



BULLETIN

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Electric Railroaders Association

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Back Issues

PDFs of previous issues can be downloaded at erausa.org/bulletin

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Trip Notices/Save the Dates

August 28–September 2: ERA National Convention in Chicagoland. We will visit the region's famous museums, e.g., Illinois Railway Museum, Fox River Trolley Museum, East Troy Railroad Museum, the heritage operation in Kenosha, Wis., the downtown Milwaukee streetcar, and last but not least, a trip on Chicago Transit Authority's historic "L" fleet. This is ERA's first visit since 2011. Visit <https://erausa.org/conventions/2026/> for the details.

Donations

The ERA Board of Directors express their deepest appreciation for these member donations in April 2026.

\$1,000 and Above

Richard Cotton, Clive Foss, Jane Holtz, Edward Sawtell

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Monthly Zoom Meeting

Friday, May 15, at 7:30 p.m.

Presenting This Month: Harvey Laner

We are pleased to have acclaimed traction video producer Harvey Laner return as tonight's speaker. Tonight's program is called "Midwest Traction Review." This program is a synthesis of rare video clips showcasing the operations of streetcar and interurban operations throughout the American Midwest, primarily from the 1930s to the 1950s, including a visit to the Iowa Traction as recent as 1998. The movie clips that make up this program are from Harvey's vast collection amassed from the collections of numerous railfans from the late 1990s to the present. The program highlights 25 electric traction operations spanning from Ohio to Iowa, including those serving large cities, suburban and rural regions

How to Join Our Zoom Meeting

The Zoom registration link for this meeting is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/KhD9eqiBTCGNqjvbuMAKQ>. You can sign in at 7:15 p.m. The show begins at 7:30 p.m. If you have any problems, email Andrew Ludasi at aludasi@gmail.com, or on the night of the meeting, text or call Andrew at 609-865-8770. At the speaker's request, this program will not be recorded. Don't miss it!

Front Cover Photo

The first of the rare operations over the weekend of April 11-12 was the extension of the **G** from Church Avenue to Coney Island, to cover the **F** that was rerouted to Euclid Avenue. In this view from the upper level of the West 8th Street Station, R-160A 9593-9594-9595-9596-9597 (Alstom, 9/2009) leads the 1402+ (2:02:30 p.m.) from Court Square to Coney Island. (See the news item on page 4.) Jeff Erlitz photo

Rear Cover Photo

The other rare operation over the weekend of April 11-12 was the **F** operating to Euclid Avenue instead of Coney Island. Seen here at Shepherd Avenue, the 1234+ (12:34:30 p.m.) from Euclid Avenue to 179th Street is composed of R-160As 9782-9781-9780-9779-9778 (Alstom, 3/2010) and 9488-9489-9490-9491-9492 (Alstom, 6/2009). Jeff Erlitz photo

A Note from the Editor

This is an abbreviated issue as some of the *Bulletin* staff will be away on the ERA tour of Scotland and Northern England, from April 25 to May 18.

Worldwide Suburban Electric Railway, Metro and Tramway Openings in April 2026

Date	Country	City	Segment	Distance (miles)	Railway/Metro/Tram
4/5	England	Birmingham	Bull St./Corporation St. to Millennium Point	0.3	T
4/8	India	Mumbai	Line 2B: Diamond Garden to Mandale Line 9: Dahisar East to Kashigaon	3.4 2.2	M
4/18	Czech Republic	Prague	Lihovar to Dvorce/Kublov (Vltava River Bridge)	0.3	T

URBAN RAIL NEWS, APRIL 23

Rail News in Review

New York Metropolitan Area

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (NYCT)

Alburtis Avenue Tower Now Gone

The demolition of the former interlocking tower south of 103rd Street on the IRT Flushing **7** Line was finally completed sometime in the past month or so. All that remains is the bottom floor, and new railings around it.



View of where the tower once stood, on March 30. Jeff Erlitz photo

Renovation Work at Newkirk Avenue **2 **5****

In last month's *Bulletin*, we forgot to mention some renovation work that was being performed at this station. From February 23 to March 15, continuously, the northbound platform was bypassed to allow M. Bhuiyan Construction Company, under contract A-37752-R, to rehabilitate the platform and street stairs. There is only one set of stairs from the northbound platform to the street, so they had no choice but to bypass the station in the northbound direction while the work was going on.

Then, starting on March 16, and continuing through to April 6, the work took place on the southbound side at the main fare control area, with southbound trains bypassing the station. There is an additional street stair at the north end of the southbound platform, but that is for exiting passengers only.

IRT Flushing **7 Line Station Work Continues**

The structural rehabilitation work that has been taking place along and under the Manhattan-bound local Track 1 at 61st Street Station was scheduled to be completed on April 10. The work has now been extended four weeks, to Friday, May 8. Southbound trains will continue to operate via the express Track M, from south of 74th Street to south of 33rd Street. Trains will continue to bypass 69th Street and 52nd Street Stations and stop at the temporary platforms at 46th Street, 40th Street and 33rd Street Stations.

The rehabilitation work that has been going on at 52nd and 69th Street Stations was going to end on April 11. That work has also now been extended, in this case to May 22.



View of the southbound platform at 52nd Street on March 30 showing the new windscreen and some of the new artwork. Jeff Erlitz photo

Adjustment to 7 Service for Mets Games

Starting on April 7, a supplemental timetable began operating on the IRT Flushing 7 Line for all weekday night Mets games. This schedule change suspends northbound express service beginning at 9:00 p.m. at 34th Street-Hudson Yards. This allows select southbound extra service to operate express from Willets Point at the conclusion of weekday evening games.

Some Interesting Operations

The crew facilities at 137th Street on the IRT Broadway 1 Line were removed from service starting on March 16 for some rehabilitation work and will continue through to the end of this year. Though no crews report to 137th Street (or clear there) there are several short-turns that end their trips there. Not having this crew room available necessitated moving the crew changes to 96th Street.

On weekdays in the morning peak period, there are four northbound short-turns at 137th Street (in addition to the two put-ins that start their trips there). Those four trips now have two-minute holds at 96th Street, during which time the southbound crews board their trains in their respective positions. When these trains arrive at 137th Street, the southbound crews are now in position to take their trains out of the relay and continue south.

Another interesting operation occurred over the weekend of April 11-12. Various projects were performed on the F Line between East Broadway and Bergen Street Stations, as well as the middle tracks south to Smith-9th Street Station. Since F trains could not operate through the area on its normal route, its south terminal was moved from Coney Island-Stillwell Avenue to Euclid Avenue. Southbound F trains operated via Eighth Avenue and the Cranberry Tube from West Fourth Street to Jay Street-Metrotech. The C train did not operate this weekend and A trains operated local between 168th Street and Canal Street.

The G train was extended from Church Avenue to Coney Island-Stillwell Avenue to cover for the rerouted F service. On weekdays, there are three G train non-revenue put-ins and lay-ups from and to Culver Yard so you can see these trains along the Culver Line. However, the lay-ups are late in the evening after dark and the morning trips are in daylight only during spring, summer and early fall. Of course, the G normally is never seen south of Avenue X Station. The G trains were operated full length and with conductors. Lots of extra crews were required for this operation.

MetroCard Fades Away

Starting in March, we believe, many of the MetroCard swipe readers began being removed from turnstiles at various stations around the system. The readers are being replaced with blank stainless-steel plates. This is similar to what was done with the token slots back in the 1990s.



Closeup view of a turnstile at 71st Avenue-Forest Hills E F M R Station on April 14, showing the plated-over location where the MetroCard reader used to be. Note also the small plate where the token slot used to be. Jeff Erlitz photo

More Rehabilitated Elevators

Three modernized elevators were placed into service at the 161st Street-Yankee Stadium B D Station as part of larger accessibility and safety upgrades. Regular replacements are needed to keep the system running effectively and efficiently,



One of the new elevators, on the northeast corner of East 161st Street and River Avenue. MTA photo

resulting in less repairs and fewer disruptions needed later.

Two modernized elevators at the 161st Street-Yankee Stadium **4** Station are expected to reopen in the coming weeks. Other elevator and escalator improvements have occurred in recent weeks. These include:

- A street-to-mezzanine elevator at 14th Street-Union Square **L N Q R W 4 5 6**
- A street-to-mezzanine elevator and two mezzanine-to-platform elevators at DeKalb Avenue **B D N Q R**
- One escalator at 145th Street **A B C D**
- Three mezzanine and platform escalators at Lexington Avenue (63rd Street) **F M Q**
- One mezzanine-to-platform elevator at 59th Street-Columbus Circle **A B C D 1**, serving the northbound IRT and southbound IND platforms. This elevator was built using a public-private partnership model, where the elevator is paid for and constructed by a developer, Global Holdings, and maintained by the MTA. The elevator adds redundant service to the station, which is already accessible

[MTA PRESS RELEASE](#), April 2

[MTA PRESS RELEASE](#), April 7

[MTA PRESS RELEASE](#), April 14

New York Transit Museum Marks 50 Years

The New York Transit Museum is celebrating 50 years of

preserving and sharing the stories of mass transportation and the people who make it possible. Founded in 1976, during America’s Bicentennial, the Museum began as a temporary exhibition proposed by NYC Transit employees. Housed in a decommissioned 1936 IND subway station in Brooklyn, the exhibition was meant to last only a few months but became the largest museum in North America dedicated to mass transit and a beloved cultural institution.

Over the decades that followed, the Museum grew alongside the city it serves. What began as a grassroots effort by transit workers evolved into a permanent institution, expanding its archives to over one million objects today, launching educational programs for thousands of students each year, and introducing beloved traditions like Nostalgia Rides and the annual Bus Festival. The Museum expanded its reach into Grand Central Terminal with an exhibition gallery and retail store and later opened an additional retail store adjacent to MTA headquarters in Lower Manhattan.

Today, the New York Transit Museum continues to preserve the vehicles, objects and stories that define the region’s transit system, connecting New Yorkers and visitors alike through exhibitions, educational programs, and one-of-a-kind experiences. Throughout its anniversary year, the Museum will mark this milestone with special events, new exhibitions, a citywide scavenger hunt, and historic train rides that honor transit’s past, engage the present, and look toward the future of how New York moves.

To explore the Museum’s history, visit the digital exhibition [Our Journey: The New York Transit Museum at 50](#). [MTA PRESS RELEASE](#), April 6

NJ TRANSIT (NJT)

First Multilevel III Car Delivered

NJT showed off the first of 374 next generation multilevel rail cars at an event at NJT’s Meadows Maintenance Complex in Kearny on April 13. The Multilevel III rail car will undergo several months of final testing and commissioning in before being joined by up to 40 additional new cars which are expected to be deployed into passenger service later this year.

The new Multilevel III rail cars provide increased mechanical reliability. This will allow NJT to retire rail cars that were built in the 1970s that operate between 30,000 to 40,000 miles before a mechanical failure and replace them with cars that are ten times more reliable, traveling approximately 400,000 miles before a mechanical failure. Passenger amenities include additional seating capacity and enhanced accessibility, higher operating speeds up to 110 mph as well as USB charging ports and new onboard information screens. The new rail cars will replace NJT’s aging Arrow III and Comet II and IV single-level cars.

The first car to be delivered is a multilevel power car, equipped with traction motors. They can propel themselves and two other cars without locomotives, or they can be combined with additional power cars operating trainsets as long as 14 cars. Power cars provide faster acceleration than can be achieved by locomotive-hauled trainsets. The new multilevel cars are being



The first Multilevel III car. NJ Transit photo

manufactured by Alstom in Plattsburgh, N.Y. and are among the first of their kind in the nation. [NJ TRANSIT PRESS RELEASE](#), April 13

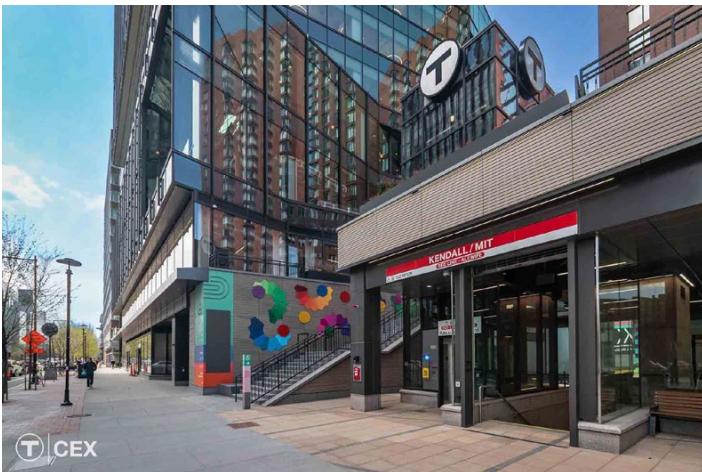
Other U.S. Systems

BOSTON, MASS.

New Kendall/MIT Entrance Opens

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority opened the outbound Kendall/MIT headhouse on the morning of Monday, April 20.

The outbound headhouse, renovated and funded by BXP in coordination with the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, features a new glass enclosure with renovated stairs, an escalator, and a new glass-enclosed, additional elevator, accessible from the street level. Kendall/MIT Station remains fully accessible, and the new redundant elevator will be ready for passenger service once the final phase of headhouse renovation is complete, which is anticipated in early June.



The new entrance. MBTA

The temporary outbound entrance/exit located at 325 Main

Street was closed with the opening of the new headhouse. [MBTA NEWS](#), April 17

KANSAS CITY, MO.

Riverfront Extension Opening Soon

KC Streetcar announced that the Riverfront Extension will officially open for passenger service on Monday, May 18, following a press conference and community celebration at 11 a.m. on the riverfront. The completion of this \$62 million, 0.7-mile streetcar extension marks a major milestone in Kansas City’s continued investment in transit, connectivity, and riverfront revitalization. More details about the press conference and subsequent community celebration will be shared closer to the opening date.

The Riverfront Extension connects the existing 5.7-mile streetcar route to Kansas City’s riverfront, beginning at 3rd Street and Grand Boulevard in the River Market, crossing the existing Grand Boulevard Bridge, and extending to the midpoint of Berkley Riverfront. This extension will connect riders from University of Missouri–Kansas City on the southern end to the riverfront on the northern end, with all streetcar trips bound for the riverfront.



Aerial view of the new Riverfront terminal area. This is a still image from the promotional video announcing the extension. KC Streetcar

The Riverfront Extension is currently in the Pre-Revenue Operations phase, the final step before safely opening the system to the public. This phase includes continued testing of the system as well as training of all streetcar operations staff. During this phase, streetcars are actively running along the extended route, including movements between 3rd Street and Grand Boulevard and across the Grand Boulevard/Berkley Parkway bridge.

The Riverfront Extension construction team is led by local contractor Radmacher Brothers Excavating (RBE). The RBE team includes a RS/WITEC joint venture, Delta Rail, Wilson & Company, PM Dynamics, Boundary & Construction Surveying, IBC, Grey Diamond, Realm Construction, Hayes Drilling, Welch Erosion Control, and Parson + Associates. [KC STREETCAR MEDIA ALERT](#), April 21

PHILADELPHIA, PA.**Coaches Purchased from Montreal**

As part of an ongoing effort to bolster its Regional Rail fleet, SEPTA is purchasing 24 rail cars from Exo in Quebec, Canada. Exo, which operates public transportation in the Greater Montreal area, formally approved SEPTA's \$8.58 million bid for the coach cars at its board meeting in March.

Funding for the purchase of these cars comes from the nearly \$220 million in additional capital dollars allocated by Governor Josh Shapiro in November 2025 to support urgent safety upgrades and infrastructure improvements.

SEPTA has been in contact with transit agencies across North America in recent months about potential rail car purchases, following FRA-mandated inspections and repairs of its 50-year-old Silverliner IV fleet last fall. The Silverliner IVs make up approximately two-thirds of the Regional Rail fleet, and large portions had to be removed from service while this work was performed. This caused trip cancellations and reduced capacity for several months.

While required repairs have been completed on most Silverliner IVs, SEPTA has committed to an enhanced maintenance program moving forward to ensure the fleet remains safe and reliable while replacement rail cars are procured. In an effort to avoid further service disruptions, SEPTA has explored shorter-term alternatives such as leasing and purchasing used rail cars from other agencies. Earlier this year, 10 rail cars leased from MARC in Maryland were placed into service. The purchase from Exo includes 24 coach cars that were originally manufactured by Bombardier in the late 1980s. These cars will operate with SEPTA's existing fleet of ACS-64 electric locomotives.



The single-level coaches were built by Bombardier in 1989.

Michael Berry photo

SEPTA is currently working out logistics for transporting these passenger rail cars from Montreal. A timeline for placing them into service will be developed later this spring. SEPTA will be performing modifications to the doors and other systems as part of a program to upgrade the cars to SEPTA standards.

[SEPTA NEWS](#), April 1

PORTLAND, ORE.**New Streetcars Ordered**

The City of Portland Bureau of Transportation has selected CAF USA to manufacture and deliver 15 new vehicles to be put into use for Portland Streetcar riders.

The new vehicles will be hybrid battery-equipped to serve a new off-wire portion of the Portland Streetcar system as the NS (North-South) Line expands to Montgomery Park in Northwest Portland. Off-wire service will be an element new to Portland Streetcar as part of the expansion project while also providing greater reliability for the rest of the system.



Portland Streetcar No. 010, a Model 12 Trio (Inekon, 2006), is operating a B Loop trip and is seen turning off SW 5th Avenue and onto SW Market Street in downtown Portland on June 22, 2017. Jeff Erlitz photo

CAF USA will build the streetcars in its railcar manufacturing facility in Elmira, N.Y. The company has delivered rail vehicles all over the world and has built modern streetcars for use in Kansas City, Cincinnati and Omaha. The vendor selection milestone moves the process into a phase to determine vehicle specifications, cost, delivery timeline and other elements. City of Portland, Portland Streetcar, Inc. and CAF representatives began negotiating those items in early April.

The new CAF vehicles will replace Portland's original Czech-built streetcar fleet that began service in 2001 and is nearing the end of its operating lifecycle, in addition to a few others in need of replacement due to age or damage.

[PORTLAND STREETCAR NEWS](#), April 2

Type 1 Cars End Their Runs

Under sunny skies, rays of nostalgia beamed from the estimated 3,000 community members who joined TriMet at Holladay Park in Northeast Portland on April 18 to say goodbye to the Type 1 MAX trains.

The event, marking the end of the original MAX trains' four decades of service, transformed the park into a tribute to a vehicle that helped shape modern transit in the Portland region. From longtime riders to families with kids experiencing the Type 1 up close for the first time, people

came to express their gratitude. Some guests even arrived in imaginative, transit-themed costumes.

At the center of the event was a soon-to-be-retired Type 1 MAX, transformed into a farewell card on an industrial scale. Attendees were invited to sign the train's exterior. They covered it in memories, jokes, art and well-wishes. By the end of the event, nearly every available inch of space was covered with handwritten notes.

The atmosphere throughout the afternoon was one of celebration and appreciation. Riders shared stories of daily commutes, first rides and lifelong memories. For many, the Type 1 occupies a special place in their memories as the one-of-a-kind MAX vehicle that has served riders for two generations.

TRIMET NEWS, April 20

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Streetcars To Be Auctioned Off

The District of Columbia's Office of Contracting and Procurement announced the upcoming sale of surplus DC streetcars through an online auction hosted by DC Surplus.

They are currently offering six streetcars for sale:

- Three 100 Series streetcars (Inekon, 2007)
- Three 200 Series streetcars (United Streetcar, 2013)

As part of the opportunity, they hosted an Industry Day on April 15, which allowed interested parties to view the streetcars in person and gain additional insight prior to bidding.

COMMUNITY STREETCAR COALITION, April 8

DC GOVERNMENT Office of Contracting and Procurement

WASHINGTON DC STREETCAR AUCTIONS
Own a Piece of DC Transit History

ONLINE AUCTION ONLY
Hosted by DC OCP

Location: Washington, DC
Bidding: Online at DCGOVT.GOVDEALS.COM

AVAILABLE FOR AUCTION	WHO SHOULD BID	AUCTION DETAILS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decommissioned DC Streetcars • Transit Equipment & Parts • Unique Collector Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Enthusiasts • Collectors & Museums • Contractors & Developers • Businesses & Investors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive Online Bidding • Vehicles Sold "As-is" • Inspection May Be Available • Registration Required on GovDeals

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

- 1 Create a GovDeals account
- 2 Search "DC Streetcar"
- 3 Place your bids online

CONTACT Email: surplus-property@dc.gov
Phone: 202-541-6017

BID COMING SOON AT DCGOVT.GOVDEALS.COM

IMPORTANT NOTES: All items sold "as is" - Buyer responsible for removal - Payment required per GovDeals terms.

Red Line Service Change

This summer, from July 6 through September 6, Metro will conduct major construction on the Red Line, and trains will not operate between North Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Free local and express shuttle buses will replace rail service to and from Grosvenor-Strathmore, Medical Center and Bethesda.

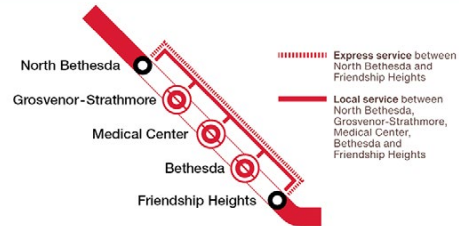
Metro is building a second mezzanine in the Bethesda Metro Rail station to connect with the Maryland Transit Administration's Purple Line light rail project. MTA's 16.2-mile light rail line is scheduled to open in late 2027 and will provide cross-county connections in Montgomery and Prince George's County with transfer points to Metro Rail stations at Bethesda, Silver Spring, College Park and New Carrollton. The new entrance will mean another access point to Metro and a shorter walk for some in the area.

Metro will also complete other needed track work during this time, including repairs on the elevated track between Grosvenor-Strathmore and Medical Center and rehabilitating the platform at Grosvenor. The station will get new lighting, tiles and platform edge. Normal train service is scheduled to resume on Sept. 7.

WMATA NEWS, April 10

Free Shuttle Service

Effective July 6 - Sept. 6 | Shuttles available during Metro Rail operating hours



closed

Station closed



International

BASEL, SWITZERLAND

Semi-Automated Operation Plans

Basel area public transport operator Baselland Transport (BLT) has awarded Stadler Rail a contract to equip its suburban tram network with the Nova Pro communication-based train control system as part of a plan to progressively automate operations.

This follows deployment of Nova Pro on the 13-kilometer standalone Waldenburgerbahn, where BLT recently introduced Grade of Automation 2 semi-automated operation. The driver gives the instruction to start and the light rail vehicle then proceeds fully automatically, with the CBTC regulating the speed, activating level crossings and bringing the LRV to a precise stop at the stations.

Expansion of Nova Pro to the more complex Basel network is the next logical step, according to the Chief Infrastructure Officer at BLT, when the contract was announced on April 10.



BLT Tango ER Be 6/10 No. 152 (Stadler, 2009) is operating a Route 10 trip to Dornach and is seen at Münchensteinerbrücke on July 31, 2023. František Vaňásek photo via Urban Electric Transit

BLT owns five suburban tram lines in the Basel area and operates four of them, with the remaining line being operated by the municipal transport company, BVB (Basler Verkehrs-Betriebe). BVB also runs the urban network which is shared with BLT services.

BLT plans to progressively equip its fleet of 38 Stadler Tango and 25 Tina trams with Nova Pro. Initial testing is scheduled to begin on Route 11 in 2027, followed by a phased rollout across the network. Communication between the onboard and trackside systems will be handled by public 4G/5G mobile networks.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 21

BELGRADE, SERBIA

New EMUs Ordered

CAF has secured a contract worth more than €300 million to supply 30 electric commuter trains to Serbia's national operator Srbijavoz, with the trains set for deployment on the BG Voz suburban network in Belgrade.

The deal with the Spanish manufacturer, which includes two years of full maintenance, is its second major rail contract in Serbia and will see the new trains replace aging rolling stock on the capital's commuter network as Belgrade pushes ahead with wider public transport modernization.

Based on CAF's Civity platform, already widely used across Europe, including in the Netherlands where NS operates the trains on its Sprinter network, each three-car unit will have capacity for 546 passengers, including 204 seated, and is intended for intensive suburban use. CAF says the trains will be built in lightweight aluminum and capable of operating at speeds of up to 120 km/h. The units are intended to deliver the acceleration and braking performance needed for a stop-start urban network such as BG Voz.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 1

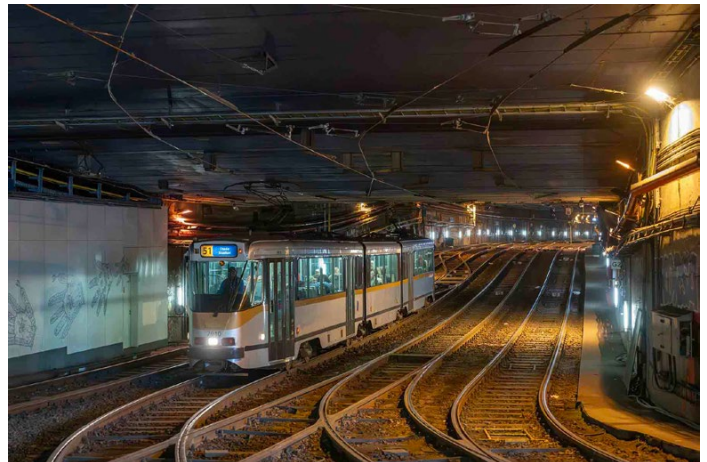
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Metro Project Scaled Back

Construction of the shell for the future Toots Thielemans metro station in Brussels has been completed. Although this marks a significant milestone in the long-delayed construction of Line 3 in the Belgian capital, Brussels Capital Region has decided to scale back the project to reduce costs.

The 10.3-kilometer Line 3 is designed to connect Albert in the southern district of Forest with Bordet in Evere to the northeast of the city center, serving 18 stations. The project combines newly constructed tunnels with upgraded pre-metro infrastructure under the city center and has been planned in two phases.

The first phase includes converting the existing pre-metro tunnel between Albert and Brussels North into a full metro line, alongside the construction of a new tunnel linking Brussels South to Anneessens. The new tunnel includes Toots Thielemans station, which is named after a celebrated Belgian jazz musician, and is intended to replace the current tunnel section running via Lemonnier, which dates back to 1958 and is unsuitable for metro conversion. *(Editor's note: The Lemonnier pre-metro tramway station is a very interesting location, with a four-track tunnel south of the station and a flat junction where tram Routes 51 and 82 merge with Routes 3 and 10.)*



PCC No. 7910 (BN-La Brugeoise et Nivelles, 9/1977) is in the four-track tunnel south of Lemonnier Station, northbound on Route 51 to Stade on May 22, 2024. Jeff Ertlitz photo

However, the project has faced mounting technical and financial challenges which have increased the cost by €170 million and extended construction time by at least eight years. Unexpectedly unstable ground conditions beneath the historic Palais du Midi forced major design revisions. In 2025, demolition of the building was approved, while preserving its façade, despite continuing legal appeals.

In February 2026, the Brussels City Region introduced austerity measures and placed significant portions of the Line 3 project on hold. Plans to extend the line from Brussels North to Bordet, as well as the full conversion of the existing Albert to



A banner for the new Metro Line 3 was seen at Porte de Hal Station on May 23, 2024. Jeff Erlitz photo

Brussels North pre-metro section to full metro operation, have been suspended pending further review of their feasibility.

Despite the cutbacks, construction will continue on the new Brussels South - Annessens tunnel. But rather than operating it as a metro, this section will be completed initially as a pre-metro line operated with LRVs, enabling partial use of the new infrastructure while preserving the option for future metro conversion. This approach will cost €500 million and ensure a return on the €500 million already invested. This new total cost of €1 billion compares with the original budget of €2 billion for Line 3 in 2020.



T4000 No. 4031 (Bombardier Transportation, 1/2011) has paused at the Parvis de Saint-Gilles stop in the north-south pre-metro while operating a northbound Route 3 trip to Esplanade on May 23, 2024. Later in 2024, Route 3 was replaced with a new Route 10, probably to clear the number for the future full metro route. Note in this view the high and low platforms and, on this date, the recently-installed under-running third rail for the future Line 3 Metro. Jeff Erlitz photo

The new tunnel should significantly ease congestion at the busy Lemonnier junction, which currently handles up to 88 LRV movements per hour. By rerouting some services through the new tunnel, reliability will be improved and delays reduced. A pedestrian connection between Toots

Thielemans and Lemonnier stations is also planned to facilitate interchange.

[INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY JOURNAL](#), April 2

GORLITZ/ZWICKAU, GERMANY

Joint Tramway Order

Gorlitz transport operator GVB and Zwickau's SVZ have placed a joint order for Stadler Tina low-floor trams to replace high-floor Tatra vehicles. GVB has ordered eight trams and Zwickau six.



Rendering of the TINA tram for Gorlitz. Stadler

An order had originally been placed with HeiterBlick as part of the Sachsen Tram of the Future framework contract, but the procurement was restarted after the supplier ran into financial difficulties. These led to it being acquired by Pesa.

SVZ said four qualified bidders participated in the final bidding process, and Stadler was rated as the best for quality and on time delivery. The 30-meter-long, 2.3-meter-wide unidirectional meter-gauge trams will be equipped with collision avoidance systems, as well as air-conditioning and passenger information systems.

They will be assembled by Stadler in Poland for entry into services from 2028.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 21

NETHERLANDS

New Arriva EMUs In Service

Private operator Arriva has begun deploying part of its long-idled fleet of new Stadler EMUs in the Dutch province of Limburg, as ongoing delays to the electrification of the Maaslijn, the Nijmegen to Roermond route in the south-east of the country, on which they were originally meant to run, continue to postpone their intended entry into service.

Two Stadler Flirt EMUs are now operating further south in Limburg on regional services between Sittard–Heerlen and Roermond–Maastricht. While the remaining nine units remain sidelined, the move marks the first active use of the

fleet after years in storage. The trains were delivered several years ago in anticipation of the Maaslijn electrification, which was initially expected to enable electric operations as early as 2020. However, repeated delays to infrastructure works have left the new fleet unusable on its intended corridor. The units have effectively been stored for around seven years while awaiting completion of the project.



Two of the Stadler Flirt EMUs that are intended to be used on the Maaslijn, Nos. 458 and 451, at Maastricht on February 20, 2021. Rob Dammers photo via Wikimedia

Dutch infrastructure manager ProRail only began installing overhead line equipment on the route last year, with full electrification now scheduled for completion by the end of 2027, more than seven years behind its original target. [RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 2

NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

New Bi-Mode Inter-City Trainsets

Test running has started on the New South Wales network with the first batch of 29 Civity electro-diesel multiple-units built by the Momentum Trains consortium of CAF, Pacific Partnership and DIF Infrastructure V. The 160 km/h regional and inter-city multiple-units consist of 117 cars in different configurations. Transport for New South Wales says it is the first Australian passenger train designed to use both overhead electric and diesel traction.

The A\$2.8 billion contract was signed in February 2019 and includes capital costs of A\$1.26 billion and 15 years of maintenance. CAF's share of the contract is €500 million, and the Spanish manufacturer is also providing equity financing and two driver training simulators.

The availability-based PPP contract includes design, manufacturing, financing and maintaining the fleet, as well as the construction of a new maintenance facility at Dubbo, 300 kilometers northwest of Sydney, where final assembly is taking place. Entry to service was originally planned from 2023. The vehicles feature overhead luggage storage, seat pockets, charging ports for mobile devices and tray tables suitable for laptops. They are also equipped with accessible



CAF Civity No. RD2301 for NSW Trainlink testing in Spain on October 8, 2024. Armin76 photo via Wikimedia Commons

toilets, wide doors, priority seating and accessible help points.

They feature audio-visual passenger information systems, CCTV cameras, and automatic selective door operation for stations with short platforms. The long and short regional trains also feature a buffet car. The vehicles are now undertaking tests to complete the safety accreditation process managed by the Office of National Rail Safety Regulator.

Operator NSW TrainLink is to use 10 long and nine shorter regional trains to replace the XPT diesel trainsets built by Comeng and the Xplorer DMUs built by ABB Transportation. The batch of 10 longer trains are intended to be used on the long-distance routes linking Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, replacing Endeavour DMUs, built by ABB Transportation. Infrastructure works are also to be carried out to accommodate the vehicles. These include works at platforms and stabling yards, including the provision of infrastructure for power, water supply, tanking, cleaning and refueling. [RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 6

POLAND

Locomotives Getting Overhauled

Alstom has signed a contract worth more than €22 million to carry out major overhauls on 11 Traxx (*Editor's Note: Traxx locomotives were originally built by Bombardier Transportation*) electric locomotives for Mazovian Railways, Poland's largest regional passenger operator, which runs services across the Mazovian province, including the Warsaw metropolitan area.

The work, scheduled for 2026–2027, will see each Traxx locomotive undergo a full P5 overhaul, the highest level of scheduled maintenance, involving deep inspection and renewal of core systems, with each unit covered by a 19-month warranty following acceptance by the operator. The program forms part of a broader push from Mazovian Railways to modernize its existing fleet alongside ongoing rolling stock acquisitions, with the company signing off on an expanded new fleet of Stadler FLIRT units last year.



One of Mazovian Railways' Traxx locomotives. Alstom photo

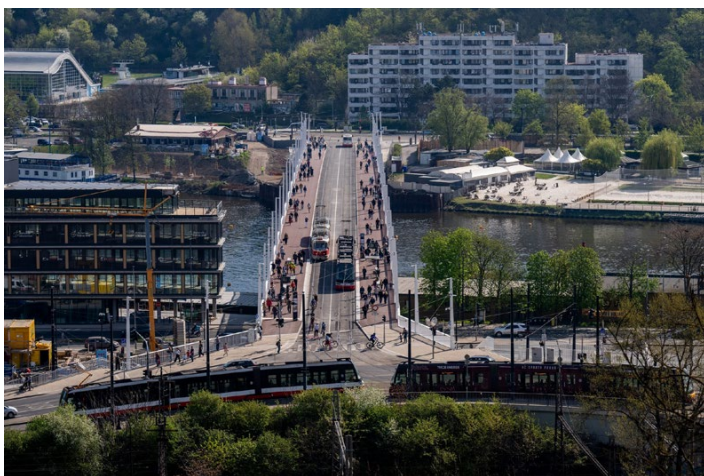
Alstom will carry out detailed diagnostics and repairs across mechanical, electrical and pneumatic components. The scope also includes repainting the locomotive bodies, as well as extensive work on trucks and running gear. This includes non-destructive testing of truck components using ultrasonic and magnetic particle methods to detect cracks and other hidden defects without damaging the parts themselves, alongside overhauls of the wheelsets.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 2

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

New Tramway Bridge Opens

The Dvorecký Bridge opened in the south of Prague on April 17. It links tram routes running on both sides of the river and is used by Routes 20 and 21. Construction required 433 meters of double-track tramway to be built. The bridge is used by trams, buses, emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists only.



View east of the new bridge. Ondřej Deml/ČTK photo

With the opening of this new bridge, there were changes

to tram routes 2, 4, 6, 7, 15, 20, 21 and 24, tram route 14 (Nádraží Holešovice – Spořilov) was eliminated and new tram route 34 was introduced (Bílá Labuť – Nádraží Holešovice). Several bus routes were also modified.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 21

ROMANIA

New Electric Locomotive Delivered

Alstom has delivered the first Traxx Passenger electric locomotive for Romania's Railway Reform Authority (ARF), marking the start of a 16-unit program aimed at renewing the country's passenger fleet.

The locomotive, part of a contract signed in January 2024, is the first of a new generation of electric traction intended to modernize Romania's ailing passenger fleet, which has an average age of between 40 and 45 years. The €150 million deal covers the supply of 16 locomotives and 20 years of maintenance, with deliveries scheduled to continue through 2026.

ARF, the Romanian Transport Ministry's body for implementing passenger rail policy, confirmed that the first unit, designated ARF002, was delivered on April 7 at Alstom's depot within the CFR Grivita workshops in Bucharest. The four-axle locomotive, capable of running at speeds of up to 200 km/h, is equipped with fully suspended traction motors and is capable of hauling up to 16 passenger coaches, with the unit also fitted with onboard European Rail Traffic Management System.



ARF's first Traxx Locomotive. Alstom photo

Before entering passenger service, ARF will first have to run endurance testing on the Alstom train, which includes 10,000 kilometers of operation before the locomotive is cleared for commercial use. With those tests set to begin in the coming weeks alongside driver training, the locomotives will ultimately be operated by state passenger operator CFR Călători under Romania's public service contracts.

ARF has indicated that the Alstom locomotives will be

deployed across several of Romania's main electrified corridors, including:

- Dej–Braşov–Bucharest–Constanţa
- Timişoara–Arad–Braşov–Bucharest–Constanţa
- Timişoara–Cluj–Napoca–Iaşi
- Iaşi/Suceava–Bucharest–Constanţa

The project was initially backed by financing under Romania's Recovery and Resilience Plan, including coverage for long-term maintenance. ARF now says funding will instead be provided in full through the EU Modernization Fund, with the financing contract expected to be signed in the coming period.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 8

SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

New Metro Train Delivered

Alstom delivered the first of eight three-car Metropolis trainsets on April 2 to support operation of Santo Domingo Metro Line 2, where an extension opened in February.

Alstom is building eight more three-car trainsets for operator OPRET under an April 2024 contract worth €101 million, fully financed through a credit from the Central American Bank of Economic Integration. The new trains are being assembled at Alstom's Santa Perpetua plant near Barcelona, and are equipped to operate in multiple with the metro's existing fleet.



The new Metropolis cars, seen after their arrival at the port. OPRET photo

The open-gangeway trainsets have wide doorways and are fitted with LED lighting. They also feature a redesigned operating console, integrated with other elements of the cab. OPRET is now undertaking further testing, augmenting those that Alstom previously carried out at its factory. These aim to validate key systems in real-world operating conditions, including the new-generation braking systems.

The vehicles are to be used on the 7.3-kilometer-long, mostly elevated northwestern extension of Santo Domingo Line 2, where limited services started on February 24. This links María Montez with Pablo Adón Guzmán, serving five stops.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 13

SWITZERLAND

Additional Cars for Gornergrat

Mountain railway operator Gornergrat Bahn (GGB) has awarded Stadler a SFR30 million contract to supply a further four Polaris electric multiple-units for the 9.4-kilometer Abt rack line from the resort of Zermatt to the Gornergrat summit, which offers views of the Matterhorn.

GGB ordered an initial four of the custom-designed POPular LANDscape Railway In Switzerland meter-gauge units in 2019 and one more in 2024. Stadler said they are now providing reliable service on one of Europe's most famous mountain railways. The modern interior and exterior design was created by the Italian design studio Pininfarina with bright, open interiors and panoramic windows offering views of the majestic Alps.



Two sets of the Gornergrat Bahn's current Polaris EMUs are seen, with the famous Matterhorn in the background. GGB photo

The two-car 34.6-meter-long 725 V 50 Hz EMUs have a capacity of 120 seated and 100 standing passengers, with CCTV monitored low-floor entrances for accessibility, a passenger information system and space for storing bicycles and winter sports equipment.

The latest four trains to be delivered for entry into service at the end of 2028 will enable GGB to replace older vehicles as part of its fleet modernization program.

[RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL](#), April 10



From the Camera of Thomas C. VanDegrift, Jr. (ERA #794)

Thomas C. VanDegrift, Jr. lived in Detroit, Mich. and joined the E.R.A. before World War II. Recently, his son, Thomas VanDeGrift III, shared with us photographs his father took

during the last couple of years of original streetcar operation in Detroit. In this installment, we once again present images from the last day of streetcar operation, April 8, 1956.



PCCs 2160, 2154, 2171 (St. Louis Car, 8/1949) are already painted and numbered for their new home in Mexico City. Seen here in storage at Woodward Car House, awaiting transport to their new home.



Revenue service on the Woodward Line, the last streetcar operation in Detroit, ended at 5:56 a.m. on April 8. Later that day, in the afternoon, the DSR sponsored a special "End of the Line" grand parade and final excursion along Woodward Avenue. PCC No. 285, pictured here, led the 24-car final farewell trip.



View southeast at the lineup of some of the PCCs that would take part in the final parade and excursion, at Woodward Car House.



DSR PCCs 264, 101, 269 and 227 just outside of the car house. All 183 of the available all-electric PCCs were sold to Mexico City. In this view, the second car from the left is No. 101, one of the two air-electric cars that were delivered in October, 1945. They were originally part of an order for Pittsburgh Railways Company, but were diverted to the DSR as demonstrator cars for testing on Woodward Avenue. This car was scrapped the following month.

Paul's ERA Bookshelf

By Paul Grether (ERA #6933, Photographs by the author)

Cincinnati's Incomplete Subway – The Complete History by Jacob R. Mecklenborg, The History Press (Arcadia Publishing), Charleston, S.C., 2010, softcover, 216 pages. Primarily text with black-and-white illustrations and a few color pictures in a center section. Several appendices include reference material, a timeline and frequently asked questions.

Possibly no other transit infrastructure in North America has as much folklore and rumors associated with its origins, creation and demise as the never-finished Cincinnati Subway. In the early twentieth century it was a booming city thanks to the arrival of waves of immigrants. Population densities in the "Basin," the part of the city sandwiched by hills and the Ohio River rivaled Manhattan neighborhoods. Like New York, Cincinnati was governed by machine politics, in this case the infamous "Boss" Cox. The subway meant decongesting the urban core, further growth, jobs, contracts and all the political favors that went along with these. Was there a transportation justification? Yes, primarily as a rapid transit system to supplement the extensive streetcar system. However, since

the existing streetcar system was built with wide gauge and with dual wire overhead, it was difficult or impossible for the multiple interurbans operating in the region to use the system to access downtown. The streetcar system was controlled by a powerful syndicate who used their monopoly on franchises to operate on city streets to charge exorbitant rates for trackage rights. The subway was proposed as a wide loop, partially passing through downtown and reaching out to the suburbs, and designed to route the various interurban lines.

Partially constructed in the bed of the drained Miami & Erie Canal, the City of Cincinnati would build significant portions of the system including subway, elevated and at-grade sections with stations. The design was robust, with full grade-separation, generous clearances and heavy infrastructure. While no track was laid, the civil construction was completed on the sections built, with only fit-out remaining, including track, signals, traction power and station finishes. An operating agreement was executed with the Cincinnati Street Railway and specifications drawn up for equipment to be presumably ordered from hometown (syndicate controlled) Cincinnati Car Company. World War I related inflation, excessive cost-overruns, the beginnings of automobile ownership and suburbanization and the demise of the interurbans collectively contributed to the collapse of the subway project. However, the primary cause was the collapse of the Cox political machine with the new city charter of 1925 establishing council-manager government and appointment of Murray Seasongood as a reform mayor.

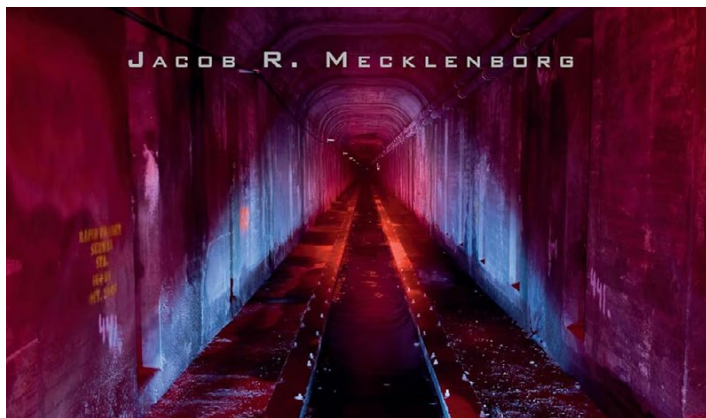
The story of the Cincinnati Subway involves many more twists and turns aptly described in Mecklenborg's book. Included are early studies that lay the groundwork for the project and then a description of the construction contracts. Finally, a description of the construction of the Mill Creek Expressway (Interstate 75) in some of the subway right-of-way and the use of the remains of the infrastructure closes out the subway. Also included is a description of how the subway project was influencing previous transit referenda for light rail and the more recent Cincinnati Streetcar project, which was built and opened after the publication of Mecklenborg's book. A fascinating read that will appeal to those interested in early transit politics, rapid transit schemes and "what-if" history.

Link to book information:

www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=63558666

Further reading:

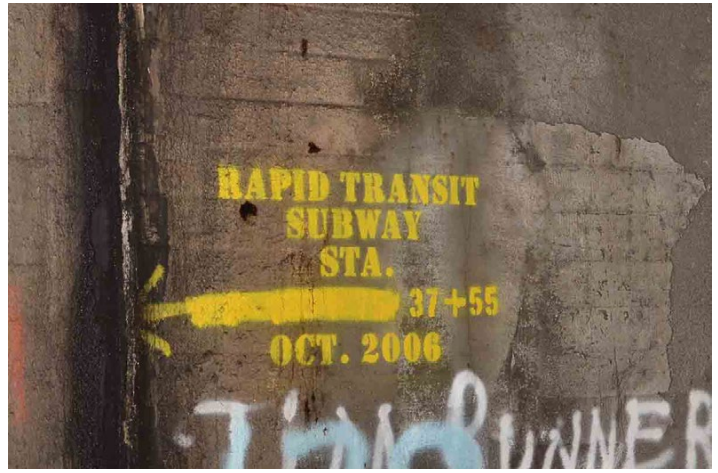
Railroad and the City: A Technological and Urbanistic History of Cincinnati by Carl W. Condit – www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=62032494 (Note: Condit is also the author of the two-volume *The Port of New York* histories of Grand Central Terminal and Pennsylvania Station in New York City)
The Cincinnati Subway: History of Rapid Transit by Allen J. Singer – www.libib.com/u/grether?solo=63558655



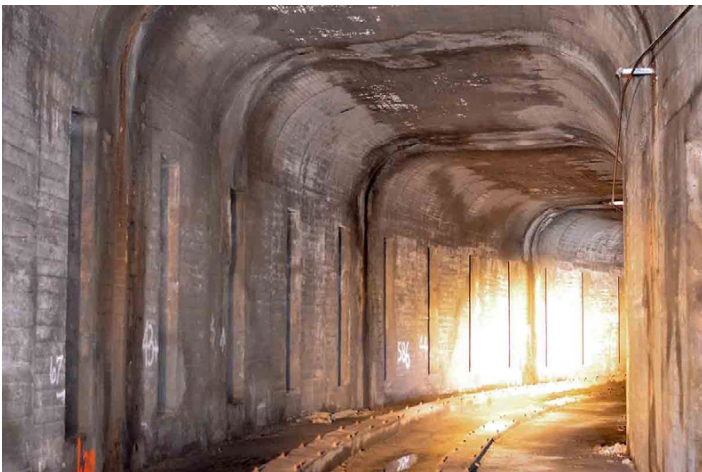
CINCINNATI'S INCOMPLETE SUBWAY

THE COMPLETE HISTORY





The above two and below-left views were taken in the Cincinnati Subway between Race Street and Liberty Street Stations on March 21, 2014.



(Above-right) Cincinnati & Lake Erie “Red Devil” high-speed interurban car No. 116 (Cincinnati, 1930) at the Shore Line Trolley Museum, June 24, 2023. (Below) The rear of the car shows the “trap” style door specified for the never-used high-platform Cincinnati Subway.



Building the New York Subway System, A Photographic Journey

Construction Route No. 16 — Part 2

By Jeff Erlitz (ERA #3997)

This month, we continue with Subway Construction Route No. 16, the IRT Jerome Avenue Line.

These photographs are in the Subway Construction

Photographs Collection of the New York Transit Museum via the New-York Historical Society.



Looking northwest along River Avenue, underneath the future 161st Street station on May 12, 1915. On the far right you can see the extra steelwork under the main girders to raise the tracks to a higher level for the future junction with the 162nd Street Connection from the Ninth Avenue Elevated coming from Manhattan. The clearing to the left, beyond River Avenue, is where today's Yankee Stadium is located.

Charles Manchester/PSC photo



Delivering steel by barge. This unusual view is looking south on Seventh Avenue (today's Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard) from the Central Bridge (today's Macombs Dam Bridge) at West 155th Street. May 12, 1915. Charles Manchester/PSC photo



On June 1, 1915, the Public Service Commission photographer took this view looking southeast along Mosholu Parkway towards its namesake station. Note the two mezzanines, at each end of the station, a unique design for this line. The distinct concrete cladding around the platforms, mezzanines and stair towers are yet to be added. Charles Manchester/PSC photo



It is now August 5, 1915 and we are looking northeast along Jerome Avenue at East 168th Street. The elevated structure is turning off River Avenue and onto Jerome. Charles Manchester/PSC photo

Travels with Jack May

Scotland-Ireland 2018 — Part 7

By Jack May (ERA #2275, Photographs by the author)

Tuesday, May 22, was our second day in Glasgow. Clare accomplished further sightseeing (including tracking down some additional Mackintosh sites), plus visits to other museums and to the Cathedral, while I devoted the day to electric railway pursuits. I should mention that this was my second trip to Glasgow, the first having come during the summer of 1960, while there were a half dozen or so tram routes still in operation. I was blessed with good weather and had a ball, as in addition to the streetcars, I enjoyed the Glasgow Subway and especially appreciated the suburban railway system, which was just completing electrification. Very attractive blue British Railways EMUs were running in test service, while regular operations consisted of steam-hauled compartment cars, chugging through the deep Queen Street Lower Level station (cough, cough, cough, click, click, click, . . .).

I had originally planned to renew my acquaintance with the circular subway line and then ride some EMU trains today, but when I asked my friend John Hayward, a retired railwayman living just outside of London, which lines he would recommend, he also informed me that there was an operating tramway museum in the area. Thus, I revised my plans and made visiting that heritage operation my primary focus. Operated by tram enthusiasts organized as the Summerlee Transport Group, it is housed within the grounds of the Museum of Scottish Industrial Life, about 10 miles east of Glasgow, and about a 10-minute walk from ScotRail's Coatbridge Sunnyside station. So right after breakfast, I trekked over to Queen Street station and found that the timetable indicated that I would be taking a 20-minute ride on a line that operated about seven trains every hour, with a one-day round-trip costing only £4.20. What could be better?

After purchasing my ticket from a machine and passing through fare gates, I descended to the station's eastbound lower-level platform by elevator, and the first thing I noticed was the absence of smoke, no longer any steam trains here. The double-track tunnel, which contains at least one more station, was built in 1886 by the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway (technically the Glasgow City and District), and was soon acquired by the North British, which operated the line until the groupings of 1923. It predated the building of the Glasgow Subway (1896) and thus was the city's first underground railway, albeit not electrified until 1960.

(Author's note: A similar underground railway tunnel operated under the elevated Central station, but was newer, built by the Glasgow Central Railway (a Caledonian subsidiary), also 1896. After the electrification of the competing tunnel through Queen Street, the Caledonian tunnel became very unpopular because of its soot and dirt, and was closed in 1964. The line was later electrified and reopened in 1979.) There were a number of competing railroads on the lucrative Glasgow to Edinburgh

and Glasgow to London lines, and as a result Glasgow had many mainline terminals, and I made a point of visiting all of them in 1960, before the infamous Richard Beeching came around and "rationalized" lines out of existence later in the decade, closing Buchanan Street (Caledonian) and St. Enoch (Glasgow & South Western), while retaining Queen Street (North British) and Central (Caledonian).

Anyway, I just missed the 9:56 a.m. EMU (the doors were closing when I emerged from the elevator), but made the 10:08, which was operating seven minutes late, opening its doors at 10:14. The 10-mile ride to Coatbridge Sunnyside was very speedy despite seven intermediate stops (some trains make only four) and I alighted at 10:33 (six late). It had rained the previous evening, but now the clouds were dispersing, and I enjoyed my walk to the Summerlee museum's entrance. I saw the tramway track immediately, but all was silent with no apparent activity at all, not a person was in sight. I began walking down the track and as I reached a curve, I heard some grinding traction noises and soon a beautiful orange tram with a bow collector came into view, heading my way. I immediately pulled out and focused my camera and breathed a sigh of relief. When I got back to the platform at the inner terminal I approached the operator, who was quite friendly and sent me to the nearby Exhibition Hall where I bought an all-day pass for tram rides. He indicated that service operates frequently, with short layovers at both ends of the line that I eventually estimated to be about a half-mile long.



I took this photo of the entrance to the museum, with a tram resting at the inner terminal, upon my departure from the grounds. The Exhibition Hall is at right.

By the time car No. 1017 departed several other museum visitors had climbed aboard. They were using the tram as transportation between various exhibits, such as miners'



My first photo at Summerlee was of No. 1017 heading toward the inner terminal of the tramway. The 1017 was built for the Paisley and District tramways in 1904 and was renumbered when that company was absorbed into the Glasgow Corporation Tramways network in 1923. It was part of a small series of open-top double-deck units that GCT soon cut down to single deck and equipped with extra-long bow collectors for operation on the long Glasgow-Duntocher line, which had an underpass that double-deckers could not clear. After Route 20 was closed in 1949, the 1017 was converted to a school/training car and its tower and short bow collector were installed. It served in that capacity until the tramway was nearing the end of operations, when in 1960 it was removed to a garden in a Glasgow suburb and used as a meeting room for local tramway enthusiasts. In 1991 it was acquired by the Summerlee Transport Group and lovingly restored to its current authentic (for 1925) operating condition.



Glasgow Corporation Tramways No. 1245 was built in 1939 and is undergoing a major restoration. A total of 152 of Glasgow's first new four-axle cars were built between 1937 and 1941. At least three of these lightweight units were preserved, and may be found in various British tram museums.



Single-truck car No. 392 from the Rheinbahn in Dusseldorf is Summerlee's only handicapped-accessible car and is brought out whenever needed to transport museum visitors whose mobility is challenged. The Düwag-built KSW unit from 1950 represents the final chapter in Western Germany's construction of trams using designs from the Second World War.



Four-wheeler No. 53 from 1908 is the pride and joy of Summerlee's collection. The open-top double-decker was built for the Lanarkshire Tramway, which was headquartered in Motherwell, less than 10 miles away from this location. The system was abandoned in 1931 and the car was purchased by a farmer who used it for storage for over a half-century before Summerlee obtained it in 1986 and restored it to pristine operational condition, using motors from a Porto, Portugal car.

homes, a sawmill and a mine, as well as some buildings that house historic working machinery. I rode the tram to the line's outer end and then began walking back to find good photo locations. I noticed the carhouse was shut up tight, but later, when I asked the motorman about some details regarding the operation, he replied that he didn't

know the answers but then added that the president of the tramway group was on the property, and “I’m sure he could help you.” David Craig certainly did, treating me to a history of the museum and the Glasgow tramway, and best of all, taking me into the carhouse, from which he pulled out the other two operable trams. In addition, he invited me into the well-equipped shop where renovation of the museum’s Coronation tram was underway.



Ex-Paisley Glasgow No. 1017 poses with Lanarkshire No. 53 at the carhouse.

Among the abundance of information I gathered from David Craig was that Glasgow Corporation Tramways (GCT) did not operate on strictly standard gauge track, as the distance between the rails was about one inch less, 4 feet 7¾ inches, to allow freight cars from the national railway system to be pulled over the tramway with their flanges running in the track slots. And all the GCT cars had to be double ended. The museum’s track is set at 4 feet 8½ inches so the two Glasgow trams on the property had to be regauged slightly. Altogether however, I enjoyed the photo session in the carhouse area best of all.



Another photo of 1908-built Lanarkshire No. 53, while a ScotRail EMU whisks by the museum grounds.

This last picture is a good way to transition to my return to Glasgow after a thoroughly enjoyable time at this pleasant low-key tram operation. There are two different stations in Coatbridge, with ScotRail’s Coatbridge Central pretty

much adjacent to the museum’s entrance. It’s a longer ride to Glasgow from that station, as it is on a branch running northward from Motherwell that has only hourly service, plus its running time to Glasgow (Central) is just short of an hour, twice as long as from Coatbridge Sunnyside to Queen Street. I was quite willing to try that line, as I like to make circle trips, but I just missed the 1:30 p.m. train and didn’t want to wait for the next one. Thus, I walked back to Coatbridge Sunnyside, where service to Glasgow Queen Street runs every eight or nine minutes.



Blairhill was the first stop on my Class 334 train, and I paused there for this photo of another such train of EMU cars. These cars were built by Alstom in Birmingham and entered service in 2001. ScotRail’s 40 three-car units are advertised as part of the manufacturer’s Coradia series, which mainly consists of diesel MUs, and is represented in North America by the equipment running on Ottawa’s Trillium line. These were the cars that replaced the “Blue Trains” I saw being tested on Glasgow’s first electrification in 1960.

Virtually all rail service in Scotland is operated by ScotRail, a private company owned by Abellio (a subsidiary of Netherlands Railways). The infrastructure is owned by Network Rail, and only a small part of it is electrified, but that is changing as 25kV overhead gets erected over the tracks of many more lines. The division of ScotRail that is charged with operating the suburban rail lines in the Glasgow area is called Strathclyde, which translates to Valley of the River Clyde, and consists of a complex network of lines (see <http://www.projectmapping.co.uk/Reviews/Resources/ScotRail%20central%20map%208.pdf> for a clear map, albeit from 2015). It shows both stations in Coatbridge, which have catenary and are served by EMUs. I took my time on my return, stopping over at two intermediate stations for photos of two types of these electric trains.

I arrived at Queen Street at 2:43 p.m. and saw a sign directing passengers to the Glasgow Subway. It led me to a moving sidewalk, which brought me to the line’s Buchanan Street stop. The 6½-mile-long, four-foot gauge circular line with just 15 stations was one of the world’s first electrified subway systems when it opened in 1896. (*Author’s note: London 1890, Budapest 1896 and Boston 1896.*) For such a short line, it has a very interesting history, which I will take a stab at summarizing using information gathered from various internet sources.

The subway is described as having two lines, an Outer

Circle and Inner Circle, but this refers to nothing more than it being a double track line, albeit in two separate tubes, with trains running clockwise on the outer and counterclockwise on the inner. The line crosses under the River Clyde twice in its circular path, and there are very few straight sections. Originally called the Subway when it was opened in 1896, it took the name Glasgow Underground in 1936, but finally in 2003, realizing the public kept calling it the subway, the bureaucrats gave in and now it is officially the Glasgow Subway again. [Would that be the case with the Newark City Subway vs. the current Newark Light Rail.] The Subway was equipped with island platforms at the beginning, but station modernization programs have resulted in the addition of some side platforms at busy stations. This could not have happened when the line's original rolling stock was in use, as the cars had doors only on one side — in fact it is said that Scottish frugality resulted in the equipment being painted only on the door side.



I used my phone to take this photo of one of the Glasgow Subway's original units at the Riverside Museum. Cars of this type originally had grips to attach themselves to a continuous moving cable, like San Francisco's cable cars. In 1935 electric motors were installed in conjunction with the replacement of the cable system by 600-volt DC third rail. These cars were retired from service in 1977.

Operating totally underground, but with the depot and shops on the surface, the original cars were hoisted by crane from the tunnel. Modernization in the late 1970s resulted in switches allowing track to ramp to the surface. The line was originally operated by cable, but in 1935 was electrified (at 600 v DC), with motors replacing the grips on the original rolling stock. As time went on maintenance was neglected and the subway became dilapidated. After a frequent series of breakdowns, the line was shut down for major modernization work, and it was closed between 1977 and 1980. When it was reopened new rolling stock began providing service under automatic train control, with the operator only handling the doors and pushing a start button. The rolling stock, with doors on both sides, is painted bright orange and as a result, the circular system soon earned the nickname of "The Clockwork Orange," based on the Stanley Kubrick/Anthony Burgess film. Trains originally were made up of two cars, but after modernization and an increase of ridership, enough trailers were added so that the trains are now three cars long (which

makes still photography of trains difficult as few stations have long platforms). In some cases the original platform at certain stations now has a transparent wall/barrier on the side where loading of trains in that direction takes place from a side platform, similar to what was done at the Union Station stop on Toronto's Yonge-University subway.



(Above and below) At the time of the author's visit, the rolling stock operating on the Glasgow Subway had been supplied by Metro-Cammell, entering service starting in 1980. Consisting of 33 motors (101-133) and 8 trailers (201-208, built in 1992), they seat 112 passengers longitudinally and can reach 34 mph. They're about 7½ feet wide and a little over 41 feet long, with two doors on each side. The upper photo shows car No. 101, which was painted in heritage colors to match the livery on the original 1896 cars. Some units have been adorned with advertising wraps, but they are generally in the middle of the three-car trains.



(Author's note: Major changes occurred in 2024, when the subway was re-equipped with new rolling stock from Stadler. Although the trains are not longer, they now consist of four cars with open gangways and are capable of fully automatic operation (not yet implemented). And half-height screen doors have been added to the platforms.)

In riding around the circle, which took about 25 minutes, I found that most of the stations were poorly lit, but one, Bridge Street, was bright and had a long platform to serve two entrances, so I positioned myself there for some photos.

After I completed my survey of the Glasgow Subway, I walked back to the hotel, just in time for the lobby reception.

To be continued in Part 8.



↑ Exit

