

The Bulletin



New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

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The Bulletin

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For general inquiries, contact us at era@inch.com.

Editorial Staff:

Editor-in-Chief:
Bernard Linder
News Editor:
Randy Glucksman
Contributing Editor:
Jeffrey Erlitz

Production Manager:
David Ross

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SECAUCUS TRANSFER OPENS **by Randy Glucksman**

What was an idea for 50 years came to fruition on Saturday, September 6, 2003, when the Secaucus Transfer station was opened. My first involvement with this project came as a member of the Rockland County Transportation Advisory Committee in the mid-1970s. At that time, it had been proposed that a direct rail connection to midtown Manhattan be provided for commuters from Bergen, Orange and Rockland Counties in order to provide a one-seat ride.

Allied Outdoor Advertising, Incorporated financed a study that was done by Edwards and Kelcey, Incorporated. In a copy of the "Draft" report, which was released in May, 1985, it was decided that it was operationally more efficient to construct a transfer station whereby train service would not be reduced to Hoboken. It was also felt that attempting to insert trains into what was already a congested Northeast Corridor would be counter-productive. Allied proposed to construct the station and a commercial complex that would contain a 400-room hotel, shopping and recreational facilities. In the intervening years the responsibility for constructing this facility passed to NJ Transit, which commenced engineering studies in 1989. I have an article from *The Rockland Journal News* dated April 4, 1991, which quoted Bill McCann, who was head of the Allied Junction Project, as being "positive" about this project, which had been a dream of the Company's chairman, George Newman, back in 1953. Mr. McCann believed that the construction would be underway by late 1991 or early 1992. Ground was actually broken on May 30, 1995.

When one considers what this project has done for rail riders in northern New Jersey, superlatives must be used to describe its magnitude. All rail lines in this part of the state are now linked. How much did it cost to construct Secaucus Transfer? NJ Transit's press release give a figure of \$450 million; one newspaper reported \$600 million, another \$650 million, but one source told me it was more like one billion dollars when "everything" is counted. Nonetheless, this is something that was never accomplished when the railroads were under private ownership by either the Pennsylvania, Erie, or later by Penn-Central or the Erie-Lackawanna. The biggest benefit is in time savings, which could be between 15 and 20 minutes each way for each commuter, and the potential to lure car drivers to the trains and reduce pollution is another tangible benefit.

How do passengers navigate Secaucus Transfer? When Bergen County and Main Line passengers arrive on the lower level, they must either take an escalator or elevator or walk to the mezzanine level, and then another set of escalators, etc., which will bring them to the main concourse. There they will have to pass through turnstiles, which accept only the magnetically coded tickets to board trains to Manhattan or Newark and points beyond. At this time, no additional charge is being assessed, but that will change when service operates 7 days a week. NJ Transit is not saying what the additional fare will be, but the amount will be somewhere in the neighborhood of what the cost is to ride

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WEST BELT LINE by Bernard Linder

Owners:

STREET CARS

July 18, 1863	Central Park, North & East River Railroad Company
October 14, 1892	Metropolitan Cross-Town Railway Company
May 28, 1894	Metropolitan Street Railway Company
August 6, 1908	Central Park, North & East River Railroad Company
January 21, 1913	Belt Line Railway Corporation
August 4, 1913	Third Avenue Railway Company

Route:

STREET CARS

July 18, 1863	Horse cars started operating from W. 51 st Street and Tenth Avenue to South Ferry. We do not know when service was extended
About 1865	Cars operated from W. 59 th Street and Fifth Avenue via W. 59 th Street, Tenth Avenue, West Street, Battery Place, and State Street (southbound)/Whitehall Street (northbound) to South Ferry
About 1882	Cut back to W. 54 th Street and Tenth Avenue
May 8, 1913	Battery cars started operating
June 26, 1913	Last horse car in service
December 29, 1919	Cars operated from W. 42 nd Street and Tenth Avenue to South Ferry
March 24, 1921	Discontinued

CAR ASSIGNMENT

Following is an incomplete assignment:

DATE	CARS
December 31, 1913-June 30, 1918	1202-1280
December 30, 1918-June 30, 1919	1202-1279
December 31, 1919	1202-1227

HORSE CAR NOTES

There were 43 cars in service during the year ending September 30, 1867. The number of horses required for the East Belt and West Belt Lines is as follows:

	NUMBER	COST
Horses on Hand	988	
Horses Bought	267	\$156.51
Horses Sold	88	\$31.65
Horses Died	279	

HORSES' WORK PROGRAMS

Running time was 54 minutes. Each team of horses worked two round trips a day with three changes of horses in each round trip.

SERVICE DISCONTINUED

In its June 30, 1922 annual report, the company made

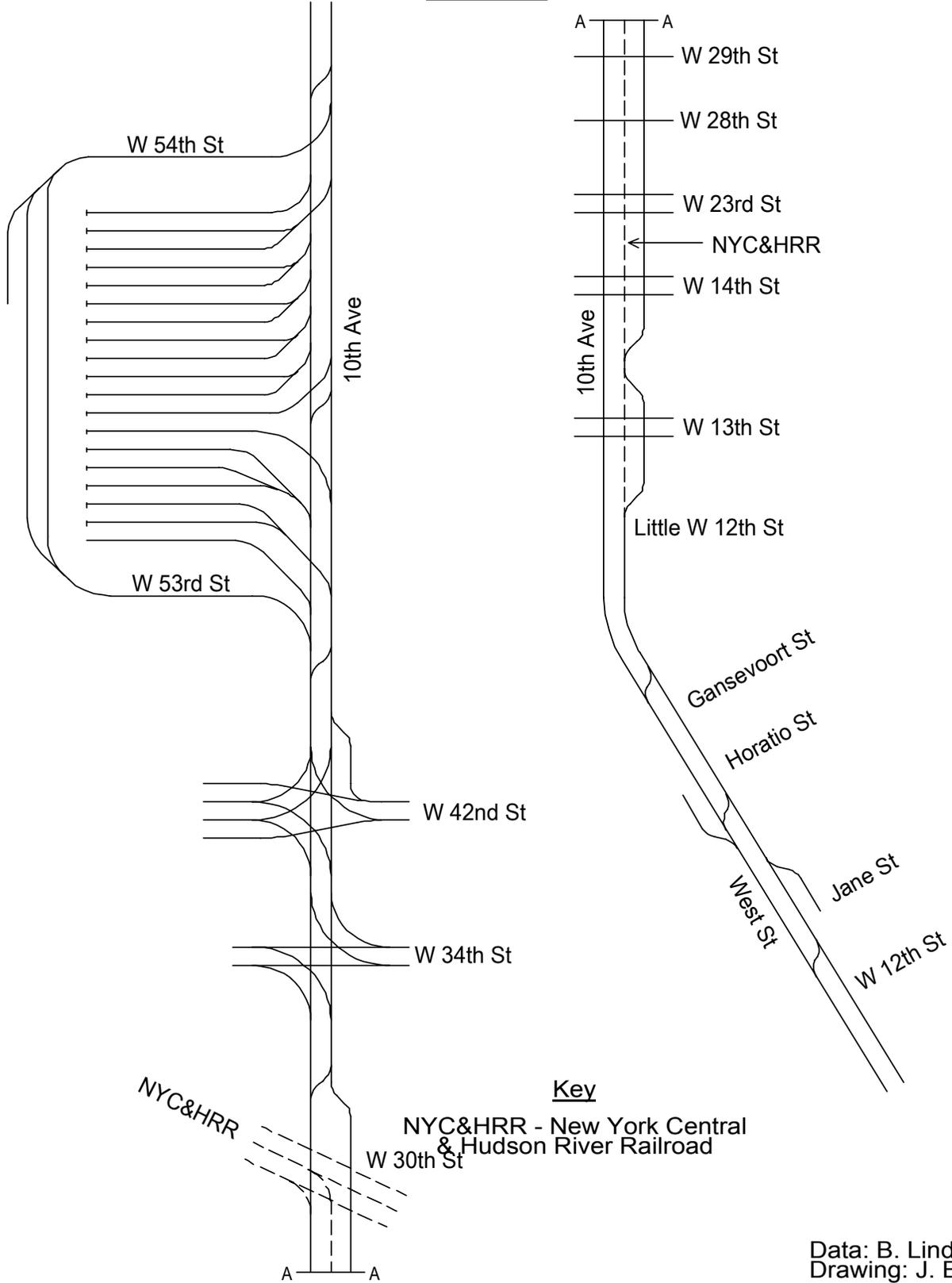
the following statement, which explained why service was discontinued:

“The East Belt Line of the Belt Line Railway Corporation was the first line to be abandoned. The line operated in Manhattan along the waterfront of the East River from the Battery northward, a distance of three and three-quarter miles. Its abandonment became effective June 3, 1919. On March 24, 1921, the West Belt line of the same company, extending from the Battery along the Hudson River front a distance of four and one-half miles, was abandoned. These two lines were operated by storage battery cars and had for years been operated at a loss. The travel, generally speaking, is to and from the water front rather than along it and the large amount of trucking on these streets made the speed with which these cars could be operated so slow as to make them unattractive for passenger service. In addition to the loss from operation, the maintenance of this trackage was very high, due to the rapidity with which the pavement was destroyed by trucks, and we were confronted with the reconstruction of the tracks and the renewal of the pavement in the near future. This reconstruction would have involved an expenditure of an amount of money that could not have been collected on the cars in many years.”

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West Belt Line
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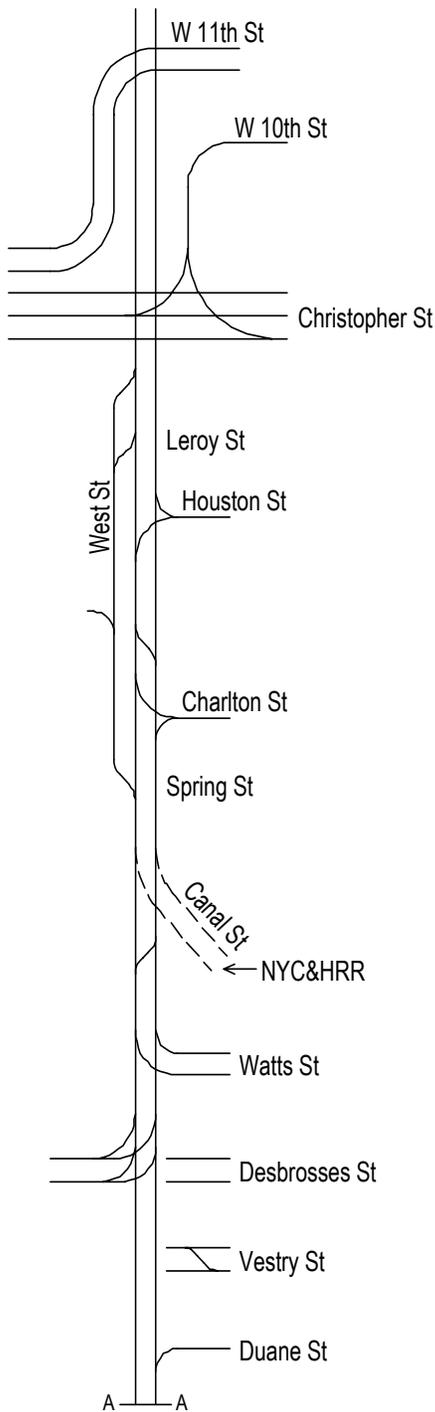
West Belt Line
North Portion
Circa 1897



Data: B. Linder
Drawing: J. Erlitz
(Continued on page 4)

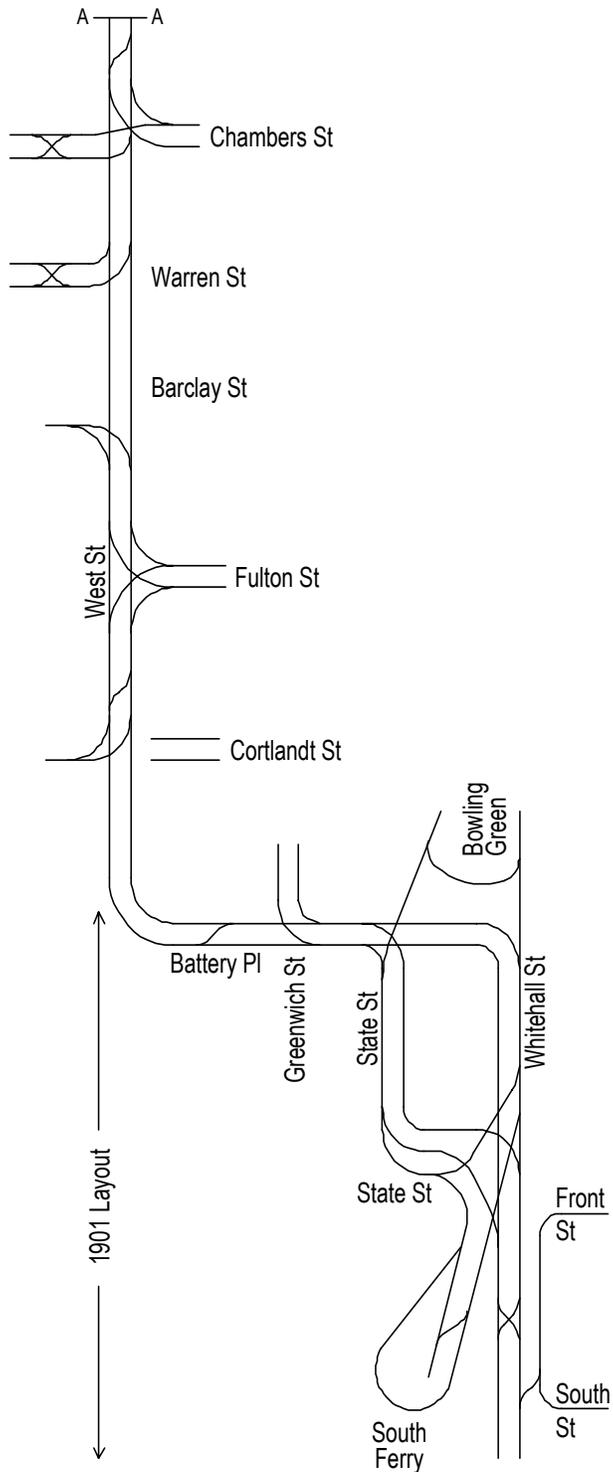
West Belt Line

(Continued from page 3)



West Belt Line

South Portion
Circa 1897
Except as Noted



Key

NYC&HRR - New York Central & Hudson River Railroad

Data: B. Linder
Drawing: J. Erlitz

TECH TALK

by Jeffrey Erlitz

Finally! Over the Labor Day weekend, as I mentioned in last month's column, the Atlantic Avenue Interlocking reconfiguration took place on the 14th Street-Canarsie Line. From Friday night, August 29 to Tuesday morning, September 2, subway service was cut back to Broadway Junction while crews from several departments and outside contractors made the changeover. The September, 2000 *Bulletin* contains before and after track diagrams of this very big project (contract C-33226). With the completion of this work, all remaining references to Canarsie Line Tracks P1 and P2 were eliminated. The images shown below were taken on Saturday, August 30 and Sunday, August 31. I never got the opportunity to photograph either the cutting away or the lifting into position of the large, main track girders. Apparently, only two main girders needed to be immediately cut away for this cutover operation while five main girders needed to be installed.

Track panels on the original northbound track, P2, were lifted from just north of Sutter Avenue station to several hundred feet north, around the reverse curve taking the line over to Snediker Avenue. Everything

was removed from this portion of the structure except for a small bundle of signal cables that had been in use up until Friday evening when service was terminated.



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Secaucus Transfer Opens

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PATH or the ferry.

Since August 4, the lower level has been open to passengers who formerly used the Harmon Cove station and to those who could access the station by other bus lines or by car or taxi. If you were thinking about driving and parking at Secaucus, forget it — no spaces have been provided for parking. For the time being, only Bergen County Line trains stop here during the week, Main Line and Bergen County trains on weekends. Pascack Valley and Main Line trains will begin to serve the station on weekdays when service resumes on PATH's line to lower Manhattan.

These are the track designations at the Secaucus Transfer station: Bergen County trains are on tracks E, F, G, and H; Northeast Corridor trains are on tracks A, B, 2, and 3. Here are a few statistics: the station occupies 312,000 square feet; height — 130 feet; 4 levels; 31 escalators, 11 elevators, 36 stairways. There are 28 TVMs, customer service offices, 4 restrooms, retail space, and several artwork installations. In the center of the rotunda there is a lighted aluminum sculpture of cat-tails that soars 30 feet.

A "VIP" train was operated from Harriman, New York to Secaucus Transfer. The train's consist was 4121-4122-5312-5321-5018. Rebuilt Comet IIs 5312 and 5321 were "wrapped" to promote the station's new con-

nections to destinations including Newark Airport, NJ Performing Arts Center, Radio City Music Hall, and the (New) Jersey Shore. This was NJ Transit's first use of wrapped cars. I boarded the train at Suffern, and it made all stops along the Bergen County Line. New Jersey's junior Senator Frank R. Lautenberg boarded the train in Ridgewood, while Governor James E. McGreevey got on at Rutherford.

The ceremonies for the opening of the station began at 11 AM, when NJ Transit President George Warrington turned the podium over to Governor McGreevey, who led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Tributes were given to those who had a part in the project, including Project Manager T. Roberson Edwards. In recognition of his championing of this project in securing federal funds, the station was named in honor of Senator Lautenberg, and a commemorative plaque was placed in the rotunda. Other speakers included NJ Transit Vice-Chairman Myron P. Shevell, U.S. Representatives Robert Menendez and Steve Rothman, and Metro-North President Peter A. Cannito. Seated on the stage was Louis Gambaccini, who wore many (transportation) hats in the metropolitan area including NJ Transit's first Chairman and New Jersey Transportation Commissioner. Mr. Gambaccini was also Chief Operating Officer and General Manager of SEPTA. Oh yes, many of our members were there. Those I saw were Gregory Campolo, Harold Geissenheimer, Gary Grahl, James Greller, and Jack May.

Tech Talk

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Interestingly, steel shims were installed on top of the northernmost girders of the original structure before the changeover point (see image below) to provide a smooth gradient from the original structure to the new structure. As you can see from one of the images below, several pieces of original Fulton Street EI steelwork had already been removed from above former Track P2. This work had been done sometime in the past two years.



For the time being, access to old Track P2 from the north end at Broadway Junction is still available from yard lead Track Y4, which is how the remainder of the track and signal removals will be conducted. In fact, Track Y4 is currently out of service and will remain so until at least the end of this year. North of the Atlantic Avenue station, only the switch leading to new Track Y4 has already been installed on northbound Canarsie Line Track Q2. The image below shows this new switch coming off of Track Q2 just north of Atlantic Avenue and

was taken back on March 23 of this year.



R-102 crane car 272 places a panel into position north of Sutter Avenue on August 31, 2003.

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Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

I recently asked member Rodney Swain to update what is occurring with the New Haven Line's catenary replacement project, and he sent the following report. "The new catenary arrangement being installed in Connecticut is different from that in New York in that it is not constant tension with weights and pulleys, but with a design stress, depending on the temperature put on at the time of installation. This system has been installed from the New York State line to Stamford on the two eastbound tracks and the express westbound track. The westbound local track is out of service all the way, with portable ramps across it at the various stations. These ramps line up with some of the doors on some cars stopped on the express track for passenger access. Along the westbound track, some of the original catenary is still in place while in other places it is in the process of being replaced, with contractors working. They use trucks, which are equipped with overhead work buckets or with cable reels with road-railer guide wheels. The new system is being installed using the old, original steel bridges that cross the tracks, as opposed to their practice on the New Canaan Branch where everything was new when the overhead was replaced several years ago."

Did you know that when a commuter purchases a monthly ticket from Metro-North (and other rail lines) the ticket is marked M (male) or F (female), and that they are not supposed to be used by anyone other than the purchaser? An article in the Westchester section (*New York Times* August 3) reported about Metro-North's efforts in thwarting ticket cheaters. A 26-year veteran Conductor has an assignment, known as a Special Duty Traveling Conductor. She rides different trains and is an expert on the subject of counterfeit tickets. Getting back to the original thought, when she encounters a passenger who presents a ticket which indicates that the "sex" of the person is different from what is printed on that ticket, she says that she gives them three chances to "fess up. If the person still insists that the ticket is theirs, she will alter the ticket so that it will no longer be usable by the person who is named on it. This is done by using a Black magic marker, and punching out the "M" or "F." She says, "to save a \$20 fare, they've ruined a \$200 ticket." Some passengers even take to hiding in the restrooms to avoid paying a fare. And did you know that there is a "deadbeat list," on which are named people who are to be removed from the train if they are spotted? Metro-North spokeswoman Marge Anders would not give specifics about the effect that using fake tickets, etc. has on the railroad, but termed this "a very minor problem."

MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

For the past few years, Metro-North and the New York State Thruway Authority have been studying alternatives for rebuilding or replacing the 48-year old Tappan Zee Bridge. Public hearings were held around the region to solicit feedback. The three-mile-long bridge carries an average of 150,000 vehicles per day, far in excess of what was envisioned in the early 1950s when it was built. Several years ago, a flexible lane was added so that there are four lanes of traffic in the peak direction, three going the other way. Of the more than 150 alternatives that are under consideration, many have a rail (heavy or light) component. Some proposals call for a tunnel, either road, road/rail, or solely rail. If heavy rail were selected, ideally it would connect with the Hudson Line. One proposal for light rail would run between Suffern and Port Chester, providing connections at five MTA lines: Port Jervis – Suffern, Pascack Valley – Nanuet, Hudson – Tarrytown, Harlem – White Plains, and New Haven – Port Chester. It should be noted that any discussions of bridge replacements, is a very sensitive issue in Rockland's river villages.

The front-page story of *The (Rockland) Journal News* on August 12, featured Stewart Airport, and the plans of New York State DOT and Metro-North to improve the transportation opportunities to the airport. A study was to be completed last month. First a little history: The MTA acquired Stewart Air Force Base from the U.S. Government on March 1, 1970, with the purpose of providing a "relief" airport to those in the metropolitan area. Republic Airport in Long Island had been acquired in 1969. In the MTA annual report for that year, it was reported that the State Legislature had authorized a link from the Erie-Lackawanna to Stewart Airport, and that design studies were underway. The following year \$30 million was appropriated to purchase additional land to the west. By 1972, it was determined that a 2.5-mile spur to the E-L Graham Line would provide riders (when modernized) "with direct access to Manhattan's Pennsylvania Station via main line tracks and a new connection at Secaucus, New Jersey. The use of high-speed self-propelled gas turbine/electric passenger cars is planned thus permitting operation over both electrified and non-electrified trackage and a total elapsed time including intermediate stops of 58 minutes for the 60-mile distance."

By 1973, with air traffic down, there was no longer any mention of a rail link. Over the years, many millions of dollars were spent on improvements to the airport. After 1979, the only reference to the two airports was on the financial statements. The latest proposal calls for a 3-

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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mile link to Metro-North's Salisbury Mills/Cornwall station at a cost of \$190 million. For that price, passengers would get an 80-minute trip to NY Penn via Secaucus Transfer or Hoboken. With the on-going Tappan Zee Bridge Study, if a rail option is selected, trains could be routed to the Hudson Line. A few years ago, title and responsibility for Stewart passed to the New York State Department of Transportation.

Member Barry Zuckerman reports that Trains #1604/1607, the *Metro North Express*, are now running with four cars and trains were routed via the new connection starting on August 11.

Connecticut Department of Transportation

Before the end of next year, commuters from Guilford can expect a new rail station. Member David A. Cohen sent a news item from *The* (New Haven) *Register* that reported about CDOT's plans to award a contract for the construction of a new platform and overhead pedestrian walkway during this month. One month earlier a public hearing was held to discuss plans for a 190-200-spot parking lot on town-owned property that is adjacent to the tracks.

MTA Long Island Rail Road

For those who have been at the Montauk rail station, its location may seem remote from "civilization," because it is a long hike or a more convenient taxi ride to the center of the village. However remote you may have thought it was, two residents were so annoyed about idling of trains' diesel engines that they started a petition drive to force the Long Island Rail Road to stop this practice. And these individuals had no trouble finding signers, because four hours of standing outside the Montauk Post Office yielded 800 signers. *The East Hampton Star* reported that this subject was brought up at a meeting of the Montauk Citizens Advisory Committee. Several members remembered that the same problem had occurred years ago and at the time the railroad stopped doing it. Other members complained about idling taxis in the village. Apparently someone at the LIRR heard their pleas, because the newspaper published a photo of an empty train yard. Thanks to member Joe Gagne, who sent this report.

The Belmont Park Fall Meet timetable was issued for the period September 5 thru October 26.

NJ Transit

All northern New Jersey rail lines received new timetables as of September 6, the date that Secaucus Transfer opened for weekend service. Please see separate article on page 1. Previously, on August 4, the station was opened to serve Harmon Cove residents who lost their rail station. Those timetables, which were recently reissued so that the colors were reversed, returned to the standard, and those that were standard were reversed. Metro-North also reissued its Port Jervis & Pas-

cack Valley Line timetable. The Main/Bergen timetable includes a new graphic (map) showing Secaucus Transfer station and rail lines that connect through it. In the "Weekend Section," extra lines have been added to show the arrival times of the Main and Bergen County Line trains. Below that are the times that the connecting trains (Morris & Essex, Northeast Corridor, and North Jersey Coast Lines) arrive, and their scheduled time at New York Penn. The same information is provided for trains leaving New York. Since there is no weekday service, the Pascack Valley Line does not appear on the map.

As of August, 105 of 116 Comet-IIs had been overhauled, and 120 of the 200 Comet V cars had been delivered. These cars are assigned to the Newark Division and the Midtown Direct services.

According to an article in *The New York Times*, during the first week of August, state officials were close to reaching an agreement that would construct a rail line, including a 2.6-mile loop in the Meadowlands. The loop would connect to the Secaucus Transfer station and would serve all venues in the Meadowlands. At the heart of this project is the Xanadu entertainment and office complex which is to be built on 100 acres starting either late this year or early next year. The cost of the rail portion has been put at \$470 million.

Another article in the *Times*, this time the New Jersey section (August 17) reported that since June 1, there had been 17 disruptions of service. Much of the blame was attributed to "nature," because of the 18-24 inches of rain that fell during that period.

Here we go again. Several months after NJ Transit began running its Midtown Direct service (June 10, 1996), Lakeland Bus Lines threatened a lawsuit over a loss of ridership. Now, NJ-ARP reports that DeCamp Bus Lines is threatening to draw up civil action against NJ Transit because of last September's opening of the Montclair Connection. It seems that ridership has dropped from 94,000 daily riders to 81,023 as of July, for a revenue loss of \$1.6 million. In quoting from the (Bloomfield) *Independent Press*, the bus line claims that NJ Transit engaged in "destructive competition" and that the rail line is subsidized and so can offer lower fares than a "private" carrier. The newspaper, to its credit, noted that DeCamp is just one of many privately owned bus companies that receives state capital subsidies as well as buses funded by the state and the Port Authority for \$1. Also to be considered is what effect the economy has had on the ridership loss. A few years ago NJ Transit and Lakeland Bus Lines came to an agreement over service levels and subsidies. Could be DeCamp is looking for a similar agreement.

Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation

The side platform, which is now designated as Platform A, at Pavonia/Newport was placed into service on August 10. This platform handles Hoboken and 33rd

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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Street trains, while the center platform (Platform B), is for Exchange Place, Journal Square, and Newark. PATH reported that the last time this platform was used was during mid-1950s, when the H&M operated the service. Platform A is open daily, between 6 AM and 11:15 PM. At other times, all trains stop at Platform B, as was done previously.

Port Authority of New York & New Jersey

AirTrain testing was being performed during an August evening that I was at JFK Airport. On September 3, I heard a report on NewsRadio 880 that service would begin before the end of the year. I checked the PA's website, which confirmed this, and it appears that both lines, Howard Beach and Jamaica-LIRR would be in service on this date.

Amtrak

July proved to be a record setting month for Amtrak, as they carried 2,223,358 passengers, the best month for ridership ever. This trend was continued since April, for in each subsequent month, new monthly records were also set. Fifteen routes, including the *Texas Eagle*, *Sunset Limited*, *Silver Meteor*, *Auto Train* and *City of New Orleans* reported double-digit ridership gains during this period. Topping the list was the *Pennsylvanian*, which has been running on a different schedule since the timetables changed on April 28.

As I approached the Seventh Avenue entrance to New York Penn, something seemed very strange, and I got closer, I saw that one of the staircases had been taken out of service. I picked up a copy of a Construction Advisory, which reported that for an approximate seven-week period, which began at 11:30 PM August 14, the stairs and banisters were being replaced, with the northernmost being done first. Customers were advised to use other entrances.

Miscellaneous

On July 15, L. Stanley Crane passed away at the age of 87. Mr. Crane had been a career railroader, starting with the Southern Railroad. After 20 years he joined the Pennsylvania but returned to the Southern, retiring as CEO in 1980. One year later he was selected to head Conrail, which at the time was in serious financial trouble, reportedly losing one million dollars a day. He opposed the federal government's plan to sell the railroad and turned the company around. By 1987, the public sale of Conrail gave the government \$1.58 billion. CSX and Norfolk Southern purchased Conrail for more than \$10 billion, effective August 22, 1998.

Other Transit Systems***Boston, Massachusetts***

2004 being a presidential election year, planning has been underway in Boston, where the Democrats will hold their National Convention, and New York City, which hosts the Republican National Convention. Mem-

ber Todd Glickman sent a report from *The Boston Globe* reporting that due to security concerns, consideration is being made to close North Station (Green and Orange Lines) for four days, between July 26 and July 29. It is also possible that Orange Line trains would simply bypass North Station, which is below the Fleet Center. Another scenario would allow trains to stop at North Station, but under heightened security measures. Transportation officials are concerned that if any type of station closure occurs, commuters will simply switch to their cars, causing more traffic tie-ups and delays, given that there could be additional street closings and detours. North Station's commuter trains would stop 100 yards from the end of their current platforms, perhaps platforming only part of the train.

Due to track work, on the Green Line, the "T"'s Fall Rapid Transit schedules were issued as of August 30, to be in effect through December 26. Buses are replacing the trolley's between Riverside and Reservoir (D Line) from approximately 9:30 PM until the end of service, Sundays through Thursday nights.

Public hearings were held in early September, on proposals to increase transit fares on January 1, 2004. The "T" is seeking to increase subway fares from \$1 to \$1.25 and bus fares from 75 cents to \$1. Before scheduling these hearings, the Governor and Legislature had to enact legislation removing a restriction from the law that prevents fare increases when ridership falls by more than 4% in a year. Gov. Romney wrote that he supported lifting the 4 percent rule because the MBTA lacks accurate ways to measure ridership. MBTA officials say fare revenue dropped by 3.2% in the fiscal year that ended June 30, and while they estimate that ridership dropped by a similar margin, they don't know that for sure. The "T" last raised fares in September 2000, when the bus fares went from \$.60 to \$.75 and subway fares, from \$.85 to \$1. In spite of all of this, Boston's transit fares remain among the lowest in the nation. Commuter fares also went up proportionately.

The MBTA would like to close five stops (one-sixth of the stops) on the B/Boston College line in an effort to reduce the current 45-minute trip time from Chestnut Hill to Government Center. This would be done in a six-month pilot program. Targeted for closure next spring are Greycliff Road, Chiswick Road, Mt. Hood Road, Summit Avenue, and Fordham Road. The *Boston Globe* reported that together, those stops account for about 2,500 daily riders, a fraction of the 30,000 people who use the B line daily. The "T" picked them based on low ridership and proximity to other stations. In all, cars make stops 22 times in less than 4 miles before going underground. Thanks to Todd for these reports.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

With the successful completion of the "Frankford Swing," SEPTA crews were put to work right away to demolish the no longer used two-block section of ele-

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 9)*

vated structure, providing "daylight" to the area for the first time since 1921.

Thanks to member Gregory Campolo, who filled in some other recently issued SEPTA timetables. June 15 was the effective date for the Broad Street Subway, Market-Frankford "L," Subway-Surface Lines 10, 11, 13, 34, and 36, and the following day for Routes 101 (Media) and 102 (Sharon Hill). The Routes 101 and 102 timetables were replaced on September 4, when service was increased from a 20 to a 30-minute headway between 8:30 AM and 12:30 PM.

New R6/Cynwyd timetables were issued on September 8 to reflect a cutback in service from 30th Street Station to Suburban Station. This move had been under consideration for some time.

From **Cinders**: SEPTA has begun work to single-track 3.4 miles of the R8 (Fox Chase) Line between Newtown Jct. and Cheltenham Jct., thereby separating passenger trains from CSX freight trains. Two passing sidings are to be installed. When new Regional Rail schedules were issued on July 6, normal weekend services were restored, however the popular *Schuylkill Valley Flyer* weekday expresses, which were eliminated during the power project, did not return. SEPTA is considering their resumption. In an unusual development, R6/Cynwyd trains are now single MUs – mostly 2-2 St. Louis cars. This marks the first use of single cars since Amtrak identified an alleged signal-shunting program more than 10 years ago. This branch also received continuous welded rail on its two-mile length. The Delaware River Port Authority, operator of PATCO, is looking to replace all 121 rail cars at a cost of \$200 million. The transit agency received 75 cars from Budd in 1968 and 46 from Vickers in 1979.

Washington D.C. area

Several rail publications have reported that MARC took delivery of 16 retired METRA Pullman-Standard cars during July. I emailed member Steve Erlitz to learn what he knew about this and he reported that they are not in service because CSX refuses to run them. Steve did see a few of them in Ivy City during August, but as of early September they were gone.

On Monday, September 8, Virginia Railway Express notified email subscribers that the Manassas line train set that operates as Train #326 (6:20 AM Broad Run) and Train #331 (5 PM Union Station) would be short one car while it undergoes some maintenance. They expected that the car would return to service by Wednesday, and it did. It was suggested that those who could take other trains go to the VRE website to consult the chart that compares train ridership to actual seating capacity. How's that for service!

Starting with the afternoon service on September 15, several train consists were revised, this due to the intro-

duction into service of additional ex-METRA Gallery cars. Manassas Line Trains #322/321/332/327/338/337 were changed from 4 Kawasakis to 3 gallery cars and 1 single level Mafersa. Trains #330/335 had one of their gallery cars taken away in order to accommodate yard space. While this resulted in a decrease in seats, current ridership shows that plenty of seats will still be available for the passengers of these trains. On the Fredericksburg Line, Trains #302/305 now operate with 5 Bombardier (Sunder) cars. Trains #304/309 operate with six Kawasaki cars and Train #303 has six Mafersa single-levels.

VRE will introduce "quiet" cars later this fall.

South Florida

The **South Florida Sentinel** reported that there is opposition to *Baylink*, the light rail line that would connect Miami and Miami Beach. Some residents in Miami Beach fear the toll that construction would have on their already crowded streets, and that the overhead wires would spoil the "charm" of South Beach. There are still others who believe that Miami Beach has not gotten its fair share of transit development. The project could cost \$400 million, paid for by a mix of federal funds and the new half-cent sales tax that was approved last November. Thanks to member Karl Groh for the report.

Member Dennis Zaccardi emailed that the new South Florida Regional Transportation Authority has hired a consultant to determine the feasibility of leasing or purchasing the existing Florida East Coast Railway tracks for commuter rail. As proposed, the line would run between Jupiter and downtown Miami. Unlike some railroads, the FEC is open to the possibility of sharing its tracks with commuter trains.

Chicago, Illinois

Member Jim Beeler sent an article from the **Daily Herald** that reported on METRA's plans to add parking to ten stations. This year, nearly 2,300 new spots will be added at 21 sites.

Our Production Manager, David Ross, forwarded an email about a Chicago Transit Authority initiative. Robert Ross (no relation) has been barred from CTA property for 18 months for repeatedly committing unlawful acts on transit property. He became the first individual to receive such an order under a Repeat Offender initiative, launched by the CTA last October. This policy was created in order to enhance customer safety and rid the system of lawbreakers. The CTA works with the Chicago Police Department and other law enforcement agencies. Getting into trouble more than one time can earn you this status, and violating the order to stay away will get you an automatic 300 days of jail time. According to police records, Ross has committed approximately 45 offenses on CTA property, ranging from peddling transit cards to not paying his fare. Other offenses are being found in any unauthorized area of CTA property, including being on the right-of-way, using the

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

transit system for any purpose other than transportation without the CTA's authorization, and, of course, unlawful sales, solicitation, and begging or unsafe conduct.

Houston, Texas

Over the weekend of August 23-24, Metro conducted tests on the system's overhead power lines and everything including the vehicle itself under its own power. Testing will continue until the full line is complete. Metro expects that service will be running for the Super Bowl, which will be played on February 1, 2004 at Reliant Stadium. Thanks to Karl Groh for the report.

Tacoma, Washington

Trolleys are running in Tacoma for the first time since April 12, 1941. Kick-off celebrations were held on August 22, and over the ensuing weekend more than 6,000 riders were carried. *Tacoma Link*, as the service is being marketed, operates every 10 minutes between 6 AM and 8 PM weekdays, and 8 AM-10 PM Saturdays. On Sundays, from 10-11:30 AM and 6:30-8 PM, cars operate on a 20-minute headway; for the in-between period, cars run every 10 minutes. For the present, no fares are charged to ride the 1.6-mile line, which uses three Skoda-built cars like the Portland City Streetcar. There are five stations: Theater District/South 9th Street, Convention Center/South 15th Street, Union Station/South 19th Street, South 25th Street, and Tacoma Dome. The line is double-tracked from 15th Street to south of Union Station. According to the agency's website, <http://www.soundtransit.org/linkrail/tacoma/>, the cars operate at 25 mph, the same as vehicular traffic, but have traffic light preemption.

Sacramento, California

The first phase of the South Sacramento light rail line was scheduled to open on September 26. There are seven stations (Broadway, 4th Avenue/Wayne Hultgren, City College, Fruitridge, 47th Ave., Florin, and Meadowview) in this 6.3-mile segment, which begins in downtown. Phase II, which extend the line another five miles to Calvine/Auberry, is not expected to begin construction until sometime in 2004 with completion planned for 2007.

San Francisco, California

Members Bob and Judy Matten did some more traveling this summer. In San Francisco they found long lines for the cable cars and the "F" Line, both heavy tourist lines. As evidence of the recent service cuts, they had to wait for a second car before they could board, and during the evening, in order to return to their hotel, they back ride to the end of the "F" Line in order to get on. The 7-day pass is still \$15, a bargain when one considers that a one-way cable car ride is \$2. Rides were taken on the recently re-opened "K" Line and Caltrain to San Jose. En route, they observed that much progress made on the third-tracking project since last September.

In San Jose the Mattens rode all three light rail lines (Mountain View-I-880/Milpitas, Baypointe-Santa Teresa, and Ohlone/Chynoweth-Almaden) and saw the new low-floor cars. Single rides went up from \$1.40 to \$1.50, and an all-day pass is now \$4.50, a fifty-cent increase.

BART's San Francisco Airport Extension has proven very popular. There are reports that during the first week, more than 100,000 passengers were carried. In the August *Bulletin* we reported that the Millbrae to SFO shuttle runs on a 24-minute headway. Bob had a few updates and sent a copy of BART's June 22 **Fares and Schedules**, which shows that a 20-minute headways are used. Should the need arise, train lengths can be increased from 4 to 10 cars. Also, there is a passing siding midway between the stations so that headways could be decreased. There are two *AirTrain* routes at SFO using two-car trains that operate on frequent headways. The Red Line runs an (inner) loop at the Airport, and the Blue Line, which also loops (outer) the Airport, also stops at West Field Road Station (U.S. Post Office and Cargo Facilities) and the Rental Car Center. This arrangement is similar to what will be in use at JFK Airport, when *AirTrain* eventually opens.

Caltrain's Proof-of-Payment system went into effect on September 22. The Mattens picked up a handout that explained the new policy. Another handout detailed two timetable changes that were made, one a minor time change affecting two trains, and the other involving the temporary removal of the through track south of the Damien station from August 25 through early October. This is being done to install additional tracks, and requires that Train #87 start its run at the San Jose Diridon station, instead of Damien, and Train #74 will terminate there as well.

San Jose, California

For the first time in its five-year life, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) ran on a Saturday. On August 9, a special train departed from the Lathrop/Manteca station at 9 AM to the San Jose Jazz Festival. Two return trains were operated from San Jose, at 6 and 8:30 PM.

ACE reported that its average daily ridership in 2002 was 3,010.

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Member Karl Stricker was kind enough to send copies of "O-Train" schedules, which he picked up during a recent visit. Trains operate every 20 minutes, although the schedule dated April 20, 2003 now has one additional late evening departure (23:48). DMU equipment that was built by Adtranz is used. There are still but five stations.

Vancouver, British Columbia

West Coast Express began running a morning version of its Train Bus on September 2. The schedule has the bus departing from Mission at 9:30 AM and arriving at Waterfront at 11:30 AM.

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 11)***Europe II**

Going to Europe twice within a little over a month is something that I had never done before. However, an invitation to a family celebration in London and 5-day Eurail® passes that went unused during July when we were in Switzerland provided good reasons to do this. As we had carry-on luggage, and Passport Controls and Customs were easy affairs at Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport, we were able to quickly proceed to the SNCF ticket windows. There we had our passes validated and received two tickets to ride RER (Regional Express) Line B to the Gare du Nord station. Arguably, this was not the best use of one of our five days, but it worked for us. At the same time we made TGV reservations for the days we would be traveling. With our First Class Eurail® pass, the upgrade costs just 3€ (€=\$1.13US). We took Métro Line 4 and changed for Line 2 to reach our hotel, which was located near the Arc de Triomphe. The afternoon was spent walking around Paris. The next morning, Friday, was a holiday, and many stores and offices were closed. When we woke up we learned about the "Blackout of 2003." Although I missed this one, I have memories of the previous ones in 1965 and 1977. I used a few hours that afternoon to ride parts of the Métro that I had not previously visited. Saturday morning we boarded an RER line "A" train for the quick ride from our hotel to the Gare de Lyon, where we found our TGV train, one of the newer duplex models, was already boarding. The builder's plate read 2003. Although it departed the terminal precisely at its 11:20 AM time, it came to an almost immediate stop for twelve minutes, and then proceeded – no explanation was offered. As the train picked up speed, we passed countless TGV sets, old and new, all painted in silver, white, and blue, stored in the adjacent yards. Arrival in Avignon was only five minutes behind schedule.

In Avignon, we used a rental car to visit some of the cities and villages in Provence, including Aix-en-Provence, and Arles, which had as residents the artists Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh. We returned the car in sufficient time to make our 12:53 PM TGV to Cannes. Avignon has two rail stations, but our trains, because they were TGVs, used the Avignon TGV station. There is a plaque recognizing the station's dedication on June 7, 2001 by President Jacques Chirac. Entering the station we learned that the train was running about 30 minutes late. I kept checking the main departure board and found no change, but decided that we should be on the platform about ten minutes early just in case the train made up some time. There was an earlier arrival, and we just had enough time to get on board. This trip was in one of the 1982 models. After the next stop in Marseilles, the train reversed and we had forward

facing seats. First Class seating is 1-2, Second Class 2-2. I learned from the crew that the maximum speed on this section was 130 mph.

Prior to leaving New York I spoke with member Ray Berger, who, when told of my travel plans, recommended that we make a visit to Ventimiglia, Italy, where there is a small trolley bus system that used a variety of equipment from different manufacturers. One evening while having dinner in Avignon, we struck up a conversation with two ladies who had made the same trip, but in reverse. They mentioned a disruption in rail service east of Monte Carlo due to a rockslide. Bob Matten sent a report from *Today's Railways* stating that this was due to discovery of an abnormal deformation in the tunnel wall. The increased surveillance paid off, because subsequently a major crack appeared and water began to enter. Direct rail service between Nice and Ventimiglia was canceled and replaced by bus service. This is a very heavy tourist line during summer. A new concrete tube is being constructed within the tunnel.

Upon arrival in Cannes, I picked up a copy of the temporary timetable, which did list the bus shuttle service. Our ride to Monte Carlo, Monaco was on a train that was powered by an electric engine. The non-air-conditioned coaches were in two sets of four, with one of each of the open ends set up for push/pull operation. One-half of one of the cars was designated First Class, non-smoking. We easily found seats here. Arriving at the new Monte Carlo station, there were plenty of signs directing passengers to the buses to Menton. Monte Carlo is very hilly, plus there were numerous traffic lights, and insufficient time was allotted for the train connection in Menton. We arrived just as the (late departing) train was leaving the station. There was no coordination between those operating the trains and the personnel who were assigned to handle the shuttle bus service. About 30 minutes later the shuttle train returned and we boarded. The equipment was identical to the train we rode earlier, but was powered by a diesel locomotive.

The ride took less than 15 minutes, and it was easy to find the street on which the trolley buses ran, just two blocks from the railway station. At the tourist office I picked a schedule and learned that not every run is operated by a trolley bus. Ultimately I did see two trolley buses, both were Bredas running the route to San Remo. We had planned to return to Monte Carlo on the 13:12 train; however, due to the extreme heat and humidity we canceled our plans to have lunch in Italy, and instead returned on the 11:53 train. The return trip was seamless as the train departed on time, and at Menton the buses were waiting. After lunch we did some sight-seeing in Monte Carlo and caught the 17:28 train back to Cannes. This trip, after our previous suffering in non-air-conditioned equipment, we were rewarded with an 8-car train which was composed of fairly new two-car

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 12)*

double-decker EMUs that were air-conditioned. Cannes is on the French Riviera, and to cool off, we went for another swim in the Mediterranean. Most of Europe experienced above-normal temperatures this summer.

After checking out of the hotel the next morning, we proceeded to the railway station and caught the same train as the previous day. And I do mean the same train, as the train set was the same, for the 45-minute ride to Nice. Storage lockers were located for our luggage, and after purchasing all-day bus tickets, did some sightseeing and shopping. On Avenue Jean Médecin, (a major thoroughfare), I saw signs (in French) that announced that "A Tram Would Soon Be Running Here." I was unable to get any details – perhaps one of our members could supply some. We picked up our luggage and boarded the #23 local bus for the 30-minute ride to Nice's airport, where we boarded an easy Jet® flight to Luton Airport in London. One of our relatives insisted on picking us up, so we did not use the Thameslink rail service.

On our first full day in London we took a motor coach tour to Oxford, Stratford-Upon-Avon where we visited the some of the universities, and the two Shakespeare homes, respectively, as well as the Cotswold region, areas we had not previously been to. Sunday was reserved for train riding, and the High Street Kensington Station, the nearest tube station to our hotel. I purchased an all-day Zone 1-6 ticket for £5.10. My wife only required the Zones 1-2 All-Day, which was £4.10 (£ = \$1.60US). For the one £ difference, I got the better deal. I boarded a District Line train to Wimbledon. Besides being the terminus for the District Line, it is also an intermediate station for Thameslink and South West Trains, and provides an easy transfer to the Croydon Tramlink, which boards from Track 10. I rode the three-line system, which opened in stages during May 2000. Tramlink uses a fleet of articulated 24 Bombardier cars. Vehicle number continue with what would have been London's next number, 2530. The series runs through 2553. As this was a Sunday, the headways were 15 minutes on the trunk and 30 minutes on the branches. Covering all lines took about 2½ hours, and I ended my ride at Beckenham Junction.

Permit me to back up a little, to report that the top news story on BBC-TV was Network Rail's major track projects over the weekend of August 23-26, which coincided with Monday's "Bank Holiday." BBC provided detailed coverage of the extensive work that was to be performed over that weekend, and even interviewed one of the senior Network Rail executives, who reported that fewer passengers are carried on weekends than on a typical weekday. He also stated that at one particular worksite, that what was being done on this one weekend would require the equivalent of 18 normal week-

ends to accomplish the same amount of work. The **Daily Express** carried the headline: "CHAOS AS BRITAIN GRINDS TO HALT." As my former colleagues at NYCT as well as many of our readers will recognize, there were what we would call a series of major G.O.s in effect. Because it was a holiday weekend, there were a number of concerts and festivals that now had reduced public transportation options – plus there were also a number of highway projects as well. For those who are familiar with the UK's rail system, these are the sections of lines that had no rail service, but had bus service.

East Coast Main – Newark and Retford
Great Western Main – Slough to Reading
West Coast Main – Hemel Hempstead to Milton Keynes and Stockport to Manchester Piccadilly
Stanstead Express – Liverpool St. Station in London to Stanstead Airport

At Beckenham Junction, I became a "victim" of one of these projects, and was forced to utilize a bus shuttle. After boarding, I learned that we were to be taken to the Denmark Hill station, where rail service was operating. After a few minutes the coach departed, and when we arrived at the fifth stop, Herne Hill, the coach went out of service with a mechanical problem. Along with several others, I got off and found a bus stop and soon a #68 bus came along which took me to the Elephant and Castle Tube stop, where I continued my riding from that point, covering sections of the Northern, Victoria, and Piccadilly Lines. At the Euston station, I picked up a copy of a brochure explaining the changes on the Virgin trains for that weekend. I made an obligatory stop at the London Transport Museum book shop, and added a few interesting books to my library. We flew home Monday morning.

London, United Kingdom

A power blackout affected London during the afternoon of August 28, stranding thousands in the Underground. Although it lasted but 40 minutes, questions were being raised about the electric grid. Officials were quick to point out that the power cut was a freak accident that occurred when a transformer in Kent failed and a backup system in London collapsed seconds later. **The New York Times** reported that London's Underground system has a backup power generator that works only when all of the network is out, but in this case just over 60% of the network was out and the generator did not kick in.

Correction

Member Bob Wright emailed a correction regarding last month's "From the History Files." SEPTA took over PTC in 1968. Although it was formed in 1963, SEPTA first started subsidizing commuter rail operations at that time, but it did not purchase PTC until October 1, 1968.

From the History Files

75 Years Ago: On October 25, 1928, the Reading

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96TH STREET POWER HOUSE by Thomas J. Blalock

As with the Third Avenue Railroad, the Metropolitan Street Railway Company was operating, in the 1890s, a combination of horse-drawn cars, cable-drawn cars, and cars operated by means of underground electrical conduits. In fact, by 1900, the Metropolitan Company had obtained a controlling interest in the Third Avenue Railroad.

In 1899, a new power house was put into operation by the Metropolitan Company. This was located at E. 96th Street in Manhattan, on the East River. It was equipped with a total of eleven steam engines driving three-phase, 25-cycle, 6,600-volt General Electric alternators.

These engines were rated at 4,500 hp each, when operating at maximum steam economy. They could, however, be pushed to 7,500 hp if necessary. The alternators were each rated for 3,500 kw output. This equipment was still in operation in 1911.

The output of this power station was sent, via underground high-voltage cables, to substations located on Front Street, Houston Street, E. 25th Street, W. 50th Street, E. 96th Street (at the power house), and W. 146th Street, all of these in Manhattan. At the substations, rotary converters were used to convert the alternating current into 600-volt direct current for the underground conduits.

In 1898, prior to the construction of the 96th Street Power House, the Metropolitan Street Railway had two sources of electrical power for the underground con-

duits which were then just being installed.

One of these sources was located in the Lexington Building on E. 25th Street. This facility had originally been designed for the installation of eight cable machines (a la San Francisco), but only four were actually installed. With the introduction of electric operation, the remaining space as used for the installation of four steam engine-driven direct current generators.

The other early power facility was located on W. 146th Street, near Lenox Avenue. It included a "temporary" steam generating station. Both of these locations eventually became rotary converter substations, as listed above, when the 96th Street Power House was put into operation.

As with the Kingsbridge Power House, this facility at E. 96th Street was eventually taken over by the New York Edison Company. An old photograph of the "System Operator's Board" at the Waterside Generating Station clearly shows that high voltage a.c. tie feeders were in place between Waterside and the 96th Street Station.

The power house ceased operation in 1915. By that time, the Metropolitan Company had become "New York Railways," and the latter company then began to purchase power from the IRT subway system. The 96th Street Station was eventually demolished, and no traces of it remain today.

COMMUTER RAILROADS STALLED BY BLACKOUT OF '03

When the power failed at 4:11 PM August 14, 2003, metropolitan area commuter railroads ceased operating. Amtrak trains from Washington and the South ran only as far north as Trenton, while trains from Boston were turned at New Haven.

After listening to our battery-powered radio, we were able to compile the following incomplete record:

PATH and Morris & Essex service was resumed about 10 PM Thursday, August 14. During the day, Friday, August 15, limited service started operating on the Morris

& Essex Lines, North Jersey Coast Line, and the Raritan Valley Line. PATH apparently operated normal service. The Long Island Rail Road, which carried passengers only on eastbound trips, operated trains on a 2-hour headway from Jamaica to Babylon and Ronkonkoma. Metro-North also operated trains on a 2-hour headway on the Harlem, Hudson, and New Haven Lines.

On Saturday, August 16, the regular Saturday schedule was in effect on all lines.

Commuter and Transit Notes

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Company began electrification of its suburban services in Philadelphia.

65 Years Ago: On October 9, 1938, the Long Island

Rail Road abandoned the Wading River Branch east of Port Jefferson.

40 Years Ago: On October 28, 1963, the demolition of New York's Pennsylvania Station was begun.

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

Tech Talk

(Continued from page 6)



Space for steelwork of new Track Q2 north of Sutter Avenue.



Old meets new as the former Track P2 is tied into the new Track Q2.



Here is a closer view of the new track panel being installed in the picture in the upper right corner of this page.



New steelwork for Track Q2 meets the existing portion of Track Q2 north of Sutter Avenue.

Photographs by the author.

Jeff may be contacted via e-mail at jerlitz@pipeline.com.



NYC SUBWAY CAR UPDATE

by GEORGE CHIASSON

This month, we go from having the Great Blackout to Hurricane Isabel as a common backdrop, and as fall begins to unfold so do the days of Redbird trains dwindle to a precious few. Following some significant fleet realignments in late August, the acceptance of R-142s for ④ service is very nearly complete, while those destined for ⑤ still lag somewhat as the program wraps up. R-62s are now dominant on ③, but also maintain a noticeable presence on the ④, even as their number has declined to just 30% of the total fleet at Jerome. Finally, R-62As have been steadily steaming to Corona to replace the World's Fair cars and a number of significant developments mark the evolution of a Redbird Work Car fleet. As usual, things on "Subdivision B" remain quiet, though the log-awaited Atlantic Avenue/Snediker Avenue structural relocation on the Canarsie Line was finally completed (see Jeff Erlitz's column in this issue), and once again the R-143s have some company on ①.

R-142s

Through September 18, 2003 Primary R-142s 6946-6950 were introduced on ⑤. As of the same date, Option II R-142s 1216-1235 and 1241-1245 were placed in service on ④. In turn, Option I R-142s 7081-7105 were relocated from ⑤ to ④ and primary R-142s 6681-6690 shifted from ② to ⑤ on August 25. These moves reduced the base fleets on both lines by one trainset to 380 cars, which remains well within schedule requirements. With just 30 more R-142s awaiting introduction and still over 100 R-62s at Jerome, it appears likely that further consolidations will be forthcoming on ②, ④, and ⑤.

On August 15, an experimental 6-car R-142 unit was observed making speed tests out on the IND Rockaway Line. This was composed of accepted units 1181/1182/1183/1184/1214/1215, temporarily removed from ④ service. Naturally, rumors began to abound that New Technology Trains were heading for ⑦, but within a couple of weeks both 5-car units had been re-marshaled and were back in passenger service. At the same time, there was a one-train swap of R-142As involving 7216-7220 and 7406-7410, which went from ⑥ to ④, being exchanged for cars 7681-7685 and 7726-7730. As best as can be determined, this is related to warranty expiration and SMS issues as the Pelham R-142A fleet passes its second anniversary of service, and is expected to be temporary. These trains were still on each other's lines through September 18, and bear proper map signage for their current assignments within. Other R-142As from ⑥ have also been seen in

the company of R-68s at the Concourse Shop, and by extension even in ④ service, as the time-required necessity of wheel-truing is occasionally being farmed out to that facility.

A Cameo Appearance: The R-110A

Inactive since its pilot service on ② and ⑤ ended in May, 1998, the 10-car R-110A prototype train was moved from its resting place at Pitkin Yard to 239th Street on August 17. It is reported to be "under evaluation," though reports conflict if there will be a concerted effort to restore it to passenger service. Given the probable equipment squeeze as MTA works to retire the Redbirds in full this may be possible, but there may be other less obvious objectives at work. By September 18, the cars were still at 239th Street with no further word on any progress which may have been made.

R-62/R-62A Transfers

Through September 18, R-62s 1346-1350, 1371-1375, 1416-1420, 1451-1455, 1481-1490, 1496-1500, 1521-1530, 1546-1550, 1556-1560, 1581-1585, and 1611-1615 were transferred from ④ to ③, for a total of 195 cars or 19½ trains. A sample observation on the morning of September 3 found 13 of the 24 trainsets used by ③ that rush hour to be R-62s, supplemented by 9 sets of mixed R-62As. Conversely, this leaves 120 R-62s assigned to ④, where the average rush hour as of September 15 was yielding at least 8 R-62 trains and sometimes more. R-62s also continue to be found on ④ during off-peak periods, including overnights.

The extensive list of R-62A transfers from ③ to ⑦ in the past several weeks includes 1841-1845 and 2021-2025 on August 11; 1851-1855 and 2016-2020 on August 18; 1836-1840, 1886-1890, and 2006-2015 on August 25; 1831-1835 on August 27; 2001-2005 on August 30; 1796-1800 on September 5; 1876-1880 and 1996-2000 on September 12; and 1806-1810 with 1991-1995 on September 17. Off-side (4 trip) devices for transfer moves to Coney Island have now been installed on all single units 2026-2045, but that appears to be the extent of this retrofit as Redbirds arrive at Corona for full-time utility duties. On August 29, unitized R-62A 1706 was damaged in a yard accident near Coney Island Shops and is sidelined, but should be repaired and returned to ⑦ service.

Redbird Notes

In the weeks since our last Update the remaining fleet of World's Fairs on ⑦ has been cut yet again by more than 40%, as arriving R-62As inundate Corona Yard.

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NYC Subway Car Update

(Continued from page 16)

Once again, not only has the dwindling fleet of GE R-36s been decimated, but so also did withdrawals and reassignments of single World's Fair R-33s resume in late August. As of September 18, there was a maximum of just six Redbird consists available for service (66 cars), with approximately five seeing service in rush hours. Nighttime and Sunday 7 service seems to have been completely surrendered to the stainless Bombardiers and middays inconsistently so, but Saturday day-times still commonly find a Redbird set or two traveling across Queens, owing to car-cleaning activities at Corona which require frequent equipment cycling. Time will tell if the Redbirds survive into our next installment, but if not we will certainly be happy to divulge the final historical details of their long service life.

By late August WH R-33S 9307 was inside 207th Street Shop receiving its GOH-II upgrade, but it remains uncertain if the 14 remaining WH single units will be making their way through the conversion/upgrade process as well. Of these only three remain active, and then likely for only a few more weeks. The potential use of R-33S cars on Corona-Coney Island shop transfers was largely subsumed (but not completely eliminated) by 4-trip R-62A single units through August. On September 5, Reserve Main Line GE R-33s 8820/8821, 8862/8863, 8878/8879, 8914/8915, and 8996/8997 were revived from storage at Concourse and allocated to Corona on permanent Work Service assignment. These have also had off-side trips installed and are expected to become regular "horses" for such moves. With their usefulness in a precipitous decline, WH R-33S cars 9311, 9314, and 9320, along with converted GEs 9308*, 9317* and 9325*, were turned over to "Subdivision C" on August 29 and have been allocated to duties out of 38th Street Yard. WH car 9310 entered storage at Corona within the following couple of weeks, and Subway Series single unit 9327 left Corona for points unknown, though it is believed to be sequestered at Coney Island. The end result is but eight active single unit cars, supporting the 6 trainsets indicated above. In addition, at least four of the GE single R-33s stationed at 207th Street for utility have been given prefixed Work Motor numbers, with a "1" replacing the more traditional "3" as such: 19334, 19335, 19337, and 19338.

Redbird Retirements

Taken out of service through September 18, 2003 were:

R-36: 9560/9561, 9566/9567, 9568/9569, 9572/9573, 9576/9577, 9578/9579, 9590/9591, 9592/9593, 9596/9597, 9598/9599, 9602/9603, 9614/9615,

9646/9647, 9648/9649, 9654/9655, 9662/9663, 9666/9667, 9670/9671, 9676/9677, 9686/9687, 9688/9689, 9694/9695, 9718/9719, 9732/9733, 9762/9763 off 7

R-33S 9308*, 9310, 9311, 9314, 9317*, 9320, 9325*, 9327 off 7

Redbird Reefing

Departing for Garden State North Reef (8 miles off Barnegat Inlet, located 25 miles SSW of Bay Head, New Jersey) on August 29 were the following:

R-33: 8958, 8959, 9018, 9019, 9026, 9027, 9130, 9182, 9183, 9214, 9215, 9225

36: 9450, 9451, 9596, 9597, 9604, 9605, 9622, 9623, 9632, 9633, 9644, 9645, 9666, 9667, 9670, 9671, 9672, 9673, 9682, 9683, 9702, 9703, 9708, 9709, 9722, 9723, 9732, 9733, 9746, 9747, 9752, 9753, 9756, 9757, 9764, 9765, 9768, 9769 (50)

One more barge load is projected for disposition off the New Jersey coast, with 42 World's Fair R-36s in line as of September 18, 2003. Remaining behind these are the active World's Fair R-36s on 7 and the 44 Reserve R-33MLs at Concourse, which are not expected to be part of the present Reefing program. It is anticipated that disposition of "Deadbirds" by barge should be complete by the end of 2003.

Subdivision "B" Notes

R-40M/42s returned to L on a regular basis, beginning on August 4. As previous, R-143s dominate the line, but the older equipment was restored in limited numbers and mainly on weekdays.

Conclusion

It seems somehow appropriate that the Redbirds should wane at the same time, if not the same pace, as the days shorten with coming of fall and the approach of another winter. Based on the experience of the past three years, it is likely these venerable trains will be harder to find as time progresses in the near-term. Eventually, of course, the day will come when they roam no more. As has been the case all along, I remain deeply appreciative of those individuals making regular contributions to this chronicle since it began in 2000, and I will do my best to bring things to a proper conclusion. The larger situation remains fluid as NYCT seeks the proper distribution of equipment to be Redbird-free, but it will undoubtedly happen. After considerable thought, I have concluded that the best way to use the time beyond the Redbirds and before the R-160s will be to develop even deeper historical appreciation of the SMEEs, the Redbirds, and even the R-62/62As, in tribute to our many years together. Meanwhile, we will keep watching the "ticker" and try to keep you apprised. Until next time....

Around New York's Transit System

New York Transit Museum Reopens

After a two-year closure, the New York Transit Museum reopened on September 16, 2003. A special celebration for members was held on Thursday afternoon, September 4. Many Division members were in attendance. At the June meeting, a speaker gave a presentation about what had been done during the interim and what visitors could expect. There have been a few changes, additions, and subtractions to the cars on display at track level, and for those who are interested, this is the lineup, starting at the block:

TRACK A1	TRACK A2
8506 (R-30)	10 (diesel locomotive)
6387 (R-16)	5 (electric locomotive)
8013 (R-11)	4902 (Low-V trailer)
2204 (B)	1612C (Q)
1575 (R-7A)	1404-1273-1407 (BU) (Q)
484 (R-4)	5760 (R-12)
6095 A-B-C (D)	6239 (R-15)
	6609 (R-17)
	9306 (R-33S)

The vintage subway and elevated cars have been refurbished and are in mint condition. They are available for next year's Subway Centennial.

On Sunday, September 7, from 10 AM to 5 PM, the Museum scheduled an MTA Family Day for all employees and their families. The museum also held a free community open house on September 13 and 14 from 10 AM to 6 PM. Tickets were distributed on a first come, first serve basis. Vintage buses were displayed on Schermerhorn Street and there was entertainment for the guests.

The original museum, dimly lit with incandescent lights, was transformed into a museum with bright lights, fresh paint, and air-conditioning. Fire protection, electrical systems, and accessibility were upgraded.

The vintage subway and elevated cars have been refurbished and are in mint condition. They are available for next year's Subway Centennial.

On display at the Dr. George T.F. Rahilly Trolley and Bus Study Center are more than 50 detailed models of trolley cars and work cars built by Dr. Rahilly, who built models of every trolley car that ever ran in Brooklyn.

Other exhibits include a history of fare collection, based on the museum's turnstile collection and the popular "Steel, Stone, and Backbone," explaining how the original subway was built. "Elevated City: A History

of the Els in New York" was transferred from the museum's Grand Central Terminal Gallery Annex and remounted.

The "new" museum is completely different from the "old" one; it has a true museum atmosphere.

CBTC Test Train—**L** Line

An 8-car R-143 CBTC test train operated between regular **L** service from Rockaway Parkway to Broadway Junction August 11 to August 15, 2003 from 11 PM to 5 AM. If this train delayed regular service, the Train Operator was required to cancel the test and operate the train far enough so that the test could resume without delaying regular service.

MetroCard Trivia

The Metro section of the *New York Times* explains that one corner of *MetroCards* have a notch to assist visually impaired riders in orienting the card correctly. The small hole in the *MetroCard* communicates with the electronic circuits in the buses' fare box.

Tiles in Subway Passageway

The Metro section of the *Times* also explains the meaning of the handsome blue-and-yellow Art Deco enamel plaques featuring large letter Ls in a long passageway at the Hoy-Schermerhorn Street station. The Ls refer to Loeser's department store, located on Fulton Street. At the present time, the Ls stand for "long defunct," because the store went out of business, probably in the 1950s.

Front Ends of IRT Cars in Store

Did you know that the front ends of two former IRT cars have been made a part of a clothing store? Member Marc Glucksman reports that in the Wet Seal store, located at the corner of Broadway and Bond Street in Manhattan, there are the front ends of an R-17 and an R-21 or R-22, painted white. They are visible from the street, and their fronts are intact, complete with roll sign, working door, controller, and brake stand. Even the headlights have been turned on, on one car. Marc was unable to determine their original numbers. The R-17 "greet" customers as they enter the store, while the R-21/22, which is directly behind it, is part of the cashier area.

Tennis Balls on Redbirds

During the U.S. Open tennis matches, played in Queens in early September, several Flushing Line Redbirds were outfitted with green tennis ball decals in which the **7** route identifier was emblazoned. Cars that had the decals included R-36s 9591, 9689, and 9719. The tennis balls and netting were barely put away, and the trophies presented, before the cars were sent to 207th Street Yard to begin preparation for reefing. Thanks to member Glenn Rowe for the car numbers.