

# The Bulletin



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

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## The Bulletin

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## 14<sup>TH</sup> STREET LINE IS 80 YEARS OLD

On June 30, 1924, Williamsburg was dressed up in flags for the opening of the new 14<sup>th</sup> Street Line. There were parades through principal streets where banners, decorations, and flags were hung. Public officials met at the grandstand located at Bushwick and Montrose Avenues, just above the Montrose Avenue station.

As soon as they met, Mayor Hylan and Transit Commission Chairman George McAneny clashed. When McAneny said that the new line could not make a profit on a five-cent fare, Mayor Hylan offered to run it himself and make a profit on a five-cent fare.

After the ceremonies, the Mayor, McAneny, and other public officials took the subway to Manhattan for a luncheon at the Hotel Brevoort. Hylan did not attend.

Revenue service started at noon. Six three-car trains running on a six-minute headway were in service during the rush hour.

The original line between Sixth Avenue and Montrose Avenue was isolated from the rest of the system. In his detailed construction history published in the December, 1962 *Bulletin*, David Rogoff explains how the cars were transferred to this line. The roof was omitted at the north end of the station above the northbound (Manhattan-bound) track and a temporary ramp was built southward to the street level just north of Montrose Avenue. The track, which was not electrified, extended across Bushwick Place into the Long Island Rail Road yard over a small wooden trestle from street to yard level. In the yard, this temporary track was connected to the Long Island Rail Road tracks.

Cars were transferred from the main line by a circuitous route. A South Brooklyn locomotive hauled the cars on McDonald Avenue to

the Parkville Yard at Avenue I, after which a LIRR steam switch engine moved the cars to the LIRR Bushwick Terminal Yard.

A huge motor truck hauled each car separately to the top of the incline, where each car was hooked to a cable and lowered by a block and tackle on the 16.9 percent grade of the incline. Until service was extended to Canarsie in 1928, trains were turned on the Brooklyn-bound track. A small inspection pit was located beyond the end of the station on this track.

Twenty cars were assigned to this line. Two cars, 2700 and another car, were transferred on June 18, 1924, and they were followed by 18 cars on June 22, 1924. To increase rush hour train lengths from five to six cars, six additional cars were transferred on July 28, 1927.

Ground was broken on April 8, 1916. Construction was delayed by a shortage of materials and manpower during World War I and by the postwar inflation. The cost of the line between Sixth Avenue and Montrose Avenue was \$23 million.

The original plans called for an elevated structure east of Montrose Avenue. But it was never approved because local residents objected to an elevated structure on Wyckoff Avenue. Another route, over the Long Island Rail Road's tracks, was approved and subsequently revised.

The 1922 Transit Commission's report states that the municipal authorities first approved and then refused to approve any further elevated construction. The BRT declined to accept a subway as a substitute for an elevated line. Because a change in plans would result in a two-year delay and an addi-

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