

# The Bulletin



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

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## The Bulletin

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## SEVERAL QUEENS TROLLEY LINES QUIT 70 YEARS AGO

In 1937, there were big changes in Queens' transit system, affecting thousands of riders. The IND was extended to Jamaica and buses replaced trolley cars on four lines — Queens Boulevard, Northern Boulevard, College Point-Jamaica, and Calvary (Borden Avenue).

The Manhattan & Queens Traction Corporation was a little-known Queens company whose cars ceased operating on Queens Boulevard on April 17, 1937, only a week before the IND was extended from Union Turnpike to 169<sup>th</sup> Street. The trolley cars operated from E. 59<sup>th</sup> Street and Second Avenue, Manhattan via the Queensboro Bridge, Bridge Plaza, Queens Boulevard, Jamaica Avenue, 139<sup>th</sup> Street, Archer Avenue, Sutphin Boulevard, and 109<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 157<sup>th</sup> Street.

Cars started operating from E. 59<sup>th</sup> Street and Second Avenue to Woodside on January 29, 1913. The line was extended gradually, as follows:

DATE	DESTINATION
April 26, 1913	Winfield
July 28, 1913	Grand Avenue, Elmhurst
August 27, 1913	Continental Avenue/ 71 <sup>st</sup> Avenue
January 31, 1914	LIRR Jamaica Station
April 18, 1916	South Road
April 20, 1916	Shore Avenue
April 26, 1916	Lambertsville
1918	109 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and 157 <sup>th</sup> Street

Most of the cars were center entrance cars that resembled B&QT's 5000 series before

the latter were rebuilt for one-man operation.

The company was always in poor financial condition because it operated a long line serving sparsely settled territory. During the postwar inflation, the company's financial condition grew worse. The Public Service Commission allowed the company to divide this line into two zones. Effective December 10, 1920, Conductors collected an additional nickel at Grand Avenue. The company was able to continue operating the cars a little longer until the equipment was thoroughly worn out. Buses replaced the trolley cars on April 17, 1937.

### NEW YORK & QUEENS COUNTY RAILWAY COMPANY

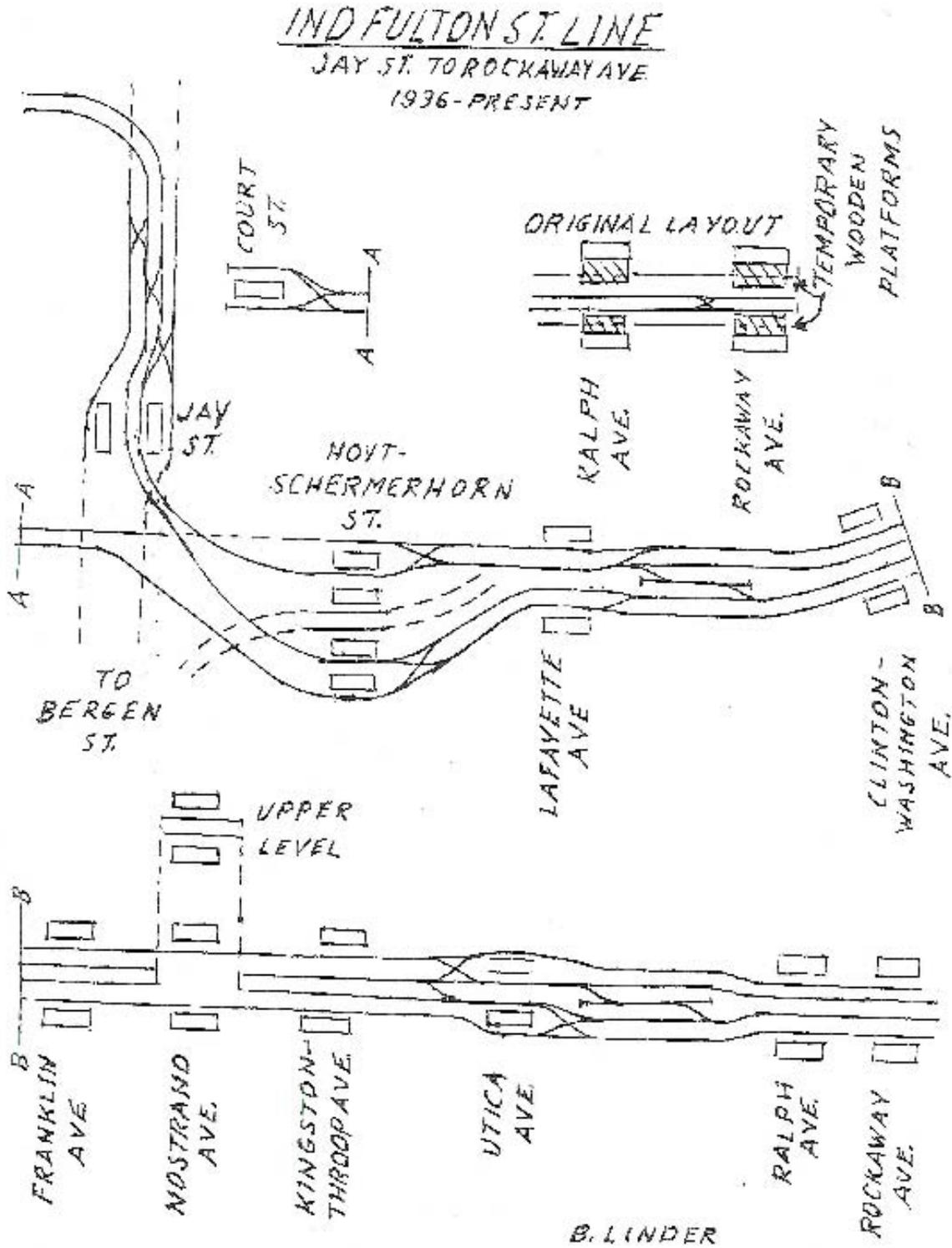
NY&Q absorbed Steinway Lines in 1896. This unified company was prosperous until the IRT was extended to Corona and Astoria in 1917 and the BRT reached Queensboro Plaza in 1920. Trolley riding fell off rapidly because the new extensions paralleled the trolley. Steinway was separated from NY&Q on May 10, 1922, and the latter went into receivership on January 18, 1923. The Northern Boulevard Line, which originally ran from Long Island City to Flushing, was split at 51<sup>st</sup> Street, with Steinway operating the west portion and NY&Q serving the east half. Because transfers were not issued, passengers paid an additional nickel.

To furnish through service from College Point, Flushing, and Jamaica to the Junction Boulevard station, the company obtained trackage rights on the BMT's Junction Boulevard Line. Connecting curves at Northern

*(Continued on page 4)*

**Next Trip: SEPTA and RiverLine—SUNDAY, November 4**

# FULTON STREET SUBWAY TRACK PLANS

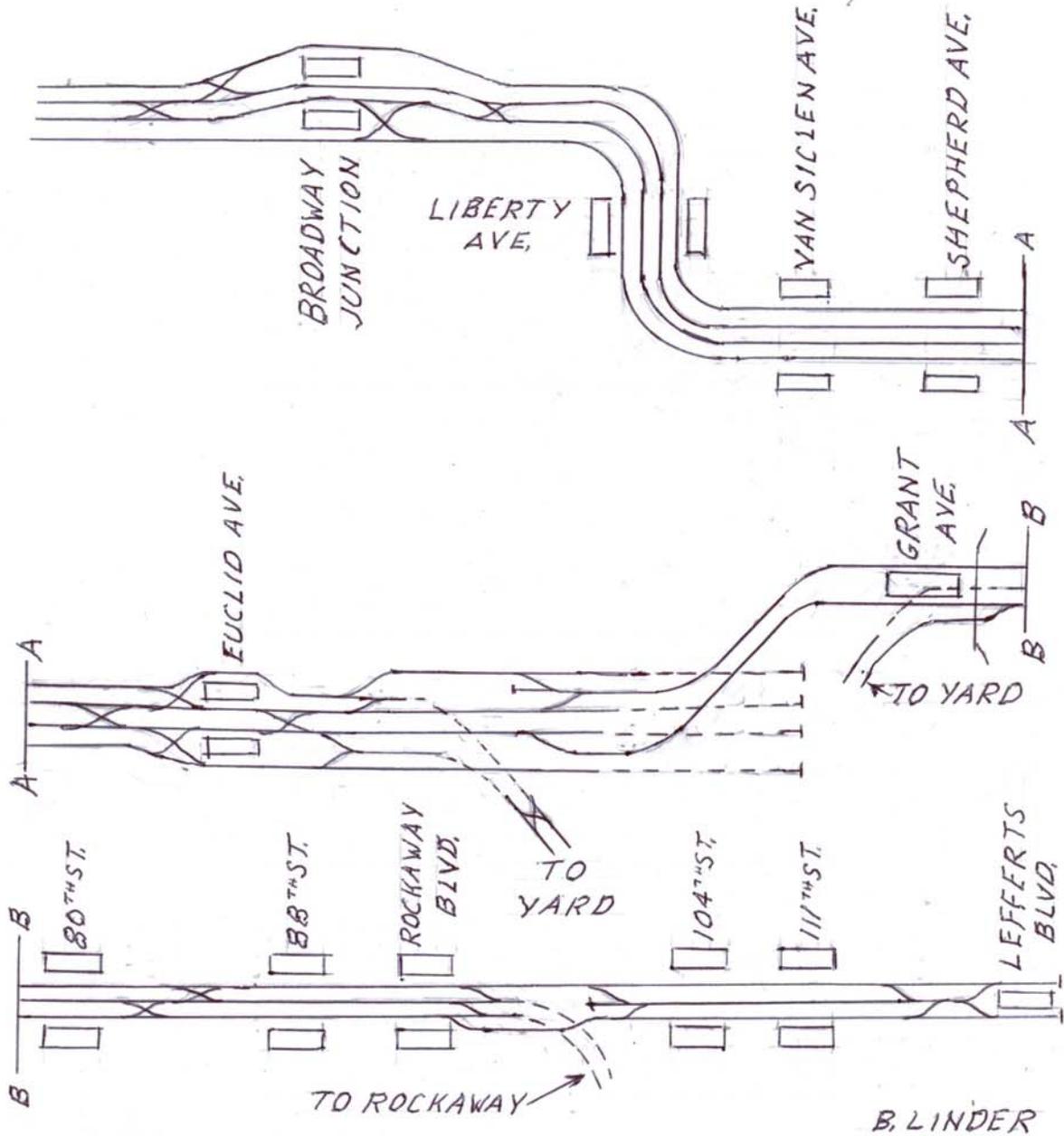


(Continued on page 3)

Fulton Street Subway Track Plans

(Continued from page 2)

IND FULTON ST. & LIBERTY AVE. LINES  
1948/1956-PRESENT



**Several Queens Trolley Lines Quit 70 Years Ago**

*(Continued from page 1)*

and Junction Boulevards and a crossover at the station were installed. Effective May 15, 1923, the above cars were rerouted via Northern Boulevard and Junction Boulevard.

When the IRT's Flushing subway line was extended to 111<sup>th</sup> Street, the College Point, Flushing, and Jamaica cars were rerouted again. Effective October 27, 1925, Junction Boulevard service was discontinued and cars were rerouted via the Corona Line on 114<sup>th</sup> Street and tracks installed on Roosevelt Avenue.

Trolley cars were rerouted again as soon as the Flushing Line was extended to Main Street, Flushing. On January 22, 1928, 111<sup>th</sup> Street service was discontinued and cars were through-routed from College Point to Jamaica via Flushing.

On June 30, 1925, the company was awarded a temporary six-cent fare, which had to be renewed annually. During the Depression, the riders objected to the six-cent fare. The authorization was not renewed and the fare was reduced to a nickel on August 16, 1931.

In 1937, the company decided to convert to bus because the city administration wanted to convert the right-of-way to a city street. Buses replaced the trolley cars on the following dates:

DATE	LINE
August 23, 1937	College Point-Jamaica
September 5, 1937	Northern Boulevard
October 30, 1937	Calvary (Borden Avenue)

*(Continued on page 5)*

**NEW YORK CITY BUS CONNECTS WITH LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT**  
**by James Mattina**

History was made by MTA New York City Transit on September 4, 2007. For the first time in history, MTA buses crossed a state boundary into New Jersey and delivered customers. (For some time, MTA express buses have been traveling to midtown Manhattan via the Lincoln Tunnel, but they do not make any stops in New Jersey.) A brand-new bus route, S89, now connects with the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Transit line at the 34<sup>th</sup> Street station in Bayonne, New Jersey. This new route is a limited-stop, rush hour-only service operating every 15 minutes in the peak direction and 30 minutes in the off-peak direction. It operates northbound from 5:40 AM to 8:32 AM and from 3:55 PM to 6:18 PM. The southbound schedule (from 34<sup>th</sup> Street) operates from 6:42 AM to 9:25 AM and from 4:07 PM to 7:37 PM.

This new, 12.5-mile-long route operates under a joint service agreement between MTA and NJ Transit. The route begins at Richmond Avenue and Hylan Boulevard in the Eltingville section of Staten Island. It travels along Richmond Avenue to Walker Street and Morningstar Road before crossing the Bayonne Bridge and stopping at the 34<sup>th</sup> Street Hudson-Bergen Light Rail station. All buses have been scheduled to meet arriving and departing Hudson-Bergen Light Rail trains. This will allow Staten Island residents who work in New Jersey to be able to cut their travel times substantially. Many Staten Island residents work in Jersey City, which in the last ten years has seen a massive construction boom of brand-new office towers, residences, and shopping

malls. This includes the tallest office building in New Jersey, along the Hudson River directly across from the World Trade Center site. Many employers and employees wanted MTA to provide service to Hudson County, something that was talked about for years.

There are many "firsts" here. This is the first time a rail connection timetable was included on a New York City bus schedule, and the first time a New York City bus crossed a state line and terminated in New Jersey. NJ Transit is a completely separate entity, and both NJ Transit and MTA New York City Transit are mentioned and include their respective customer service numbers and websites on the timetable.

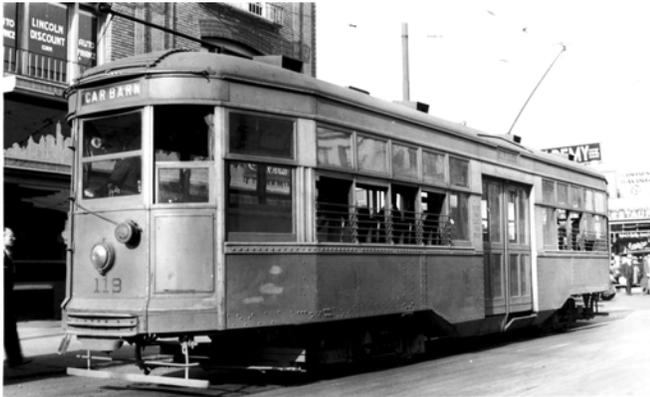
The Jersey Journal quoted Bayonne Mayor Joseph V. Doria, Jr.: "This week marks the first time that the MTA and NJ Transit are working together on a public transit line. It is the MTA's first route into New Jersey. I hope this bus line will lead to more future cooperation between the two transit agencies."

So far there is no joint fare between the two services, but it is currently being looked at by both agencies. This should be interesting because the Light Rail is on the honor system. Roaming inspectors check tickets, as there is no fare collection on the trolleys. This has been the norm for all the new systems opening in the United States. A joint pass that can be dipped in NYCT's *Metro-card* fareboxes and shown on NJ Transit's ticket inspectors is a possibility.

Several Queens Lines Quit 70 Years Ago

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MANHATTAN & QUEENS TRACTION CORPORATION



Car 119 in Jamaica, taken October 8, 1933.  
Stephen L. Meyers collection



Car 102 at Queens Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue.  
Bernard Linder collection



A car at Queens Plaza.  
Bernard Linder collection



Car 136 at Queens Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue. BMT gate cars are laid up on the middle track; cars of this type were eventually rebuilt into "Q" cars.  
Bernard Linder collection



Car 110 is seen under the Flushing Line elevated structure.  
Bernard Linder collection



113 was a 48-passenger car built in 1914 by the St. Louis Car Company. It is seen here in Jamaica on June 15, 1934.  
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 6)

**Several Queens Lines Quit 70 Years Ago**

*(Continued from page 5)*

**NEW YORK & QUEENS COUNTY RAILWAY COMPANY**



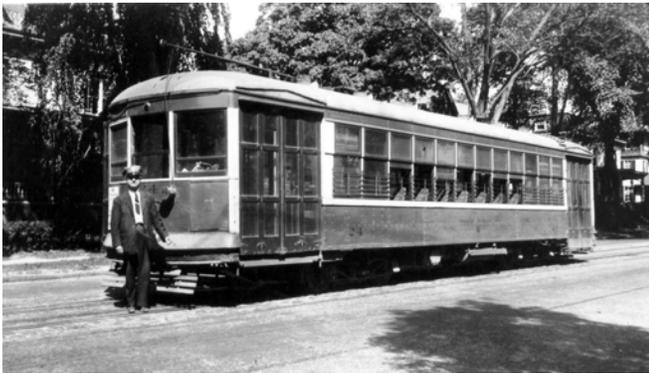
**A car on the College Point Line crosses Hillside Avenue in Jamaica in 1937.**

Bernard Linder collection



**Car 41 in Woodside on April 14, 1936.**

Bernard Linder collection



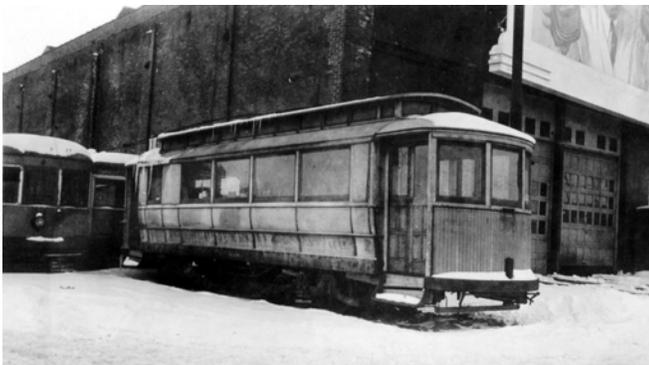
**#24 was the last car on the Northern Boulevard Line, seen here at Sanford Avenue.**

Bernard Linder collection



**Car 351 on the Calvary Cemetery Line on Borden Avenue, near the East River, in Long Island City in 1937.**

Bernard Linder collection



**A New York & Queens County parlor car in 1937.**

Bernard Linder collection



**Car 34 on the College Point Line on April 19, 1936.**

Bernard Linder collection

# Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 227  
by Randy Glucksman**MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST)**

The annual Open House at Croton-Harmon has been scheduled for October 20, from 10 AM to 3 PM.

**MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (WEST)**

While the exact schedule has not been published, on August 16, NJ Transit (and Metro-North) issued a press release announcing that beginning October 28, there would be 16 new weekday trains—nine inbound to Secaucus and Hoboken and seven outbound — which would nearly double the level of service on the Pascack Valley Line. Please note that this is slightly revised from what was reported in the August *Bulletin*. This includes bi-directional and off-peak service. Of the additional weekday trains, one inbound and two outbound will operate in the evening, including a late-night train, with the remainder of the new service offered middays. Also for the first time in a very long time, there will be weekend service, with 23 trains operating on Saturdays and 23 on Sundays—11 inbound to Hoboken and 12 outbound each day.

“Long” siding, which extends westward from Pascack Junction, was placed into service on May 19. This is one of four sidings that will enable the additional service to operate. The others are “Cole,” between Wood-Ridge and Teterboro, “Sack,” between Anderson Street and North Hackensack, and “Pond,” which is located between Pearl River and Nanuet. As of mid-September, “Cole” and “Sack” remain to be placed into service. When first proposed, the siding names were different, and the two that are not being built now were known as “Golf” at Oradell and “Vale” at Montvale.

On August 21, Metro-North took a group of consultants who be looking at the most cost-effective way of getting travelers to Stewart Airport on a two-hour bus/rail tour of the airport and surrounding area. The transit agency has solicited bids from these firms to do a study that will examine transportation options, including trains, express buses, and light rail. Proposals were due at the end of September, and pending the receipt of \$10 million, Metro-North will award the job. The final report is due in 2010. A feasibility study completed in 2003 produced these options:

- Construction of a 3-mile line from the Port Jervis Line in Salisbury Mills to Stewart Airport
- Extending the Port Jervis Line along the New York State Thruway to Stewart Airport
- Construction of a light rail line from the Salisbury Mills station to Stewart Airport
- Express bus service from the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan

The oldest engines in west-of-Hudson service are being overhauled, and as has been previously reported,

are being renumbered in the process. These are the old and new numbers for the first group, and presumably the others, 4190-4194, will be renumbered sequentially as 4906 - 4910. 4903 has been back for several months, and on August 22, I saw 4905 leading a Port Jervis Line train.

OLD NUMBER	NEW NUMBER
4184	4900
4185	4901
4186	4902
4187	4903
4188	4904
4189	4905

**MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD**

As of August 15, Ticket Agents and Clerks at LIRR's 51 staffed Ticket Offices began accepting credit and debit cards for ticket purchases. This includes all major credit cards - American Express, MasterCard, Visa, Discover (Novus), and Diners Club, along with Transit Benefit Cards and bank-issued debit cards. Prior to August 15, the use of such cards was limited to TVMs. The introduction of the debit and credit card option at Ticket Windows resulted in part from an analysis of sales transaction data from LIRR's Ticket Machines and feedback from Ticket Clerks. When it comes to customer purchasing preferences, the majority of LIRR's tickets are sold through credit cards. For 2006, nearly 78% of Ticket Machine sales were credit/debit card-based, with cash accounting for the remaining 22%.

Due to New York State Department of Transportation construction work at Roslyn Road in Mineola over the weekend of August 25-26, special timetables were issued for the Oyster Bay, Far Rockaway, and West Hempstead Branches, plus the City Terminal Zone and a special, multi-colored one for the Port Jefferson and Ronkonkoma Branches. The work performed was classified as a major milestone because the railroad overpass that will eliminate the grade crossing was put into place. These were the service changes:

Ronkonkoma Branch:Eastbound

- From 12 to 7 AM, passengers traveling from Penn Station to Ronkonkoma transferred to buses at Mineola, than transferred to trains at Hicksville
- After 7 AM, passengers destined to Hicksville, Farmingdale, and east to Ronkonkoma boarded dual mode bi-level trains at Penn Station operating via the Montauk Branch and Central Branch to Ronkonkoma
- Bethpage passengers boarded Huntington trains at Penn Station, and transferred to buses at

*(Continued on page 8)*

**Commuter and Transit Notes**

*(Continued from page 7)*

Mineola for Bethpage

- Greenport passengers transferred to buses at Ronkonkoma

**Westbound**

- From 12 to 7 AM, passengers traveling from Ronkonkoma to Penn Station transferred to buses at Hicksville, then transferred to trains at Mineola to complete their trips
- After 7 AM, passengers traveling to Penn Station from stations east of Bethpage boarded dual-mode bi-level trains to Penn Station operating via the Central Branch and Montauk Branch
- Bethpage passengers boarded buses at Bethpage, then transferred to trains at Mineola
- Greenport passengers boarded buses at their stations east of Ronkonkoma and made a train connection at Ronkonkoma to points west

Port Jefferson Branch:

**Eastbound**

- Penn Station to Huntington/Port Jefferson passengers transferred to buses at Mineola, then transferred to trains at Hicksville
- All Huntington/Port Jefferson trains added stops at New Hyde Park. Carle Place and Westbury passengers transferred to buses at Mineola
- New Hyde Park, Merillon Avenue, and Mineola passengers traveling to Carle Place, Westbury, Hicksville, Bethpage, or Farmingdale transferred to buses at Mineola. These passengers could also transfer at Bethpage or Farmingdale to trains traveling east on the Ronkonkoma Branch
- Carle Place, Westbury, Hicksville, Bethpage, and Farmingdale passengers traveling east could board local buses or transfer to Huntington/Port Jefferson trains at Hicksville or at Farmingdale for Ronkonkoma trains
- There was two-hour service from Port Jefferson stations east of Huntington

**Westbound**

- Passengers boarded trains at their stations and transferred to buses at Hicksville, then transferred to trains at Mineola
- All Huntington/Port Jefferson trains added stops at New Hyde Park
- Carle Place and Westbury passengers boarded buses at their stations and transferred to trains at Mineola
- Farmingdale, Bethpage, Hicksville, Westbury, and Carle Place passengers traveling to Mineola, Merillon Avenue or New Hyde Park boarded buses at their stations and transferred at Mineola
- Farmingdale, Bethpage, Hicksville, Westbury, and Carle Place passengers traveling between these stations boarded local buses

Far Rockaway, Oyster Bay, and West Hempstead Branches:

- Both eastbound and westbound Far Rockaway, Oyster Bay, and West Hempstead Branch trains had revised connections at Jamaica due to schedule changes in their Ronkonkoma and Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch connecting trains. Details were included in the special August 25-26 Track Work Timetables for each of these branches

During the third week of August, two seasonal timetables were issued: U.S. Open – August 27-September 9, and the Belmont Park Fall Meet Timetable, which will be in effect from September 7-October 21.

An overnight (August 26/27) inspection of one of the four tunnels that connect Queens with Manhattan, found some unspecified track defects. These repairs were not able to be performed until after the morning rush hour, so, as a result, some LIRR trains were operated more slowly through the tunnels. At 8:20 AM, LIRR reported that it was experiencing 10-15 minute delays. To give passengers more options, some trains were diverted to Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, or Hunterspoint Avenue, where NYC Transit was honoring LIRR tickets. Three trains were diverted to Brooklyn and one to Hunterspoint Avenue, and seven were terminated at Jamaica.

New timetables under General Order No. 403 went into effect at 12:01 AM September 10, and will remain in effect through November 11. The Shea Stadium timetable was also re-issued; however, there was no “end date”, because the Mets were still in contention for post-season play. Here are the changes.

- Babylon Branch – One track is out of service midday weekdays between Wantagh and Amityville because of construction work on the Seaford station platform. This affected midday and overnight Babylon Branch trains and caused numerous schedule changes. On weekends, because of track tie replacement work between Amityville and Lindenhurst, there is hourly train service for Amityville, Copiague, and Lindenhurst. This work is scheduled to continue for the next three years and will also lead to re-routing and altering the schedules of weekend Montauk Branch trains
- Long Beach/Far Rockaway/Hempstead Branches — One track is out of service midday weekdays between Valley Stream and Island Park because of grade crossing renewal work at Ocean Avenue in East Rockaway. Schedule adjustments were made to trains in both directions for these branches
- St. Albans - weekdays — To accommodate midday weekday track work, the St. Albans stop on Babylon Branch trains was shifted 38 minutes later. Beginning early Saturday morning through early Monday morning on the weekends of September 22-24 and September 29-October 1, west-

*(Continued on page 9)*

**Commuter and Transit Notes***(Continued from page 8)*

bound St. Albans passengers were affected by work on one of the Jamaica Station platforms. From 7 AM Saturday through 2 AM Monday on both weekends, westbound train service from St. Albans was temporarily suspended. Passengers boarded vans for connecting train service at Jamaica. Passengers traveling westbound from stations Babylon through Rockville Centre to St. Albans transferred to vans at Jamaica to complete their trips to St. Albans. Eastbound train service to and from St. Albans was not affected

- Port Jefferson Branch — One track is out of service midday weekdays between Syosset and Huntington due to construction of a drainage culvert near Syosset. Schedules were adjusted accordingly
- Atlantic Branch Viaduct Rehab Work — The midday and overnight weekday and weekend single track outage between East New York and Flatbush Avenue continues, along with rehabilitation work on the Atlantic Avenue Viaduct. There were adjustments in operating times for all eastbound and westbound Hempstead Branch and Far Rockaway Branch trains between Jamaica and Flatbush Avenue. Connection times for Huntington, Babylon, and Ronkonkoma trains at Jamaica are also adjusted
- Main Line Concrete Tie Replacement (west of Jamaica) — Concrete tie replacement work on the last of the four Main Line tracks west of Jamaica to the East River Tunnels takes place on weekends. All eastbound Main Line trains have two minutes additional operating time and some trains between 9 PM, Friday and 4 AM, Monday are adjusted between three minutes earlier and three minutes later
- Port Washington Branch/East Side Access Work — One track between Shea Stadium and Harold Interlocking (just east of the East River Tunnels) is out of service on weekends to accommodate work being done for the East Side Access Project. All eastbound and westbound Port Washington Branch trains depart six minutes later

For the duration of these timetables, Holiday Eve service operated on the Port Washington (1), Port Jefferson (3), Far Rockaway (1), Babylon (3), and Long Beach (1) Branches on September 12 (Rosh Hashanah) and September 21 (Yom Kippur). These trains will also run on November 21 (Thanksgiving), December 21 (Weekend of Christmas), December 24 (Christmas Eve), December 28 (Weekend of New Year), and December 31 (New Year's Eve).

The East Side Access exhibit, which had been dis-

played at Grand Central Terminal between the Station Master's Office and the New York Transit Museum Store, has now been moved to Penn Station.

**NJ TRANSIT**

In fiscal year 2007, which ended on June 30, NJ Transit set a new ridership record with a 4.1 percent gain in passengers. The agency reported 250.9 million trips on its trains, buses, and light rail lines for the year, up from 241.1 million trips the previous fiscal year. Rail ridership increased 6% overall, with the greatest gains on commuter routes to New York and northern New Jersey. Bus travel rose 1.4 percent, again with commuter routes showing the highest gain. The transit agency also reported that for the fiscal year that ended on June 30, the average weekday ridership was 865,000 trips on its bus, rail, and light rail lines.

The official date for the opening of part (just 332') of the new high-level platform serving Tracks 1 and 3 at Broad Street, Newark was May 4. On Tuesday, August 21, the entire platform was available to passengers.

A new timetable for the Morris & Essex Lines was issued as of August 31 when weekday work was completed, and regular weekday service was resumed on the Gladstone Branch. Weekend work continued through September 22, and regular weekend service returned on September 30.

In early September, a Transit Advisory was issued notifying North Jersey Coast Line riders that as of September 15, through service between Bay Head and Newark would be reduced, and in some cases replaced by shuttle trains to/from Long Branch. Hourly service between Bay Head and Long Branch was continued until September 30. New schedules were to be issued on October 1.

For the Steeplechase Event at Far Hills on October 20, a special schedule will be operated. Details were not available at publication time.

An NJ Transit spokesman told *The Montclair Times* that weekend Montclair service could begin next fall following the completion of two major projects: upgrades to the North River Tunnels and ongoing platform and track construction at Newark's Broad Street Station. There is also another issue in Montclair – the sounding of train horns. At present, trains cannot blow their horns in the municipality before 7 AM or after 7 PM. This FRA ruling expires next June, and it remains to be seen whether or not it a renewal request will be submitted.

NJ Transit renewed its agreement with Norfolk Southern Railway for another ten years for use of the Washington Secondary Branch. This will allow for the continuation of Boonton Line service from Netcong and Hackettstown until the year 2016 and includes a five-year renewal option. One of the speakers at the July Board meeting requested that NJ Transit consider additional service west of Dover and service to Phillipsburg. (Please see below.)

*(Continued on page 10)*

**Commuter and Transit Notes**

(Continued from page 9)

Member Larry Kiss told me that until October 1, 1966, there was passenger service beyond Hackettstown to Washington. From Washington to Phillipsburg, there had been passenger service until 1939. The portion of the line from Netcong through Hackettstown and on to Washington was the original Lackawanna main line to Pennsylvania until the Lackawanna Cut-off was built and was a double-track line in those days. In Phillipsburg, the station was jointly used by the Jersey Central and the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western. It still exists and is used by the NJ Transportation Heritage Museum. Until December 28, 1983 NJ Transit operated service to Phillipsburg via the Raritan Valley Line.

At its September Board meeting, the Directors approved the following projects:

- Transportation alternatives along the I-78/Raritan Valley Line Corridor. The study will evaluate whether there will be new or expanded multi-modal park-and-ride facilities and the potential extension of rail service on the Raritan Valley Line westward from High Bridge to Phillipsburg
- A public/private partnership with Notchwood LLC, which will construct a new station building equipped with waiting areas, public restrooms, and a restaurant in Upper Montclair on the Montclair-Boonton Line. Notchwood will design a building in character with the original fire-damaged 1892 station, on which demolition began last month
- \$1.7 million worth of improvements for the Watessing station in Bloomfield, including restoration of the inbound and outbound canopies and rehabilitation of the station area. This Montclair-Boonton Line station was constructed in 1912. Construction is expected to begin in November, 2007, with completion in the fall of 2008

Member Bob Kingman reported that he saw MLV cars, 7522 and 7523 arriving on a freight train at Kenwood Yard in Albany on August 26, 2007. On September 16, he saw 7526 and 7527. Thanks, Bob.

One of my co-workers saw NJ Transit (ex-Amtrak) 808 in the Meadows Maintenance Complex on September 14. This unit has been overhauled and repainted for the Atlantic City Express service.

Newark Light Rail (formerly the Newark City Subway) got a new schedule on September 1. On Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, there is now an outbound trip that departs from Penn Station at 5:10 AM and arrives at Grove Street at 5:30 AM.

**PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION**

The PA has awarded a seven-year contract to NBC Universal to install 8 small, silent television screens next to the doors of the 340 PA-5 cars now being built by Kawasaki. These TVs will broadcast news, entertain-

ment, and train departure times as well as alerts on delays, track changes, etc. NBC Universal will pay the Port Authority up to \$300,000 per year for the right to be the exclusive provider of the TV content. It is estimated that the cost of this installation and upgrading the existing system in all 13 PATH stations will be around \$15 million. A 5-year renewal option is also included. The first PA-5s should be arriving in mid-2008, with delivery of all cars by 2011.

**METROPOLITAN AREA**

After being postponed, the Haverstraw (via Yonkers) to Manhattan ferry began operating on September 4. There are two round trips, which depart from Haverstraw at 6:15 and 7:05 AM, with a scheduled 1½ hours of running time to the World Financial Center, arriving at 7:57 and 8:47 AM, respectively. These times include 12 extra minutes to get to Pier 11 at Wall Street. Return trips depart from Pier 11 at 5:30 and 6:30 PM. The cost of a one-way ride is \$15, 10 trips are \$130 and 40 trips are \$450. Compare this with Metro-North's Ossining (Zone 5) peak fares, which are \$9.75 one-way, \$97.50 for 10-trips, and \$213 monthly. You need to add the cost of subway fares. Metro-North's current timetable shows Train #722 departing from Ossining at 7:23 AM and arriving at Grand Central Terminal at 8:06 AM.

In early September, the New York State Senate approved an expenditure of \$22 million to reduce the running time between Albany and New York City. This is just one part of a plan by Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno to build a high-speed rail line in the state. The goal is to lower the running time between Albany and New York City to 2 hours, instead of the current 2½ hours. The money would be used to add a fourth track at the Albany-Rensselaer station, improve the movement of trains at the Hudson station, 30 miles south of Albany, and stabilize a rock wall adjacent to the tracks under the George Washington Bridge, where there is a slow speed order. At Hudson, a bottleneck would be alleviated so that passenger and freight trains can continue through the station without having to slow while another train is in the station. Sen. Bruno admitted that creating a truly high-speed rail service would require \$1.5 billion. A plan that was approved two years ago remains stalled. Thanks to *The Rockland Journal News* for this report.

**AMTRAK**

The August 23 edition of *The Wall Street Journal* had a very positive story about Amtrak. It cited airline woes as causing increased ridership, up 6% this year, but Amtrak's long-haul service still suffers. This year, *Acela's* on-time-performance is running at around 88%, up from 84% last year. June's OTP was 90%. *The Wall Street Journal* also mentioned Amtrak's new express service between New York and Washington, D.C., which only has one intermediate stop – Philadelphia (September, 2007 *Bulletin*).

(Continued on page 11)

**Commuter and Transit Notes***(Continued from page 10)***LABOR DAY (MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3)**Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North

The same additional service was operated on all three lines as was done for the day before July 4. Sunday schedules were in effect on Labor Day.

NJ Transit

On Friday, August 31, there was early "getaway" service on the Morris & Essex (1 train), Northeast Corridor (2), North Jersey Coast (3), and Raritan Valley (1) Lines. On Monday, September 3, the major holiday/weekend schedule was operated on all lines except for the Montclair-Boonton and Pascack Valley Lines, which for the present do not have service on weekends.

**MUSEUMS**

Member Frank Pfuhrer reported that Branford's recently restored New Orleans 850 would be on the road again, this time in Washington, D.C. on October 25. This is the third road trip for NOPSI 850, having previously visited New York City and Chicago. The New Orleans Convention Bureau is taking NOPSI 850 to Washington to help attract visitors to New Orleans.

**OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS***BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS*

The *Charlie Card* is really catching on. At its August 15 meeting, the MBTA Board authorized the purchase of an additional 5 million cards. The Board also okayed the installation of 5 fare card vending machines (that are capable of accepting debit and credit cards only), which were to be installed at Fenway Park by the end of the week. The American subsidiary of a German company was awarded a \$4.2 million contract to produce up to 5 million new *Charlie Cards* over the next three years at its plant in Twinsburg, Ohio. Each card will cost MBTA 79 cents, the lowest per-card rate of any major public transportation system in the country, according to MBTA General Manager Daniel A. Grabauskas.

D Line reconstruction work was completed three days earlier than was originally planned. The "T" announced that normal service would resume on September 1, rather than September 4. During the shutdown, which was done in two phases, more than 16,000 ties were replaced, tracks were realigned, ditches were cleaned, and tree limbs that intruded on the right-of-way were cut back. There were also station improvements, which included painting, lighting, and accessibility improvements. Also, the Hyde Street Bridge in Newton was renovated. The Fall schedules went into effect on September 1, to coincide with the completion of this project.

It looks like the Greenbush Line, which was to begin service this summer, then slipped into September, may now open October 29. Thanks to member Todd Glickman for these reports.

Both Todd and member George Chiasson sent the following report. More than ten years since the late

Senator John Chafee secured the first federal funds for a Warwick rail station and connection to the T.F. Green Airport, and more than a year has passed since ground was broken for the \$222.5 million intermodal project that includes a station, a rental car parking garage, and a skyway with moving sidewalks to the Sundlun terminal, it seems that there will be some progress. Finally, things are coming together, and work, other than behind-the-scenes designing, land acquisition, and lining up contracts, is about to begin. By the end of August, the first visible construction was the relocation of utilities and exit booths to the terminal's short-term parking lot. Then there was the issue of how much the state would have to pay Amtrak. In December, 2004, Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri told *The Warwick Beacon* that the \$3.5 million Amtrak wanted was too much and he was looking to have the state pay no more than \$1.5 million a year for the tracks. At that time, other states were paying \$8.50 per train mile for track rent. Based on projections that MBTA would use Amtrak rails for 102,000 miles a year, the state would pay \$867,000 at the \$8.50 rate given other users.

*LINDENWOLD, NEW JERSEY*

Member David C. Warner corrected the news item about PATCO's *Freedom Card* (August *Bulletin*). This card is a "contactless" smart card that contains a tiny chip and antenna. It works similarly to the WMATA smart cards that have been use for several years. The pilot program for the system has been in place for a year, and at the present time there is at least one fare gate at each station that accepts the smart card, as well as the companion paper tickets, which are for infrequent riders. They are magnetically encoded and inserted into a reader at the fare gates. As with the current plastic ticket system, the paper tickets can be purchased for one or two rides. There will be no 10-ride paper tickets because riders who use those tickets would want to switch to the *Freedom Card*. While the stored value on the *Freedom Card* never expires, the paper tickets expire in three days. The system is being installed by Cubic, as is PATH's. In fact, many of the internal components of the equipment at PATH are similar to what is at PATCO.

In mid-September, PATCO announced that full introduction of the *Freedom Card* would have to wait until the end of this year or the beginning of 2008. In testing, the cards have failed too frequently to risk general distribution. Another problem is that the cards had proved to fragile and sensors had shown a propensity for not being able to read the cards.

*PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA*

Member Bob Wright had some additional information about SEPTA's new fares that were reported on in the August *Bulletin*. "SEPTA has been court-ordered to keep the 60-cent transfer on the transit side, so it remains in place. The new convenience pass has been

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

introduced, but that's it for the changes on City Transit. The suburban zones have been simplified and/or eliminated, as you reported, but that remains a very quiet and non-publicized action, for some reason. Regional Rail fares went up, as scheduled, but in my experience, the change to impose the \$2 penalty for any fare purchased on-board a train is not being strictly enforced. At my usual station (Ivy Ridge, R6), there is no Ticket Office, so riders have no choice unless they've pre-purchased tickets somewhere else, and the Conductors seem to treat this on a very subjective basis.

"Also, the work at 8<sup>th</sup> Street station (Market-Frankford Line) is nearly done. The platform tiles are in place and most of the stairway/ramp work is wrapping up. It appears that lighting remains to be completed. The new elevator from the nearside bus shelter on Market Street at 8<sup>th</sup>, which SEPTA noted was opened on April 17, is now working. I pass it almost every day and noticed yellow 'caution' tape around it almost constantly until early July.

"The second extended shutdown of the Market Street 'L' ended on August 26. I rode the 'L' a couple of times recently and noticed that crowds were very light in the peak hours, an indication that riders are finding other ways rather than deal with the shuttle buses. The Conductor on my morning R6 train noted that ridership has been up on the trains, and he believes that many from further-out stations on Route 100 are 'reverse-commuting' to Norristown and the R6 instead of their usual runs on 100 to the 'L' during the shutdown.

"Finally, there is some 'buzz' about SEPTA ordering electronic signs for the K-cars and PCC-IIs. Apparently SEPTA put these signs out to bid. It has been experimenting with electronic signs on two N-5s, one of which is 155, and, having seen these signs, I'm impressed (and I am a bigger fan of the old-fashioned roll sign – apparently, those on the N-5s have been very troublesome). We shall see where this goes."

The Delaware Valley Association of Railroad Passengers reported that SEPTA is considering phasing out of the "R" numbering system for its Regional Rail lines, a system that has been in use since the 1984 opening of the Center City Tunnel. When first proposed, the idea was to pair the lines on the basis of peak ridership and to try and balance car requirements. But, as it turned out, they were not the most efficient pairings in terms of crew productivity and operating costs. By re-pairing the lines, SEPTA may gain these much-needed cost savings. The present system does have some supporters, but how many passengers being confused about the direction, have boarded the wrong R3 or R5 over the years?

**PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA**

Westmoreland County officials, armed with a \$500,000 state grant, are looking to hire a consultant to determine the feasibility of a rail commuter line to Pittsburgh. This would be a two-phase project that would offer commuter rail service between Latrobe and downtown Pittsburgh as well as from Arnold to the Strip District. This line was selected because Amtrak's *Pennsylvanian* already operates over this routing, and it was a top recommendation of a study completed last year by a regional planning agency that explored improving transportation needs in the region. Initial plans suggested the proposed Latrobe-Greensburg line could use existing tracks and train stations and include stops in Jeannette, Irwin, Trafford, Wilmerding, East Pittsburgh, Braddock, Swissvale, and Wilkinsburg. The cost of this project ranged from \$190 million for a limited-service system to a more ambitious \$300 million line that would operate every 30 minutes during peak commuting times. Trip times would be 49 minutes, and ridership is estimated at 8,800 each day.

Another line under consideration would run from Arnold to Pittsburgh's Strip District and would stop in New Kensington, Oakmont, Verona, and Lawrenceville and also utilize existing train tracks. This line would cost about \$140 million and would serve as many as 6,700 daily riders making the 34-minute commute. Pittsburgh had lots of commuter service in the last century, and its last line from Versailles (14 miles) and McKeesport made its last run on April 28, 1989. The equipment was subsequently sold to CDOT, which used it for many years on Shore Line East.

Thanks to the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* for this news.

**SOUTH FLORIDA**

There have been rumors circulating for a long time that the much-touted Colorado Rail Cars were not all that they were cracked up to be. Member Karl Groh wrote that they would probably be evicted, now that their failure to perform reliably is now an established fact. "The company builds wonderful trailers but as self-propelled units, fuhgeddaboutit. Guess is that they may go up to Orlando and by the time that the commuter operation starts, they could finally iron all the bugs out - maybe." (*Editor's Note*: These cars were supposed to be tested under harsh winter conditions, on a proposed commuter line in the Albany area to determine whether or not these cars are all-weather.)

Karl also forwarded a report from someone who attended Tri-Rail's August Board meeting. This person reported that the Board moved and seconded a motion to exercise an option to the Southern California coach order with Rotem. Tri-Rail will get 8 cab cars and 4 coaches, which is a bit beyond the two cab cars originally envisioned at a cost of \$21.5 million, and there

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

was ZERO discussion. The whole thing took about 10 seconds, with no mechanical staff present. "I seem to take this as a vote of no confidence in the Colorado Railcar debacle, but there was no mention of them during the Board meeting."

On September 10, *The South Florida Sun-Sentinel* reported that Tri-Rail service has declined since Bombardier took over responsibility for maintenance from Herzog on July 1. Another firm, Veolia, is now responsible for operations. From January to June, it was reported, Tri-Rail averaged 11 late or canceled trains per month because of mechanical defects, a fact that was disputed by a former employee. This person wrote to Karl Groh that "there was only one cancelled train (total) and we had, at the most, 6 failures (5 minutes or more). There were other trains delayed on occasion, but I would say an average of 11 is on the high side." Another inaccuracy – "Also, they blame the age of the equipment. They admit that the DMUs are new, but fail to note that 6 of the 15 locomotives are less than a year old!" In July, 32 trains were late or canceled. In August, the number jumped to 82. On top of these delays, both passengers and crews have complained of hot cars, foul-smelling toilets, and roach infestation. Tri-Rail's Board has directed Bombardier to improve the service as quickly as possible.

The State of Florida could soon have an agreement with CSX that would allow Tri-Rail to assume dispatching responsibility for the trackage over which its trains operate. In exchange, CSX would pay \$7 million per year to use those tracks. But, there is an expensive fly in the ointment – Tri-Rail would have to rebuild the bridge that is now used only by CSX freight trains over the New River in Ft. Lauderdale. Tri-Rail officials say that dispatching the line would cost \$12.3 million plus an additional \$2.8 million in maintenance. What is needed is a dedicated source of funding, which has run into several obstacles from state legislators. Thanks to member Joe Gagne for this report from *The South Florida Sun-Sentinel*.

In 1988, the state paid CSX \$265 million for the 72-mile corridor between West Palm Beach and Miami, but that price did not include the right to dispatch the line, which would allow passenger trains priority over freight.

Tri-Rail's April 30, 2007 timetable, which was sent by Karl, is now a tri-fold edition.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

On August 8, the Chicago Transit Authority approved a budget-balancing plan that will reduce bus service by 8% and raise fares on September 16 if a state funding package for transit is not approved. The plan is a modified version of a contingency plan proposed in May. CTA President Ron Huberman said that positive budget results from internal belt-tightening measures, labor

savings through arbitration, and increased fare revenue due to higher ridership will enable the agency to offer a modified plan that incorporates feedback from a series of public hearings and impacts fewer passengers. Nonetheless, nearly 700 employees will be laid off.

CTA is waiving the \$5 purchasing fee for *Chicago Card* and *Chicago Card Plus* from September 1 to October 31 to encourage passengers to switch to electronic fare media. The CTA Board approved a fee waiver period in light of the pending fare increase and service reductions scheduled to go into effect Sunday, September 16 should the CTA not receive funding from the Illinois General Assembly. Under the modified contingency plan, passengers using the *Chicago Card/Chicago Card Plus* or the *Transit Card* will see an increase in bus fare to \$2, whereas cash-paying passengers will pay \$2.50 per ride. Rail fares will rise to \$2 for *Chicago Card/Chicago Card Plus* cardholders, while fares for passengers using either cash or a *Transit Card* will rise to \$2.50 off-peak and \$3 peak. Peak periods are 6:30-9:30 AM and 4-7 PM. These cards may be purchased at more than 200 non-CTA retail establishments.

In September, CTA issued a press release expressing its disappointment that the State Legislature failed to approve any additional state funding for public transit. So, the new fare structure went into effect on September 16, and the discontinuation of the Yellow and Purple Lines did not take place. However, only 39 bus routes will see reduced service, not the 63 that were proposed in May. Still, CTA estimates that it would lose 100,000 riders per day due to the fare increase. Thanks again to Bob Hansen for these reports.

CHESTERTON, INDIANA

NICTD (The South Shore Line) issued a new timetable on August 1. Thanks to member Jim Beeler for sending copies.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

At 6:15 PM CDT, August 1, a bridge carrying I-35 over the Mississippi River collapsed, taking with it vehicles that were crossing, as well as the people who were in those cars and trucks. This accident sent government officials across the country out to have their own bridges inspected. Thirteen people were killed and about 100 were injured. A *New York Times* front page story on August 16, was entitled **BRIDGE FAILURE CAN'T FEND OFF USUAL POLITICS**. There were charges that the Governor, Republican Tim Pawlenty, was unnecessarily rushing the construction to replace the bridge because Minneapolis will be hosting the 2008 Republican National Convention. The Pawlenty Administration has unveiled broad plans and a list of five possible contractors. That the bridge must be replaced is not a topic of discussion – all sides are in agreement that it must be replaced. Some of those who would not rush into hurried replacement would like to have light rail tracks in-

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cluded. Stay tuned.

**DALLAS, TEXAS**

Dallas Area Rapid Transit officials broke ground for the Farmers Branch LRT station on August 30. It will go into service in late 2010 as part of DART's Green Line. This will occur when service is extended north from Pleasant Grove and downtown Dallas to the northwest suburbs of Farmers Branch and Carrollton. Thanks to *Railway Age* for this news.

**FT. WORTH, TEXAS**

The Ft. Worth Transportation Authority, also known as the "T," operates Trinity Railway Express in partnership with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART). The "T" has held a series of public hearings to explain its plans for a proposed 40-mile Northeast Rail Corridor that would run from south to west across Tarrant County through Grapevine, and terminate at DFW Airport. There would also be connections to TRE and a future light rail line at the airport. Local officials decided that to deal with increasing highway traffic, highways could not be built quickly enough, and commuter rail offers an economical solution. Existing freight tracks would be used. Thanks to *Progressive Railroading* for this report.

A subsequent email reported that the proposed line would pass through Colleyville, Haltom City, Hurst, and North Richland Hills without stopping because those cities are not participating financially.

**SEATTLE, WASHINGTON**

On August 28, Sound Transit held a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the start of construction for the Mukilteo station. When it opens in the spring of 2008, there will be weekday round-trips between Everett and Seattle. Sound Transit reported that the opening of this station is yet another in a long list of *Sounder* improvements that will roll out in the fall of 2007 and throughout 2008. By the end of 2008, Sound Transit expects to be running nine round-trip trains in the south corridor, including two "reverse-commute" round-trip trains, as well

as four round-trip trains in the north corridor between Everett and Seattle.

*Sounder* service was increased with the addition of two new weekday round trips on the south corridor and one on the north corridor, including the introduction of a new "reverse commute" train that runs from Seattle in the morning and returns to Tacoma in the evening. The reverse commute train will enable commuters to ride to jobs in South King County and Pierce County.

Under the new schedules, trains depart (northbound) Tacoma for Seattle at 5:00, 5:45, 6:20, 6:50, and 7:20 AM and 4:45 PM. Southbound trains to Tacoma depart at: 6:10 AM and 3:35, 4:20, 4:45, 5:15, and 5:55 PM. Everett to Seattle (southbound) trains depart at 6:12, 6:42, and 7:42 AM, while northbound trains depart Seattle at 4:33, 5:05, and 5:35 PM. In addition, there are what are called *Rail Plus* trains, which are operated by Amtrak as part of the Rail Plus program serving the Seattle, Edmonds, and Everett stations. These trains only accept monthly passes valid on Sound Transit. There are no ticket upgrades and single-trip tickets are not accepted by Amtrak. These *Rail Plus* trains depart from Everett at 9:55 AM and 8:54 PM, and from Seattle at 7:40 AM and 6:40 PM.

Two years after it was closed for reconstruction, the 1.3-mile Downtown Tunnel was reopened for bus service on September 24. The reconstruction was done for the LRT system, which is scheduled to begin operating to SEATAC Airport in 2009.

**PORTLAND, OREGON**

A 0.6-mile extension to SW Lowell on the Portland City Streetcar was opened on August 17 and free rides were given on August 18 and 19. Since 1997, the streetcar has brought \$2.5 billion in new development. Skoda-Inekon delivered five streetcars in the second quarter of 2001. Two additional two vehicles were received during the Summer of 2003, and that was followed by three more last December. The total mileage is now 7.8 miles.

Tri-Met is seeking a nickname for its new Washington

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## FLAG STOPS by Larry Kiss

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the last flag stop in the New York City area. In 1987 the Staten Island Railway made all of its flag stops regular station stops. A flag stop is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "a railroad station at which trains stop only if signaled as by flag." In practice, railroads would designate a flag stop in their timetables with the letter F next to the scheduled time of arrival. The letter F would have a footnote with the typical explanation of "trains will stop if a passenger is clearly visible to the Engineer or on advance notice to the Conductor."

Flag stops were made regular stops on Metro North's Hudson Line effective October 25, 1981, on the Harlem Line beginning October 25, 1982, and the New Haven Line as of April 25, 1982. The Long Island Rail Road eliminated its flag stops in 1965 and in New Jersey only the Suffern to Port Jervis line had them into the 1970s. The last one was gone by February 24, 1973. Although there are no longer any flag stops in the New York area, Amtrak keeps up the tradition, with several in small rural area towns.

## Commuter and Transit Notes

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County Commuter Rail line that will run 14.7 miles between Beaverton and Wilsonville, opening in Fall 2008. The only qualifications that were given are that name should be simple, fun, and memorable. Tri-Met is offering as a first prize, an annual Tri-Met transit pass valued at \$836 and a sneak preview ride, along with the everlasting glow of seeing your winning name on the rail vehicles and marketing materials for years to come.

I received this email from member Michael Feldman: "I'm an NYD member who lives in Portland, OR. (I'm a lifelong subway nut who grew up in Philly, then lived about 30 years in D.C., then moved here to Portland. I've always been interested in NYC transit and did a 'subway marathon' when I was a college student in 1966.) The Portland Streetcar passes on 2 sides of the building I live in; I ride it often. So I was interested to see the paragraph on page 11 of the September, 2007 issue, about the Oregon Iron Works prototype streetcar contract.

"A few comments:

"(1) A good background discussion of the origin of the current Streetcar vehicles (7 Skoda/Inekon Astras and 3 Inekon Trio's) is on the Portland Transport blog at [http://portlandtransport.com/archives/2005/10/the\\_streetcar\\_b.html](http://portlandtransport.com/archives/2005/10/the_streetcar_b.html). Portland Streetcar did NOT want a heritage or touristy line - we already had that - but a modern transportation vehicle. They went shopping in Europe, and ended up with the Astras. The blog discussion explains the relationship between Astra and Trio. They are similar 2-rooms-and-a-bath double-enders, with lots of common parts.

"(2) The *Oregonian* article was interesting, but didn't quite 'get it' about vehicles like this. Portland has, indeed, bought most of its MAX LRVs from Siemens. As U.S. light-rail fans know, Siemens has a plant in California which assembled many of the U.S. LRVs, including the MAX SD-600s and the latest order of S70s, which are due next year. Siemens builds LRVs here but not streetcars (smaller, lighter than LRVs), and is German-owned. In arranging the \$4 million earmark Rep. De Fazio wanted a U.S.-owned company, and figured the earmark would kick-start one. So, why not Brookville or Gomaco? They build replicas and rebuild heritage cars. For example, Brookville did the Route 15 PCC-IIs for SEPTA. According to my contacts here, when Portland was looking for streetcars, neither company could, or would, provide an off-the-shelf modern car. As it turns out, the Astras and Trios have been quite reliable. Of the 10 cars, 6-7 are on the line at any given time - they stick to the 12-minute schedule.

"(3) Oregon Iron Works is a privately-held company in the Portland suburbs. It has built large parts of hydroelectric plants, barges, and some aerospace vehicles. In the streetcar-prototype deal, OIW will acquire licenses

from Skoda to build Astras. Ironic, isn't it - the Czechs got into building modern streetcars by buying licenses to build PCCs back in the 1950s. COMECON designated Tatra as the main streetcar builder for Eastern Europe, and thousands of these PCC-like cars were built, many of which are still on the rails. So turnabout is fair play, I guess. The OIW deal has a familiar ring to me - another infusion of federal seed money to kick-start a defense company into the rail-vehicle business. Yeah, OIW actually builds a lot of defense stuff, so is it going to be another Rohr or Boeing Vertol screw-up? I'm hopeful OIW will succeed, by building the Astra instead of reinventing the wheel. Maybe we've learned something from the '70s aerospace-giant failures. From what I can tell, OIW is a scrappy relatively small outfit, not a big-time member of the military-industrial complex. If the \$4 million earmark buys machinery, tooling, licenses, and one working prototype, the industry will be rolling again and they'll fill their order book pretty quickly. (Portland alone will need 25 or so in the next few years.) We'll see."

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

All of BART's cars came with carpeting. When delivered, one 8-car train of NYCT R-44s (328-335) was also so equipped, and in its early days had to be laid up to the yard each night for cleaning, but those R-44s lost their carpets a long time ago. Member Raymond Berger sent an article from *The San Francisco Chronicle* reporting that a pilot program is underway under which the carpets have been removed from 80 cars and replaced by a smooth-surfaced, plastic composite material used on most U.S. transit vehicles. There are currently 669 cars in the fleet. Many of the riders who were interviewed for the article agreed that the carpets were disgusting in their appearance and stained.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

History was made during the evening of August 20, when the first *Sprinter* DMU traveled the 1.7-mile segment, called the San Marcos loop, that extends to California State University San Marcos from the rail line being built between Oceanside and Escondido. The \$472 million, 22-mile line is scheduled to begin carrying passengers to 15 stations by the end of this year. Thanks to member John Pappas for this report from *SanDiego.com*.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

GO Transit opened its newest station, Lisgar, on September 4. It is located in Mississauga on the Milton Line between the GO Milton and Meadowvale stations. In order to accommodate this station, eastbound (toward Union Station) the Milton departure times for the six trains were moved up by two minutes. There were no changes for the westbound trains.

MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

Canadian Pacific Railway announced that it would sell Windsor Station for future development. A CPR spokes-

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man said that the station building would continue as it now is and that the railroad "expected to remain as a long-term lead tenant" there. This station is used by AMT commuter trains which operate to Blainville/St. Jerome, Delson/Candiac and Dorion/Rigaud. In its timetables, AMT refers to this station as Lucien-L'Allier.

**JERUSALEM, ISRAEL**

Now under construction in Jerusalem for the light rail system is the Bridge of Strings, which was designed by the world renowned architect Santiago Calatrava. The \$55 million bridge is described as steel-and-glass-stayed structure and will be Israel's longest main span at nearly 460 feet. Mr. Calatrava has designed many buildings, including some rail stations. In fact, it is his design that will be used for PATH's new World Trade Center Station. Thanks to *Engineering News-Record* for this report.

**REYKJAVIK, ICELAND**

I never thought that I would write about this country, for it has never had any rail service. I learned this when my wife and I were there 12 years ago. However, my sister-in-law visited there recently and brought home a tourist magazine entitled *Iceland Explorer*, and there it was, on page 4, a news item entitled "**TAKE THE 'A' TRAIN,**" with an accompanying color photo of one of France's new TGVs whose caption read: "There (sic) at it again, and 'this time' they have actually set aside land for the project from now through 2021. That would be an express train, perhaps a monorail, not a bullet train from the Keflavik International Airport to the capital city of Reykjavik, when finished to take approximately 20 minutes rail time from point to point." The article went on to mention that it would result in a time savings of about half of what it takes now. This idea "floats to the top of the bottle about once every two years." The highway between the airport and Reykjavik is becoming a four-lane road, two lanes in each direction, and when finished will serve the nation for several years to come. But, in the end, there will be another 15 "trainless" years, minimum, before anything will be built, if at all.

**LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM**

On September 4, *International Railway Journal* reported that the inaugural train between Paris and Eurostar's new terminal at London St. Pancras broke the Paris-London rail record with a journey time of 2 hours 3 minutes for the 492 km (305 miles) run; the previous record was 2 hours 18 minutes. The train reached a maximum speed of 320 kph (199 mph) on sections of the existing high-speed line in France and the now-complete High Speed 1 line in Britain. The record was achieved ahead of the opening of this final section on November 14 when Eurostar services will switch from London Waterloo to St. Pancras.

**SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Todd Glickman sent the following report: "I'm just back from a business trip to Singapore, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, and Bangkok. There's not much new to report from the first three cities, with existing systems 'status quo' and the build-out of Singapore's SMRT Central Line subway in progress. Essays on these systems may be found at <http://world.nycsubway.org>.

"In Bangkok, the system expansion of the BTS SkyTrain continues at a rapid pace. In particular, the Sukhumvit Line, that has operated from Mo Chit (adjacent to the 'Weekend Market') on the northwest side of the city to On Nut at Sukhumvit Soi 77 in the east for the past eight years, sees significant construction of the extension past On Nut. (The naming convention is for main cross streets to be numbered consecutively upward heading east from Siam Square; "soi" means street in Thai. Even-numbered sois are on one side of the main road, and odd-numbered sois are on the other. Smaller cross streets have the suffix '1' after the soi number, so that Sukhumvit Soi 101/1 is a smaller cross street just east of Soi 101.) In the median of Sukhumvit Road, concrete supports are in place along about half of the extension, with the track bed support structure from On Nut to about Sukhumvit Soi 95. The supports for the station near Soi 101 are under construction (the terminal for the current phase of the extension will be near Soi 107), but there is no sign of where the station entrance stairs will go anywhere along the extension. The official names of the new stations east from E8 On Nut will be: E10 Bangchak, E11 Punnawithee, E12 Udomsuk, E13 Bang Na, and E14 Bearing Station (terminal).

"Track level is approximately 40 feet above the surface. BTS SkyTrain continues to operate three-car unitized sets, though station platforms can accommodate six car trains. As demand increases (as it will with the extension), two three-car sets can be coupled to operate a six car train. Estimated completion of this 6km extension phase is 2009. Inside the trains is a relatively new addition: Four video screens are mounted above the longitudinal seats, displaying commercials and informational tidbits. When the automated station announcements are made, the audio from the content is overridden, and the station announcement shows up as subtitle text at the bottom of the screen."

**FROM THE HISTORY FILES**

*100 Years Ago:* In October, 1907, the New Haven Railroad extended its electrification to Stamford.

*80 Years Ago:* On October 17, 1927, trolleybus service on Staten Island ended, with the abandonment of the Richmond-Tottenville Line. The use of trolleybuses on Staten Island lasted slightly more than 6 years, as the first line began operating on October 8, 1921. It replaced the defunct trolley operator, Staten Island Midland Railway.

*News items and comments concerning this column may be emailed to [NYDnewseditor@aol.com](mailto:NYDnewseditor@aol.com).*

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pal Airport. However, the Brooklyn & Queens Transit Corporation rebuilt the Grand Street/Junction Boulevard trolley line, located in the middle of 94<sup>th</sup> Street, in 1935 with a new concrete base and new heavier running rail and trolley wire. It was considered one of the most modern stretches of trolley line in the entire B&QT trolley network.

Hoping to attract new patronage to the new airport, the BMT Corporation made a counterproposal to the City to extend the Grand Street/Junction Boulevard car line to the new Administration Building. The City of New York responded that the B&QT would have to install new track on the service road of the Grand Central Parkway in order to reach the Administration Building, as well as install a new loop once there. They told B&QT that this work was to be done at the company's own expense, that once completed the ownership of the new track had to be conveyed to the City of New York, and that B&QT would have to pay rental charges to the City for every trolley car operated over it and all additional track in the area. Further, the City of New York retained the right to cancel this agreement with notification of only 30 days.

This outrageous proposal was met with complete opposition by the BMT Corporation, which refused the proposition outright. William Rosell of BMT advised B&QT's Track Department to construct a tailing-point crossover two car-lengths before the end of the track owned by BMT and that owned by the City. Remember by that time, all the land north of the Grand Central Parkway was already seized by the City, including 94<sup>th</sup> Street and the trolley tracks on which the Grand Street/Junction Boulevard ran to the water's edge.

Upon completion of the installation of the two switches and turnouts, the Track Department was to notify Mr. Rosell at 385 Flatbush Avenue Extension. This happened just before noon on December 9, 1938. At 11:54 AM, a trolley had passed the switches heading for North Beach. It turned out this was the last car over that portion of the car line. Mr. Rosell ordered that the following car and all subsequent cars were to turn back at the crossover, beginning at exactly noon. Once the 11:54 AM car returned, the trolley wire was cut and tied down at the exact end of BMT's property ownership, the exact midpoint of the 94<sup>th</sup> Street overpass over the Grand Central Parkway. In that way, the City of New York had no claim of rent on their tracks in the area. Immediately after, all the track and wire were quickly removed.

Operation of trolley service on the line has an unusual history. Originally service was provided by the Junction Boulevard car line. But, in the latter part of 1936, the line was through-routed with the Grand Street Line and this route was called "The Grand Street Line." At the beginning of World War II, service throughout B&QT

was improved and trolley lines that had recently been motorized, returned to electric railway operation. All this caused overcrowding at B&QT's trolley depots, including Fresh Pond Depot, from which the Grand Street Line operated. On January 31, 1943, the Grand Street Line was moved from Fresh Pond to Crosstown Depot to relieve this overcrowding. In February, 1946, the service on Grand Street and Junction Boulevard was once again split. Grand Street cars ran between Williamsburg and Maspeth Depot (at Grand Street and Brown Place, today the Long Island Expressway overpass), except during rush hours when Grand Street cars were extended to the crossover at Junction Boulevard and Corona Avenue. The remainder of the route was served once again by the Junction Boulevard Line, which operated between the same crossover at Junction and Corona and the Grand Central Parkway overpass.

On October 15, 1939, New York Municipal Airport opened for commercial aviation business and the entire city was extremely excited by the event. The new airport was named "LaGuardia Airport" in honor of the mayor. There was special bus service run only on that day by Brooklyn & Queens Transit Corporation (not Brooklyn Bus Corporation) using 900-series buses. These connected with Grand Street trolleys at Jackson Mill Road and 94<sup>th</sup> Street and ran to the new LaGuardia Airport Administration Building. The service lasted only one day. Ridership was extremely heavy as many citizens of New York wanted a look at the new airport and the chance to personally see commercial airplanes take off and land at the new facility.

Despite the difficulties experienced by the BMT Corporation, this single event marked the entrance of the City in a new era of public transportation. B&QT and the BMT Corporation held fast to their opposition of the actions of Mayor La Guardia and the City of New York. About 1938, splices in the destination roll signs in Brooklyn trolley cars appeared with two readings: "WORLD'S FAIR" and "NORTH BEACH AIRPORT." In 1943, the Board of Transportation printed whole new roll signs with a single destination simply reading "AIRPORT." At no time did any Brooklyn trolley car appear with a roll sign destination reading "LaGuardia Airport." Buses for the special service on opening day of LaGuardia Airport on October 15, 1939, were diverted from Flatbush Depot where they were normally run on the B-2 Flatbush Avenue-Rockaway Ferry, later Flatbush Avenue-Avenue R route. Destination signs used for the special service that day simply read "AIRPORT," normally used for a possible short-turn at Floyd Bennett Field Airport at Flatbush Avenue.

This story is completed by mentioning that the Junction Boulevard car line was motorized on August 25, 1949, and the Grand Street Line on December 10, 1949. These were replaced by Route B-72 and Route B-59 buses (now routes Q-72 and Q-59) respectively.

## Around New York's Transit System

### New Jersey Asks for More New York Subway Cars

The state of New Jersey has asked MTA for 600 subway cars when they are decommissioned to add to its artificial reef. It is known that these reefs attract fish, lobsters, and other marine life. When the Redbirds were scrapped in 2003, many of those cars were reefed off the coast of New Jersey. At the time, some environmentalists raised concerns that asbestos in the cars could disintegrate. However, New Jersey's environmental protection commission issued a statement saying that studies conducted by federal agencies and other states that sunk subway cars have found no such problems.

### Eighth Avenue Subway's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Eighth Avenue Subway opened on September 10, 1932. To commemorate this anniversary, the museum R-1 to R-9s were placed in service on September 10, 2007. Transit officials celebrated the occasion with a ceremony at the 207<sup>th</sup> Street station, after which the R-1 to R-9s operated in revenue service over the original route between 207<sup>th</sup> Street and Chambers Street. Passengers entering the train were surprised to see the rattan seats, exposed fans, and open windows. A newspaper photo showed a blank upper destination sign, a "CHAMBERS ST" lower destination sign, and an "S/SPECIAL" route sign on the car.

### Transit Construction Project—Progress Report

We found a newspaper article reporting the status and completion dates of several projects that are planned or under construction.

*South Ferry Station* — This new terminal for ① trains

should open in August or September, 2008. This station will provide better access to the Staten Island Ferry terminal and a free transfer to the BMT at Whitehall Street. This five-year project cost nearly \$500 million

*Fulton Street Transit Center*—A glass-and-steel-domed building will shine light on the platforms. This \$888 million project, which should be completed in early 2009, will make it easier to transfer among the subway lines serving lower Manhattan

*East Side Access*—When this \$6.3 billion project is completed in 2013, Long Island Rail Road trains will operate through the unused lower level of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Street Tunnel and a new tunnel under Park Avenue to a new Grand Central station under the existing station. The tunnel boring machine, which is being assembled in the unused 63<sup>rd</sup> Street Tunnel, will start digging soon

*Flushing Line Extension* — MTA will accept a bidder at the end of the year. Construction will begin on the 34<sup>th</sup> Street station, which will include platform doors and a tempered air system. Work should be completed by 2013

*Second Avenue Subway*—At the present time, the contractor is digging up utility lines on Second Avenue between E. 92<sup>nd</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> Streets. A hole will be dug and the tunnel boring machine will be lowered and assembled in the existing tunnel. Work on this \$3.4 billion project should be completed by 2013

*Moynihan Station*: The preliminary plans for the rebuilt James A. Farley Post Office building will be released soon. The tentative completion date is 2018.

## OCTOBER 15, 1939: 68<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF LAGUARDIA AIRPORT by Donald W. Harold (ERA #1077) as told to Raymond R. Berger (ERA #2298)

A really interesting story about the involvement of the BMT Corporation in the opening of LaGuardia Airport 68 years ago was explained to me by Donald W. Harold, the founder of the Transit Museum and an Honorary Member of this organization.

The City of New York under the leadership of Mayor LaGuardia was keen to build a new airport for the newly emerging commercial aviation market. In 1938, BMT's surface rail operation, the Brooklyn & Queens Transit Corporation, was notified by the City of New York to abandon the Grand Avenue (Junction Boulevard) trolley line to North Beach. This was a neighborhood on a peninsula extending from today's Grand Central Parkway to the water at the East River and Bowery Bay.

The Grand Street/Junction Boulevard trolley was built there originally to serve the North Beach Amusement Park located at the end of land at the foot of 94<sup>th</sup> Street. After World War I, the popularity of the amusement park declined, it was finally abandoned in the early 1920s, and the land was used to for the small North Beach Airport. The neighborhood also contained small private houses, but was somewhat sparsely populated.

The City intended to condemn all the land north of the Grand Central Parkway, then under construction along with the Triborough Bridge. The plan was to use the land east of today's Marine Air Terminal north to the East River and Bowery Bay for a new New York Muni-

*(Continued on page 17)*