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CITY BEGAN OPERATING STATEN ISLAND TROLLEY CARS IN 1920

Street railways were hard hit by World War I and the tremendous increase in costs following it. In this three-part series, we are explaining how New York City's street railways were able to maintain service during this difficult period. The December, 2009 issue discussed the Brooklyn and Queens companies' problems, the next issue analyzed the Manhattan and Bronx companies' difficulties, and this issue will reveal the problems encountered on Staten Island.

In 1919, two companies operated trolley cars on Staten Island. Richmond Light & Railroad Company provided service, but Staten Island Midland Railway ceased operating on January 19, 1920 because of inadequate receipts, depriving thousands of Staten Island passengers of needed transportation. The Public Service Commission and the city had advance notice of the company's problems, and the former made every effort to help the company. But the Board of Estimate and Apportionment refused the company's plea for relief. Without the Board's consent, PSC could not save the company. In the summer of 1919, the company informed PSC that it would cease operating if relief were not granted. PSC was able to persuade the company to continue operating a little longer. In December, 1919, the company finally set the date for closing down. At a hearing held on December 29, 1919, the company revealed that it was operated at a loss in 1919 and several previous years. Service was discontinued January 19, 1920 despite a Supreme Court restraining order served on the company's Traffic Superintendent.

The following lines ceased operating: Silver

Lake, Concord, Richmond, St. George and Port Richmond to Midland Beach, and Manor Road.

From January 19 to December 1, 1920, Richmond Light & Railroad operated cars on the Silver Lake Line between St. George and Clove Road. The city operated an inefficient bus service, which could not handle the traffic. Starting May 21, 1920, Midland operated one car on each line, except three cars on St. George to Port Richmond via Concord between 10 AM and 5:25 PM.

On November 17, 1920, 28 cars, probably single-truck Birneys, were delivered to Staten Island. Municipal operation by the Department of Plant and Structures began on December 1, 1920 over the former Midland routes. With ten additional Birneys and several second-hand Second Avenue Railroad cars, the fleet was increased to 69 cars in 1921.

Six years later, trolley service ended suddenly because the Controller refused to pay the electric bill. In April, 1927, Staten Island Edison asked the city to pay a year and a half overdue electric bill. A month later, the matter was brought up and received no attention. When the city received the notice to discontinue power, it asked for an extension of time. On July 1, one month's notice was given to the city. On July 30, 1927, there was an all-day conference regarding the unpaid \$175,000 electric bill. The Controller said that the operation was illegal, and he agreed to pay the final bill after trolley service was discontinued. The Commissioner of Plant and Structures said that he could serve Staten

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NEXT TRIP: 207TH STREET SHOP TOUR—MARCH 20

A HISTORY OF **F** (AND **V**) TRAIN SERVICE (Continued from February, 2010 Issue) by George Chiasson

GENESIS OF THE **F** TRAIN, PART I: THE PROSPECT PARK & CONEY ISLAND RAILROAD (1874-99)

The present day Culver Line of MTA New York City Transit had its beginnings as the Prospect Park & Coney Island Railroad, one of four privately-owned excursion lines linking populous neighborhoods of Brooklyn with the "resort" community of Coney Island. In the time immediately surrounding the Civil War the then-independent city of Brooklyn experienced a massive growth phase, in which it started to be transformed from a mostly suburban, semi-agrarian setting to an urban landscape. As Lower Manhattan provided much of the area's economic energy even at that time, Brooklyn's greatest area of early development was largely contiguous to both it and the burgeoning downtown area of Brooklyn. In turn the central business district was linked to nearby residential neighborhoods by a developing system of surface transit (i.e. horsecar) lines, with a steam railway (the Long Island RR) aimed at points further away. Brooklyn's large ocean front was an early summer refuge for city dwellers, and a few entrepreneurs sought to exploit this opportunity by establishing a resort experience that included transportation, accommodation and recreation. Through this effort, a group of steam excursion lines was gradually built that focused on Coney Island, as did another serving Canarsie and the Rockaway Peninsula.

Originally incorporated on October 9, 1874, the Prospect Park & Coney Island Railroad more popularly carried the name of its financier and founder, Andrew R. Culver, to thus gain its name as Culver('s) Line. As opened on June 19, 1875, in plenty of time to garner early summer traffic, PP&CI was laid out as a single-track railroad from a terminal at the Greenwood station (next to the present Greenwood Cemetery on one edge of Prospect Park) to the Gravesend station (located at the present Neck Road), with passing sidings located at the Harris-Woodlawn and Gravesend stations. The line followed what is now 20th Street eastward a short distance before turning south onto Gravesend (now McDonald) Avenue, a largely unoccupied survey with little density along what would become a teeming boulevard of southern Brooklyn. In time the current streetscape of McDonald Avenue enveloped the railroad corridor, which ran along the surface over its first 45 years of existence. Eight days after its initial opening, PP&CI was extended via single track to the Coney Island oceanfront terminal known as "Culver's Depot." This was located at approximately W. 5th Street and Surf Avenue, about where a large apartment com-

plex currently exists across from the New York Aquarium.

In its earliest incarnation, PP&CI's stations were located at Greenwood Depot, Turner-City Line (Ft. Hamilton Parkway), Parkville (Avenue I), Washington Station (Avenue K), Harris-Woodlawn (Avenue N), Kings Highway, The Brooklyn Jockey Club (Avenue T), Gravesend (Neck Road), Van Sicklen (Neptune Avenue), and The Culver Depot. The station at Turner-City Line (Ft. Hamilton Parkway) was an early casualty in 1876, but summer traffic was good enough to increase service after the first year, and in time for the 1878 season the line was double-tracked from Parkville to Coney Island Creek (south of Van Sicklen). It was then extended via single track from Culver Depot to Norton's Point (approximately Surf & Mermaid Avenues) on June 9, 1879, from which a connecting ferry boat operation to the Rockaway Peninsula was instituted on June 17, 1881. Things were going so well at this point that major enlargement and renovation was performed on the Culver Depot and adjoining hotel in time for the 1883 summer season.

By 1885, the appeal of PP&CI had caught on sufficiently to draw the attention of the Long Island Rail Road, and a joint seasonal venture begun which connected LIRR's 63rd Street Ferry Terminal in Bay Ridge with the Gravesend Race Track (of the Brooklyn Jockey Club) before continuing on to the Culver Depot at Coney Island. To accomplish this the two lines were physically tied together at "Parkville Junction" (roughly McDonald Avenue at 47th Street) and a portion of PP&CI's service rerouted to the 63rd Street Ferry terminal via what is now the Bay Ridge Branch of LIRR. As well, LIRR began to acquire a financial interest in PP&CI, which enhanced its fiscal performance all the more.

By the late 1880s PP&CI was preparing to shift its focus away from seasonal excursion traffic to full-time urban transportation corridor, but even so it did complete a replacement terminal at its Greenwood Depot in 1888 after the original was burned on November 14, 1887. On June 7, 1890 PP&CI rerouted most of its trains from both Greenwood Depot and the 63rd Street Ferry LIRR terminal to a new Union Depot. This was located at 36th Street & Fifth Avenue, and served jointly with another Coney Island excursion road, the Brooklyn, Bath & West End Railway. It was also adjacent to the Brooklyn Elevated Railway's Fifth Avenue "E1," which provided a swift, year-round connection to Downtown

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A History of F (and V) Train Service*(Continued from page 2)*

Brooklyn (and Lower Manhattan via the Brooklyn Bridge). Access to Union Depot was achieved by using the Prospect Park & South Brooklyn Railroad, better known as the South Brooklyn Railroad, which was originally opened as an extension of the Brooklyn, Bath & West End (better known as the West End Line) in 1887. This line was largely in an open cut parallel to 38th Street, including a hewn-rock tunnel between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. It extended to an intersection with the existing Culver Line at "Kensington Junction" (near Cortelyou Road), and included new stations at City Line Junction (Ninth Avenue) and Fort Hamilton Avenue (Parkway). Double-tracking of the original PP&CI route was extended from Parkville to meet the branch from the PP&SB, and a station also created at Kensington Junction. Another new stop was also added on Gravesend Avenue at the Parkway Driving Club (Avenue S), a new summer attraction on the route, for the 1890 seasonal traffic.

Though PP&CI turned increasingly away from its joint operation with LIRR, and became more involved with Brooklyn's traction empire, LIRR retained its interest in the line through the following five seasons as the companies remained financially entwined. On June 5, 1895, joint through service was thus instituted from the Sands Street terminal in Downtown Brooklyn (with connection available to Brooklyn Bridge cable shuttles) to Manhattan Beach via the Culver Line. Again this was done in time for the summer season, using a new physical connection from the Culver Line up to the elevated structure at 36th Street & Fifth Avenue, approximately from 38th Street & Tenth Avenue to the existing 36th Street Yard. To get to Manhattan Beach, trains left the Culver Line at Parkville Junction and headed east onto the Bay Ridge Branch, then turned south onto LIRR's Manhattan Beach Branch, which directly paralleled the present Brighton Line to the peninsular oceanfront, at the opposite end of Coney Island just past Brighton Beach. It also served the Sheepshead Bay Race Track.

For the next summer (beginning in May 1896), PP&CI introduced similar through service from Sands Street Terminal to Culver Depot, following the same route as the Manhattan Beach line but remaining on the Culver route for the balance of its journey beyond Kensington Junction. As time went on, PP&CI (and by extension LIRR) concentrated less service to the two older terminals at Greenwood Depot and the 63rd Street Ferry, and all trains to the latter were discontinued at the end of the 1897 summer season. The following year (starting May of 1898) it was succeeded by new service to the 39th Street Ferry terminal, located just past Union Depot at the far (north) end of the South Brooklyn Railway, which had originally opened as part of the West End Line in 1887. A month later, on June 18, 1898 PP&CI

commenced its final year of joint operation to Manhattan Beach, with service offered from the 39th Street Ferry and, more importantly, from the Park Row elevated terminal in Manhattan as well. Both used the South Brooklyn Railway, Culver's route as far as Parkville Junction, and the Manhattan Beach Branch, but trips from Park Row were shunted across the Brooklyn Bridge by cable-powered bridge motors to Sands Street, where steam engines took over. Thus for this final year there was a wide variety of joint LIRR/PP&CI service available to the Brooklyn race tracks, Coney Island, and Manhattan Beach all at once, in addition to the nominal year-round excursion traffic (which had rapidly evolved into a commuter trade) that was by this time forming to the string of neighborhoods that evolved along Gravesend Avenue.

GENESIS OF THE **F** TRAIN, PART II: THE CULVER LINE AND BRT (1899-1919)

As the outcome of a long series of business deals conducted through the 1890s, the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Corporation took shape by the end of the decade, and in the process both assumed command of the former Prospect Park & Coney Island Railroad and emancipated it from financial entanglement with the Long Island Rail Road (though the lucrative joint service agreement was continued). Without the slightest pretense regarding the future of Culver's Road, BRT discontinued "excursion" operations forthwith in April of 1899 and immediately reconfigured the entire line as an electrified transit route, to be used by both trolley cars and elevated rapid transit trains on a year-round basis. Starting on June 17, base service was established from Park Row Terminal in Manhattan all the way to Norton's Point, with trains being pulled by a "bridge motor" (actually a cable-operated shuttle car with electric back-up) across the Brooklyn Bridge, then a steam engine from Sands Street to 36^h Street via the Fifth Avenue "EI," and on the surface to Culver Depot and Norton's Point. As of July 3, electrically-equipped rolling stock (if available) was able to complete the last part of that trip under overhead trolley wire south of the 36th Street ramp, but there was a mix of steam and electric for some time to come. At this point also, the Culver Line was double-tracked for its entire length, and existing stations changed or new ones added to line up as follows:

Eighth Avenue (located on the 39th Street connector), Ninth Avenue, Ft. Hamilton Avenue, 13th Avenue, 15th Avenue, Kensington Junction (Cortelyou Road), 18th Avenue, Parkville, 22nd Avenue, Avenue N, Avenue P, Kings Highway, The Brooklyn Jockey Club (LIRR only), Gravesend (Neck Road), Avenue W, Van Sicklen, Culver Depot, and Norton's Point.

In rush hours BRT's Culver trains were not operated across the Brooklyn Bridge, but were instead turned at

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A History of F (and V) Train Service

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Sands Street Also, BRT established a joint-usage streetcar line to serve the balance of the original PP&CI corridor, starting from the old Greenwood Depot and ending at Coney Island, that physically shared trackage and stations with Culver Line "El" trains (all of which had small, low platforms). Finally, both LIRR and BRT continued to run summertime "Special" services on various portions of the Culver Line; from 39th Street Ferry to Manhattan Beach via Parkville Junction; from 39th Street Ferry to Gravesend Race Track; and from Park Row to Manhattan Beach via the Fifth Avenue "El." As might have been expected, this early attempt at through service over the Brooklyn Bridge proved to be cumbersome, tenuous, and disruptive, and it was summarily discontinued on July 16, 1899 in favor of a permanent terminal at Sands Street on the Brooklyn side, the sole exception being BRT's Specials to Manhattan Beach.

On July 3, 1900 the first Culver electric trains were operated by third rail on the Fifth Avenue "El" from Sands Street to the 36th Street ramp, but not all rolling stock at the time was capable of using it. Starting about April of 1901, midday Culver trains that did use electric power were re-extended over the Brooklyn Bridge to Park Row, using third rail all the way across the East River. Otherwise, the remaining steam-drawn consists had a motive power change performed at Sands Street and were pulled over the East River and back by a cable-powered bridge motor. This routine was interrupted between July and October, 1901 due to a powerhouse fire, during which time all trains were again turned back at Sands Street. After the 1902 summer season concluded that September, through jointly-operated Specials from Park Row to Manhattan Beach via the Culver Line were not revived. Ultimately, a mix of steam and

electric trains continued to ply the Fifth Avenue and Culver Lines until sometime in 1905, by which time BRT had received enough new wooden "El" cars to electrify its entire operation. On January 26, 1908 the operation of through elevated trains on the Brooklyn Bridge completely subsumed cable-operated shuttles, and all remaining Culver service was finally extended from Sands Street to Park Row.

During 1908, BRT surface cars replaced "El" trains operating between Culver Depot and Norton's Point, while LIRR's Special service from 39th Street Ferry to Gravesend Race Track was discontinued in 1909. Ultimately, the track was shut down by political fiat after the 1910 racing season, and in succeeding times its functions largely acquired by the existing facility at Aqueduct. Sheepshead Bay Race Track suffered a similar fate and was also closed after the 1910 racing season, taking joint BRT/LIRR special service on the Manhattan Beach Branch with it. Thereafter LIRR continued to operate its own summer excursion trade to Manhattan Beach from Long Island City and Bay Ridge for a number of years. Eventually, business fell off and the passenger trains were discontinued in 1924. The line then continued to be used for freight movement until about 1933 when the Great Depression set in, and it was physically removed by 1941.

The Dual Contracts were signed between the City of New York, the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, and BRT in March, 1913 with multiple upgrades and extensions due the existing elevated rapid transit system of Brooklyn as a result. Within a few years, work was nearing completion on the elevation of the original West End Line's route, and Culver operations were significantly modified as a result. On June 23, 1916 southbound trains were routed into the West End's new station at Ninth Avenue (situated on a short extension of

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City Began Operating Staten Island Trolley Cars in 1920

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Island with buses if power were shut off.

All cars were in the barn when power was shut off at 3:01 AM August 1, 1927. Three days later, 13 cars were transferred to the city-operated Williamsburg Bridge Line.

Buses transferred from 79th Street, 86th Street, and 96th Street in Manhattan and other Staten Island routes were running on each route an hour and a half before power was shut off. Fare was ten cents and some operators refused to accept transfers.

Before extending service to the interior of Staten Island, city officials compared the cost of operating different types of vehicles, as shown in the following table showing cost per vehicle mile:

- One-man trolley cars: 24.3 cents

- Buses: 29.55 cents
- Trackless trolley: 20.95 cents

Trackless was the cheapest. Construction cost \$400 per mile, much less than single-track trolley at \$37,000 or more per mile. Because it was the most economical, the city decided to build three lines. On October 8, 1921, 30-passenger trackless trolleys started operating from Meier's Corners to Seaview Hospital (2.6 miles) and Bull's Head (2 miles), which was soon extended 2.4 miles on Richmond Turnpike to Linoleumville (present-day Travis). On November 4, 1922, trackless trolleys started operating on Arthur Kill Road from Richmond to Tottenville.

Because the Department of Plant and Structures had no more money, it decided to discontinue the trackless trolleys, which transported 5,000 passengers. The last trackless departed from Tottenville at 11:30 PM October 16, 1927 and the first Tompkins Bus Company bus left Richmond at midnight.

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A History of F (and V) Train Service

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the original West End right-of-way between Ninth and Tenth Avenues), where they passed through the lower level. Northbound trains were similarly rerouted on June 28, and as a result third rail was extended from the 36th Street ramp to the existing surface station at Fort Hamilton Parkway, where a changeover to trolley overhead continued. The original surface stations used by Culver trains at Eighth and Ninth Avenues since 1899 were

closed, and rush hour Culver trains began skipping the local stops on the Fifth Avenue "E1" to quicken trip times to and from Park Row, as well as reduce congestion on the two-track line (West End trains had been so operated from January, 1908 to June, 1916). This strategy, coupled with the dedication of West End operations through the new Fourth Avenue Subway, served to diminish pressure upon the city and BRT to fully incorporate the Culver Line into BRT's developing subway system (something that was ultimately avoided until 1931).

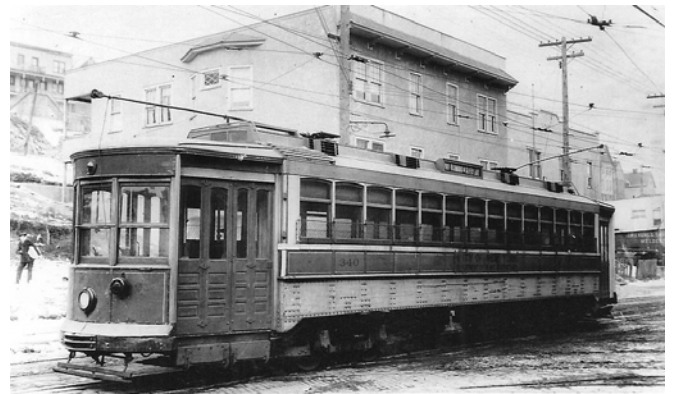
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City Began Operating Staten Island Trolley Cars in 1920

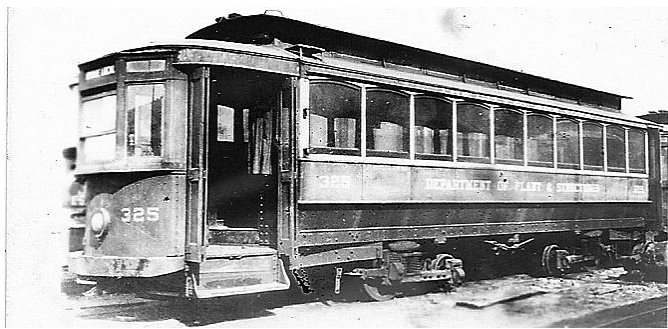
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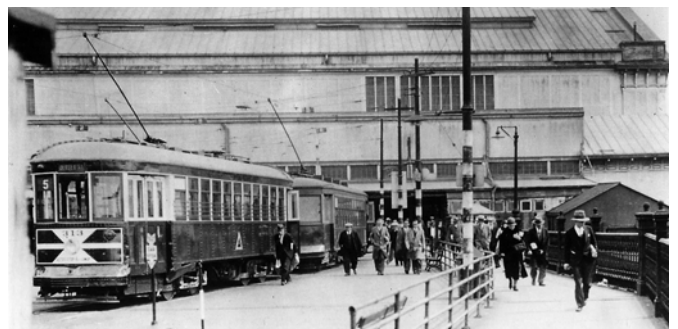
Department of Plant and Structures trackless trolley at Linoleumville.
Bernard Linder collection



Department of Plant and Structures trolley car 340 on Staten Island Midland Railway, 1922.
Bernard Linder collection



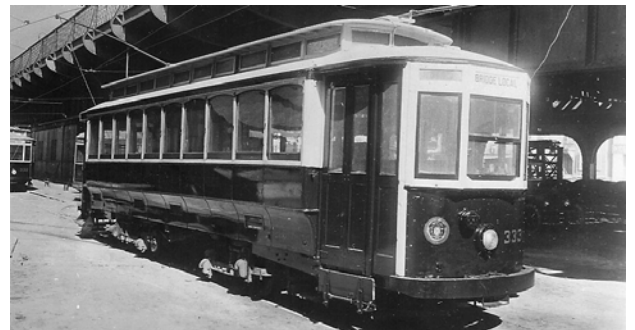
Department of Plant and Structures Williamsburg Bridge and Staten Island cars.
Bernard Linder collection



Richmond Light & Railroad car 313 at St. George in 1924.
Bernard Linder collection



Staten Island trackless trolley.
Bernard Linder collection



Second Avenue Railroad car rebuilt for Staten Island Midland.
Bernard Linder collection

NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY CAR UPDATE

by George Chiasson

Hello, Everybody!

As 2010 started, so began a brand new approach regarding the change of equipment on the New York subway's Subdivision "B," and what a surprise it is, as emphasis turns away from removing the last 60-foot SMEEs, instead moving toward elimination of the sometimes obstinate R-44 class. As a result there were no 60-foot SMEE retirements at all in January (for the first time since June, 2007), though the R-160 program has continued without interruption or even significant change. Otherwise, the two ongoing initiatives involving subway rolling stock (Staten Island R-44 overhaul and 7 R-62A brake modification) moved rapidly toward their respective conclusions, while overall the system tottered in an uncertain state owing to the generally rocky fiscal environment we all confront these days. In any case, let us start our fanciful journey into 2010 right here.

Subdivision "A" Happenings

Through January 16, 2010 the following single unit R-62As have received the modified WABCO brake valve and joined the pool of north motors: 1962, 1982, 1996, 2026, 2042, 2052, 2066, 2072, 2082, 2092, 2112, 2132, and 2142. This brings the total number of R-62As so modified to 70, with just 18 more cars ending in "6" to go before completion of this effort. Unmodified single unit R-62As have continued to appear as north motors on rare occasions, but these seem to be in error as the most recent instances include cars whose numbers end in "6" but have not yet received the modified WABCO brake valve. Such consists tend to last for no more than a day in service, if that long, so in almost all cases these days it is assured there will be a single unit with modified brake valve at the north end of any given 11-car train.

R-160 Progress

Through December 31, 2009 Option II R-160A-2s 9688-9707 had been delivered, while Option II R-160A-2s 9663-82 went into service on E and F. As of January 16, 2010 Option II R-160A-2s 9708-22 had been delivered, while 9683-92 had entered service at Jamaica. As of January 16, 2010 Option II R-160Bs 9878-92 had been delivered, with cars 9863-72 entering E and F service by December 31. At the Kawasaki plant in Yonkers, Option II R-160Bs up to 9908 were observed around the facility by the middle of January. The operation of CBTC-equipped R-160A-1s 8313-76 in ATO (Automatic Train Operation) mode on L was initially slated to commence right after Christmas, but while these 64 cars are basically confined to the 14th Street-Canarsie Line they have not yet been observed operating in fully-automatic mode. Cars 8377-8652 are

now seen on L only on rare occasions, while 8313-76 have become infrequent visitors to J/Z and M, with one observed on M on January 6.

As of January 16, 2010 deliveries totaled 340 R-160A-1s, 550 R-160A-2s, and 615 R-160Bs for a combined quantity of 1,505. Of the overall total as of January 16, 340 R-160A-1s were in service at East New York on J/Z, L, and M; 60 R-160A-2s plus 430 R-160Bs at Coney Island on N, O, and W (for 490 total); and 460 R-160A-2s plus 160 R-160Bs at Jamaica on E and F for a combined total of 620.

60-Foot SMEE News (Retirements Grind To A Halt)

December 18, 2009 was a bookmark occasion for the remaining Phase I R-32s, for as of that date all R-32s at Jamaica were restored to "active" status, and all apparent effort to eventually retire or relocate them and the other 10-car train at Coney Island came to a standstill. As a result, there are 252 potential Phase I R-32s that could remain in passenger service for the long haul at this point, or at least until NYC Transit makes its next equipment acquisition at an unknown later date. These consist of the 210 cars for A and C at 207th Street, 26 for R and V at Jamaica, 10 for E and O at Coney Island, and six complete ex-Jamaica cars that reside at Concourse. Retired DCE School cars 3742/3 were inside 207th Street Shop as of January 16 and may now be a parts supply, while long-stored pair 3720/1 remain at Jamaica (where they have rested since February, 2009) and are reportedly held aside for legal purposes. When (or if) the Phase Is stationed at Jamaica and Coney Island will be joining their sister cars for A and C service is not definitively known, but appears a good bet to take place once determination of the R-44s' future becomes official. The 10-car Phase I R-32 train at Coney Island (3445/3468, 3520/3891, 3610/1, 3726/7, 3820/1) disappeared again after spending December 29 on B, then was back again on January 12 and still going (and still on B) as of January 15.

As the end of the reefing program (or at least this phase of it) became a certainty on or about December 18, the last 12 Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s from Jamaica (4550/1, 4616/7, 4674/5, 4704/5, 4738/9, and 4784/5) plus 4620/1, to which these 12 were attached, were held aside and not asbestos-abated. Rumors abound regarding the future of these cars, from a return to East New York or Jamaica (or even Coney Island) to a parts supply for the 50 Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s that still toil on J and Z, but as of January 16, 2010 they remain intact and in storage. Their fate may be determined once the response to future delivery of the 32 R-160A-1s (9943-74) expected in

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New York City Subway Car Update*(Continued from page 6)*

the summer of 2010 becomes clarified.

Overall by January 16, 2010, there were 246 Phase I R-32s and 50 Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s active for a total of 296. By all appearances, the general retirement of these car types, as a direct result of R-160 deliveries, has come to an end.

The 75-Footers of MTA New York City Transit (R-44, R-46, R-68, R-68A)

On or about December 18, 2009, two "typical" 4-car sets of R-44s (Morrison-Knudsen rebuilds 5290/5291/5293/5292 and Coney Island rebuilds 5342/5343/5345/5344) were removed from service and ushered into 207th Street Shop. There the interiors were partially disassembled (seats, flooring, sidewalls), the trucks and frames closely inspected for wear and tear, and (most importantly) the stainless steel "skin" partly removed beneath select door sills to expose the under-car's carbon steel framing. This study of the R-44s' overall condition arose from growing concern about the remaining cost and longevity of the R-44s as they approach 40 years of age, and a desire to determine the best course of action across the balance of the R-160 program, given that a useful number of Phase I R-32s and Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s are still part of NYCT's rolling stock arsenal. The study, being performed by DCE Engineering staff, will thoroughly examine all aspects of retaining or retiring the 272 (now 264) R-44s and necessary actions to bring it about. The report is expected to be completed by February with an official decision, following an equally thorough review of its contents, made by the end of March. Suffice to state that as things currently stand on January 16, the R-44s are NOT yet being retired (at least officially), but neither are the 60-footers, while a growing number of replacement R-46s await determination of their fates.

As additional R-160s have arrived at Jamaica since retirement of the last Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s on December 10, one 8-car train of R-46s in the 5690-5961 group has been forwarded to 207th Street, as follows: 5878-81 and 5910-3 on December 25, 2009; 5810-3 and 5922-5 on December 31; and 5850-3 plus 5894-7 on January 12, 2010. Upon arrival they have undergone inspection and cleaning, and some have also received blue diamond-shaped stickers near the number boards, in anticipation of their projected use on A and C starting in January of 2010. These plans have been changing almost by the day since the New Year began, however, and as of January 16, 2010 it appears they will ultimately be re-deployed to Pitkin Shop. When (or if) official approval is made to retire the R-44 fleet, a combined total of approximately 376 R-46s should be expected to gradually overwhelm **(A)**, supplemented by a few 10-car sets of Phase I R-32s as has been the

case for some time.

As of December 18, 2009, R-68s and R-68As were no longer being seen on **(N)** during weekdays, with the last day of regular operation (and at that a train or two at the most) being noted as December 2, 2009. One train of R-68As was used on **(D)** on (Saturday) December 26, while another was seen on **(W)** on New Year's Eve. Yet another train of R-68As was observed on **(N)** on January 14, 2010.

R-44 Retirements

The following were taken out of service through January 16, 2010:

December, 2009: R-44 5290/5291/5293/5292 and 5342/5343/5345/5344 withdrawn from Pitkin **(A)**.

The R-44s of MTA Staten Island Railway

Arriving at Coney Island Overhaul Shop between December 16, 2009 and January 16, 2010 were SIR "A" cars 408 and 434, along with "B" cars 403 and 435. "A" car 426 remained in process at Coney Island, while returning to the Staten Island Railway upon completion were "A" cars 414, 428, 438, and 466, along with "B" cars 421 and 425. This raised the overall number of completed cars to 48.

Miscellaneous Notes and Reefing Renewed

Following reload during the week before Christmas, Barge 28 departed 207th Street on Sunday, December 27, 2009 bound for the JY Reef in Georgia with the following 44 car shells contained aboard: 4558, 4559, 4560, 4561, 4562, 4563, 4592, 4593, 4594, 4595, 4596, 4597, 4602, 4603, 4608, 4609, 4626, 4627, 4646, 4647, 4650, 4651, 4662, 4663, 4666, 4667, 4678, 4679, 4684, 4688, 4689, 4690, 4691, 4692, 4693, 4698, 4699, 4720, 4721, 4727, 4762, 4763, 4778, and 4779. JY Reef (formerly J Reef) is located 20 nautical miles off the coast of St. Catherine's Island, Georgia (nearest municipality on a map is Halfmoon Landing), or for reference more than 30 miles southeast of Savannah. Preparation activities associated with the current reefing program concluded at 207th Street Shop on January 8, 2010, leaving the shells of R-30 8337, slant R-40 4272, and some 60 Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s scattered about the complex to await departure on Barge 29, plus a possible Barge 30 (or perhaps 29A?). As of January 16, 2010 the empty barge was expected to soon return, while the Weeks Marine crane may be leaving its mooring at the 215th Street dock, where it has resided since 2001, after departure of the last barge.

Open to question at this stage is not only the possible disposition of the 272 R-44s but the status of a smattering of other equipment that for various reasons was left out of the reefing program. Aside from the four Phase I R-32s indicated above, there remain the six slant R-40s converted to H.R. school cars in 2008, two R-40Ms, and the mixed R-40M/42 pair. Moreover, early indications are that (should their retirement move forward) the

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Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 256
by Randy Glucksman

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

After the February column was completed, MTA released an updated list of service reductions. Details can be found at <http://www.mta.info/news/stories/?story=11>. Anticipated savings for Metro-North (East) are \$5.4 million (\$4.9 million MNR and \$0.5 million CDOT) plus \$0.5 million for Metro-North (West). LIRR estimates that its savings would amount to \$6.3 million this year and \$11 million in 2011. Train consists would be reduced so that some trains could exceed the 95% load guideline with the possibility of standees. LIRR's proposals would be implemented in two phases – May and September, while Metro-North (East) would implement its with its planned June 20 summer construction timetable change upon approval of CDOT. For west-of-Hudson, this will take place after approval from NJ Transit and probably be coordinated with one of NJT's timetable changes. The adjustments that take place in May do not require public hearings or further MTA board action. Those that have been proposed for September must be considered by the Board. Public hearings have been scheduled between March 1 and March 8 in all five boroughs, White Plains, Suffern, Carle Place, and Riverhead (added as an afterthought) for the proposals that are deemed to be a major alteration to crew and timetables. However, you can be sure that commuters who attend these hearings will come to vent about all the service reductions. Below, is a breakdown by railroad.

Metro-North (East)

Thirteen weekday trains will no longer operate or would be combined, many of which were added in April, 2008. 16 of 670 trains will lose some cars.

HUDSON LINE: Trains #487 and 491 (9:04 and 9:55 Grand Central Terminal/Croton-Harmon) and Train #793 (10:55 PM Grand Central Terminal/Poughkeepsie). 745 passengers would be impacted. I have been an occasional user of some of those trains

HARLEM LINE: Train #681 (7:52 PM Grand Central Terminal/Southeast) and Train #683 (7:57 PM Grand Central Terminal/Mt. Kisco) will be combined. Train #693 (10:29 PM Grand Central Terminal/Southeast) cancelled, affecting 933 passengers

NEW HAVEN LINE: Train #1532 (1:34 PM Grand Central Terminal/New Haven), Train #1569 (2:33 PM New Haven/Grand Central Terminal), and Train #1302 (1:15 AM Grand Central Terminal/Stamford) cancelled. Four trains operating between 1 PM and 3 PM from Stamford and Grand Central Terminal would be cancelled, replacing the half-hourly service with hourly service. 605 weekday passengers and 265 weekend passengers would be affected

Metro-North (West)

PASCACK VALLEY LINE: Four weekend trains that were proposed for elimination will continue to operate, but Trains #1600 (4:56 AM Spring Valley/Hoboken) and Train #1639 (6:55 AM Hoboken/Spring Valley) will be cancelled. Both make local stops in New Jersey. It is not known how many New Jersey passengers would be affected, but 65 are Metro-North

PORT JERVIS LINE: Trains #58 (9:20 AM Port Jervis/Hoboken) and #61 (6:27 PM Hoboken/Port Jervis) will be cancelled. To reduce the nearly four-hour gap in service to Hoboken, Train #62, which departs from Port Jervis at 11:31 AM, would be moved up. The following train, #64 departs Port Jervis at 1:28 PM. A total of 685 passengers would be affected

Long Island Rail Road

The proposed changes also differ from what has been previously reported. Belmont Park service would only operate during the Belmont Stakes. LIRR reported that the 150 passengers affected have bus service from Queens Village. The service for the 2009 Spring Meet was initially cancelled but brought back a month later (July, 2009 *Bulletin*).

Starting in September, between midnight and 5 AM weekdays and until 6 AM weekends, there would be no service on the Atlantic Branch between Jamaica and Flatbush Avenue. Weekdays, 430 passengers would be affected and on weekends, 720. At the same time, weekend service (17 trains each day) on the West Hempstead Branch would end, affecting 350 passengers. What surprised people was the elimination of the Ronkonkoma to Greenport shuttle except on summer weekends. Two round trips are scheduled every day, and on weekdays, two additional trains operate, one to Yaphank and one to Riverhead.

In a related story, there was a surprise announcement on January 26, when LIRR announced that it would consider the creation of a local authority to operate the service between Riverhead and Greenport, a distance of 21 miles. LIRR president Helena Williams asks, "Is it an opportunity then to spark debate and spark discussion as to what should be the future level, how should service be provided?" One possible option would be replacing rail service with a rapid transit bus system. Says Williams: "It's a good opportunity to pause and examine."

Only the Far Rockaway Branch would see no cancellations. Except unless otherwise indicated, all changes would go into effect in May.

PORT WASHINGTON: Train #446 (4:43 PM express, first stop Great Neck) cancelled. Combined are Train #444,

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(4:22 PM express) and Train #356 (4:25 PM local), affecting 390 and 450 passengers, respectively. In September, the half-hourly off-peak service would be increased to hourly, reducing service by 14 weekday and 32 weekend trains. 3,500 daily and 7,200 weekend passengers affected

PORT JEFFERSON: Train #662 (5:11 PM Hunterspoint Avenue) terminates at Huntington, where passengers transfer to a diesel train for stations to Port Jefferson. 420 passengers are affected

RONKONKOMA: Two trains lose two cars. For September, cancel Train #2096 (4:34 PM Flatbush Avenue/Ronkonkoma), affecting 600 passengers

OYSTER BAY: Cancel weekend/holiday Train #6500 (1:35 AM Jamaica/Oyster Bay) and Train #6503 (7:20 AM Oyster Bay/Jamaica). This affects 30 and 50 passengers, respectively

HEMPSTEAD: Two trains lose two cars

BABYLON: Combine Trains #39 (7:33 AM Babylon) and #1019 (7:40 AM Seaford) so that Train #39 makes all stops. Two express trains, #1056 (4:57 PM New York Penn/Wantagh) and #1152 (5:03 PM New York Penn/Freeport) will be combined. All told, 1,100 passengers affected. Two other trains would be combined: Train #146 (4:39 PM Flatbush Avenue/Babylon) and Train #1054 (4:37 PM New York Penn/Wantagh), affecting 280 and 700 passengers, respectively

LONG BEACH: Cancel Train #874 (5:40 PM Flatbush Avenue/Long Beach). 390 passengers are affected. In September, Train #809 (6:09 AM Long Beach/Flatbush Avenue) cancelled, affecting 510 passengers

WEST HEMPSTEAD: In September, cancel Train #909 (8:08 AM West Hempstead/Flatbush Avenue). 220 passengers would be affected

MONTAUK: Starting in September, except for summer Fridays, cancel Train #2712 (4:30 PM Hunterspoint Avenue/Montauk). 170 passengers west of Jamaica and 310 passengers east of Jamaica would be affected

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST)

Another entrance to Grand Central Terminal is being built on the south side of E. 47th Street midway between Park and Lexington Avenues. While this is being done, there is no access to Grand Central North's 47th Street cross passage from the Track 11 and 13 platforms. All other access to the cross passageway is unaffected. This project, which is part of the LIRR East Side Access Project, is expected to be completed in August, 2011.

On February 5, Metro-North introduced a new service called *Metro-North Train Time*, which provides real-time status of trains and also schedule information for the next twelve trains via a smartphone or computer at the selected station. At present, this is available for 67 stations including Grand Central Terminal and Harlem-125th Street and another 28 are being added this month.

Ultimately all Hudson, Harlem, and New Haven Line stations will have this service with the exception of State Street in New Haven plus the Danbury and Waterbury Branches. This is because the system that is used in those areas is different.

For the first time since 2001, all three timetables were not revised in mid-January. In the interests of saving money, only the New Haven Line received a revised edition on January 18 because it has the largest number of trains that were operated during the Thanksgiving-New Year's period. The expiration date has been extended to April 10.

The New York Yankees begin their season on the road with an 8:05 PM game on Sunday, April 4 in Boston. Their first home game is at 1:05 PM, Tuesday, April 13 vs. the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. Yankee Stadium service will be included in the April 11 editions.

Metro-North's next-generation inspection train, which will replace the *ex-Phoebe Snow* cars, will be the west-of-Hudson Comet Ills formerly operated on NJ Transit. An attractive color scheme has been designed by the Vergara Studio. Originally delivered as 5179-80, they were renumbered 5009-10 when a deal was made to swap them for a pair of Comet IIs that were to undergo rehabilitation.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (WEST)

During the week of January 11, there were reports that both the Haverstraw-Ossining and Newburgh-Beacon Ferries were suspended due to icing conditions in the Hudson River. I do not know anyone who rides either service and have to rely on traffic reports or the Internet to get updated information. MTA's new website, which was introduced on January 13 (February *Bulletin*), has a link to connecting services and I was able to confirm early that week, the ferries were not operating, but by the end of the week, were back in service. Winter contingency schedules for both ferry services were once again published. Here is my first-hand observation: en route to the January Division meeting, as I rode over the Tappan Zee Bridge, the effects of the slightly warmer temperatures (30s) began to pay off as most of the Hudson River was free of ice, the exception being some areas very close to the shore line. As February began, both services were suspended again and remained so into the last week of the month.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Shore Line East issued a new timetable effective January 18. Many trains had their departure times changed up to 63 minutes earlier or later.

And on February 16, another timetable was issued to extend Train #1633 so that it begins in New London at 5:52 AM, rather than at Old Saybrook at 6:17 AM. There is an intermediate stop in New Haven (7:03 AM) with the train terminating in Stamford (7:54 AM). The return train, #1640, departs Stamford at 4:46 PM and New Haven (5:39 PM), and arrives in New London at 6:54 PM.

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What is unique about this timetable is that it is strictly for the weekday service. A note inside states: "This schedule highlights expanded service to New London. Consult the regular SLE Public Timetable, Effective January 18, 2010 for additional service information." Thanks to member David A. Cohen for sending copies of both editions.

According to a report in *The New Haven Register* sent by David A. Cohen, Governor Jodi Rell has requested that CDOT coordinate with Amtrak and the Connecticut Trades Association to add four more round trips between New London and New Haven later this year. A spokesman for this organization opposes an increase in service because it would be "incompatible with the bridge crossings because closing the bridges more often would hurt marinas, boat dealers, and destinations on the inland side of the bridges."

I received a report that like the M-2s, the Kawasaki M-8s will feature café cars. How many and what their numbers will be is not yet known. Some digital photos of the interior show that it is maroon and red. The armrests are of a wraparound type, which should prevent the tearing of trouser pockets.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

For the third consecutive year, a new on-time-performance (OTP) and a best-ever (since 1979) record was set, with all trains arriving on time, 95.21% of the time. Included are 81 rush hour periods when the OTP was 100%. LIRR President Helena E. Williams attributed the improvement to "investments in the fleet, better maintenance practices, a robust track work program, better vegetation management along the right of way, and, most importantly, the effort of some 6,800 employees who keep customer service and safety as their top priorities all year long." The previous record of 95.14% was set in 2008 and in 2007, it was 94.07%.

The OTP in diesel territory continued to lag behind at 93.32%, although there was a small improvement in 2009 over the previous year's 92.84%. The railroad is continuing to work to address reliability issues that have hampered the performance of its diesel fleet since entering service in 1998. A train is considered on time if it reaches its final destination within 5 minutes 59 seconds of its scheduled arrival time. This standard measure, used throughout the commuter rail industry, was adopted by LIRR in 1979. That year LIRR posted an OTP of 83.42% and has since begun an upward climb.

In connection with the Atlantic Terminal Pavilion opening on January 5 (February *Bulletin*) a color brochure was issued explaining the features of this new facility. I picked up a copy at the January Division meeting. Thanks to the member who brought them.

Track work related to the Hog Island and Powell Creek Bridge project over the weekends of January 23-

24, January 30-31, and February 27-28 resulted in the issuance of special Long Beach Branch timetables. Buses replaced the train service from Valley Stream to Long Beach.

A brochure explaining the Atlantic Avenue Viaduct Rehabilitation Project was produced. From December, 2009 through May, 2011, the project is in Phase IIa. The viaduct is composed of 199 steel spans, which are approximately 40 feet apart. During Phase I, 87 were completed and an additional 84 will be done under Phase IIa, which is the area from New York Avenue to Troy Avenue plus a small section around Ralph Avenue.

NJ TRANSIT

As this column was being completed, a top news story was a report that was initially released by Patrick Reilly, General Chairman of the United Transportation Union. This followed a meeting on February 12 between union leaders and new NJ Transit Executive Director James Weinstein. During the meeting, Reilly said, Weinstein detailed Governor Chris Christie's "aggressive" cost-saving plan for NJ Transit. "The plan comprises of fare hikes of between 20%-30%, and service reductions that are currently being worked on. The service reductions could force the carrier to furlough some of its employees. Mr. Weinstein stated that specific details will be forthcoming within the next two weeks." Reilly wrote that the service reductions would likely take effect in June. NJ Transit already cut nine train runs last month (please see below). The new Governor has already said that he would withhold nearly \$33 million in subsidies for the transit agency. NJ Transit's Board of Directors took up this subject at its February 17 meeting, and public hearings are to be scheduled for later this month. Although nothing definitive has been announced, the most expensive monthly rail ticket, Trenton/New York Penn, presently \$352, with a 30% increase (\$105) could cost \$457! Fares were last raised, by 9.6%, on June 1, 2007.

When Governor Christie made his transportation appointments in January (February *Bulletin*), he stated that he was opposed to raising the gas tax, which is used to replenish the Transportation Trust Fund. This fund is used for road and transit projects, and officials say it will run out of money by 2011. The Governor declined to "take a firm position" on fares, saying that would tie the hands of Executive Director Weinstein as he tackles NJT's budget. Previous governors and legislatures refused to raise the gas tax, which is one of the lowest in the nation and should have been raised, especially when the gas prices were lower. So at the end of the day, commuters will probably pay higher fares again, and elected officials can boast that they have not raised the gas tax. But, is this not the same as a tax, except to a smaller population?

Some Montclair-Boonton Line riders who are not happy with the train eliminations that occurred with the

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January 17 timetable change have begun to organize a grassroots movement to protest to NJ Transit. I received an email reporting that a commuter handed out flyers on one of the affected trains urging riders to complain directly to NJ Transit via its web site.

Similarly, in Atlantic City, riders are also unhappy with the elimination of Train #4610 (5:49 AM Atlantic City/30th Street) and a letter-writing and email campaign has begun there as well.

In early January, as we were driving home from visiting relatives who live near North Brunswick, there was a billboard on Route 1 with this message: "IMAGINE A TRAIN STATION IN NORTH BRUNSWICK" and this web site: <http://www.ourtowncenter.org/>. In one of the online videos, it is mentioned that North Brunswick is located in the longest stretch of the Northeast Corridor Line without a station: Jersey Avenue (MP 33.1) to Princeton Junction (MP 47.1). The developers of this property are proposing that the now unused former Johnson & Johnson site be used for transit oriented development that would include a rail station.

Fortunately, Monday, January 18 was a federal holiday – Martin Luther King Day – and many commuters stayed home, but for those traveling on the Montclair-Boonton Line between 6:20 and 11:51 AM, *Midtown Direct* service was not operating due to overhead wire damage. NJ Transit arranged for cross-honoring of rail tickets on DeCamp Bus Lines Routes 194, 195, 196, and 197. Eastbound diesel trains from Montclair State University stopped at Newark Broad Street where passengers could connect with *Midtown Direct* trains from Dover and Gladstone.

Another overhead wire problem occurred on February 2. NJ Transit sent its first email advisories at 5:32 AM that NEC, NJCL, and *Midtown Direct* service was subject to 20-30-minute delays into and out of New York Penn Station due to an Amtrak overhead wire problem, which was quickly escalated to 60 minutes. As the train I was riding was approaching Secaucus Junction, I turned on my radio in time to hear WCBS-880 traffic reporter Tom Kaminski tell of three trains stuck between Secaucus Junction and the North River Tunnels. That news made the decision very easy for my seatmate and me – we would go to Hoboken. Arrangements had already been made to cross-honor rail tickets and within minutes we joined other passengers on a train bound for 33rd Street. All service was reported operating on or close to schedule at 1:33 PM.

During January, I received emails from member Bob Vogel (Chuchubob) showing a different color scheme on GP40PH-2B 4205. Gone is the diagonal "disco" striping over the top of the engine. Actually this scheme was introduced with the Comet-Vs, P-40s, and P-42s, and is only new to these locomotives.

NJ Transit set up a display with a video and map adjacent to the east gate of Tracks 9/10 at New York Penn Station to promote the ARC Tunnel. There is a sign which lists these lines as being able to finally receive direct (transfer-free) service to Manhattan: Main, Bergen, Pascack Valley, Raritan Valley, North Jersey Coast (points south of Long Branch), Morristown (points west of Dover), and Boonton (points west of Montclair State University). These lines get more frequent and express service: Northeast Corridor, North Jersey Coast, Morristown, Montclair, and Gladstone.

A co-worker who rides through Newark told me that the majority of trains on the Raritan Valley Line are composed of multi-level cars.

Newark Light Rail got a new timetable effective January 9, with some reductions in service. This may be seen in the table below. In addition, the last weekday departure to Grove Street leaves Newark Penn Station at 11:18 PM, one hour earlier than under the September 5, 2009 schedules, and the last departure from Broad Street departs at 11:44 PM vs. 12:35 AM. On weekends/holidays, the last departure from Newark Penn Station is at 11:18 PM vs. 12:58 AM and the last one from Broad Street is at 11:39 PM vs. 1:19 AM.

After I wrote the above paragraph, member Jack May sent this email: "Although weekend operations on the traditional portion of the City Subway did not change this time, there has been a steady erosion of the light rail service in the past few years, especially on Saturdays, the traditional shopping day in downtown Newark. A 20-minute headway has been in effect since the end of June, 2008. Prior to that cars ran every 15 minutes, effective June 9, 2007 and before that date, a 10-minute headway was operated. Thus in the last two and a half years, Saturday service has been cut in half, from 6 cars every hour to only 3. Previously, NJ Transit operated a higher frequency on Saturday than Sunday, now both days have the same schedule."

STATIONS	SEPTEMBER 5, 2009	JANUARY 9, 2010
Branch Brook Park and Newark Penn Station (AM)	Every 3-4 minutes	Every 3-5 minutes
Grove Street and Newark Penn Station (AM)	Every 7 minutes	Every 7-10 minutes
Branch Brook Park and Newark Penn Station (PM)	Every 3-4 minutes	Every 3-5 minutes
Grove Street and Newark Penn Station (PM)	Every 7 minutes	Every 7-10 minutes

Exactly one week later, HBLRT got a new timetable. There have been some changes on weekdays, and on weekends the service operates every 20 minutes over each route vs. every 15 minutes (January 12, 2009 edition). Also, the first train to arrive at 22nd Street, which was previously 6:08 AM, is now 6:46 AM.

4800, one of four ex-Amtrak P40s that NJ Transit pur-

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chased for ACES service, caught fire due to an injector failure near Morrisville, Pennsylvania at about 5:30 PM on Saturday, February 13. Train #7174 departed from Atlantic City at 3:21 PM and was due in New York Penn at 5:56 PM. According to 6abc.com, two of the 62 passengers were taken to a hospital with breathing problems. Five crew members were also aboard the train. 1,400 feet of catenary was damaged, and until repairs were made, there were delays on the Northeast Corridor Line. 4800 was formerly Amtrak 812. Service delays continued for several hours. Bob Vogel wrote that during the blizzard two weeks prior, a P-40 failed to start at Shore Tower, where the train turns. It was determined that the cause was snow getting into everything inside. NJ Transit then decided to run diesel-only between Newark and Atlantic City. A multi-level cab car is used on the opposite end. ACES passengers must ride other trains between New York Penn and Newark. The other three P-40s have been removed from service. According to Bob, these are the only diesel locomotives that can fit in the North River Tunnels.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

Since I rarely ride PATH, the opportunity came to me in connection with the February 2 power problem on the Northeast Corridor (please see above). I saw that the zoetrope installed between 14th Street and 23rd Street was boarded up and no longer in service. Upon arrival at 33rd Street, I asked the train's Engineer if this run ever is assigned PA-5s, and he said that it happens occasionally. In answer to my question about the PA1-PA3s being scrapped, he said that quite a number were already off the property.

METROPOLITAN AREA

I received a very interesting four-page document from member Howard Mann about the Roosevelt Island Tramway. This nearly 34-year-old line was to be shut down for rebuilding as of March 1. Since its May, 1976 opening, the system that has been employed is known as "single-haul." When it reopens it will become a "double-haul." This improvement means that cars will be able to operate independently of each other, rather than the present system where neither car can move without the other. It will now be possible to schedule both cars, which are being replaced with new ones, in the same direction if crowds require an increase in service. Current plans call for the first car to return to service on August 13, 2010, followed by the second three weeks later on September 9.

Riders still have the option of **F** from the Roosevelt Island station or the Q102 bus to Queens Plaza where a change can be made to **E**, **G**, **R**, and **V**. During the shutdown, for those for whom using **F** is too difficult, a temporary shuttle bus operates between 7 AM and 11

PM, half-hourly during peak hours, hourly at other times, from Roosevelt Island to Second Avenue between E. 58th and 59th Streets.

AMTRAK

This month, *Acela* trains between Boston and Washington, D.C. were to be equipped with free (for the time being) Wi-Fi. Thanks to member Dennis Zaccardi for this news.

In addition to the previously reported timetables that were issued effective January 18 (February *Bulletin*), I also found new ones for the *Ethan Allen Express/Vermont*, and the *Adirondack*.

On February 1, Amtrak released details of a master plan that would replace its aging 1,400-plus fleet of rolling stock. Contained within the 99-page PDF is the need to purchase over the next 14 years: 780 single-level cars, 420 bi-level cars, 70 electric locomotives, 264 diesel locomotives, and 25 high-speed train sets. This would be done at a cost of \$11 billion, based on 2009 dollars.

MUSEUMS

The Shore Line Trolley Museum (Branford) announced that the 2010 Guest Operator/Rapid Transit Weekends will take place on May 1-2, June 5-6, July 3-4, August 7-8, and September 4-5.

INDUSTRY

On page A24 of *The New York Times* (January 14) there was a photo showing ex-Milan, now Muni (Peter Witt) 1814. The text reported that the Obama Administration will make it easier for cities and states to spend federal money on public transit projects, particularly light rail. This action reversed the policy of the previous administration that called for the evaluation of new transit projects largely by how much they cost and much travel time would be saved. Transit advocates have complained that such cost-effectiveness tests have kept many projects from being built, especially light rail projects. U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said that new guidelines would be created that take into effect what he termed "livability," which would include environmental, community, and economic benefits.

Last year's gains in ridership, which were caused by the higher costs for gasoline, are beginning to decline due to the recession. MTA (and there are others) reported declines in ridership for the last quarter of 2009, which will further exacerbate their financial problems.

AMERICAN REINVESTMENT AND RECOVERY ACT

New York Senator Charles Schumer announced that the proposed Moynihan Station will receive \$83.3 million in stimulus funding for Phase I. This new station will be located where the General Post Office is presently situated. The project is intended to increase capacity and restore some grandeur to the Penn Station area.

HIGH-SPEED RAIL

President Obama flew to Tampa on January 29 to announce \$8 billion in awards to states to develop high-

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speed rail. He also announced that the State of Florida would receive a grant of \$1.25 billion, which would go towards construction of a \$2.5 billion high-speed, 84-mile rail line to connect Tampa and Orlando. At the time that this request was made, there was also one for \$30 million for some work on the section between Orlando and Miami. Florida officials have not determined how they will fund the balance. Thanks to Dennis Zaccardi for this news.

This link, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/hsr_awards_summary_public.pdf, which was sent by Todd Glickman, lists all high-speed rail projects that will receive funding. In the Northeast Region, the New York City-Albany-Buffalo route received \$148 million for seven interrelated projects. There will be new track, signals, and interlocking improvements, as well as upgrades to warning devices at grade crossings and enhancements to stations in Rochester and Buffalo. A \$3 million award is going to the New York-Montreal route, where three miles of track will be added to relieve congestion and improve OTP. The Northeast Corridor (Boston-New York-Washington, D.C.) will receive \$112 million for the completion of engineering and environmental work for a new tunnel in Baltimore and a new station at BWI Airport. Projects will span Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. A third award was made to the *Downeaster* service between Boston and Portland, Maine, where 30 miles of track will be restored, including 36 grade crossings, so service can be extended to Brunswick.

ANOTHER NOR'EASTER (FEBRUARY 6)

This storm began earlier in the week, but by Friday, February 5, it was knocking at the door of our nation's capital, ultimately dropping around 30" of snow. Baltimore received 26" and Howell, in central New Jersey, wound up with 14". However, the area surrounding New York City was largely spared; Tottenville (Staten Island) got 6" and Sheepshead Bay (Brooklyn) got 2", but no snow fell north of the George Washington Bridge.

Member Dave Safford reported, "with 28.5" of snow, Philadelphia is definitely not the sunny south! (Not that the south is either — my son reports 30 inches and counting in D.C.). Bowing to reality SEPTA, for the first time in its history, yesterday (February 6) ordered a phased shutdown of all transit facilities except the subways. The buses and trolleys went first (at 3 AM), the Norristown High Speed line (formerly R100) five hours later, and seven hours later the last of the Regional Rail lines closed down. SEPTA officials said that this extraordinary move was designed to avoid a repeat of a December incident in which a High-Speed line train was trapped for hours between stations by accumulated snow. Truthfully, SEPTA was not alone. The airport was functionally shut down, and in eight hours of off-

and-on shoveling yesterday I saw precisely one passenger vehicle pass on the very main route on which my house fronts. All SEPTA services resumed at 6 AM Sunday, although certain buses continued to have delays due to unplowed streets."

PATCO operated on a special schedule with 20-minute headways. The River Line operated with delays.

In the Baltimore area, member Steve Erlitz reported that MARC operated full service on all three lines on Friday, February 5. In anticipation of the large snowstorm, MARC made the following changes to service:

PENN LINE: No additional trains were operated, but starting with Train #520 (12:20 PM departure from Washington), the larger rush-hour train sets were used on all trains

CAMDEN LINE: Train #852 (5:51 PM from Washington) was cancelled. An extra Camden Line train departed Union Station at 2 PM making all stops to Camden Yards

BRUNSWICK LINE: Train #877 (4:55 PM departure) was cancelled. An extra Brunswick Line train departed Union Station at 2:40 PM making all stops to Martinsburg, W.V. Train #871 (Friday-only 1:40 PM departure from Washington) operated as scheduled

On Tuesday, MARC ran a holiday schedule on all lines but shut down on Wednesday.

On Saturday there was no light rail or bus service and the subway only operated between Mondawmin and Johns Hopkins. On Tuesday, the Light Rail was running every 30 minutes from Hunt Valley to Camden Yards. There were bus shuttles to North Linthicum and BWI only. The full subway line was open but single-tracking in some areas with 30-minute headways.

WMATA alerted riders during the morning of February 5 that if snow accumulations are 8" or higher, only below-ground service would operate. On Tuesday, Metro ran full service on the Orange, Green, and Yellow Lines. The Blue Line ran from Franconia-Stadium Armory and the Red was underground only. All services were on 30-minute headways vs. the normal 6-minute and 3-minute for the Red Line.

Due to the federal government giving everyone a four-hour early dismissal on February 5, Virginia Railway Express operated its largest trains for midday service (leaving Union Station at 12:55 PM and 1:15 PM). No service was provided on Monday and Tuesday, February 8 and 9, because the federal government had still not resumed operations.

Amtrak cancelled Trains 95, 83, 85, and 171 and the *Auto Train* south of Washington, D.C. Northeast Corridor services were also affected. On Sunday additional trains were cancelled and there was no service between Washington, D.C. and New York.

In advance of the storm, NJ Transit cancelled its (weekend only) 7600-series Rahway/New York Penn service and LIRR announced that it may suspend train

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

service temporarily when snow accumulation reaches between 10 and 13 inches. That never took place.

AND ANOTHER NOR'EASTER (FEBRUARY 10)

The second such storm in four days arrived in the New York metropolitan area during the overnight hours of Wednesday, February 10. A blizzard warning was in effect for some areas, with snow accumulations of up to 18". All three rail transit operators made advance plans and disseminated the information via the Internet, as well as the broadcast media. Where years ago, this would have resulted in a generally non-productive day as workers stayed at home, now, with laptops, Wi-Fi, and the Internet, work could be done at home. I was allowed to take advantage of this option. Here is what occurred.

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD: Normal inbound AM service was operated. Spokesman Joe Calderone told WCBS-880 that the arrivals at New York Penn were only 43% of a typical day. Between 12:55 PM and 3:48 PM, 13 additional eastbound trains departed from Penn Station as follows: Port Washington (1), Port Jefferson (3), Ronkonkoma (2), Babylon (6), and Far Rockaway (1). Starting with Train #1050 (3:34 PM New York Penn/Wantagh) 17 trains were cancelled and/or combined from New York Penn as were five from Flatbush Avenue.

Wednesday evening, a check of the MTA web site found delays on the Port Washington, Port Jefferson, Ronkonkoma, Hempstead, and Far Rockaway Branches. Service was on or near schedule for the Thursday AM commute.

METRO-NORTH: Inbound AM service was reduced by 70% and special "Storm Schedules" were available a day before on the Internet. Additional service was provided between noon and 5 PM, with reduced service after that time. Spokesman Dan Brucker encouraged riders to take advantage of this earlier service. In a later interview he reported that since few trains were used, those which were kept in yards and in other locations were prepped for Thursday's AM rush hour, which he expected would be normal, and it was.

NJ TRANSIT: System-wide cross-honoring of bus and rail tickets was in effect for Wednesday and then was extended to Thursday. Inbound AM service followed the regular schedule. WCBS-880's Sean Adams, reporting from Metro Park, described the station as a "veritable ghost town" with nearly empty trains stopping at the station. At 8:40 AM, the Jersey Avenue station was closed for eastbound trains; however, westbound trains were not affected. Just two more trains were scheduled to depart from Jersey Avenue. It remained closed the following day due to "weather conditions."

At 2 PM, this advisory was sent: "Customers that normally transfer at Secaucus Jct. for connections are ad-

vised to check your connections which are subject to change due to weather conditions." There were no reported delays on Wednesday during the day, but at 7:40 PM alerts were sent to advise that "due to combined trains due to weather-related track limitations, please expect crowding conditions Thursday on Northeast Corridor trains."

Delays were reported on the River Line where, due to snow conditions, service was suspended between the Entertainment and Walter Rand Transportation Centers. Service was not resumed until Friday.

Bus service was suspended in southern New Jersey at 5 PM and in Northern New Jersey at 7 PM and did not return until 7 AM and 6 AM, respectively.

AMTRAK: All service south of Washington, DC was cancelled on February 10.

PHILADELPHIA: From Dave Safford: "Only 14 inches of snow were dumped on Philadelphia (well, last time it was 28.5), but the area simply shut down. All interstates were closed to traffic, the airport shut down tight (and hoped that the first plane would be off at 9:00 (Thursday) morning), Amtrak curtailed service, but PATCO, regional rail and the subways ran straight through the whole storm, although not to much purpose. Passenger loads were countable on your fingers, with only 11 tickets sold all day at Market East. Buses and trolleys officially stopped running at 5 PM, but from field reports it appears that many lines were closed by 1:30 PM. The total snow this winter in Philadelphia has now reached 5'6" over the previous record and it's only early February."

MBTA: Boston, which escaped the first Nor'easter, increased service on the Green, Blue, Red, and Orange Lines, in anticipation of workers leaving early. On the Commuter Rail, the only change was that the 3 PM to South Acton was extended to Fitchburg.

MARC AND WMATA: From Steve Ertlitz: "With the federal government reopening with a two-hour delay on February 12, Metro opened but was running 20-25-minute headways and was going to close at midnight rather than at 3 AM. The Red Line was still closed from White Flint to Shady Grove and the Orange closed from East Falls Church to Vienna. VRE was on an 'S' schedule, as was MARC's Penn Line. Camden and Brunswick were shut down. VRE resumed normal service on Tuesday, following a day off for Presidents Day and another snowstorm."

If all of this snow was not enough, on February 12, a Red Line train, with 345 passengers aboard, derailed at the Farragut North Station at 10 AM. Steve reported that the Train Operator ran into the relay track in error and stopped, and then he backed up over a "derail". The station was reopened about two hours later, but there were delays for several hours.

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 14)

On January 23, Massachusetts Bay Commuter Rail announced that beginning February 1, new off-peak train boarding and operating procedures were being implemented on all commuter rail lines. No off-peak trains are allowed to depart a station until all exterior doors are fully closed. Passengers were requested to use the high-level platform or the outer end of the platform at each station during off-peak hours and board into the limited number of open coaches indicated by the train crew. Limiting occupancy to fewer cars on off-peak trains is supposed to increase revenue collection and boarding safety and improve OTP. The advisory went on to describe how passengers could identify off-peak trains in the published timetable and to remind passengers that they must not open their own doors or traps and must always board where a Conductor is present.

Todd sent new timetables that were issued for the Fairmount, Fitchburg, Greenbush, Haverhill, and Old Colony Lines effective January 11.

The State of Massachusetts applied for stimulus funds for its South Coast Rail project, which would have added rail service from New Bedford/Fall River to Boston. The application was denied.

Beginning February 11, Fitchburg Line passengers waiting on station platforms were provided with a six-minute countdown clock that displayed on electronic message boards telling them when the next train would arrive. The system uses Global Positioning Satellite equipment on the commuter rail trains. Onboard riders will hear automated next station announcements. Now 12 of the 13 commuter rail lines have "Next Train" technology. The Haverhill Line is next. Thanks to Todd Glickman for these reports.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Dave Safford reported that the last of the Delaware River Port Authority's remaining economic development money will be used for transit related projects in Camden. \$3 million will upgrade the Walter Rand Transportation Center with new bus platforms, covered links to the River Line and PATCO's Broadway station, and miscellaneous lighting, PA system, and landscaping. \$9 million will go to upgrading economic activity immediately surrounding the Broadway and City Hall PATCO stations. DRPA also signed a \$311,550 contract for the legally required biennial inspection of the PATCO system.

From member Lee Winson there are three reports: "For many decades, SEPTA and its predecessors referred to its Center City streetcar routes (10, 11, 13, 34, and 36) as the 'Subway-Surface' lines. The cars operate in a subway in Center City and as a traditional surface streetcar in West Philadelphia. The map color and signage has been green for many years. Philadelphia

briefly considered using color names, e.g. Green Line, but this did not catch on and was discontinued. Since the June 14, 2009 timetable change, SEPTA has renamed this network as 'Trolley Lines.' These also include Route 15/Girard Avenue, and Routes 101/Media and 102/Sharon Hill. Their schedules are also in green. SEPTA says the goal is not just to replace old signs, but to make the terminology used to designate lines and modes of transit clear and consistent throughout the system. For the Norristown High-Speed Line, long known as the 'P&W' or 'Philadelphia & Western,' the 'Route 100' designation was dropped effective September 7, 2009, but the schedule color remains purple."

Lee was checking the January 17 timetables and noticed that on the R6/Cynwyd Line (former Pennsylvania Railroad Ivy-Ridge Manyunk line), that trains terminate in Suburban Station—they do not continue through the Center City Tunnel to Market East. The schedule notes that passengers may transfer to other SEPTA trains using their ticket stub. Its former "partner," the R6/Norristown Line, operates through. Weekdays, some Norristown trains continue on to Wilmington, Delaware, as they do on Saturdays. On Sunday they operate to Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania.

New schedules went into effect on February 7 on the Market-Frankford, Broad Street, and 10, 11, 13, 15, 34, and 36 trolley lines. "I did not see any significant changes"

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Norfolk Southern has asked the Surface Transportation Board for permission to cease service on its Cockeysville, Maryland branch, which it operates at night under a temporal separation agreement with MTA Maryland. MTA's light rail transit trains operate on this line by day, as part of the Hunt Valley Line service. NS acquired operating rights over the ex-Pennsy line when Conrail was divided between NS and CSX in 1999. The route once served trains linking Baltimore and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Thanks to **Railway Age** for this news.

Steve Erlitz reported that the first two new MP-36 locomotives, 11 and 12 entered, service on January 19. Although the first unit was displayed at Washington DC's Union Station on May 7, 2009 (June and October, 2009 **Bulletins**), disagreements with Motor Power Industries, the manufacturer, over safety certifications and liability issues have kept the units out of service.

Steve also sent copies of new MARC timetables dated January 19. The Brunswick Line is now back to being a folder, instead of a card, and there was one departure change. The Camden Line added stops to trains on the "S" schedule. Penn Line changes coincided with Amtrak changes.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Steve Erlitz sent a report that Amtrak and MARC management had been working over the past several weeks

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

(in January) to improve passenger flow at Union Station. After careful consideration and examination of many alternatives, the following procedures went into effect for boarding MARC trains during the afternoon rush hour effective February 2: Camden and Brunswick Line trains board through Gate A and Penn Line trains through Gate B and/or C. Steve wrote that "MARC has sort have been doing it. Penn Line has been informally out of Gate B. I guess now they are making it official."

Also, "the following measures were implemented to ensure passenger safety and security. Passengers will no longer be permitted to wait for trains before they are posted for boarding in the area outside of Gates A, B, and C or out on the platforms. Passengers may only proceed to their train when the train is posted for boarding on the station train status monitors and/or announced by an Amtrak employee. MARC passengers found waiting in either of these areas will be directed to return to the station by Amtrak station staff, Amtrak or CSX Conductors, and MARC staff. Amtrak Police will be assisting in this effort as well. Again, these changes will ensure passenger safety and security at Union Station and allow Amtrak and MARC staff to better manage crowd control in the event of a service disruption."

One impediment to expansion of Virginia Railway Express service is lack of storage tracks at Union Station. A remedy is near, as VRE is constructing midday storage tracks near the L'Enfant Plaza station. When completed in July, two morning trains, one on each line, will terminate here and not go to Union Station. With this change, a new express train departing from Fredericksburg at 5:05 AM will be added. This train will call at Leland Road, Brooke, Alexandria, Crystal City, L'Enfant, and Union Station. In addition, cars will be added to Manassas Line Trains #326 and 329 and Fredericksburg Line Trains #308 and 311. Upon delivery of two new locomotives, which are expected in late summer/early fall, two cars will be added to Trains #300 and 307.

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

There is some fallout from the cost overruns of The Tide. Michael Townes, the CEO of Hampton Roads Transit, announced that he would retire at the end of September and step down as CEO and President of the agency on January 31. This was reported in the February *Bulletin*. Additionally, HamptonRoads.com reported that 700 feet of concrete that was laid around the embedded light rail track behind City Hall does not meet minimum standards and is being torn out. While the mistake was made by a contractor, which must absorb the cost of redoing the job, the timing is unfortunate. Thanks to member Frank Pfuhler for sending this news.

HRT's new CEO and President, Phil Shucet, notified Norfolk City Council members on February 9 that The Tide would be running in the spring or summer of 2011.

The project is 61% complete, with major construction expected to be "substantially complete" in July.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Todd Glickman was in Atlanta for the Annual Meeting of the American Meteorological Society over the MLK Day weekend and wrote as he was staying at a hotel in Peachtree Center. The conference was held at the Georgia Convention Center, and he bought a four-day MARTA "Breeze Card" that allows unlimited travel for \$13.50. The breakdown is \$13 for the rail fare, and \$0.50 for the card itself, which is a very thin paper "ticket" with an RFID antenna inside that contains the stored value or validity information. It has a serial number on the rear so the value/validity can be tracked online. "Access to the train station from the ATL Airport terminal was quite easy. A few things caught my eye: First, I was surprised that the Green Line ran two-car trains during off-peak hours. Second, I found the station countdown timers a problem. It seems that the timers are designed to show the expected arrival time in minutes, IF the train were moving at normal speed. And so when at a station mid-line, and the nearest train is still at the terminal, the timer will show 'xx' minutes without changing until the train gets underway from the terminal. Thus waiting for a Blue Line train at Five Points headed eastbound, the timer displayed 16 minutes for four minutes while the train was at the Indian Point terminal, then started counting down. Twenty-minute headways were run on the Sunday I was there, even during the midday. The stations and cars were relatively clean, as eating and drinking are prohibited."

CHESTERTON, INDIANA

In connection with Metra's February 1 fare increase, NICTD raised one-way fares at Hegewisch. Zone 1 fares went from \$3.80 to \$4.00 and Zone 2 fares went from \$3.35 to \$3.50. Senior fares went up ten cents so that the fares are \$2.00 (Zone 1) and \$1.75 (Zone 2).

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Member Jim Beeler sent a copy of a folder issued by Metra containing information such as a map, fare schedule, fare options, connecting services, types of tickets sold, and a whole lot more. Also, the Heritage Corridor to Joliet, the final "purely" Metra timetable, has been re-issued in the new format. Like its predecessor, it carries a January 30, 2006 date. New timetables were also issued for the Milwaukee District North Line (Fox Lake) and the North Central Service (Antioch) dated February 1. These are the first timetables Jim has seen that have the effective date in large type near the top, making them much easier to read than the previous editions. One interesting thing to note is Train #120 operates from Antioch to Prairie Crossing on the North Central Line and then switches to the Milwaukee North line to Chicago. Initially Jim thought that was the first time a train has been scheduled to run this way, but he did some checking on Metra Train #120 and it turns out

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 16)*

it has been following this routing for some time — but there was no mention in the timetables as no stops were made on the Milwaukee-North line. What is new are the stops at Libertyville and Lake Forest — thus it is now shown in the Milwaukee-North timetable. Also new are the weekend stops made by a few trains at the Grayland station, but only on Chicago Cubs game days. To my knowledge this is the first time Metra has scheduled any trains with stops only on Cubs game days. CTA does have special schedules for the Purple Line and Yellow Line on Cubs game days. Thanks to Jim for sending copies.

As of January 20, Metra accepts credit cards at all of its downtown stations and the 14 busiest Metra Electric stations. Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover cards are accepted for all ticket purchases at LaSalle Street Station, Millennium Station, Van Buren Station, Chicago Union Station, and the Ogilvie Transportation Center and on its website for monthly passes and 10-Ride tickets. On February 8, Metra began accepting those cards at all 76 outlying stations where an agent is on duty and from new vending machines at the 14 busiest Metra Electric stations. Metra Electric stations will have vending machines because that line generally does not have Ticket Agents. The credit card vending machines will be in addition to the cash-based machines that are already in place along the line.

CTA announced on January 20 that 2009 combined bus and rail ridership totaled 521.2 million rides, a decrease of 1% (5.1 million rides) vs. 2008 ridership. Projections were that ridership would be 517.4 million. Even so, totals were stronger than the agency expected considering the dramatic impact the recession had throughout the year. CTA ridership in 2009 still surpassed 2007 figures, when the agency recorded 439.5 million rides. Thanks to Bob Hansen for this report.

On February 7, CTA implemented service reductions of 9% for rail and 18% for buses. This was due, like many other transit systems, to reduced revenue collections. In addition to various cost-cutting measures such as strict controls on overtime, not filling vacancies and not granting salary increases to non-union employees, CTA will lay off more than 1,000 of its employees.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

In response to rider requests, Northstar has added overnight parking under a six-month pilot program that designates up to 10 spaces each at the Big Lake, Elk River, Anoka, Coon Rapids-Riverdale, and Fridley stations. The designated spaces are available with each car permitted to occupy the space for no longer than seven days at a time. Signs mark these spots. In mid-January, Anoka-Ramsey Community College began providing shuttle service for Northstar commuters traveling to and from its three locations in Coon Rapids.

AUSTIN, TEXAS

The latest presentation was made to the Capital Metrorail board on January 25. It was expected that the remaining issues would all be resolved. Plans were continuing to enable start-up of service early this month, with trains operating on schedule for two weeks prior.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

On February 9, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom joined other city officials to mark the beginning of construction of the Central Subway in the city's South of Market District. The project, which is scheduled for completion in 2018, will provide subway service underneath the SoMa, Union Square, and Chinatown neighborhoods. Tunneling is scheduled to begin in 2012. A trip on the Central Subway is projected to take 8 to 10 minutes between Chinatown and the Caltrain station at Fourth and Brannan Streets, compared to about 20 minutes on a bus. The Central Subway project is estimated to cost about \$1.6 billion, with the federal government projected to provide \$948 million of the funding and the rest made up of state and local sources. Thanks to member Phil Hom for this news.

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

VTA held a public hearing on January 13, to discuss plans for a 1.57-mile extension of the Vasona LRT from Winchester to Hacienda. The original Vasona Corridor LRT Project was proposed to extend from downtown San Jose through the city of Campbell to the Town of Los Gatos with nine new stations and four park-and-ride lots. The first portion of the project was completed in 2005 and extended LRT to the Winchester station in Campbell. The \$175 million project would construct two tracks, expand parking capacity, and add pedestrian access at the Winchester station. A new Hacienda station with an optional park-and-ride lot would also be built, along with end-of-the-line facilities. Six existing station platforms along the Vasona Corridor alignment (Winchester, Campbell, Hamilton, Bascom, Fruitdale, and Race) would be lengthened.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

Railway Age reported that due to last year's bankruptcy of Montreal-based Curtis Doors, the Toronto Transit Commission's order for its new subway cars could be delayed. A prototype train was originally scheduled to be making test runs at this time.

Jack May forwarded an email reporting that the standard gauge Scarborough ALRT will be converted to LRT and be merged into Transit City. As was reported last month, the new lines will be standard gauge. The tracks will be replaced, and the line extended to (at least) Sheppard, and carhouse facilities will be shared with TTC Sheppard and Malvern routes. No date was given for this work.

FROM THE HISTORY FILES

60 Years ago: In March, 1950, a study group in Montreal recommended that a 15-mile subway be con-

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THIRD AVENUE "L" NEAR THE HARLEM RIVER



View north from 128th Street, April 17, 1903 (before third-tracking).



Three-car South Ferry-129th Street Local at 129th Street, May, 1940.

Bernard Linder collection



129th Street station looking east, October 21, 1950.
Bernard Linder photograph



129th Street station looking east, September 22, 1954.
Bernard Linder photograph



North of 129th Street station looking south.
Bernard Linder collection

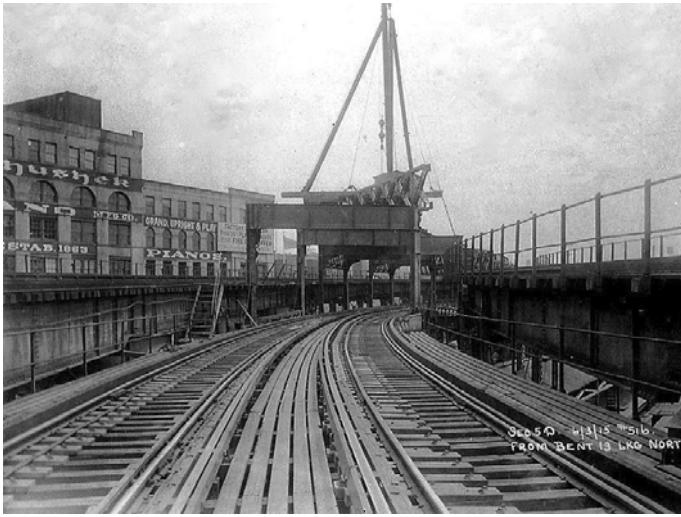


129th Street and Third Avenue.
Bernard Linder collection

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Third Avenue "El" Near the Harlem River

(Continued from page 16)



North of Harlem River looking north, June 3, 1915.
Bernard Linder collection



Thru express gate train south of 133rd Street, July 8, 1950.
Bernard Linder collection



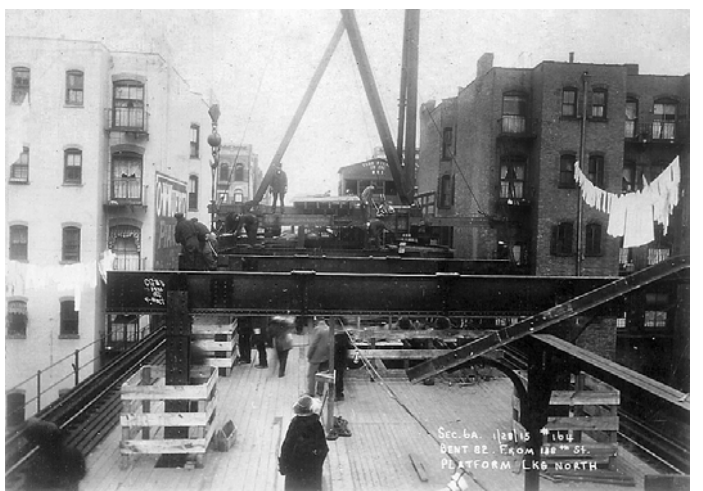
South of 133rd Street looking south.
Bernard Linder collection



133rd Street station, upper level, August 5, 1953.
Bernard Linder photograph



View south from 138th Street, showing backyard section, May 12, 1955.
Bernard Linder collection



138th Street looking north, January 28, 1915.
Bernard Linder collection

Around New York's Transit System

Service Reduction Plan Modified

In the January issue, we reported that because of an arbitrator's ruling awarding a large raise to TWU-represented workers, a shortfall of dedicated tax receipts, and removal of most of the state's contribution to school fares, MTA NYC Transit had resurrected its 2009 "doomsday" service reduction plan. Since that news came out, the situation has deteriorated further, with the state's proposed 2010-1 budget cutting subsidies to MTA even more and an even greater shortfall of dedicated tax receipts than had been anticipated.

Meanwhile, NYCT has revised the subway portion of the "doomsday" plan somewhat. The proposal to run **N** trains via the Manhattan Bridge and close the City Hall, Cortlandt Street, Rector Street, Whitehall Street, Court Street, and Lawrence Street stations overnight has been withdrawn. Also, the proposal to discontinue **Z** service has been replaced by a proposal to merge **M** and **V**, creating what would be the first direct Broadway Brooklyn/Sixth Avenue service since **K** service was discontinued in 1976. Southern Brooklyn would lose **M** service, as it would have in the 2009 scenario.

Two Types of Train Countdown Clocks Activated

On December 24, 2009, NYCT launched train countdown clocks (which announce the amount of time remaining until the next train arrives) at five stations (Brook Avenue, Cypress Avenue, E.143rd Street-St.

Mary's Street, E. 149th Street and Longwood Avenue) on the Pelham Line (**6**). These are the first of 152 stations on **1 2 3 4 5 6** (by the first quarter of 2011) to have their PA/CIS (Public Address/Customer Information Screens) systems activated. The audiovisual information given by the clocks is obtained from NYCT's new ATS (Automatic Train Supervision) system. On February 1, 2010, NYCT activated the clocks at the Buhre Avenue and Middletown Road stations, also on **6**.

Meanwhile, NYCT is looking for ways to add countdown clocks to stations where the signals are not under ATS, at minimal cost. A pilot costing \$20,000 is underway at the 181st Street, 175th Street, 168th Street, 163rd Street, 155th Street, and 145th Street stations on **A** and **C**. At these stations, audio announcements will count down the time until the next train arrives; they will be accompanied by visual announcements at all of the stations except for 181st Street and 175th Street. Since the signals serving this area are not under ATS, however, the information provided will be less detailed — the system will announce that a train is coming, but at stations served by more than one route it will not be able to indicate which train is coming, and it will not be able to differentiate between in-service and out-of-service trains. This system gets train location information from the track circuits and transmits it to public address speakers and screens that were previously installed.

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 17)

structed at a cost of \$180 million. It was not until late November, 1961 that the Quebec Municipal Commission approved a 9.5-mile rubber-tired subway and gave permission to borrow \$132 million for construction and equipment. Approved were two routes: a 4.02 mile east-west line parallel to St. Catherine Street and a 5.5-mile St. Denis Line to run north under Berry Street. The initial service began on October 14, 1966 from Atwater to Papineau (#1) and Henri-Bourassa to Place D'armes (#2). The subway is now 40 miles.

30 Years ago: On March 17, 1980, three Toronto Transit Commission CLRVs, 4027, 4029, and 4031 began operating in service on MBTA's Arborway Line. **Headlights** (June-July, 1988) reported that over the next three months, the cars would be tested on all of the Green Lines to evaluate their performance characteristics and suitability for use in Boston. The cars were leased under a \$500,000 contract with the manufacturer, the Urban Transportation Development Corporation. In the end, MBTA ordered 115 LRVs from Kinki-Sharyo in two orders.

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

New York City Subway Car Update

(Continued from page 7)

prospect of any NYCT R-44s being preserved for posterity is rather slim.

Conclusion

So, is this a case of startling surprise catching us off-guard? Perhaps somewhat, but recall that before the first R-160B was delivered in 2005 there was serious discussion of using the 340 R-160A-1s to be based at East New York (and delivered in 2007-8) as a means of

replacing the R-44s, whose 272-car fleet just happened to be the right corresponding quantity. The idea at that time was lost to accounting efficiency, as the powers that be determined it made more sense to retire the older equipment in direct correlation to age rather than utility. Now there is a new management and, obviously, a new attitude so things change again. Meanwhile, we'll be waiting for the first signs of definitive progress and remain ready to chronicle the life and times of whatever the answer turns out to be. Until next time, stay warm and stay alert!