroad bridge to cross the Allegheny and still serves the convention center, the Strip District and the stadiums with an above- and below-ground light-rail line. It also includes 14 new stops as it snakes its way for 4.3 miles from Gateway Center to the convention center and across to the North Shore, where it ultimately ends up above ground in Manchester. White's alternative, which PA planners have dismissed, has lots of engineering and legal challenges of its own.

Baltimore, Maryland

After two years, Baltimore's 9.4-mile double-tracking project for the Central Light Rail Line was completed, and normal service was resumed to Hunt Valley on February 26. The Gilroy, McCormick, and Pepper Roads, and Hunt Valley Towne Centre stations were reopened.

Washington, D.C. area

In the January and February **Bulletins**, I reported that MARC had planned to close four stations on March 6. Member Steve Erlitz emailed that with the Maryland State Legislature threatening to pass a bill forcing the stations to remain open, Maryland DOT Secretary Flanagan announced postponement of the closings for one year. Service will remain at current service levels through March, 2007.

With the award of a \$109 million contract to Sumitomo Corporation, the single-level Mafersa cab cars are a step closer to being sent to Connecticut. CDOT purchased all of 38 of these cars from Virginia Railway Express in 2004, but the cab cars were retained by VRE for use with the ex-Metra Gallery cars. Sumitomo will construct 11 bi-level Gallery cars, which would replace the aforementioned cars. The contract comes with an option for 50 more. Deliveries are scheduled to begin this November and be completed next January. VRE's website shows artist's renderings of these cars, which are very similar to the ones that are being built for Metra.

VRE announced that in order to be able to continue the current operations, an additional \$3.3 million in FY 2007 would be required for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1. The transit agency is proposing to raise an additional \$1.4 million from ticket revenues and increase the subsidy from local jurisdictions by \$1.9 million. The changes, if approved by the Operations Board and the Commissions, will mean the base fare and the zone fare will increase 6%. This will result in a fare increase between 5.25% and 7.1% beginning in July. Information on the fare increase, including the rationale behind the proposal, the proposed fares, and how to comment, is available on VRE's website. The last fare increase occurred on June 27, 2005.

The Common Denominator, which bills itself as Washington's Independent Hometown Newspaper, reported in its January 23, 2006 edition that the administration of Mayor Anthony A. Williams supports plans for a 3.5-mile streetcar line that would run from Union Station to Minnesota Avenue. This project will be included in a \$43 million project that will rebuild the H Street-Benning Road roadbed and is currently in the design phase. It is expected to be bid this spring for construction to commence in the fall. The cars, which were not described, would receive their power from a single overhead line. Washington, D.C. had an extensive streetcar system until January 28, 1962, but instead of overhead

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wires, the cars took power from a conduit (slot) between the running rails. Thanks to member Karl Groh for forwarding this report.

Charlotte, North Carolina

I received a very interesting trip report from member Jack May, who wrote that having procrastinated long enough, he scheduled a trip to Charlotte, which was one day prior to the line's suspending service for one year. He rode on the last day, February 5. The reason for this suspension is so that the city can construct a light rail line. Jack wrote: "Weekend service was started by volunteers (Charlotte Trolley Incorporated) in 1996 using ex-Charlotte car 85, a double-truck double-end arch-roofed unit built in the Southern Public Utilities (later Duke Power) shops in 1927. It was the final car to run when Charlotte's last line was converted to buses in 1938. Over a mile of former Southern Railway (now Norfolk Southern) track, running southwest to northeast was used from Atherton Mill to the edge of downtown, terminating just after crossing the Belk Freeway and right before the new Convention Center. This was a portion of the railroad's main passenger line from Columbia to Charlotte, which was no longer needed when the *Augusta Special* was discontinued in the 1960s. The line's car house is just off the mainline at Atherton Mill, in an area (South End and Uptown) that was undergoing gentrification, being converted from industrial use to condominiums, shops and restaurants. Power was generated by a diesel engine on a platform with wheels that was towed or pushed by the streetcar whose motors it was feeding. The car, which had been converted to a residence, was restored and painted in a New Orleans (St. Charles Avenue) livery. The line was single track with one passing siding, and 85 ran every half hour. This is what I rode in 1996, and I enjoyed it very much.

"CTI has three more historic cars: former Piraeus, Greece 60, a beautiful-looking deck-roof single-trucker painted bright red and renumbered 1 but not operable; a single-truck Birney, 407, built by Brill for the Virginia Electric Power Company that eventually found its way to Fort Collins, Colorado, as 25, and Asheville, North Carolina 117, another Brill Birney. The first two are in the car house, but 117 is elsewhere. 1 apparently is displayed at various venues for special events like fundraising. On my first visit the car house also contained former Red Arrow Car 13, a St. Louis Car Company product, which I'm sure I rode on many occasions in Delaware County, Pennsylvania. It is owned by Dave Crawford and is now located in a warehouse. We drove over there in the afternoon to look at the car, whose exterior has been restored magnificently. Now it has to be put into mechanical running order and the interior has to be refurbished. It will be a big job, but well worth the effort. A great deal of support was garnered for the

construction of a light rail system in Charlotte and in 1999 a half-per cent sales tax was approved by voters for improvements to mass transit. The South LRT line would be the first project and its route would overlap the heritage streetcar line. The initial part of the project would be the conversion of the heritage line to an overhead trolley operation with it being extended through the Convention Center and the heart of the downtown area to Ninth Street, increasing the line's length to 2.1 miles. While the work took place, 85 was operated in the southwest direction from the car house. Work was finally completed in 2004 and the line's operation was turned over to CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System), which is Charlotte's mass transit operator. It began to be operated with paid, professional motor persons. Knowing that once the extension and electrification were completed, service could not be operated every half hour with just one car, and a not very reliable one at that, three double-truck replica "Birney" cars, like the ones built for Tampa, Little Rock, and Memphis, were ordered from Gomaco. Service was re-inaugurated at the beginning of summer in 2004, with a schedule calling for a pair of cars to run on a half-hour headway every day of the week. Thus there were four operable cars on the property: 85 and the three Gomacos, 91, 92, and 93. Car 1976, an open car on loan from Gomaco, was added to the fleet in July, 2004, but the "Breezer" was purchased by Tampa and is now running on the TECO line.

"In the past few months 85 has had its difficulties, and coils have burned up on several occasions, the last being the previous Friday. Thus only a pair of Birneys was operated the last Sunday. Patronage was high, as the media had reported on the forthcoming suspension of service and many people had brought their children for a farewell ride.

"The South Corridor line will be 9.6 miles long and have 15 stations. It is expected that rush hour headways will be 7.5 minutes and off-peak frequencies will be every 15 minutes. Ridership in the first year is projected at 9,100, eventually going up to over 18,000. Not all of the stations currently in use on the heritage line will be used for the new line and new ones will be added. In fact maps show that the inner terminal will be at 7th Street, while the heritage line now goes two blocks further to 9th Street. And there will be fewer stations along what is now the heritage line south of the freeway. 16 SD70 LRVs are being built by Siemens in Sacramento and are similar to the cars used in Houston and San Diego. Charlotte has ambitious plans for improved transit. In addition to the South Corridor, light rail operation will be pushed northeastward from the downtown terminal and a streetcar line, crossing the LRT route in the center of Charlotte, is also on the drawing boards. Another corridor, running to the north, would consist of a 30-mile-long commuter service on Norfolk Southern

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trackage. Finally, lines to the southeast and west are also planned, but it is not clear whether the preferred alternatives will be light rail or bus rapid transit (I recall reading a few months ago that the public and the politicians are pushing hard for LRT rather than BRT in the Southeast corridor). As I mentioned before it appears that heritage streetcar operation will resume before the light rail line opens. The big question is once light rail transit service begins, whether the old-time cars will operate interspersed with the LRVs as in Portland and formerly in San Jose. And if so, on what kind of a schedule? Let's hope for the best. From all outward appearances, Charlotte is doing the job correctly."

Nashville, Tennessee

Nashville MTA announced during February that its *Music City Star* commuter service would begin in late summer. Its website has recently been updated and includes photos of the equipment that will be used. All of the equipment, former Amtrak F-40s and ex-Metra gallery cars (4 cabs and 7 trailers) have been or are being painted into a new color scheme. The original start-up date was to be last fall, but that was moved to early this year.

South Florida

Karl Groh reported that the February 17 edition of *The Palm Beach Post* carried the announcement that on March 27 a new timetable with 33% more service and the elimination of the mid-day gap would be in effect. This schedule will be evaluated after a 60-day period, and revised as necessary. Weekday service will be hourly with a morning and afternoon rush hour 20-minute headway with two additional trains running. Saturday and Sunday service will be every two hours with two more trains. This has been a long time coming and this summer will see even more service when DMUs finally arrive. They should have been delivered beginning last April, but the builder has had many problems, especially the unit that was destroyed by fire in Colorado. Also, unspecified difficulties with the New River Bridge forces the continuing use of a CSX drawbridge, which was supposed to be for freight only. But they are getting there and the 10%+ drop in passenger loads will hopefully be reversed. Tri-Rail reported that the final phase of the double-tracking project cost \$338.8 million.

Joe Gagne sent an article from *The South Florida Sun-Sentinel* reporting that the new schedule would increase the number of daily trains from 30 to 40. Early next year, when construction of the New River Bridge is completed, Tri-Rail plans to operate 48 daily trains.

Another article that Joe sent from *The South Florida Sun-Sentinel* reported about a proposal by a member of the SFRTA board to allow senior citizens, age 65 and older, to ride Tri-Rail for free. However, Tri-Rail's Executive Director, Joe Giuliotti, says that the transit agency

cannot afford to lose the estimated \$570,000 in revenue that it presently collects from seniors, who make up about 13 per cent of its ridership. Seniors presently receive a 50 per cent discount on Tri-Rail.

There is a plan to extend Tri-Rail service south and west into Miami from its present terminus, Miami International Airport. Under this proposal there would be eight new stations: Blue Lagoon, Coral Way, Sunset, Kendall, Killian, Turnpike, Metrozoo, and Airport (Kendall-Tamiami Executive Airport). There are many unanswered questions according to the article in *The Miami Herald*, which was sent by member Bob Matten, the most important being – would CSX be willing to lease or sell its trackage? Supporters have targeted April, 2007 as the start-up date for this service, which would use the still-to-be-delivered Colorado Rail Car DMUs. Miami-Dade Transit would be responsible for maintaining the tracks and constructing concrete platforms on property already controlled by the county. Unlike the line between Mangonia Park and Miami Airport, which handles Amtrak, CSX and Tri-Rail trains, these tracks see little freight traffic. An inspection trip using one of the new DMUs was planned for late February or early March. When I spoke to Bob, he told me that his sister, who lives in Kendall, would welcome such a service because there is very heavy traffic congestion in the area, especially during her trip to/from work. She would use this service if it were running.

Chicago, Illinois

Member Jim Beeler kindly sent copies of the new Metra timetables that were issued in conjunction with January's service changes. It is kind of strange seeing new stations as the terminals for two of the lines. The UP West Line, which was formerly Chicago to Geneva, is now Chicago to Elburn and the SouthWest Line was changed from Chicago to Orland Park, to Chicago to Manhattan. The UP Northwest Line/Harvard timetable was re-issued effective January 23, as was the UP North line to Waukegan/Kenosha. On January 30, the North Central Line was re-issued and for the first time, its naming convention was standardized to all of the other Metra timetables when it became "North Central Service – Chicago to Antioch", replacing "Metra's North Central Service Riders Guide." That nomenclature had been used since August 19, 1996, when service began on this line. Jim also wrote that he "made a Saturday trip on the Milwaukee North line to Fox Lake. Love the Metra weekend pass, as I got \$19.80 of riding for only \$5." That has to be the biggest transit bargain in this day and age because it allows unlimited rides on Saturdays and Sundays. In addition, up to three children under the age of 12 can tag along. This pass is valid on all Metra lines except for the South Shore.

Prior to these new schedules being implemented, there were reports that not everyone was pleased with them. A number of commuters complained about the

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retiming of their trains by between 5 and 20 minutes, and others were not happy about the lengthened running times due to the added stations.

Beginning this June, the Blue Line as we know it will be no more. At its February board meeting, the CTA approved a plan to restructure its West Side Corridor Services. This involves changing the routing of this line under a 180-day test. As of now, it could be renamed the Silver Line. 54th/Cermak Blue Line service will be rerouted to travel to and from the Loop via the Paulina Connector at all times. According to CTA, customers will benefit from increased service levels and faster service. Direct service to the Loop elevated means enhanced connections to the Orange, Brown, and Green Lines, Purple Line Express service, and Metra. During rush hour commutes, Loop-bound customers will have the choice of the current 54th/Cermak Blue Line routing via the Dearborn Street Subway and or elevated service via the Paulina Connector. Service to the O'Hare branch from 54th/Cermak via the Dearborn Street Subway will be maintained during rush hours. Enhanced service to O'Hare will still be possible at other times through a free transfer at Clark and Lake. The frequency of service on the Forest Park branch of the Blue Line will increase, especially during weekday off-peak hours and weekends. Customers who board trains on the Forest Park branch between Medical Center and Forest Park will benefit from increased frequency of service at all times, including weekends, and improved access to CTA and Pace buses along the route. 14 bus lines are also being modified. Thanks to Bob Hansen and member Jeff Erlitz for this report.

New Orleans, Louisiana

Thanks to MBTA, New Orleans is getting an additional power station. On January 30, the transit agency approved the loan of a 22-year-old portable electric substation which was gathering dust after upgrades to the "T"'s power system made it largely obsolete. (It was last used in 2004.) When it is placed into service, this 60-foot-long mobile unit will allow the Canal Street Line to be extended from the present terminus at Crozat Street. It was planned to have the substation in service before the end of February in order to accommodate the expected Mardi Gras crowds. A check of RTA's website at the end of February showed that the December 18 schedules were still in effect. Interestingly, the nation's oldest subway is shipping the substation south to help the oldest continuously operating streetcars in the world. The unit, which includes three transformers, was expected to arrive in New Orleans by the end of the week. It was chosen after a nationwide search found that the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority was the only transit agency in North America to have a unit compatible with the 600-volt overhead wire system

that powers New Orleans streetcars. Thanks to Todd Glickman for this report.

Another email, this one from Frank Pfuhrer, reported that the St. Charles Line could be running this December.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

With ridership averaging 26,000 per day, Metro officials are preparing for additional demand. The fleet is being increased as one additional car has been ordered for delivery this year and two for next year. The two park-and-ride lots at the 28th Avenue in Bloomington have been 110 per cent full, with cars spilling out to the curbs of nearby streets. Next year, construction will begin on a \$25 million, five-level parking ramp on the station's south lot. The ramp, set to open in 2008, will nearly triple spaces (about 540 to 1,475). Bloomington will get a new station, one that was dropped from the initial plans due to cost considerations. 34th Avenue/American Boulevard is located between the Humphrey Terminal and Bloomington Central stations. Thanks to member Neil Carlson for this report from ***The Star Tribune***.

Denver, Colorado

Denver's Regional Transportation District has announced that its 19.1-mile Southeast LRT Extension will open on November 17, 2006. There are to be 13 new stations south of the present I-25/Broadway station.

Seattle, Washington

On January 18, elected and transportation officials attended a ceremony to mark the beginning of construction of the Beacon Hill Tunnels. The 360-ton boring machine was delivered to contractor Obayshi last summer, which will dig two almost one-mile-long tunnels for the light rail system.

San Francisco, California

Inside Track, which is published by the Market Street Railway, reported that this year, the F/Market Street Line should begin to get additional rolling stock. Muni expects to complete repairs on "Iron Monster" 162, ex-Brussels/Zurich 737, and Kobe/Hiroshima 578-J. By next year, Market Street Railway 798 is expected to join the fleet. On December 12, the Muni Board of Directors approved additional work on the 11 former Newark PCCs which are now being overhauled. The cars will have more upgrades on their trucks plus significant interior work including repainting, upholstering, and flooring replacement. This work will cost \$3 million but the good news is that there will be sufficient funding to restore three or four 1948 "Torpedo" PCCs (1006, 1008, and 1011, and perhaps 1009, if its damage from a vagrant-set fire is not too extensive). Thanks to member Dennis Cavagnaro for sending the newsletter.

Placing the former NJ Transit PCCs into service has been delayed. The problem is that the prototype car, 1080 (ex-NJT 9), which is in the Los Angeles Transit Lines scheme, needs to have its interior redone be-

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cause of lead-based paint. This was something Muni was trying to avoid in an effort to get these on the street early. So now, this work will have to go to an outside shop, as Muni has no certified technicians who can handle lead paint abatement. Member John Pappas reported that this car is in a great likeness of Los Angeles Transit Lines, which had 40 very similar post-war PCCs.

As of January 17, each weeknight starting at 10 PM, the Muni Metro Subway from Embarcadero to Church Street has been shut down to enable improvements to be done. The subway typically shuts down at 1 AM. Phase I is expected to take about one year, and will see replacement of the catenary system. When Phase II will start next winter, the same work will be undertaken in the section between the Castro and West Portal stations. Replacement bus services are operating and there will be adjustments to the hours when there are ball games at PacBell Park. This information appeared in a brochure sent by member Robert P. Arce, who also provided the report in the next two paragraphs.

Muni's base fare is now \$1.50 for adults (age 18-64) and 50 cents for seniors, disabled, and youths. Cable car fares, which are one-way only, are \$5 (5 years and older). Seniors and disabled pay \$1, but only before 7 AM and after 9 PM. Transfers are not issued or accepted.

Robert also reported that the work on the Third Street LRV Line is progressing and is almost complete in some sections with track and overhead in place. The exception is that station platform work is not yet finished. In other sections they are digging up the street for the beginning of track work, some station platform work having been done. Nothing seems to have been done in regard to the construction of the maintenance facilities other than to put in the necessary track work and overhead to aim the rails in the correct direction. Service will not have to be interrupted when the construction begins on the facilities themselves.

Member Pete Donner was also in the Bay Area and sent current BARTD (January, 2006), Caltrain (January 1, 2006), and ACE (August 1, 2005) schedules, as well as the Muni Subway reconstruction brochure.

San Diego, California

Other interesting news items from the Winter, 2006 edition of *Inside Track*: Two ex-SF Muni PCCs, 1122 and 1123, which had been stored in South Lake Tahoe, have been moved to San Diego for use in a downtown loop service. These cars were built by the St. Louis Car Company in 1946 for the St. Louis Public Service Company and were part of a group of 66 that were purchased from St. Louis Public Service in 1957. Four additional cars arrived in 1962. San Diego operated a fleet of 28 PCCs between 1937 and 1949. Seventeen were sold to El Paso City Lines in 1950.

In conjunction with the aforementioned, a subsidiary of San Diego Transit, San Diego Vintage Trolley, will be created to own and operate this special downtown service on the present SDT tracks on a loop, starting from 12th/Imperial, via the private right-of-way along the waterfront to Union Station, B Street, and 12th Street back to Imperial. The equipment will be operated by SDT personnel. Both cars are in need of extensive rehabilitation and will require pantographs rather than trolley poles when placed into service. Neither a paint nor numbering scheme has been determined. Those connected with the project have selected a completion date of July, 2008. Thanks to John Pappas for this report.

Member Phil Hom reported that this summer, a pilot group of riders would begin paying for their trolley, bus, or *Coaster* rides using a *Smartcard*. Within one year, this program should be extended to all riders. *Smartcards* are electronically swiped at validating machines on buses or on platforms for the San Diego Trolley, *Coaster*, and, by late 2007, on NCTD's *Sprinter* trains. Passengers will pay a \$5 deposit for the card and then add an amount of their choice, up to \$500, to cover their transit costs. Account balances will be accessible online.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

In December, 2005, GO Transit awarded Bombardier a contract for additional 20 bi-levels. Bombardier's press release did not indicate whether the order would be for cabs or trailers. These cars will be built in Thunder Bay, and when all are delivered next year, will boost the fleet to an all-time high of 415 cars.

Trinidad and Tobago

The government of Trinidad and Tobago placed a notice in *Railway Age* requesting qualifications for design-build-operate-maintain (DBOM) services for a proposed rail transit project. This action is being taken to alleviate traffic congestion on the principal East-West and North-South Corridors in the country. The project consists of three segments for the East-West Corridor and two for the North-South Corridor. It is hoped that the contract would be awarded this fall. Construction is expected to take between five and six years.

London, United Kingdom

We have all heard the slogan, "Know before you go," and if you are planning a trip to London, you should know that the London Transport Museum at Covent Garden is closed and will not reopen until the spring of 2007. According to the report that my son Marc sent, it closed on September 4, 2005 for a major refurbishment project that is to cost £18.6 million (US \$32.4 million). The Museum was last refurbished in 1993.

From the History Files

Because of last month's special *Bulletin*, **From the History Files** did not appear. It is included in this month's column.

65 Years Ago: On March 22, 1941, the final New York,

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Around New York's Transit System

Unusual Reroutes

To install new stairs, platform edge, and communications and to perform electrical and plumbing work at the Fulton Street station, Seventh Avenue Line, IRT service was rearranged. The following schedule was in effect from 12:01 AM Saturday, January 21 to 5 AM Monday, January 23, and probably several other weekends. The northbound track was out of service from south of Nevins Street to the north end of Chambers Street. Southbound ② trains made all local stops and bypassed Fulton Street. Northbound ② trains made express stops on Lexington Avenue. ③ trains from 148th Street terminated at 14th Street on southbound Track #2. Service on ④ was extended from Utica Avenue to New Lots Avenue. All-night service was operated on ⑤ via Lexington Avenue express to Bowling Green, after which trains operated around the loop, bypassing South Ferry. Trains made express stops on Seventh Avenue. When the southbound track was out of service at Fulton Street, ② and ⑤ trains operated in the opposite direction from what was described above.

To build the connection to the new South Ferry station, trains were rerouted again. The following schedule was in effect from 12:01 AM Saturday, February 4 to 5 AM Monday, February 6, 2006:

- ① trains from 242nd Street terminated at 14th Street on southbound Track #2. A fare-free shuttle bus operated in both directions, serving Chamber Street, Rector Street, and South Ferry
- Southbound ② trains made local stops from 96th Street to Chambers Street. Northbound ② trains made local stops south of 34th Street and express stops north of 34th Street
- ③ service was suspended and replaced by a fare-

free shuttle bus serving the 148th Street, 145th Street, and 135th Street stations

Because a switch was replaced in the Bronx, ④ trains operated from New Lots Avenue to 138th Street-Third Avenue and Woodlawn to 149th Street-Grand Concourse. A fare-free shuttle bus operated in both directions, serving the 149th Street-Grand Concourse, 138th Street-Grand Concourse, and 138th Street-Third Avenue stations.

⑤/Grand Central Shuttle operated all night.

Another Ancient Wall Excavated at South Ferry

In the January, 2006 *Bulletin*, we reported that archaeological treasures were discovered in the excavation for the new South Ferry station.

In late December, 2005, the workers who were digging up Battery Park for the new station uncovered a second stone wall, which is historically significant and must be preserved. It was anticipated that the first wall would be removed by the end of January and the second wall could be removed by early February. Meanwhile, digging stopped in the area around the two walls and the work was two weeks behind schedule.

The second wall is several feet below street level and about 300 feet south of the first wall. The second wall is similar to the first wall, but longer and taller. It is made of stone blocks and mortar, probably with logs near the base.

The workers took apart the walls with rubber mallets and chisels. Then they were lifted carefully out of the trenches in canvas bands attached to construction cranes. The pieces were cataloged, carefully removed, and stored in crates. They will be stored in the park until construction is completed.

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Susquehanna & Western Railroad mixed train departed from Hanford, New Jersey, and passenger service ended at Butler.

50 Years Ago: On March 23, 1956, the Philadelphia & Western (Red Arrow) abandoned trolley service between Villanova and Stratford. This line branched off of what is known today as the Norristown High-Speed Line. At the time, the replacement service was bus Route Y. Today's passengers ride Route #103 which mimics the service of the old Red Arrow line to Ardmore. It even runs on the old right-of-way where it crosses under Route #100 (the rail bed was converted to busway), at Ardmore Junction.

100 Years Ago: On April 18, 1906, the Hudson & Manhattan Railroad Company and the Pennsylvania Railroad negotiated a joint service agreement between Newark and Hudson Terminal. This arrangement lasted up to the date that the Aldene Plan went into effect on April 30, 1967.

65 Years Ago: On April 12, 1941, streetcar service ended in Tacoma, Washington. On August 22, 2003, just over 62 years later, the first 1.6-mile segment of a new light rail system, known as *Tacoma Link*, began running. There are five stations on the route between the Tacoma Dome and Theater District/S. 9th Street. Sound Transit is the operator of this service.

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