

The Bulletin



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The Bulletin

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THIRD AVENUE "L" QUIT 50 YEARS AGO

When the last Third Avenue "L" train ran south of 149th Street on May 12, 1955, it marked the end of an era of rapid transit in Manhattan. The elevated was the sole form of rapid transit until the First Subway opened in 1904. The subway was extremely popular and the extensions gradually siphoned the traffic from the old elevated lines, most of which were discontinued at Unification in 1940. The Third Avenue "L," which was the busiest, became a rarity and managed to survive in Manhattan until May 12, 1955 and in the Bronx until April 28, 1973.

This article will analyze the rise and fall of passenger traffic on this line from 1908 to 1955. Before World War I, New York's population was increasing and "L" riding increased about 3 million passengers a year between 1908 and 1916. A partial rush hour express service north of 42nd Street had been operating for several years. To increase the capacity of the line, the third track was made continuous between Chatham Square and Fordham Road. Extended rush hour express service in the Bronx and all-day express service in Manhattan was begun in 1917. This new

express service resulted in an increase of nearly 14 million passengers from 1916 to 1917. Passenger traffic reached a maximum of 158,557,789 in 1917. When the Lexington Avenue Subway was extended to the Bronx on August 1, 1918, everyone knew that Third Avenue "L" traffic would decline. Passenger total for 1919, the first full year of Lexington Avenue Subway operation, was 20 million

less than the 1917 total.

The extension of the elevated to White Plains Road on October 4, 1920 and the beginning of evening express service in 1923 helped boost riding 3 million in 1921 and again in 1924. However, these increases were only temporary and the decline in riding averaged 1½ million

riders a year during the 1920s.

New York City's transit riding fell appreciably during the Depression and the Third Avenue "L" was no exception. The decline averaged 10 million passengers per year from 1930 to 1935. Improved business conditions during the next five years helped reduce the average annual decline to 2 million passengers. The closing of the Second Avenue "L"

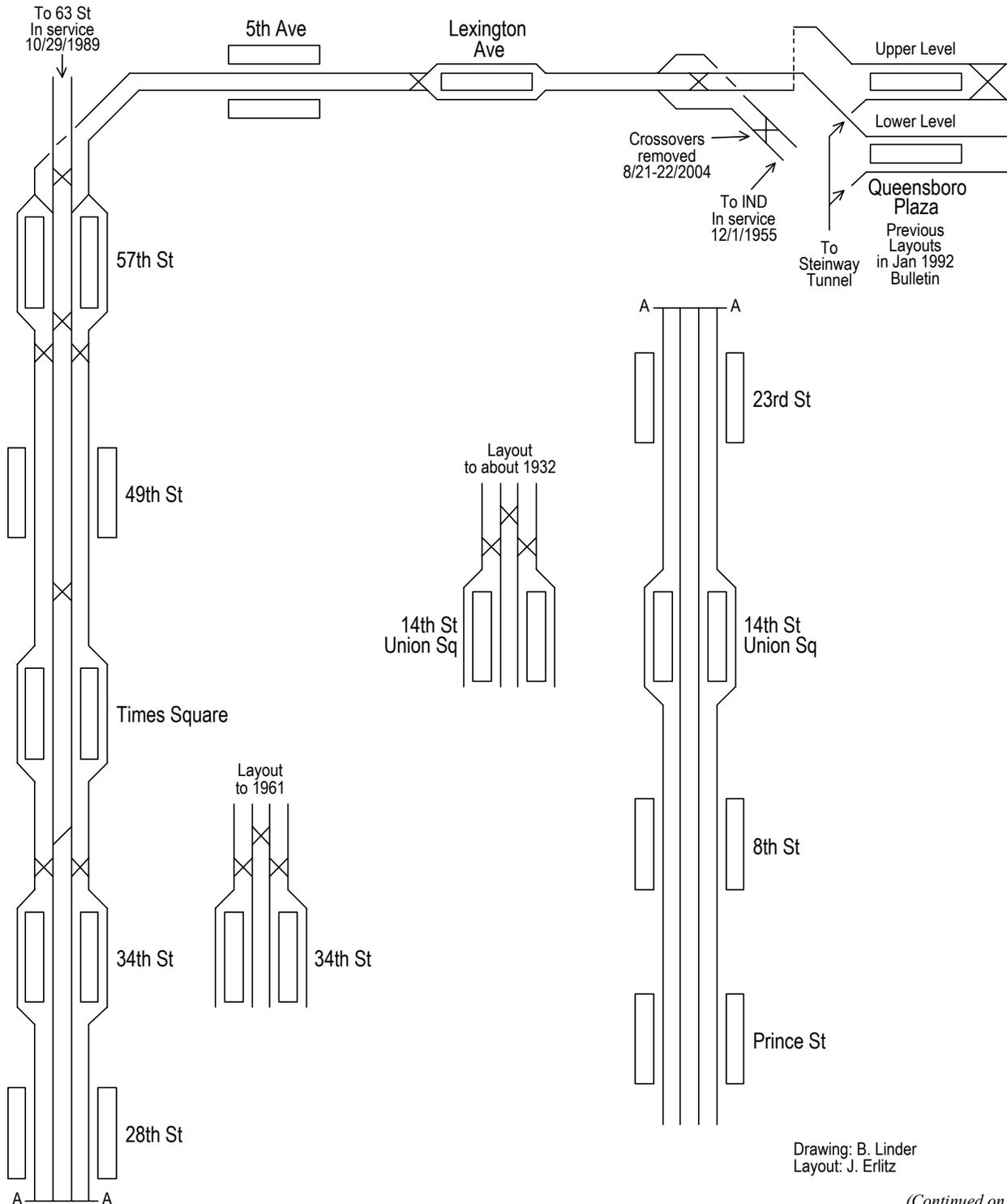
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Manhattan Railway, Chatham Square, 1880.
Bernard Linder collection

BMT BROADWAY LINE TRACK PLANS

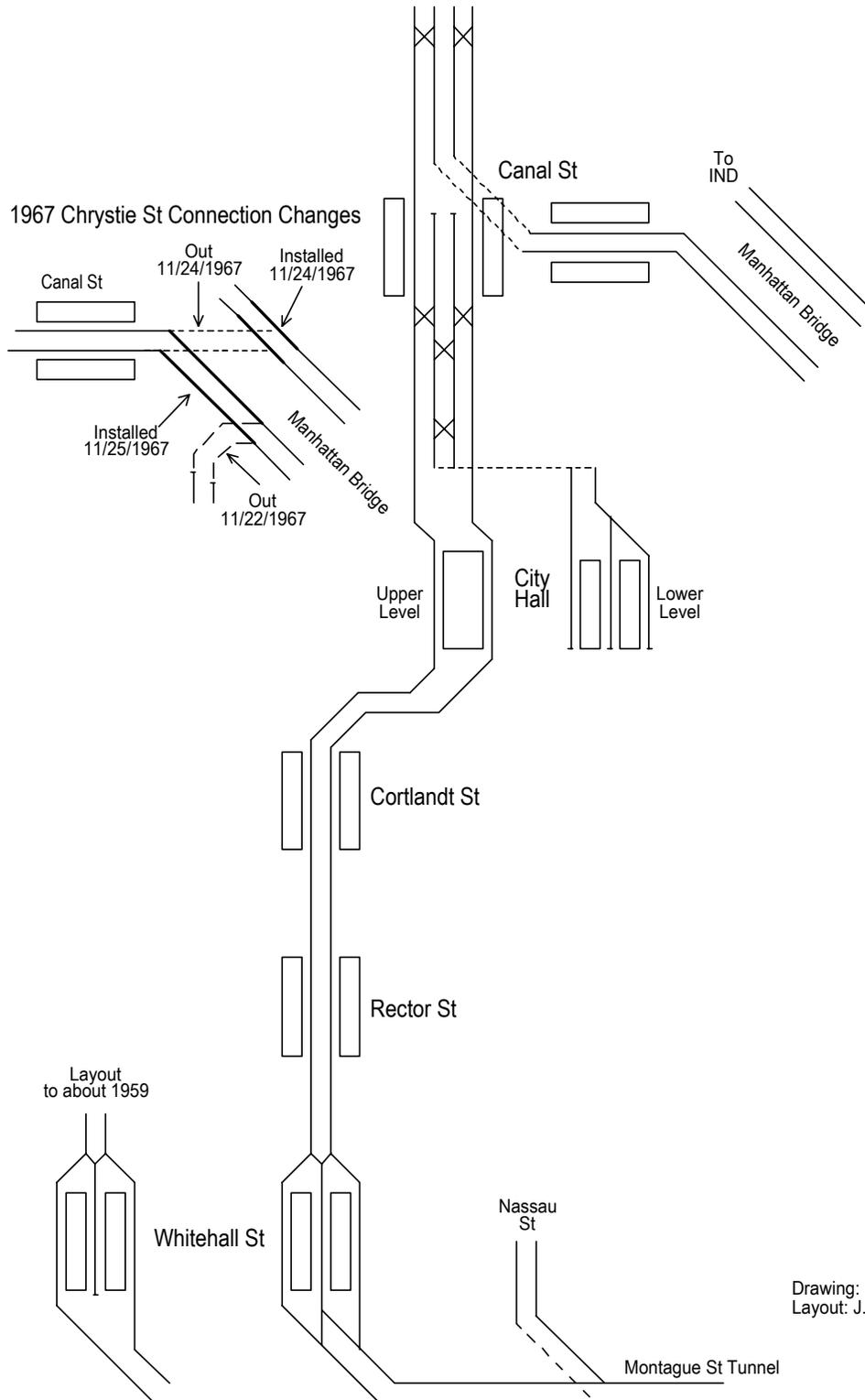
Broadway Subway North Portion 1937-Present



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BMT Broadway Subway Track Plans
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**Broadway Subway
South Portion
1937-Present**



Drawing: B. Linder
Layout: J. Erlitz

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Third Avenue "L" Quit 50 Years Ago

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in 1940 and 1942 did not divert passengers to the Third Avenue "L," where riding continued declining slightly, reaching a new low in 1944. Wartime shortages of automobiles and gasoline and the wartime business boom must have helped boost riding by 13 million passengers in two years, making the 1946 total the highest since 1933.

Postwar riding fell on nearly all transit systems. Third Avenue "L" riding declined rapidly. This decline was accelerated by the abandonment of major portions of the line between 1950 and 1955. On December 22, 1950, service was discontinued between South Ferry and Chatham Square and between Gun Hill Road and 241st Street. Weekday evening and all weekend service south of 149th Street was discontinued on March 14, 1952. The City Hall station was closed on December 31, 1953 and all service south of 149th Street stopped running on May 12, 1955. As a result of the decline in postwar rid-

ing and the above abandonments, passenger traffic fell

DATE	MUDC	GATE	COM-POSITE	Q	TOTAL
November 17, 1948	397	42	76	—	515
January 18, 1949	386	42	67	—	495
August 23, 1949	361	42	55	—	458
March 17, 1950	365	42	42	—	449
April 21, 1950	357	42	12	30	441
October 30, 1950	342	—	—	78	420
March 14, 1951	288	—	—	72	360
July 24, 1953	201	—	—	72	273
July 28, 1954	166	—	—	72	238
November 3, 1954	150	—	—	72	222
April 29, 1955	140	—	—	72	212



Looking north from Chatham Square, upper level.
Bernard Linder collection



Another view of Chatham Square.
Bernard Linder collection



Rebuilding Chatham Square, February 8, 1915.
Bernard Linder photograph



Harlem River Bridge, looking north, May 9, 1955.
Bernard Linder photograph

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Third Avenue "L" Quit 50 Years Ago

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Harlem River Bridge, looking north from 129th Street station, May 9, 1955.
Bernard Linder photograph



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



99th Street Yard, which closed April 30, 1949.
Bernard Linder collection

TECH TALK

by Jeffrey Erlitz

During April, the Long Island Rail Road installed new third rail on Tracks 1 and 2 of the Main Line between Mineola and Hicksville. M-7s at least as high as 7415 are now in service. The new signal system that is being installed on the Montauk Branch from Babylon to Montauk is being done with color light signals, not position light, as has been the PRR/LIRR standard for many, many years. Of course, the East River tunnels and the underground portions of the Atlantic Branch have had color light signals since 1910 and 1905, respectively. At one time, both the Long Beach and Bay Ridge Branches also were equipped with color light signals.

The first cut-ins for the new signal system on the Concourse Line is scheduled to take place in June. This will be the section from north of 145th Street to north of 161st Street and includes one Central Instrument Room at 155th Street and one Relay Room at 161st Street.

Schiavone Construction has been hard at work on Phase 2 of the Times Square station rehabilitation project, contract A-35920. This \$117.7 million project is now 66% complete and should reach beneficial use by June of next year. On the 7 platform, almost all of the tile work has now been completed. The mosaic tile samples for the **NORW** station have been approved. Tile work on the southbound side is 90% complete while the northbound side is about 60% complete. Floor and wall tile installation is just about done in the Eighth Avenue passageway.

Out on the Fulton Street Line, the Euclid Avenue ADA project (contract A-35930) is now nearly 80% complete. Gibraltar Contracting is installing three elevators under this \$14.3 million project, which is scheduled to be completed by this June.

M.A. Angeliades is now just past the halfway point in the historic restoration of the Simpson Street station on the Lenox Avenue-White Plains Road Line. This \$13.5 million project should wrap up by the end of this August.

Contract C-33823 is going to be the tunnel rehabilitation of the (BMT) Broadway Line from Whitehall Street to Canal Street. This project is now in design and construction should start by the end of July next year.

The structural rehabilitation of the White Plains Road Line north of E. 180th Street (contract C-34574) is now about 80% complete. Work is currently being done on

Track 2 (southbound local) between Nereid Avenue and 219th Street. The thru spans have been replaced at all four stations, with waterproofing in the thru span areas now complete at 219th and 225th Streets. The reinstallation of the track at these two stations has started while the waterproofing at 231st Street and Nereid Avenue continues. Steel repairs on the middle track (Track M) continue between Nereid Avenue and 241st Street.

Slattery Skanska is now just past the halfway point in the construction of the new maintenance shop and car washer at Corona Yard. This is a huge project, costing \$207.8 million.

The tunnel lighting on the Fourth Avenue Line is being rehabbed under contract E-33801 and is almost 90% done. In fact, the section from 95th Street to 9th Street already has all of the new lighting fixtures turned on. The section from 9th Street to Pacific Street should be done by September.

Slattery Skanska is also working on contract E-33815, the rehabilitation of the tunnel lighting on the Queens Boulevard Line from Lexington Avenue to Queens Plaza. The contractor is a little more than 1/3 of the way done.

Rosewood Contracting is 80% done in its rehabilitation of five pump facilities on the Eighth Avenue Line between the Chambers Street and 23rd Street stations. This \$18.3 million project is scheduled to be complete by the end of this July.

Whitmann Plumbing Associates is 94% complete on its installation of dry standpipes in 42 stations all over the subway system under contract E-40822. Whitmann should wrap up by mid-June.

I never mentioned this before but, under the Canarsie Line CBTC project (S-32701), trains will, under normal circumstances, operate fully automatically from door close to door open at the next station. The Train Operator will keep his/her hand pressed down on the controller handle in, I believe, the emergency brake position, while the train accelerates, maintains speed, and decelerates for the next station. This *should* have the effect of having nearly identical running times for each train on the line.

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CORRECTION

In the April, 2005 issue, page 6, column 2, line 7 should read, "tracks 7 and 8" (not "tracks 1 and 2").

Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

New timetables under General Order No. 301 went into effect at 2:01 AM April 3, and will remain in effect through October 1. On the Hudson Line and Harlem Lines, these changes affect only weekend trains. *The New York Times* reported that these schedules have been “tweaked” so that trains appear to be running on time more often. The railroad will not be changing the starting of finishing times, only some of the intermediate station departure times. This will affect approximately one-third of the 606 daily trains. Metro-North President Peter A. Cannito agrees that doing this is risky, and the new timetables are not intended to improve reliability, but rather to increase customer satisfaction. Recent surveys have shown rider dissatisfaction with OTP. The time that is being re-allocated is what is known as “recovery time” or “pad.” This can explain why a train is late at many stations, but on-time at the terminal. Many railroads follow this practice. I can remember an Amtrak trip to Washington, D.C., where we were running 16 minutes late at BWI Airport, but arrived in Washington, D.C. Union Station on time! Prior to 1990, Metro-North’s standard for a late train was one that was more than 5 minutes 29 seconds late. At that time it adopted the LIRR’s definition – 5 minutes 59 seconds.

Other changes:

- Hudson – Due to station rehabilitation projects at Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, and Ardsley, three trains that originate at Croton-Harmon depart 8 minutes earlier than the previous schedules. Instead of 40 minutes after the hour, the departure times are 9:32, 10:32, and 11:32 AM. Three Grand Central Terminal/Poughkeepsie trains now depart 13 minutes earlier, at 4:51, 5:51, and 6:51 PM. In addition, three trains to Croton-Harmon (#8747, 8749, and 8753) depart Grand Central Terminal 6 minutes later, at 4:56, 5:56, and 6:56 PM.
- Harlem – Because of track work (and single-tracking) between Valhalla and Hawthorne, trains to Southeast depart Grand Central 2 minutes later, at 50 minutes after the hour. Connecting trains to Wassaic also leave Southeast 2 minutes later. Also, Saturday-only train #9653, the 6:18 PM Grand Central Terminal/Southeast, is bypassing Valhalla and Hawthorne, and the train departs 3 minutes later, at 6:21 PM. Ongoing station rehabilitation work at Melrose, Tremont, and Fordham requires the use of bridge plates for boarding because the track next to the platform will be out of service on weekends. Therefore, an additional 2 to 3 minutes have been added to the schedules of Lower Harlem weekend trains making multiple

Bronx stops since slow customer boardings are expected at these stations.

- New Haven (Saturday) – Because the Harlem and New Haven Lines share tracks from Woodlawn south, this Harlem Line track work also affects Saturday-only trains. These inbound local trains leave Stamford 2 minutes later, at 3:32, 4:32, and 5:32 PM.
- New Haven (Weekday) – In response to customer requests, stops at Rowayton, East Norwalk, Greens Farms, and Southport have been added to Train #1588 (9:37 PM Grand Central Terminal/New Haven). This change closes a 75-minute gap in service to these stations on weekday evenings. Finally, Train #3538, a Friday-only train to New Haven, now departs 3 minutes earlier, at 2:57 PM, and Train #1593 (9:09 PM New Haven/Grand Central Terminal) now departs 7 minutes later, at 9:16 PM.

With continuing deliveries of M-7s, the ACMUs are out of service and M-1s are being scrapped. During a ride on the Harlem Line on March 22, I saw the following cars south of Fleetwood being prepared for disposal: 8286-8307, 8322/23, 8326/27, 8358/59, 8366/67, and 8368/69. I did observe one 9-car train of ACMUs as I passed North White Plains Yard. That same day, FL-9m 2014 was the motive power on the Wassaic-Southeast shuttle.

Mileposts for March had an article about the rebuilding program for the M-2s, although it was called the equivalent of an “Extreme Makeover.” The Critical System Replacement (CSR) Program being done in conjunction with CDOT is breathing new life into these 30-year-old cars. Being replaced are propulsion and lighting systems, as well as toilets and floors. In the two years that CSR has been in place, the MDBF (Mean Distance Between Failures) has increased. In 2004, cars that had not gone through the program averaged 49,434 miles, while those that had been overhauled averaged 98,676 miles, nearly double. In terms of numbers of cars, as of this past January, 68 of the 240 M-2s had been completed. Each car requires about a month of shop time. The program is expected to be finished by 2008.

An analysis of rolling stock used on the New Haven Line has found that by the end of this year the average age of the equipment will be 25 years. As a comparison, the Harlem and Hudson fleet, after delivery of 300 M-7s, will average 8 years. As new rolling stock is years away, both agencies have undertaken a project to repair the critical systems in the M-2 fleet (please refer to the pre-

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 7)*

vious paragraph). The cost of the whole project is \$150 million, of which Metro-North is providing \$52 million.

CDOT purchased 33 Mafersa cars from Virginia Railway Express last year with the goal of adding 2,000 seats to New Haven Line trains. However, only a handful of the cars have entered service on Shore Line East trains. When these cars are in service, the Bombardier cars will be shifted to New Haven/Grand Central Terminal service. CDOT is looking to lease 8 locomotives from Amtrak, which would be P-40s, not F-40s as was previously reported. One diesel train was added in 2004, and with the acquisition of the P-40s and transfer of CDOT Bombardier coaches, two additional diesel trains would be operating. This spring, CDOT was going out to bid for six new dual-mode locomotives, with an option for four more. To plan for the future, CDOT and Metro-North are formulating a plan to purchase approximately 360 EMUs that would accomplish the following:

- Replace the entire M-2 fleet
- Replace mainline diesel trains (see above)
- Replace Shore Line East trains with EMUs
- Provide seats to meet ridership demand through 2015

The cost is approximately \$1 billion, based on a unit cost of \$3.5 million for each rail car. You can add about \$350 million for the new maintenance shop in New Haven. \$350 million is Metro-North's share of the program; the State of Connecticut would be responsible for the balance.

Several infrastructure projects have been planned for the New Haven Line. CP 216 in New Rochelle would be reconfigured to add Interlockings at CP 215 and CP 217, to provide additional flexibility for the center island platform at New Rochelle and allow for efficient access for Amtrak trains merging from the Hell Gate Line at Shell Interlocking.

In 1995, Metro-North completed the replacement of the catenary within New York State, and the State of Connecticut has completed the portion of the line from the State Line to CP 232 in Stamford. The project has been divided into four sections which are listed below, along with the estimated costs, completion dates and current status:

- Catenary "A" – Replacement of 32 track miles of wire from the state line to CP 232 including replacement of three undergrade bridges in Greenwich - \$57 million, May, 2000-May, 2005. All catenary work is complete. The Greenwich station is complete with the exception of the pedestrian overpass and electrical work at platforms, which are to be complete by this month.
- Catenary "B" – Replacement of 30 track miles of wire from CP 235 to CP 241 in Norwalk, including

replacement of three undergrade bridges in Darien and Norwalk - \$ 67 million, August, 2004-January, 2009. Track outages began last month, with a three-month outage on Track 4 from South Norwalk to Stamford for catenary bridge foundation work.

- Catenary "C" – Replacement of 18.8 track miles of wire from CP 241 to CP 261 (Devon). This project will be completed in three phases and includes undergrade bridge work and major rehabilitation of Walk and Saga moveable bridges - cost to be determined, January, 2007-September, 2014.
- Catenary "D" – Replacement of 24 track miles of wire from CP 261 to CP 271 in New Haven, including replacement of three undergrade bridges along the right-of-way - \$83 million, April, 2001-September, 2006. Current outage on Track 2 is to be complete this August. At that time, Track 4 will be taken out of service for approximately one year.

MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

Rail photography on the Hoboken Division could get a little more interesting, but just be careful where you stand when you snap the shutter, due to NJ Transit's photography policies. Two former Amtrak F-40s will be leased from the Morristown & Erie Railway so that seven of Metro-North's locomotives can be sent for overhaul. It had been expected that NJ Transit would be able to provide replacements for these units, but "changes to both NJT's and MNR's operations as well as delays in the delivery of NJT's new diesel locomotives, has inhibited NJT's ability to provide replacement locomotives." The locomotives that will be leased for up to 42 months meet all cab signal and other requirements and the cost should not exceed \$200,000.

Motive Power, Incorporated was awarded an \$8,550,000 contract to overhaul 7 GP-40-FH-2s, 4184-4190. These units were delivered between 1988 and 1992, having been rebuilt from former Union Pacific and Conrail GP-40s. Under the terms of the contract, 2 units will be done this year, 3 in 2006, and the remaining 2 in 2007. MPI was not the low-bidder. That distinction went to Norfolk-Southern, but because N-S was unable to commit to a project delivery schedule, it did not get this contract.

MTA Long Island Rail Road

The schedule for Shea Stadium service from April 11-May 22 is now available.

NJ Transit

Again this year, the return to Daylight Saving Time did not dictate a timetable change. The March/April edition of *FYI* reported the following:

The departure times of many trains are being adjusted by a few minutes to improve reliability and connections with other services, to provide room for new trains, and to accommodate construction on the North Jersey

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 8)***Coast Line.**

Several new trains will operate on certain lines, providing more seats during peak and off-peak periods and filling gaps in service.

There are new midday trains on the Main/Bergen Lines that provide hourly service to all stations between Ridgewood and Secaucus, which will increase travel options to New York and New Jersey. This will require the renumbering of several existing trains.

New express trains will provide additional capacity on the Northeast Corridor, Boonton, and Main/Bergen Lines. This will result in more travel options for two recently opened stations, Montclair State University and Ramsey/Route 17.

NJ Transit carried a record number of passengers last year, surpassing pre-9/11 records. Rail ridership reached almost 64 million passenger trips, up 5.2 percent over 2003. *The Courier-News* reported that with these statistics, NJ Transit Executive Director George D. Warrington hinted that the proposed fare increases that would take effect on July 1 might be trimmed a little from the average 15% that has been proposed. Light Rail ridership also increased 24.3% to 11.3 million trips. Many of these increases are attributable to the opening of the Montclair Connection, Secaucus Transfer, and the RiverLINE. The transit agency also added service on most lines.

The news is positive for the continued use of EMUs on NJ Transit. NJ-ARP members reported that they attended a meeting during March with NJ Transit officials who told them that the 230 car Arrow III fleet would be replaced, not rebuilt (again). And the new car order may exceed that number because of ADA requirements which reduce the seating and FRA standards that have been increased for corner collision posts and end doors. Scrap stainless steel prices are at an all-time high, so the Arrow IIIs should fetch top dollar. All cars would have automatic electronic (not mechanical) voltage change equipment. Lack of this feature doomed the slightly older Arrow IIs. NJ-ARP also reported that "Triplets" are not favored by the operating department so new EMUs and EMUs/DMUs will most likely be married pairs for both types of cars. For the EMUs, all motors probably will be in one unit returning to the motor/trailer combination that the Lackawanna adopted in 1931.

Another topic of discussion was the installation of catenary wire from Great Notch to Denville, and that is a possibility. Other electrification candidates such as the Raritan Valley Line and Long Branch to Bay Head are less likely, with service to be provided on those lines by the EMU/DMU dual-mode multiple units.

In March, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a \$284 billion federal transportation bill that included

\$15 million for the project that would restore rail service using DMUs on the New York, Susquehanna & Western tracks from Hawthorne and Paterson to Hackensack. The line is presently served only by freight trains. Passenger trains last ran on the "Susie Q" on June 30, 1966. *The Star-Ledger* reported that with existing funds and a state commitment of \$10 million, about \$31 million has been committed to the \$60 million project. There still needs to be a Senate bill and a signature by the President.

On March 22, NJ Transit held another public hearing, this one in Freehold Township, about the Monmouth-Ocean-Middlesex (MOM) rail project. According to the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), the following describes the three routing possibilities. The first two would connect with the North Jersey Coast Line, while the third would join the Northeast Corridor Line. All would require changing trains in Newark to an electric train to New York. (See chart on next page.)

While gathering data for a soon-to-be published roster of NJ Transit's coaches, I waited in NY Penn Station to get a look at the commuter club car that still operates on the North Jersey Coast Line. The car, renumbered 5459 from its original 5759, retains its mid-car partition, with a door. In the east end of the car, there are 24 material-covered reclining chairs and 15 standard blue vinyl(?) covered seats. The west end of the car is available for regular passenger use and looks just like all of the overhauled Comet IIs. You can find this car on Trains #3224 (7:11 Long Branch/NY Penn) and #3269 (5:33 NY Penn/Long Branch).

One year after the start-up of RiverLINE service, NJ Transit officials were pleased with the progress that has been made even though ridership did not meet projections of 5,900 daily riders. *The Burlington County Times* reported that weekday riders bought 4,394 monthly passes since the line began selling them. In April, 2004, the line's first full month of operation, NJ Transit sold 212 monthly passes. In March, 2005, the agency sold 491 monthly passes. During last summer ridership averaged more than 5,000 trips each weekday, with the July figure climbing to an average of 5,795 trips. However, with the colder weather, ridership dropped to an average of 4,816 in December. But during the first three weeks of February the average daily weekday ridership inched back over the 5,000 mark.

Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation

Finally, after years of "talking about it," the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey awarded Kawasaki Rail Car, Incorporated a \$499 million contract to construct 340 PA-5 cars. They will be an updated version of MTA New York City Transit's R-142 cars, but a PA grinning Chairman Anthony R. Coscia was quoted in *The New York Times* as saying: "Our price on a per-car basis is actually lower than they paid, but we're getting a better car." In addition, \$310 million will be spent for

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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car maintenance equipment, renovations to the Harrison Maintenance Facility, and preliminary work to upgrade PATH's signal system. Mr. Coscia did not say if Kawasaki's was the low bid, and he also chose not to identify the other bidders. Kawasaki promised to spend \$128 million in the region on labor and parts. The shells will be manufactured at KRC's plant in Lincoln, Nebraska, and very likely the final assembly will be done in the company's Yonkers facility. The first of these cars are expected to arrive in 2008. Interestingly, the PA's press release reported that the entire fleet would be replaced by 2011. Previously, the PA had indicated that the now nearly 20-year-old PA-4s, which are stainless steel, would be overhauled.

Metropolitan Area

For the first time in 21 years, New York State has an on-time budget, although there were still some details to be worked out as this was written in early April. As far as transportation goes, \$17.9 billion has been allocated for the MTA. The Legislature also authorized a \$2.9 billion transportation bond act that must be approved by voters this fall. If approved, the monies would be split evenly between MTA capital projects and statewide highway/bridge improvements.

Amtrak

On Friday, April 15, a bombshell hit Amtrak. All *Acela*

trainsets were removed from service immediately due to cracks that were detected in the brakes. An inspection revealed these cracks were found in 300 of 1,400 brakes that were checked and Amtrak then had to scramble to put together some trains of Amfleet cars. *The New York Times* reported that Amtrak shuffled equipment and transferred cars from the West Coast. You might remember that all *Acelas* were removed from service during the summer of 2002 due to problems with the yaw dampers. If there is any good news here, it is that the work will be done under warranty. NJ Transit announced that it would supply its own cars on two of the *Clockers*, one in each direction. These trains are already powered by ALP-46s. Those trains are typically made up of 12-14 *Amfleet* cars. It seemed that the situation changed day-by-day, because on Monday, it was announced that the limited service (one trainset in service) would remain unchanged thru Friday April 22. Actually, the trainset only made it to Washington, D.C., and did not make a return trip that day. From Tuesday on, no *Acelas* were operated. Amtrak then reported that the brake manufacturer and Bombardier only had 80 replacement sets available. On Wednesday, April 20, it was announced that *Acela* service would remain suspended at least until the summer. In place of *Acela*, *Metroliner* service returned effective Monday, April 25. Ironically, the April 25 timetable was the first one which did not include the *Metroliner* service. All thirteen hourly departures are being covered starting May 2, with

MONMOUTH-OCEAN-MIDDLESEX (M-O-M) LINE ROUTING POSSIBILITIES

ROUTE DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED STATIONS	EXISTING STATIONS	RUNNING TIME TO NEWARK PENN STATION	PROPOSED NUMBER OF DAILY TRAINS	PROPOSED DAILY RIDERSHIP	CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE (millions)	OPERATING COST ESTIMATE (millions)
Lakehurst to Matawan	Lakehurst	Matawan	1:35	44	10,900	\$730	\$45
	Jackson	South Amboy					
	Lakewood	Perth Amboy					
	Freehold Township	Woodbridge					
	Marlboro Morganville	Newark Airport Newark					
Lakehurst to Red Bank	Lakehurst	Red Bank	1:37	44	7,900	\$600	\$42
	Jackson	Middletown					
	Lakewood	Hazlet					
	Howell	Matawan					
	Eatontown	South Amboy					
		Perth Amboy					
		Woodbridge					
Lakehurst to Monmouth Junction	Lakehurst	New Brunswick	1:50	44	9,000	\$860	\$49
	Jackson	Edison					
	Lakewood	Metuchen					
	Freehold Township	Metropark					
	Freehold Borough	Newark Airport					
	Manalapan	Newark					
	Jamesburg South Brunswick						

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

Metroliner service between Washington and New York each weekday departing both terminals nearly every hour between 6 AM and 6 PM. This service was increased to every-hour-on-the-hour weekdays from Washington and New York starting Monday, May 2. These trains have both Business class and First class service. *Metroliners* were supplemented with 20 *Regional* train roundtrips between Washington and New York, with most departing at five minutes past the hour. Starting April 25, Boston-New York weekday trips were to be at 100 percent of the existing *Regional* service – nine roundtrips per day.

With the new timetables that went into effect on April 25, Amtrak instituted a policy that all *Regional* trains would be "All Reserved." This affected every train except the *Keystones* and (Springfield) *Shuttles*. Obviously, these timetables were published prior to the *Acela* brake problems.

After the last issue went to press, member David W. Safford reported that Amtrak was laying welded rail on Track 2 from Paoli to Overbrook, Pennsylvania. The railroad's "green train" has dropped rail as far as Wayne. This is part of a larger plan to rebuild the right of way through to Harrisburg, as well as restore the catenary to permit electric traction to run again between Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

From **Cinders**: Amtrak is modernizing its switcher fleet. Motive Power Industries has delivered ten GP-15D locomotives, 570-579, and 8 GP-38-3 locomotives, 520-527, are being rebuilt from former GO Transit GP-40-TCs originally built in 1966. The latter were GO Transit 500-507 and when Amtrak purchased them in October, 1998, they became 192-199. With the arrival of P-42s they got bounced to their present numbers.

Miscellaneous

Joseph Boardman has been selected by President Bush to head the Federal Railway Administration. Boardman, a career transportation professional, has been NYSDOT Commissioner since July, 1997. Mr. Boardman, a lifelong resident of New York, grew up on a dairy farm in Oneida County and served in the U.S. Air Force in Vietnam during 1968-69. He is a graduate of Cornell University and SUNY Binghamton. In an interview with the Associated Press, he said that two of his priorities would be saving Amtrak and strengthening our weak rail safety and security system.

The former Metra Gallery cars at the Kawasaki plant in Yonkers belong to Virginia Railway Express. I got a good look at the cars and saw V444. Nearby were 8754 plus two other cars for which the numbers were not visible. There was also an LIRR 4000-series car.

Museums

Branford has scheduled the following dates as "Rapid Transit and Guest Operator Weekends." May 28/29,

June 25/26, July 30/31, August 27/28, September 24/25, and October 22/23 and 29/30.

Other Transit Systems**Boston, Massachusetts**

The test that the MBTA conducted on the B Line, where cars bypassed four stops, Greycliff Road, Mount Hood Road, Summit Avenue, and Fordham Road, has ended, and as of March 16, those stations have been permanently closed. In a poll of 1,142 riders, 73% wanted the stops eliminated. This test began on April 20, 2004 (please see the June, 2004 **Bulletin**). Because B Line cars averaged 45 minutes for the trip between Boston College and Government Center and made 22 stops in just 3.94 miles, many riders opted to take the bus to speed their commute. It is expected that removing these four stops, which served 2,500 of the branch's 30,000 daily riders, could save between 3 and 4 minutes per trip. By comparison, the D Line between Riverside and Fenway has 13 stops in 9.17 miles and takes an average of 57 minutes. "T" officials started looking two years ago at eliminating five stops along Commonwealth Avenue, based on average boardings and the proximity of adjacent stops. The Summit Avenue stop, for example, is about a tenth of a mile from the Washington Street stop. Thanks to member Todd Glickman for the report.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

From **Cinders**: SEPTA has issued an RFP (request for proposals), which was due on March 31, to purchase 50 low-floor trolleybuses. These vehicles would replace the present fleet of Flyers, which are 25 years old, and would presumably be assigned to routes out of Frankford Depot, where much wire work was done in connection with the new terminal project. Route 36 service will be disrupted from June 19 into September, while PennDOT rebuilds the Lindbergh Boulevard Bridge over the CSX main line in Southwest Philadelphia. SEPTA will take advantage of this time and install new track from 49/Woodland to 54/Lindbergh. SEPTA's idle PCC-1Is were put to use on three fan trip charters, the first of which was held on February 5. The 18th and final rebuilt car arrived in Philadelphia from Brookville Equipment on November 23, 2004. The Paoli electric car shop was demolished last fall as part of the Superfund cleanup of the PCB-contaminated Paoli MU Yard.

In January, the Parsons consulting firm submitted its report with recommendations for the Schuylkill Valley Line. A three-phase approach is being recommended:

- Phase I – Re-electrification of the Ivy Ridge Line (ex-PRR Schuylkill Branch) between Cynwyd and Ivy Ridge with a new connection to SEPTA's ex-Reading Norristown Line. R6 Regional Rail trains could then operate in a loop between Norristown and Center City using both routes.
- Phase II – Diesel passenger service between 30th Street Station and Reading via the Ivy Ridge and

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Norristown Lines to Norristown, then via the Norfolk Southern Harrisburg Line.

- Phase III – Direct service between Reading and Philadelphia via the Center City Tunnel using dual-mode locomotives. This would require installation of 600-volt d.c. third rail through the tunnel, a concept that SEPTA has always opposed.

At around a \$700 million cost, this project is far less expensive than the original SEPTA \$2 billion proposal to build a dedicated electrified line all the way to Reading.

Washington, D.C. area

Metro announced a project in early March to increase the capacity of its rail cars, by removing seating capacity. Here is how it will work. The program, which is in two parts, would take 16 of the 3000-series Breda cars, and remove some of the seats. Two six-car trains would be created, leaving four spare cars. They would operate on the Red, Orange, and Green Lines. On one train, which has been designated as Concept I, the present 64 seats would be reduced by 8 seats. Additional handholds would be installed and placed away from the doors to reduce crowding at those locations. The Concept II train would have 24 seats removed, leaving 40. Under Phase I, on-board cameras are being installed on these cars to record data every Wednesday for at least three months beginning in June.

Pending approval, and review of data in November, then the seats would be removed, the hand rails would be installed, and the camera recordings would be continued. One other suggestion that was considered by Metro's Board Planning and Development Committee include longitudinal seating like MTA New York City Transit has. For further information, you can check out Metro's website at www.wmata.com/about/met_news/PressReleaseDetail.cfm?ReleaseID=703.

Charlotte, North Carolina

On Saturday, February 26, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the South Corridor Light Rail line. This line will be 9.6 miles long and connect Uptown Charlotte to I-485. There will be 15 stations. Revenue service is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2007.

Tampa, Florida

In the March *Bulletin*, I reported on *The Breezer*, TECO's newest car. From an email sent by member Karl Groh we learn that the car is out of service for an indefinite period due to asbestos in its controllers. Those parts have been removed and shipped to Gomaco for abatement.

South Florida

Our members are also train riders. Karl Groh wrote: "I rode to a meeting in Deerfield Beach on March 19, and the new track is great, with quad gates at all railroad-highway crossings. Passenger counts are down slightly

due to delays caused by the many finishing touches under way. Most of the hard work is done. The old draw span over the South Fork of the New River in Broward County will remain for freights as the Tri-Rail trains will cross a new fixed bridge, 3,700 feet long and as high (55') as the I-95 span with grades to match. This will be the final bit of work on making the line a 21st Century commuter railroad." Meanwhile, the State of Florida is negotiating with CSX to take over control of the 72-mile line, which was purchased by FDOT in the 1980s. At the present time, CSX controls the operation, maintenance, and dispatching functions. The biggest bone of contention occurs when CSX dispatchers in Jacksonville give priority to their freight trains during the morning rush forcing Tri-Rail commuter trains to wait and fall behind schedule.

In the beginning, Tri-Rail schedules were rather simple affairs, two-sided on hard stock. Over the years they grew into booklets, the latest containing 32 pages plus the cover pages. Member Gary Grahl brought me a copy of the current edition, dated August, 2004. He also gave me copies of a fold-up-sized edition which has eight panels, and half of them have the train schedules for daily and weekends in both directions.

Cleveland, Ohio

March 15 was the 50th anniversary of the opening of Cleveland's Rapid. In advance of that day, I emailed the GCRTA to inquire if anything special was going to be done to recognize this event. No response was received and upon checking the agency's website, no press release was issued. However, the RTA did hold a board meeting on that date, and one of the items on the agenda was "to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the start of heavy-rail Red Line service, from the Windermere station in East Cleveland to Tower City, on March 15, 1955." Contrast this with MTA New York City Transit's celebration of its subway's 100th anniversary!

Minneapolis, Minnesota

It has been a while since we have new about the Hiawatha Line. Member Neil Carlson sent an article from the *Minneapolis StarTribune*, which reported that according to a survey about 39% of the light rail riders are converts to public transit and, if not for the trolley, would be driving alone. A survey of more than 2,000 riders last year found that 80% of rail patrons have cars and that 44% of riders take a bus to the train. After its first half-year of service, the line had higher-than-expected ridership and earnings from fares, but startup costs drove the public subsidy to \$3 per ride. Metro Transit says it expects the subsidy to drop to \$2.34 per ride in 2005, the first full year of service. Ridership this year is about 40,000 rides per month ahead of forecasts made before the \$715 million line opened. In January, boardings were estimated at 441,845 and, in February, 448,149. And finally, for the time being MSP Airport officials have decided against offering light-rail parking at the Hum-

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phrey Terminal ramp, saying that all spaces are needed for airport travelers.

Tucson, Arizona

From the same source of the Tampa news (above), comes information that a folder on the "Old Pueblo Trolley" operation has as its cover picture one of the former Brussels single-truckers that ran at the Grand Cypress Resort in Florida starting in June, 1986.

Seattle, Washington

Fortunately, the plan to eliminate the Waterfront Streetcar Line has met a lot of opposition. This story was initially reported in the November, 2004 **Bulletin**. At issue is the Seattle Art Museum's plan for a Sculpture Garden, which requires the taking of the property where the maintenance barn is located. In late March, the Port of Seattle came up with a proposal that would extend the line north by 1.2 miles (7,200 feet), construct two new stations, and provide the land for a new maintenance facility. The city plans a pedestrian bridge next year over the BNSF tracks at Thomas, linking Elliott Avenue West and Myrtle Edwards Park. The bridges with an extended trolley line could serve the nearly 15,000 people who work in Lower Queen Anne and along Elliott Avenue West. The new stations would be located at West Thomas Street and the other near Terminal 86, the grain terminal. Another email reported that because the present maintenance facility is a metal pre-fab, it might be possible to move the building rather than construct a new one. Best of all, the Port of Seattle has offered to pay for this project, for which no cost or funding source had been determined. Thanks to member Harold Geissenheimer for filling in some of the details.

Sound Transit is again operating one train from Tacoma and one from Everett to all home games of the Seattle Mariners. Return service departs approximately 30 minutes after the game ends.

San Francisco, California

Ridership is up 17%, as a result of the *Baby Bullet* train service that CalTrain introduced last June. The average ridership last September was 31,000. At that time, 10 express trains, which make the trip in under an hour, were added between San Jose and San Francisco. CalTrain renewed its contract with Amtrak, which has been the contract operator since 1992, for three more years. The \$180 million contract comes with two one-year options. Thanks to **Progressive Railroading** for the news.

The ad in **Railway Age** read: "Budd Cars," and there were three photos showing cab car V803, an interior view of one of the cars, and a train of RDCs stopped at a station. CalTrain has decided to sell its 2 cab cars and 12 coaches plus spare parts, as a lot. These cars were

built by the Budd Company for the Boston & Maine in 1952, and acquired by the MBTA when it took over the B&M commuter services. In 1982, the "T" sent them to Boise, Idaho (hence the nickname "Boise Budds") for conversion into non-powered trailers and cab cars. CalTrain leased the cars in 2000, but later purchased from outright from the Virginia Railway Express. CalTrain described the cars as "featuring push-pull trainline capacity (27 pin AAT Trainline), disc brakes each axle, stainless steel fluted siding, toilet rooms in both cab control cars, vinyl seats in theater configuration, painted interior walls, and ribbed rubber flooring." They had been used for the special baseball service. The cars were available for inspection from March 14 to April 14, after which sealed bids were to be received until April 27. The minimum acceptable bid was \$562,000.

San Francisco-bound commuters now have an option to continuing to drive into the city. Since last December 7, a sign has been installed on California Highway 24, near the Rockridge BART station, that provides information on the number of parking spaces that are available. This was done as part of a project named "smart parking." The system allows drivers to reserve spaces or track availability by Internet, cell phone, and PDA, up to two weeks in advance. Since December 7, more than 400 commuters have availed themselves of the service. Thanks to **Metro Magazine** for the report.

Stockton, California

Almost one-third of Altamont Commuter Express trains were late during the month of February, and that has resulted in a drop in ridership from 2,750 in November to 2,400. In response, the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, the operator of the service, has responded by reducing fares 10% across the board through May 15. The deterioration of OTP has been attributed to freight train traffic. Union Pacific has been running extra trains in the Bay Area because of weather problems in southern California. To avoid this type of problem from happening in the future, ACE is looking into long-term ways to reduce the delays, including purchasing sections of track and changing rights-of-way.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Mount Pleasant on the Georgetown Line became GO Transit's 55th station, when it opened on February 7. Commuters arriving for the 7:17 and 7:52 AM trains to Union Station were greeted with free coffee, pastries, and other goodies. The new station is situated between Brampton and Georgetown and is the 8th station on the line. At the present time tickets are being sold from a trailer as many of the permanent facilities have not been finished. The schedule calls for all work to be complete by early 2006.

GO Transit raised the price of each ride by 15 cents as of March 19. So, a round trip-ticket went up by 30 cents, 10-ride tickets by \$1.50 and monthlies by \$6.

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Around New York's Transit System

Electromagnetic Interference's Effect on R-142 Cars

An R-142 train lost power recently due to electromagnetic interference (EMI). If an R-142 train develops an external EMI fault, the train will temporarily lose power and an indication will appear on the Train Operator Display (TOD) Trouble Screen. The Train Operator must place the master controller in the full service brake position and notify the Control Center immediately. The propulsion system should reset automatically within two minutes after the application of a full service brake. When the EMI fault indication has cleared from the TOD

screen, the Train Operator must notify the Control Center, which will authorize the Train Operator to proceed.

Public Address Announcements

To prevent articles that are left on trains from being identified as suspicious packages, Conductors and Dedicated Announcers must make frequent announcements regarding unattended packages. These announcements remind passengers to watch their personal belongings and packages. If they see suspicious activity or unattended packages, they should notify a police officer or a transit employee.

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Reduced fares were also raised slightly.

Montréal, Quebec, Canada

Metro-North's ACMUs may have been the oldest electric commuter cars in North America, but AMT's Canadian Car & Foundry single-level coaches, 800-839, are older. They were built in 1953 and are to be retired upon delivery of an order of 22 Bombardier bi-levels. At that time, the title for AMT's oldest cars would go to the Canadian-Vickers Gallery cars from 1970.

From the History Files

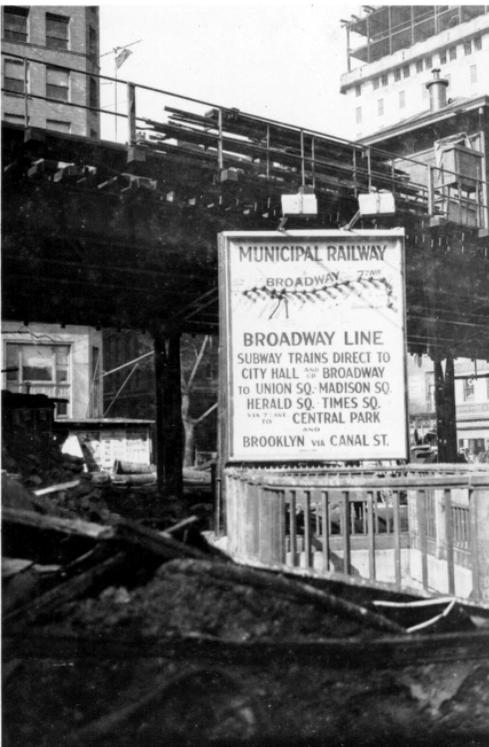
50 Years Ago: On May 20, 1955, the Erie Railroad ended passenger service on its Orange Branch. Freight service continued and is currently operated by Conrail Shared Assets during late evening and overnight hours. A portion of the branch is served by LRVs of the Newark City Subway, which was extended to Grove Street in Bloomfield on June 22, 2002.

25 Years Ago: On May 9, 1980, Amtrak's first AEM-7 was placed into service. Ultimately, with replacements for two wrecked units, Amtrak purchased 54.

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

BMT Broadway Subway Track Plans

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←The Whitehall Street station is seen under construction.

In this second Whitehall Street station construction photograph, we see a power transformer being lowered into the ground.→

Both photographs, Bernard Linder collection

