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CHRYSTIE STREET OPENED FORTY YEARS AGO

The biggest subway service changes ever made took place when the Chrystie Street Subway opened on November 26, 1967. The December, 1967 *Bulletin* described the problems encountered with trains operating in accordance with the new schedule during the first morning rush, November 27, 1967.

The *Bulletin* revealed that confusion reigned supreme and the Monday rush hour confusion was worse than the most pessimistic critics had feared. The *Bulletin* informed us: "Main reasons for the confusion were: (1) train crews over unfamiliar tracks; (2) employees unfamiliar with new schedules and routes and, in some cases, unfamiliar equipment; (3) most trains lacking proper signs for new routes and many carrying wrong signs and incorrect marker lights; (4) passenger ignorance of routes not normally used and their refusal to try different routes; (5) NYCTA insistence in eliminating familiar route names; (6) reduction of the popular Broadway via Manhattan Bridge service."

Since the BMT subway was opened in 1920, the Brighton, West End, Sea Beach, Fourth Avenue, and Culver (until 1959) merged at DeKalb Avenue, where they were routed via bridge or tunnel to Manhattan. Because many trains switched on double crossovers, there were delays, especially in the rush hour. To eliminate these delays, flyover tracks were built north and south of the station.

To increase capacity, two express tracks were built under Sixth Avenue and the Houston Street tracks were connected to the new Chrystie Street tunnel leading to the Manhattan Bridge. The track layout was rearranged at the Manhattan Bridge portal. The north tracks were disconnected from the BMT

Broadway Subway and connected to the new Chrystie Street Subway. The south tracks, which were used only in rush hours, were disconnected from the Nassau Loop and connected to the BMT Broadway Subway.

After the last Nassau via Bridge trains on Wednesday evening, November 22, the south Manhattan Bridge tracks at the Manhattan end were disconnected from the Nassau Street tracks. On Friday evening, after the last train, the 7:02 express from Brighton Beach, the north tracks were disconnected from the BMT Broadway Subway and connected to Chrystie Street. The first D train via Chrystie Street departed from Coney Island at 12:10 AM Saturday, November 25. All BMT Broadway trains operated via tunnel from about 7:40 PM Friday until early Monday morning, November 27.

The engineers designing the new track layout predicted that 90 trains per hour could be operated through DeKalb Avenue in the rush hour. Checking our records, which date back to 1950, we find that the maximum was 80 trains per hour when Chrystie Street opened. During the intervening years, riding has declined and service has been adjusted. The current timetables are probably similar to the November 14, 2004 timetables, which schedule only 56 trains per hour. On December 10, 1953, Culver trains were still operating through DeKalb Avenue. NYC Transit scheduled 76 trains per hour on the original track layout. After IND trains started operating on the Culver Line, BMT Culver riding declined. On January 3, 1961, 65 trains per hour were scheduled to operate through DeKalb Avenue in the rush hour. Headways are listed in the table on page 6.

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