

The Bulletin



New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

Vol. 52, No. 9

September, 2009

The Bulletin

Published by the New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated, PO Box 3001, New York, New York 10008-3001.

For general inquiries, contact us at nydiv@electricrailroaders.org or by phone at (212) 986-4482 (voice mail available). ERA's website is www.electricrailroaders.org.

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

Production Manager:
David Ross

©2009 New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated

In This Issue:
Brooklyn's Convertible Trolley Cars...Page 2

BMT THROUGH SERVICE TO ASTORIA BEGAN 60 YEARS AGO

In 1949, the Board of Transportation decided that it could economize and furnish better service by running IRT trains to Flushing and BMT trains to Astoria.

Since 1923, three services with different headways and train lengths were operated from Corona and Astoria. IRT trains operating from Flushing and Astoria to Times Square provided a one-seat ride to midtown Manhattan. BMT trains from Flushing and Astoria terminated at Queensboro Plaza, where passengers could make an across-the-platform transfer to BMT subway trains. Until June 13, 1942, weekday and Saturday Second Avenue trains from Willets Point Boulevard and Astoria operated to South Ferry during rush hours, City Hall during midday, and 57th Street-Second Avenue in the evening and all day Sunday. There was no service during the midnight hours. The last trains departed from Willets Point at 7:21 PM, Astoria at 8:58 PM, and South Ferry at 9:34 PM June 13, 1942.

IRT service between Times Square and Astoria was discontinued permanently on July 24, 1949, and BMT shuttles were run temporarily from Astoria to Queensboro Plaza, alternating to the IRT and BMT platforms.

Before BMT subway trains could operate to Astoria, it was necessary to make extensive track changes west of Queensboro Plaza. A special schedule was in effect while the work was performed during the October 15-16, 1949 weekend. Brighton Locals terminated at 57th Street while Fourth Avenue Locals were turned on the northernmost lower level track at Queensboro Plaza. Astoria Shuttles continued operating on the northernmost upper

level track. Both center tracks were out of service. Temporary wooden bridges spanning these tracks allowed passengers to make across-the-platform transfers.

Starting Saturday and continuing until Sunday afternoon, a six-car train of Q cars was single-tracked on the southbound track between Queensboro Plaza and Astoria while workmen sawed off the northbound platforms to accommodate the wider BMT subway cars. At 5:20 PM Sunday, October 16, officials rode a test train composed of N-2450-4025-2451-2536-2535-2534-S on the northbound track to Astoria. The three north cars were laid up at Astoria and became the revenue train when they were coupled to three other cars. The three south cars were single-tracked on the northbound track between Astoria and the former IRT track at Queensboro Plaza until regular service began before the Monday morning rush hour.

Meanwhile, workmen sawed off the southbound platforms and the signal stop arms were relocated to the opposite side of the track.

October 14, 1949 was the last day trains of Q cars operated between Flushing and Queensboro Plaza. Because they were no longer needed in Queens, the Q cars were taken out of service and laid up on the Culver middle track.

The next day, October 15, 1949, all Flushing trains were routed to Times Square. As soon as new cars were available, Flushing to Times Square service was increased regularly.

About 1945, rush hour Times Square locals

(Continued on page 4)

NEXT TRIP: NYCT E. 180TH STREET SHOP TOUR, SEPTEMBER 12

BROOKLYN'S CONVERTIBLE TROLLEY CARS by Bernard Linder

In the nineteenth century, most street railways operated two sets of cars — open in the summer and closed during the rest of the year. Open cars were very popular. On a hot day, passengers took pleasure trips to enjoy the cool breezes. But company officials were not happy that they had to maintain separate fleets. BRT economized by swapping trucks each season from closed to open cars and vice versa.

The car builders found the solution, a convertible car whose windows were removed and replaced by iron bars in the summer. As soon as they were available, BRT ordered 450 convertibles from four car builders listed in the following roster.

CAR NUMBERS	BUILDER	DATE
3555	Stephenson Car Company	1904-5 (prototype)
3700-99	Brill Car Company	1905
3900-24	Brill Car Company	1905
3925-74	Stephenson Car Company	1905
3975-99	Jewett Car Company	1905
4100-99	Stephenson Car Company	1906
4300-49	Laconia Car Company	1906
4500-4549	Jewett Car Company	1906
4550-99	Laconia Car Company	1906

ALTERATIONS TO CARS

Because the original design was apparently unsatisfactory, most cars were altered. 3700s and 3900s were built with open platforms. In 1907-8, vestibule fronts partially enclosing the platforms were added. 4100s, 4300s, and 4500s were built with vestibule fronts partially enclosing the platforms. All cars were equipped with gates instead of doors.

4500s were built with rattan cross seats that were not replaced. In 1907-8, rattan cross seats on the other cars were replaced with wooden longitudinal seats at each end and wooden cross seats in the center of the car.

Flatbush Avenue cars were the first convertibles crossing the Brooklyn Bridge on February 13, 1906.

CONVERTIBLES COUPLED TO TRAILERS

Several cars were rebuilt to PAYE (Pay As You Enter) with completely enclosed platforms and doors replacing gates.

CAR NUMBERS	DATE
4100	1910 (couplers added 1917)
3953, 3954	1916
4101-99, 4300-4	1919 (couplers added 1919)

In March, 1917, the company started operating a two-car train composed of a four-motor 4100-series car and a trailer. Cars 4100 and 5050, whose motors were removed, were operated on Flatbush Avenue until 1919. The company must have been pleased with the results. It ordered 100 center-entrance trailers, 6000-99, from Brill in 1919. These trailers were coupled to 4100-99 and 4300-4, and were operated on the following lines: Bergen Street, DeKalb Avenue, Flatbush Avenue, Flatbush-Seventh Avenues, Flushing Avenue, Fulton Street, Green and Gates Avenues, and Williamsburg Bridge Local. Trailers continued operating until 1925, when Mayor Hylan banned their operation in New York City. BMT complied and motorized 6000-53 at the Coney Island Terminal shop in 1924-5. They were renumbered 5100-53. The remaining trailers were not motorized and were taken out of service. They were renumbered to 5154-99 on October 31, 1929 and were scrapped in 1932.

ONE-MAN OPERATION

In 1932, cars 4100-99 and 4300-4 were rebuilt for one-man operation at the Brill plant in Philadelphia. On the left side, the doors were sealed and the steps were removed. The front platform was enlarged and the narrow door was replaced by a four-part folding door. A destination roll sign was installed above the front center window.

LAST TWO-MAN CARS

Unrebuilt convertibles were still operated with two men in the 1930s. Until October 15, 1934, 4500s were in regular service on DeKalb Avenue, the last two-man line. Until July, 1937, two-man cars 4573, 4575, 4577, and 4578 provided rush hour service on Flatbush Avenue short-turns south of Nostrand Avenue. Two-man car 3970 and probably other two-man Canarsie Shuttle cars carried passengers to the amusement park in the summer of 1938.

CONVERTIBLES REBUILT TO CLOSED CARS

In 1923, cars 4528 and 4529 were rebuilt to a duplex safety car at the Fresh Pond Shop, and renumbered to 4600. Seating capacity was 71 and standing capacity was 86. The cars were placed in service on DeKalb Avenue on February 6, 1924 and never operated on any other line. It was retired on December 21, 1933.

In 1927 and 1928, eight convertibles were rebuilt to closed single-end cars at DeKalb Shop for Canarsie Shuttle service. The front platform was enlarged and the gates were replaced by wide four-part folding doors in the front and a narrow exit door in the rear. The left side

(Continued on page 3)

Brooklyn's Convertible Trolley Cars

(Continued from page 2)

of the platforms was enclosed completely and double-hung windows were installed on both sides. Cross seats were retained in the rear half, but were replaced by longitudinal seats in the front half. In 1928, the cars were

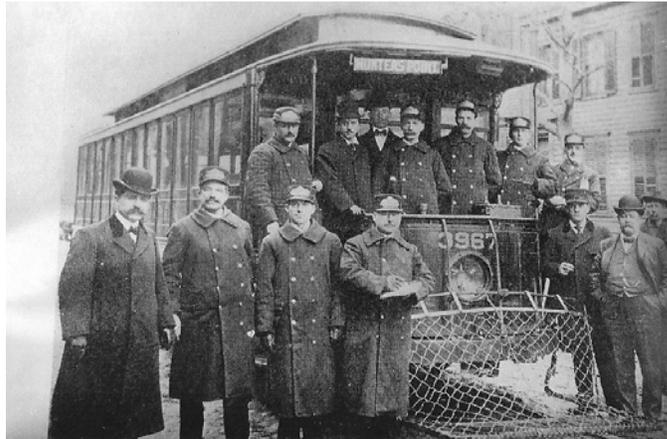
leased to the New York Rapid Transit Corporation, BMT's rapid transit subsidiary. They were placed in service on the Canarsie Shuttle the same day the 14th Street Line was extended to Rockaway Parkway, July 14, 1928.

The cars were transferred to the Rockaway Parkway Line on November 21, 1942 and were taken out of ser-

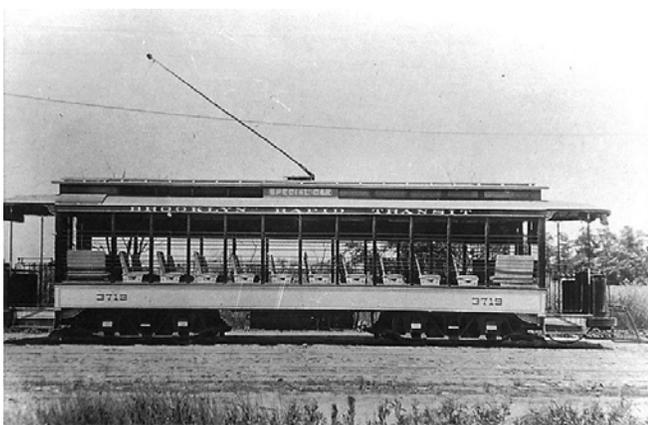
All photographs below are from Bernard Linder's collection.



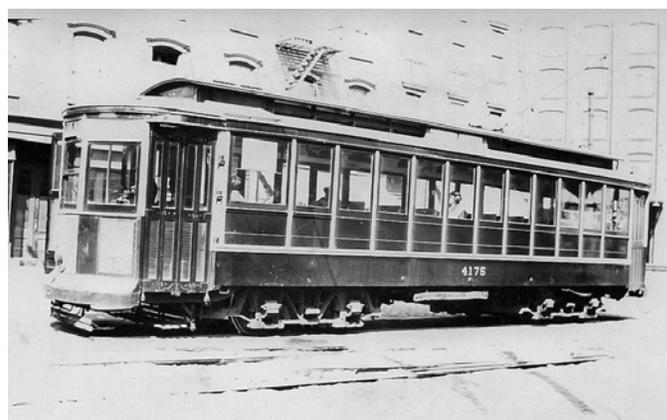
Interior of a convertible.



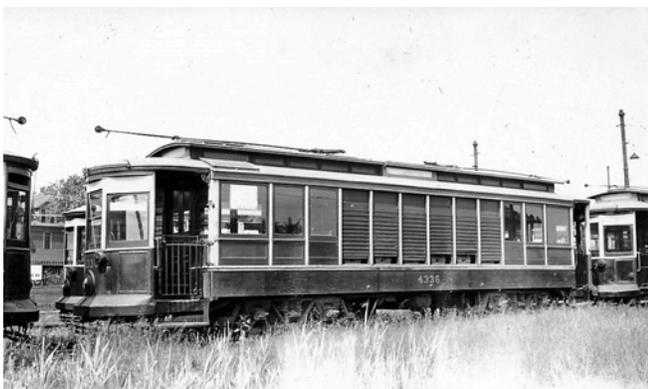
Car 3967 at Crosstown Depot in 1905.



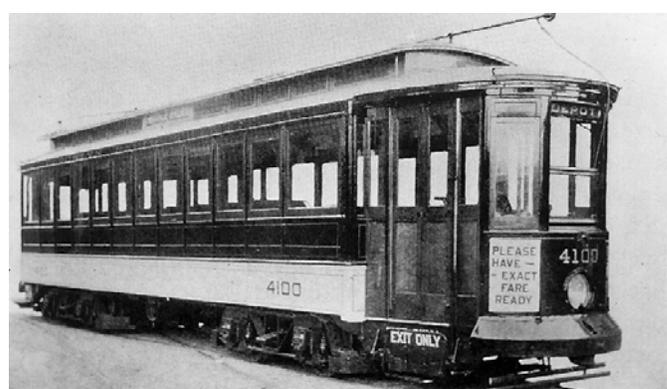
Car 3719, with open platforms and windows removed.



Car 4175, seen in April, 1933 on Manhattan Avenue in Greenpoint, was converted to one-man operation in 1932.



Car 4336 was photographed on the Canarsie Shuttle in 1939 with the windows removed for summer service.



The platforms of car 4100 were enclosed completely in 1919, and the gates were replaced by doors.

(Continued on page 5)

BMT Through Service to Astoria Began 60 Years Ago

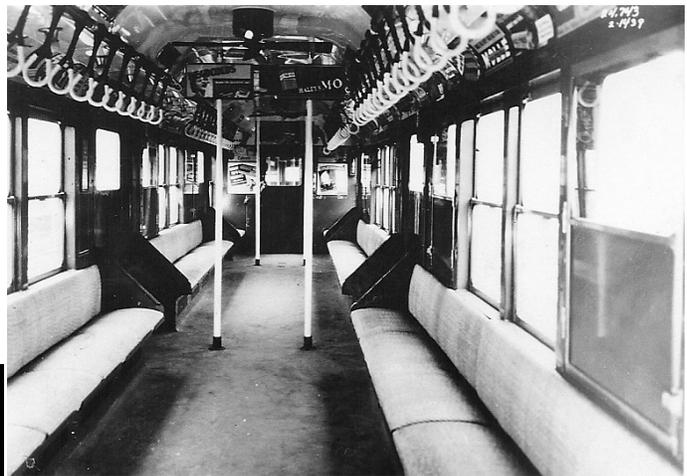
(Continued from page 1)

and expresses were each on a 9-minute headway with a peak 6 minutes for 36 minutes. Queensboro Plaza locals and expresses were each on a 9-minute headway. On July 14, 1948, IRT train lengths were increased from 8 to 9 cars. In December, 1949, 36 nine-car trains were in service during the rush hour. Locals and expresses were each on a 4-minute headway.

CARS IN SERVICE

Date	Number of Cars
R-12: 5703-5802	
July, 1948	34
August, 1948	58
September, 1948	88
October, 1948	100
R-14: 5803-5952	
September, 1949	134
October, 1949	177
November, 1949	204
December, 1949	234
January, 1950	250
R-15: 5953-5999, 6200-6252	
February, 1950	250
March, 1950	333
April, 1950	350

The first R-12s were in service on July 13, 1948. All 350 cars were in service on April 23, 1950. The Steinways, Lo-Vs, and World's Fair cars were transferred to the Bronx.



World's Fair Steinway car interior.
Bernard Linder collection



R-12 car interior.
Bernard Linder collection



Museum Lo-Vs at Willets Point, April 8, 1967.
Bernard Linder collection



R-14 5903 at 103rd Street, April 7, 1954.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 5)

BMT Through Service to Astoria Began 60 Years Ago

(Continued from page 4)



R-15 5965 in Corona Yard, November 21, 1958.
Bernard Linder photograph



R-15 car interior, taken in Coney Island Yard on October 26, 1964.
Bernard Linder photograph

Brooklyn's Convertible Trolley Cars

(Continued from page 3)

vice in May, 1948.

CANARSIE SHUTTLE CAR RENUMBERING

NEW NUMBER	ORIGINAL NUMBER	REBUILDING COMPLETED
4700	3976	December, 1927
4701	4318	March 31, 1928
4702	4305	April 30, 1928
4703	3781	April 30, 1928
4704	3788	May 31, 1928
4705	3790	June 30, 1928
4706	3789	June 30, 1928
4707	4315	July 31, 1928

Car 3900 was rebuilt to a closed one-man safety car at DeKalb Shop and was renumbered to 4800. It was the first car to use a passimeter (turnstile) coin machine. The front platform was enlarged and the gates were replaced by wide four-part folding doors in the front and a narrow exit door in the rear. Platforms were enclosed completely and double-hung windows were installed on both sides.

On January 24, 1929, the car was placed in service on the Vanderbilt Avenue Line. It was operated on Ninth Avenue Depot lines and was out of service by 1943.

SCRAP DATES

YEAR	CAR NUMBERS				
	3700s	3900s	4100s	4300s	4500s
1930	42	43	—	10	11
1932	—	—	1	—	—
1933	—	—	1	—	2
1934	4	8	—	4	2
1935	2	1	—	6	1
1937	10	10	—	6	13
1938	18	14	—	6	29
1939	4	5	—	—	2
1946	15	17	23	10	20
1947	—	—	22	—	2
1948	—	1	43	-	1
1949	4	1	10	5	6
1950	1	—	—	—	3
1951	—	—	—	2	4
1955	—	—	—	1	—
1956	—	—	—	—	2
1957	—	—	—	—	1

WORK CARS

Most of the cars listed below were scrapped in the late 1940s or early 1950s.

(Continued on page 19)

NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY CAR UPDATE

by George Chiasson

Hello, everybody!

The R-160s kept right on “rockin’” their way onto the scene as we hit mid-year, and are now the second largest element of the vast fleet at Jamaica, having passed the combined total of remaining 60-foot SMEEs during this increment. Not surprisingly, they have now been entrusted with covering all service on the important **E**, and will continue to press the remaining R-46s off **F** in the weeks and months ahead (the new cars now cover almost 20% of all service on **F**). On the flip side, a major reassignment of Jamaica’s older SMEEs began on July 1, and some more have been retired. There was also an interesting flip-flop of another sort on the Subdivision “A” lines recently, so without further adieu, let’s have a look:

Subdivision “A” Happenings (Three-Way Single Unit Shuffle, Modified Singles, and Signs To Come & Go)

On June 16, R-62A single unit cars 1923, 1928, and 1932 had their **7** LED side signs replaced by standard rollsigns and departed Corona Yard (**7**) for Mosholu (**S**)/42nd Street Shuttle, where the latter two (1928 and 1932) were deposited in trade for 1922 and 1924. These three (1922-1924, in order) then headed over to 240th Street (**1**) and remained there for passenger service, which started on June 22, complete with red barn assignment markings and **1** interior strip maps. In trade, 240th Street cars 1905, 1908, and 1912 were re-assigned to Corona (**7**), but only 1912 actually made it to Queens (first seen on July 1), while 1905 and 1908 stayed back for use as air-conditioned motors on refuse trains for the summer (first seen on July 3). Meanwhile, 1928 and 1932 were already running on the **S**/42nd Street Shuttle by June 21, both having had all Corona-related body markings and **7** interior strip maps removed. As for 1912, it had a Corona LED side sign installed and had received its purple assignment striping by July 13, but still contained **1** interior strip maps. The main upshot of this redistribution was to have a solid numerical block of single units at 240th Street (1917-1926 consecutive), though all will remain as complete independent cars, with control cabs only on 1920, 1921, 1925, and 1926.

The number of recent “yellow dot” R-62A single units with modified WABCO brake valves has continued to increase on **7**, though not necessarily with yellow dots. As work on this undertaking has moved into cars ending with the digit “4,” they are only being installed at one end of each car, and are so denoted by either a yellow dot, an orange dot, diamond or square, or even nothing at all. As of July 9, cars known to be so modified include 1904, 1944, 1964, 1984, 1994, 2044, 2074, 2084, 2114,

and 2124 with the rest of the 4s expected to follow rapidly. These and the “0” cars now dominate the north (operating) end of most **7** trains, with operating non-modified single units most definitely in a minority status. The revised total number of cars anticipated for this retrofit is now 88, of which we presently count 31.

In late June, notice was issued to **7** personnel informing them that rollsigns were no longer to be changed from the standard “circle” format to the “diamond” (express) reading, as this function was now assumed by the LED side destination signs. Meanwhile, a pilot service enhancement program on **1** that began in May sees several midday trips being turned at 137th Street, and a new front sign reading “137 Street” inlaid to the standard red circular “**1**,” is being added to denote this variation.

R-160 Progress

As of June 30, 2009, Option I R-160A-2s 9488-9507 had been delivered, with Option I R-160A-2s 9463-82 entering service on **E** and **F**. As of July 13, 2009 Option I R-160A-2s 9508-17 were on hand, while 9483-92 had been accepted for passenger service at Jamaica. Of the remaining Option I R-160Bs already delivered, 9213-22 had started revenue service on **E** and **F** as of June 16, with 9223-32 closing things out as of July 2, 2009. As things with the R-160 have progressed, their utilization has improved and remained steady to the point where 40 Kawasaki-built, Alstom-equipped cars were transferred from Coney Island (**N**, **O**, **W**) to Jamaica (**E** and **F**): 9143-62 on June 16, and 9123-42 on June 27. This brought the overall fleet at Coney Island back to approximately 810 cars, where it had historically been prior to mass deliveries of the R-160s there in 2007 and 2008, after being expanded from the 750-car range back in 2005. At Jamaica, these additional 40 R-160Bs helped to cover all service on **E** more quickly than would have been possible otherwise, but the overall fleet there is also being expanded temporarily to enable specific equipment to be assigned to certain routes.

The first set of Option II R-160Bs (numbered 9803-7) had arrived at 207th Street by June 24 and was shifted to Coney Island for set-up work on the evening of June 26. These are 5-car sets built by Kawasaki and contain the same Alstom Onix propulsion package as the previous Option I R-160Bs and the R-160A-2 trains presently being delivered. Their numbering (9803-9942) is set to begin past Alstom’s own Option II portion of its R-160A-2 contract (to be delivered in 2010), which will be 9593-9802. When the second option was awarded last November, Alstom detailed half of Kawasaki’s portion (70

(Continued on page 7)

New York City Subway Car Update*(Continued from page 6)*

cars) as being supplied with its Onix system and half with Siemens (as on 8848-9102), but it remains uncertain if this is still the case. At any rate, the Option II R-160B acceptance regimen will remain unchanged for the time being, with new deliveries going to Coney Island for vendor set-up, then static and function testing based at Pitkin. At least the first half of this portion of the R-160 order (9803-72), if not the entire group, will be burned in and finally placed in passenger service at Jamaica. On July 4, delivery of the second 5-car set of Kawasaki Option II R-160Bs (9808-12) had begun, but remained incomplete as of July 13.

As of July 13, 2009 deliveries totaled 340 R-160A-1s, 345 R-160A-2s, and 530 R-160Bs for a combined quantity of 1,215. Of the overall total as of July 13, 332 R-160A-1s were in service at East New York on **J/Z**, **L**, and **M**; 60 R-160A-2s plus 410 R-160Bs at Coney Island on **N**, **Q**, **W** (for 470 total); and 260 R-160A-2s plus 110 R-160Bs at Jamaica on **E** and **F** for a combined total of 370.

60-Foot SMEE News (Now It's Jamaica's Turn)

The removal of Phase I R-32, R-40M, and Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42 equipment from passenger service continued without interruption, as such focus shifted from the slant R-40s after June 12. And as expected, approximately one 10-car set of the older SMEEs has been retired each week, as at least one new R-160 train was accepted for revenue service. Things took an even more dramatic turn on July 1, though, when a concerted effort was begun to contain specific equipment types to certain routes on the Jamaica (Queens Boulevard) lines. The most noticeable manifestations of this act were the sudden appearance of 60-foot SMEEs on **V** for the first time since it came into existence in December, 2001 (specifically trains of both Phase I R-32s and mixed R-40M/42s), and the absolute dominance of **E** by trains of R-160s. In ensuing days across the July 4 weekend, it became clear that this was part of an overriding strategy to reduce the role of 60-foot SMEE equipment in the various services at Jamaica, though they did start appearing on a 7-day, 24-hour basis on **R** for the first time since late 1986.

As it turned out, the "official" distribution of Jamaica's rolling stock starting on July 8, 2009 was **E**: 100% R-160; **F**: R-46s and the remaining R-160s; **R**: R-46s plus some R-32s and R-40M/42s; and **V**: R-32s, R-40M/42s, and R-46s. Upon further review, it was then discovered that there were several official "last trains" in the days immediately preceding July 8, though 60-foot SMEE equipment continues to pop up on **E** and **F** occasionally if circumstances warrant. The "final" train of Phase I R-32s assigned to **E** on Monday, June 29, 2009 consisted of N-3705/4-3610/1-3673/2-3820/1-

3891/3520-S, while the last train of Phase I R-32s that ran on **F** on Thursday, July 2 was made up of N-3376/7-3805/4-3756/7-3473/2-3933/2-S. R-40M/42 equipment continued to appear on both **E** and **F** through the July 4 holiday weekend, but on Monday, July 6 there were three such "final" consists on **F**: N-4690/1-4639/8-4749/8-4660/1-4521/0-S; N-4583/2-4772/3-4528/9-4452/3-4746/7-S; and N-4667/6-4454/5-4656/7-4716/7-4650/1-S. The same day there was just one, "final" mixed train of R-40M/42s on **E**: N-4779/8-4784/5-4597/6-4631/0-4485/4-S, while on Tuesday, July 7 there was one complete set of Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s to mark the "official" end of 60-foot SMEEs on the Queens Boulevard express lines: N-4643/2-4551/0-4561/0-4574/5-4584/5-S. A canvass of the Queens Boulevard routes on July 9 revealed no additional surprises, and things remained so through Monday, July 13.

While the rate of retirement for the SMEEs was expected to accelerate given their reduced role and the influx of additional R-160s, the overall fleet at Jamaica has grown well past the 1,200-car threshold and is expected to top out around 1,300 before leveling off again. This is likely an all-time high for the facility (and by quite a measure at that), but will support the mass infusion of R-160s to **E**, **F**, and (eventually) **V** service over the balance of 2009. By July 13, 2009 there remained 258 Phase I R-32s, 48 Modified R-40s, and 192 Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s for a total of 498.

60-Foot SMEE Retirements and Restorations

The following were taken out of service, or restored to operation through July 13, 2009:

June, 2009: R-40M 4462/3, 4474/5, 4500/1, 4508/9, 4534/5, 4542/3 withdrawn from Jamaica (**E**, **F**, weekday **R**); R-42 (Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled) 4554/5, 4632/3, 4658/9, 4768/9 withdrawn from Jamaica (**E**, **F**, weekday **R**); R-32 Phase I 3676/7 (second time) restored to service on **E**, **F**, weekday **R**

July, 2009: R-32 Phase I 3356/7, 3538/9, 3784/5 withdrawn from Jamaica (**R**, **V**, sometimes **E**, **F**); R-40M 4464/5, 4486/7, 4498/9, 4502/3, 4512/3 withdrawn from Jamaica (**R**, **V**, sometimes **E**, **F**); R-42 (Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled) 4570/1, 4572/3, 4606/7, 4654/5, 4676/7, 4708/9, 4760/1 withdrawn from Jamaica (**R**, **V**, sometimes **E**, **F**).

The 75-Footers of MTA New York City Transit (R-44, R-46, R-68, R-68A)

With the 40 R-160Bs transferred from Coney Island to Jamaica, there seemed to be little change in fortune for the R-68s and R-68As assigned there. Both continue to turn up daily on **B** (mostly R-68As) and **Q** (mostly R-68s), with one or two still appearing most weekdays on **W**, but (still) not on **N**. In addition, though **G** service was extended from Smith-9th Streets to Church Avenue

(Continued on page 8)

New York City Subway Car Update

(Continued from page 7)

starting on July 5, the R-46 equipment assigned to it was unchanged. A wander on **A** to Far Rockaway on July 10 found it strictly populated with 75-foot R-44s and R-46s (no R-32s) — a harbinger of a rather homogenous future.

The R-44s of MTA Staten Island Railway

Arriving at Coney Island Overhaul Shop between June 16 and July 13, 2009 were SIR "A" cars 406, 412, and 416 and "B" car 405. Completed and returning to Staten Island were ex-NYCT "A" car 398 (completing this group) and SIR "A" cars 418, 436, and 440, which raised the overall number of completed cars to 21. Remaining at Coney Island were SIR "A" cars 406, 412, and 416, along with SIR "B" cars 405, 415, and 431. The shell of retired SIR A-car 402 was also still at Coney Island.

The following article about the SIR R-44 Overhaul project appeared in the *Staten Island Advance* on June 29, 2009:

"Staten Island Railway riders can look forward to a slightly more posh commuting experience as the fleet of disco-era train cars undergoes a makeover...Two-thirds of the borough's 63 cars already have been spruced up after being loaded onto flatbed trucks and driven over the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge to the Coney Island repair facility, which is the largest of its kind in the country.

"Gone are the banged-up yellow and orange seats, the dingy beige floors, and the leaky ceilings. In their place are freshly sanded seats now painted periwinkle blue, new floor tiles, and patches to keep the rain from getting into the cars and onto the seats...Underneath the cars, new shocks will cut down on the swaying motion of the cars and should make for a smoother ride. New vents were punched through the bottom of the cars to prevent rust...To stop the leaks, a special fabric seal was applied to the seams of the car roofs, then primed and sealed...Scratched windows also have been repaired.

"Some might say it's worth the extra quarter — the base fare rose yesterday to \$2.25...The trains' face-lift is part of an \$11 million project to keep the 1973-vintage cars rolling in good shape for the rest of their useful life of 40 years...The desire is not only to make sure the trains are operating properly ... but also to make them as cosmetically pleasing as possible,' said Allen Cappelli, the borough's representative on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board...It was Cappelli's predecessor, the late Frank Powers, along with City Councilmen Vincent Ignizio and James Oddo, and other former MTA Board members, who began the push for the overhaul...The Railway cars were completely renovated in 1991, and this latest round of repairs and improvements is meant to keep the trains in good working

order to last until they are replaced with new cars, a process expected to begin between 2013 and 2015...It's long overdue, but we are ecstatic that they are being overhauled, and there is still a plan for the new cars in the near future,' Ignizio said.

"The entire process takes about five to six weeks from the time the rail car leaves Staten Island to when it's sent back. When the cars return to the Clifton Maintenance Shop near the Stapleton homeport, each car gets an updated exterior logo, repainted windowsills and other details, and is given a tuneup before it resumes passenger service...The first cars back in service are running very well, said Barry Greenblatt, the Railway's assistant chief of operations...So far, only one complaint has been filed about the few cars already back in service -- someone was offended by the 'new car smell.'

"To prepare for the project, two Railway cars were dissected at Coney Island during a two-year engineering analysis, during which it was decided which repairs were too involved to handle at Clifton, and which parts should be addressed during the overhaul...While many of the repairs are things passengers won't see, it's the little things that make the most difference to riders, like 'being able to look out a clear window, and sit on a clean seat,' said George McGowan, the Railway's superintendent of the mechanical department...Though Staten Island will continue to keep the heat on the MTA until the new cars are delivered, 'I'm glad they heard the call and they did something in the interim,' Oddo said. 'As long as they're clean and comfortable, I guess Staten Islanders won't care if they're vintage or brand-new.'"

Reefing Renewed and Miscellaneous Disposition Notes

First, another correction is in order regarding Barge 20 (Delaware, June 13). Add lone slant R-40 4273 to the 22 previously listed to create the following full complement of 23: 4154, 4155, 4170, 4171, 4212, 4213, 4262, 4263, 4270, 4271, 4273, 4274, 4275, 4376, 4377, 4402, 4403, 4406, 4407, 4422, 4423, 4448, and 4449. 4272 was left behind and still at 207th Street as of July 13. The empty Weeks Barge was at 207th Street as of June 27, then floated on the Harlem River until it was reloaded on July 8 and 9, this time with 44 slant R-40 shells, again in double-decked fashion. It (Barge 21) departed again on July 11 with the following aboard: 4176, 4177, 4218, 4219, 4242, 4243, 4246, 4247, 4248, 4249, 4256, 4257, 4286, 4287, 4290, 4291, 4300, 4301, 4304, 4305, 4320, 4321, 4338, 4339, 4342, 4343, 4346, 4347, 4354, 4355, 4356, 4357, 4370, 4371, 4390, 4391, 4398, 4399, 4414, 4415, 4424, 4425, 4432, and 4433. This left behind 31 slant R-40s for future reefing by July 13, plus 2 R-26s, 3 R-30s, and (apparently) 4 long-stored R-44s. More about that next time, though, while we await the mass entry of those last two classes (R-40Ms and Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s) into

(Continued on page 20)

Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 250
by Randy Glucksman

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

On July 14, Governor David A. Paterson selected Jay Walder to become the next MTA Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. A transportation professional, Mr. Walder had a prior stint with MTA from 1983-95, when he was Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer. He moved to London in 2001 to work for a consulting firm, but in 2006 he went to work for his old boss, former MTA Chairman Robert Kiley, at London Transport, where he is credited with implementing congestion pricing. Upon confirmation by the New York State Senate, he will become MTA's tenth Chairman, succeeding H. Dale Hemmerdinger.

The opening of two MTA mega-projects has been delayed. The LIRR East Side Access project to Grand Central Terminal will not be in service in September, 2015, but instead in February, 2016. The opening of the \$4.4 billion first phase of the Second Avenue Subway has been delayed from June, 2015 to at least December, 2016 but it is more likely to be the summer of 2017.

Meanwhile, MTA announced that in the preliminary 2010 budget there would be no fare increase or service cuts, but there could be 7.5% fare increases in 2011 and 2013. The transit agency also reported that it expects to get less than half as much real estate tax income this year as it had last year, a projection that has worsened significantly in the last five months. Projected fare and toll collections also are lower, with ridership off more than 3% since last year.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST)

For the New York Yankees vs. Boston Red Sox series, which took place from August 6-9, Metro-North operated additional service to the Yankees-E. 153rd Street station. For the 7:05 PM games on Thursday and Friday, August 6 and 7, there was a direct "Yankee Clipper" train each afternoon, which departed New Haven at 4:18 PM. For Saturday's game the regular schedule was in effect, but on Sunday, because it was telecast as ESPN's Sunday Night Baseball game, the time was rescheduled from 1:05 to 8:08 PM. Because the Yankees-E. 153rd Street Game Day timetable does not contain schedules for this type of game, special timetables were posted on the Internet. I learned that due to the short notification, no printed copies were produced. For Hudson, Harlem, and New Haven Line riders, the 8:05 PM game service is designed similar to the 4:05 PM Saturday game, but trains operated later at different times to accommodate the later game start and end times. On the New Haven Line, in addition to 3:46 and 4:46 PM departures from New Haven, there was a special 4:16 PM "Yankee Clipper" express arriving at the stadium at 5:41 PM. Returning from the game, there were four direct trains on the

New Haven Line, two to Stamford and two to New Haven.

After writing only positive news about increasing ridership, unfortunately the time has arrived to reverse the story. Metro-North reported for the first five months of 2009, compared to the same period in 2008, ridership fell 2.8%, which means a loss of \$10 million in fare revenue. For the month of May, it was down 3.9%. It is obvious that the struggling economy and job losses have caused this, and many riders who when employed purchased monthly tickets now purchase single- or 10-trip tickets as an adjustment to their reduced travel requirements. *Weekly Rail Review* reported these other transit agencies had ridership losses: Tri-Rail – 11,716 daily riders in June this year compared with 15,408 in June last year, and Trinity Rail Express — down 11.8% this June compared with last June.

Metro-North is working on what it calls its "Vital Processor Interlocking System" (VPI) project. When completed later this year, it will bring all of Grand Central Terminal's signals and switches into the 21st century. This job, on the upper level, entails restoring the electronic equipment in the 12 VPI systems that operate the complex. In March, 2008 the lower level was done in support of the upcoming East Side Access Project. VPI components have a 15-year life cycle, and the current work replaces the equipment that was installed in 1993.

During the months of July and August, I received reports that NJ Transit trains composed of ALP-46s and multi-levels have made frequent trips between New York Penn and New Haven to qualify crews. This regional service is to begin this fall.

Metro-North, in conjunction with CDOT and NJ Transit, issued a color brochure titled *New Service to Football Games at the Meadowlands*, which explains line by line for both East and West of Hudson, how to reach Giants Stadium. The "Take the Train to the Game™" logo appears on the cover.

For New Haven Line riders, there is information on the one-seat rides to Secaucus Junction and, for Hudson and Harlem Line riders, how to reach New York Penn Station.

Metro-North has a controversy on its hands, not of its own making. According to *The Journal News* (July 25), Village of Tarrytown officials have instituted an \$8 parking charge for all cars, except village residents or parking permit holders, destined for the train station. This fee goes into effect four hours before any weekday Yankee game. And, to add insult to injury, signs reading "Metro Railroad Parking" direct drivers to a parking lot where they are asked to pay the \$8 charge. This fee is

(Continued on page 10)

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

split between the village of Tarrytown and Propark America. What irks some Metro-North officials is that they don't want their riders to get the idea that Metro-North is the entity charging for the parking. Tarrytown's mayor, Drew Fixell, told **The Journal News** that the village decided to charge the fee as compensation for the added cars coming into the village. One letter writer to **The Journal News** complained that she was charged \$8, and was not going to Yankee Stadium, but rather to have lunch in Manhattan with a friend. Rail ridership to Yankee games ranged from 3,000 to 4,000, and having fewer automobiles driven to games is definitely good public policy and contributes to a greener environment. However, some of the passengers who were interviewed were angry at this charge. A meeting is to be set up between Metro-North and Tarrytown officials.

Halfway through the year, overall on-time performance stands at 97.7%. These are the statistics by line: Hudson, 98.1%; Harlem, 98.7%; and New Haven, 96.8%.

At a ceremony held on August 17, Governor David A. Paterson announced that \$39 million in ARRA funding had been received for repairs at the Tarrytown station, which will enable a significant renovation of the station. Platforms, shelters, and the public address system will be replaced. The overpasses will be replaced and raised to meet new state freight requirement standards. New benches and ticket vending machines will be added. Work is scheduled to be completed in early 2012. A \$1.7 million reconstruction of the station building began in May. Details were reported in the May **Bulletin**.

According to Jim Cameron, Chairman of the Connecticut Rail Commuter Council, delivery of the six pilot M-8s, which should have taken place last month, has been delayed until November. With 4-6 months required for testing, their in-service date has also been pushed back. The first 36 cars will be constructed in Kobe, Japan, after which the work will be done at the Kawasaki plant in Lincoln, Nebraska. Effective January 1, 2010, Connecticut riders are to pay an additional 1.25%, which is the first of six annual raises to fund the M-8s. In each subsequent year, the rate will be only 1%.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (WEST)

West-of-Hudson ridership also fell when the months of May in 2008 and 2009 were compared. The rate was a dramatic 11.7% for the Port Jervis and Pascack Valley Lines, for a loss of almost \$363,500.

On-time performance for the Port Jervis and Pascack Valley Lines at the mid-point of 2009 was 96.4%. By line it was: Port Jervis, 96.6%, and Pascack Valley, 96.3%.

Metro-North awarded a \$7.9 million contract to Progress Rail Services to perform overhauls on eight F-40-PH locomotives used in west-of-Hudson service: 4191-

4, plus four which were acquired from NJ Transit. These are believed to be 4114, 4116, 4125, and 4126. Larger capacity, 2,500 gallon fuel tanks will replace the existing 1,800 gallon tanks, which will reduce the frequency of re-fueling. They will receive new main engines, main and auxiliary generators, and new "hotel" power generator sets, for lights, heat, and air-conditioning. The new engines will meet year 2010 EPA emission requirements. The contract also has a \$2.6 million option to overhaul two additional F-40 locomotives by June, 2012. This option would be exercised should funding become available. The work will be done at PRS' facility in Mayfield, Kentucky. Starting in 2006, seven GP-40s, 4184-90, renumbered 4900-6, were overhauled by Wabtech.

Seat drops announcing rail service to the Meadowlands beginning August 14 appeared on Pascack Valley Line trains on August 6. One-way tickets, 10-trip tickets, and Monthly tickets to/from Hoboken and New York Penn will be honored. The regular one-way fare from New York Penn is \$4.25, and the cost for seniors is \$1.75. From Hoboken, the fares are \$3.25 and \$1.50, respectively.

In conjunction with NJ Transit's new timetables (please see below), one for the Port Jervis and Pascack Valley Lines was issued effective August 17.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

One pair of ex-CDOT SPVs was still "hanging out" near Hudson Tower in late July.

Also in July, CDOT notified Metro-North that it would be canceling the planned fare increase hearings.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

The press had a field day with the news that a passenger reported that he saw another passenger enter the cab of Train #611 (6:45 Port Jefferson/Hunterspoint Avenue) and operate the train for a distance of 24 miles. The incident was alleged to have taken place on July 2. The Federal Railroad Administration was notified and investigations were underway by LIRR and the Nassau County District Attorney, Kathleen Rice. On August 5, she announced that the train's Engineer and the passenger alleged to have operated the train would be charged with reckless endangerment in the second degree, which is punishable by one year in jail. She also said if the allegations are true, it could have turned into a "mass casualty." The Engineer, a 16-year veteran, who was suspended without pay as soon as the story surfaced, was also charged with official misconduct and could be terminated. LIRR called the allegations "extremely serious and troubling", and said it was reinforcing regulations that bar unauthorized people from Engineers' cabs.

A flyer for the Meadowlands with the "Take the Train to the Game™" logo was issued. It is possible to purchase a joint ticket from any LIRR station to the Meadowlands, and in fact, while waiting at Secaucus Junction for my

(Continued on page 11)

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

train to go home on August 14, I noticed that a passenger had such a ticket. This certainly is a first for ticket collectors. There is one caveat: these tickets are not valid for any other Meadowlands events or travel.

Twenty of what are described as LIRR's "least-utilized" ticket offices were closed as of Wednesday, August 19, as part of a cost savings program. LIRR previously announced that the following ticket offices would be affected: Bethpage, Broadway, Cedarhurst, Douglaston, East New York, Farmingdale, Floral Park, Forest Hills, Hewlett, Kew Gardens, Lindenhurst, Little Neck, Massapequa Park, New Hyde Park, Northport, Nostrand Avenue, Oceanside, Rosedale, Seaford, and Woodmere. Station waiting rooms continue to remain open with their regular hours, as well as the restrooms. If it is any consolation, the LIRR reported approximately 70% of tickets are purchased through ticket vending machines, which were introduced in 1983.

For the U.S. (tennis) Open, LIRR issued its usual timetable (Form S-4). This year, the dates are August 25-September 13.

NJ TRANSIT

On July 14, a three-car test train operated to the Meadowlands station. Governor Corzine and other public officials dedicated the station during a ceremony held on July 20. In conjunction with this new service, NJ Transit issued a new map, and has assigned the color white to this line, which is known as the Sport Line.

Revenue service began at 11:30 AM July 26 (please see the August *Bulletin* for details), when the first train departed from Hoboken. After stopping at Secaucus Junction (11:40 AM), the train arrived at the Meadowlands at 11:53 AM. The service operates approximately every 10 to 20 minutes before and after games. For the first time, NJ Transit also issued press releases concerning this soccer event in Spanish and Portuguese.

Although a family commitment kept me from riding the Sport Line on that day, a Conductor who works a train that I frequently ride gave me some first-day observations: Bergen/Main/Pascack Valley Line trains were operating on Tracks E and F, which normally handle only Main Line trains, while Meadowlands shuttle trains were operating from Tracks G and H, which typically handle Bergen County and Pascack Valley Line trains. The Conductor also told me that when he passed through Secaucus Junction after 11:30 AM, he found the platform for Tracks G and H was jammed with people.

As I passed through Secaucus on my way home on July 31, I learned that because of a concert at the Meadowlands for the Australian rock band AC/DC, rail shuttles would operate. The service ran on Track H and Pascack Valley Line trains were routed to Track G with the Bergen County Line trains. Because my wife and I

had a dinner reservation with friends, I could not take the time to ride the line.

As the saying goes, "the third time is a charm," and I did get the opportunity on August 14, the third time that this new service was operating, for a pre-season game between the New York Jets and St. Louis Rams, who won by a score of 23-20. I rode to Hoboken because I was also in search of the new timetables that went into effect on August 16 (please see below). The trains' Conductors checked tickets at the gate. Train #1551, which was composed of six Comet II and Comet IV coaches and powered by GP40-FH-2 4141, departed at 3:20 PM. Besides me only two other passengers were aboard, and surprisingly, they both detrained at Secaucus Junction. Upon arrival at the Meadowlands station, I counted 23 other passengers who had detrained. Train #1553 arrived 30 minutes later, and 26 passengers detrained. I noticed that one of those passengers did not proceed towards the stadium, and so I figured that there were at least two of us who were not going the game. As soon as I saw that person begin to take pictures of the station, I realized that he was another railfan, who turned out to be member Bob Vogel, aka Chuchubob. It was the first time that we had met. The third train of the afternoon, #1555, deposited 30 passengers. Several were interviewed by WNBC-TV reporter Pei-sze Chang, who was interested in their experiences riding the train. Bob and I had to wait for the first eastbound departure, Train #1554, which left at 4:58 PM because first two trains returned "light" to Hoboken.

Reaching the Meadowlands station, trains operate westbound from Secaucus via the Pascack Valley Line, past Pascack Junction, to Sport Interlocking. At this point, two tracks branch off to the Sport Line. There are two intermediate interlockings, Berry and Stadium, and a connecting track between Berry and Plank Interlockings on the Pascack Valley Line to create a "Wye" that is referred to as the "P-B" (Plank-Berry) Connecting Track. The Meadowlands station has three tracks, which are numbered 1-3, Track 1 (the one closest to the stadiums) has a side platform, while Tracks 2 and 3 share an island platform. During our visit, all trains operated in and out of Track 1. Upon detraining, passengers are directed to the east end of the platform towards the stadium by stadium employees wearing yellow shirts with "EVENT STAFF" lettering. There is also a connecting overpass between the two platforms, which we were not able to access.

Rail service also ran on Monday, August 17, for a pre-season game between the New York Giants and the Carolina Panthers. Carolina won the game, 24-17.

A brochure promoting the use of the rail service has been produced by NJ Transit. Included are facts such as: Just 23 minutes from Hoboken and 10 minutes between Secaucus Junction and the Meadowlands. Al-

(Continued on page 12)

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

though there are no printed timetables, member Daniel Chazin, who also took a ride on the line, forwarded this link, http://www.njtransit.com/sa/sa_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=CustomerNoticeTo&NoticeId=2168, which lists the dates, times, and events when rail service will operate.

For those members who have never been to the Secaucus Junction station, let me say that it is a very large station with seven train lines operating on two levels. On the upper level, at its center, is a rotunda with a piece of artwork, and surrounding it are four entranceways to access the trains. Above each entrance are Solari boards with signs in the colors representing each rail line. Ever since opening in 2003, the configuration has been: East – Northeast Corridor (red), North Jersey Coast Line (blue); West – Morristown and Gladstone (both green); South – Montclair-Boonton (brown) and Pascack Valley Line (purple), and North – Bergen and Main (yellow). During the last week of July, scaffolding was erected on the west side and the Gladstone signs were removed, to be replaced by relocated Montclair signs. The two daily (in each direction) Gladstone *Mid-Town Direct* trains have never stopped here. To the sides of these signs, there are smaller signs with white numbers on a black background that only display the next five departure times for New York Penn and Hoboken. Where the Montclair signs had been was empty. However, several days later, a digital board, which can display a variety of information, including the Meadowlands service, had been installed there.

NJ Transit launched what it calls *DepartureVision™* service on August 12, which sends a display of the train departure boards to mobile devices, such as iPhones, Blackberries, or web-enabled cell phones. Under what is called the “beta test”, at the present time this service is only available for Secaucus Junction under a 6-8-week trial.

On Sunday, August 2, there was additional service to Monmouth Park in the form of six North Jersey Coast Line trains (3 in the AM and 3 in the PM) which provided earlier and later service for riders attending the Haskell Invitational.

Six new timetables were issued effective August 16. However, the dates were not changed for the Montclair-Boonton (April 19) and Pascack Valley Lines (July 12), instead, boxes were added on the covers which read, “NOTICE! Revised Times Starting 8/16/09.” These are the changes:

ATLANTIC CITY: Normal midday service resumed as track work has been completed

MAIN/BERGEN: Some connecting times at Secaucus were changed

MONTCLAIR-BOONTON: Some New York Penn departure times changed and middays, between August 17

and continuing through mid-September, buses replaced trains between Dover and Montclair State University for track work

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR: Schedules were changed on a number of trains due to the Amtrak track replacement project. Because of the Meadowlands Sports Complex, weekend service to Secaucus Junction has been increased. Under the July 12 schedules, ten eastbound trains did not stop at Secaucus Junction; now all but four make this stop. Westbound, previously fifteen trains did not stop; that number has been reduced to nine.

NORTH JERSEY COAST: Schedules were changed on a number of trains due to Amtrak’s track replacement project between Newark and Rahway. The extra summer service to the New Jersey Shore ends on September 13, and service will be reduced. Those trains were shaded in gray, which could possibly mean that new timetables will not be issued until October

PASCACK VALLEY: Some connecting times at Secaucus were changed. This month, track work will be performed between Spring Valley and New Bridge Landing, requiring bus replacement. Details were not available at publication time

“Getaway service”, similar to what normally operates on pre-holidays, will run on Friday, September 4, on the Northeast Corridor, North Jersey Coast, and Pascack Valley Lines.

In late July, a Bergen County Line Conductor I spoke with told me that there are two sets of multi-levels assigned to the line, one with five cars and one with six. Member Sid Keyles wrote on this subject that “during the past few weeks, I have noticed at least two trainsets of bi-levels in use on the Main/Bergen Lines. In talking with a few Conductors, they have advised me that these cars have not yet been used beyond Suffern. When the bi-levels first appeared on these lines earlier this year, it had been one train a day that never traveled above Waldwick. Now, some of the bi-levels have been spotted by me between Waldwick and Suffern on both weekdays and weekends.”

“You can’t get them all” was the gist of an email from member Bob Kingman dated July 26. Bob wrote “Train #414 went through Mechanicville at roughly 10:15 PM (last night). There were a good number of NJT cars on the end. Lots of trouble earlier in the day made this a nocturnal run because this train is normally due in Albany around 1-2 PM. Sunday they were all gone,” hence no car numbers.

New York’s City Council unanimously approved the ARC project’s special permit application under the city’s Uniform Land Use Review Procedure on July 29.

Two high-level platforms, 450 feet long, will be built just south of the Plauderville station on the Bergen County Line under a \$7.9 million contract that the Board of Directors approved at its August 12 meeting. Some of the cost is being provided by ARRA funding. Work will

(Continued on page 13)

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

begin this fall and is to be completed in the spring of 2011. There will also be a new heated waiting area on the inbound platform, canopies, lighting, electronic signage, closed-circuit television cameras, ramps, and sidewalks. The Plauderville station is used by approximately 740 daily passengers.

When the Hudson-Bergen LRT was originally conceived, it was to operate in Bergen County. After the initial phases were built, NJ Transit tried to downgrade the project so that it would be DMU-operated beyond Tonnelles Avenue. Thanks to the efforts of many, including the New Jersey Association of Railroad Passengers, New York Division members (alphabetically) Phil Craig, Jack May, and Frank Miklos, and former New Jersey Assemblywoman Rose Heck, a ceremony was held on Saturday, July 18, with Governor Jon Corzine, Congressman Steve Rothman, and a number of elected officials to announce that the present "HLRT" will in fact become "HBLRT" and be extended 11 miles to operate on the former Erie Railroad Northern Branch to Tenafly. A daily ridership estimate of about 24,000 is anticipated. In its announcement, NJ Transit conceded that with Colorado Railcar going out of business last December (February, 2009 *Bulletin*), the transit agency was unable to locate another manufacturer that could produce a car that is FRA-compliant in a short amount of time, hence the change of mode. The cost estimate for extending light rail has not yet been finalized; however, the preliminary estimates are in \$800-\$900 million range. The Northern Branch project is included in the joint long-range capital program of NJDOT and NJ Transit, using a mix of federal and state Transportation Trust Funds. Currently, the line is served by Conrail Shared Assets freight trains. The Erie-Lackawanna ended passenger service on September 30, 1966, from Sparkill to Hoboken. Until December 13, 1966, the line ended in Nyack.

Preliminary engineering is to begin this year, with "shovels in the ground" in 2011. Upon completion in 2014, service is planned to operate from early morning through late evening hours, seven days a week, with trains departing every 6-12 minutes in the peak hours. A trip from the northernmost portion of the line will take 21 minutes to Tonnelles Avenue, 25 minutes to Port Imperial, and 37 minutes to Hoboken.

Member Stanley Z. Harris sent an article from *The Bergen Record* that reported some of the above and added that trolley service to Tenafly ended in 1938. This line paralleled the Northern Branch through Ridgefield, Palisades Park, Leonia, and Tenafly. Mr. Harris questions the ridership projections because the line would be competing with NJ Transit and Coach USA's Red & Ten Lines, which operate four routes through these

towns to the Port Authority Bus Terminal.

New RiverLine schedules were issued effective June 29, replacing the August 2, 2008 edition. There was a minor time change. At \$1.35 (\$.65 - seniors) for a one-way trip of 34 miles, this has to be one of the best transit bargains in the region.

A new, undated version of the ACES schedule was available in July.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

The Port Authority funded a study of a possible PATH extension to Newark Airport. If built, there would be a 2-mile extension from the South Street Yard in Newark to the monorail station. This proposed extension would include two tracks, stations, power supply, and 40 cars, and would cost about \$31 million.

The 340 PA-5s will be numbered 5600-5769 (cab cars) and 5100-5269 (non-cab cars).

AMTRAK

I do not know if it was the effect of Amtrak receiving funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, but originals of Northeast Corridor Forms W2 (New York and Washington, DC), W4 (Boston and Virginia Beach), W5 (Springfield and Washington, DC), W8 (Empire Service), and W10 (Keystone Service - New York and Harrisburg) timetables were available at New York Penn. I was also able to obtain originals of the *Adirondack*, *Ethan Allen Express*, *Vermont*, and *Maple Leaf*. All have a July 13 effective date.

On July 13, Amtrak announced that it had completed the overhaul of its first car using funds from the ARRA. Amfleet II coach 25013 had been sidelined since it was involved in a yard collision in Hialeah, Florida in April, 2005. This work was performed at the Bear, Delaware facility using \$58.5 million in ARRA funds. Funding from this act is also supporting similar work at the Amtrak maintenance facility in Beech Grove, Indiana, including \$19.3 million to restore and return to service 20 Superliner cars and one Viewliner car, plus \$13 million for 15 P-40 locomotives.

Then on August 10, Superliner Sightseer Lounge 33016 became the first of 21 cars to be removed from storage, restored to good condition, and returned to service as part of a \$19.3 million, ARRA funded program at the Amtrak Beech Grove, Indiana maintenance facility. Pullman-built 33016, entered service on July 1, 1981 and had traveled nearly 5.1 million miles before being damaged in Washington State on April 4, 2005 and placed in storage. 18 of the remaining 19 cars are also Superliners, plus the prototype Viewliner dining car. \$13 million to will be spent to rehabilitate 15 P-40 locomotives. Thanks to Bob Hansen for this news.

Cinders reported that Amtrak is in the midst of a program to upgrade its *Acela* trainsets. This work is being performed in facilities at the Penn Coach Yard in Philadelphia. As of June, 6 of the 20 sets had been com-

(Continued on page 14)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 13)*

pleted. Normal wear and tear issues are being taken care of, plus some exterior painting where required. The focus is on the interior, including the installation of new carpeting and curtains, better seating in food service cars, improved signage, and new leather seating in Business Class cars. Amtrak is also testing a system that would bring "Wi-Fi" service to *Acela* passengers.

Amtrak, the New York State Department of Transportation, and the National Park Service Trails and Rails program celebrated the 35th anniversary of *Adirondack* service during a ceremony held at the Albany-Rensselaer station on August 5. The *Adirondack* (Trains #68/69) operates between New York Penn Station and Central Station in Montreal. During the past fiscal year, ridership exceeded 112,000.

If you are traveling to Pittsburgh via Amtrak between September 24 and 26, you should make alternate plans. Amtrak announced that because of the G-20 Economic Summit to be held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, a few blocks away from the train station, its trains will pass through but not stop in Pittsburgh. Affected are the *Pennsylvanian* and *Capitol Limited* – a far cry from the days of the "golden era" of railroads. Thanks to ***Railway Age*** for this news.

Do you want to buy a Turbo train? Seven were built by Rohr in 1976, and they were a mainstay of *Empire Service* until their withdrawal from service in 2004. In 1998, Amtrak and the State of New York collaborated on a project to upgrade tracks and equipment. The goal of the \$185 million project was to reduce travel time between Rensselaer and Manhattan to two hours, resulting in a savings of about 20 minutes. However, the track improvements that would have permitted the higher speeds never came to be. New York State spent \$65 million to rehabilitate the trains, of which only two ever operated before the project was canceled. The three completed trains were towed by Amtrak to its Bear, Delaware facility, where they remain, while three others, in varying conditions, remain in Glenville, New York. Their fate is uncertain.

The State of Wisconsin will purchase two 14-car train sets from Las Rozas, Spain-based Patentes Talgo SA to replace current equipment used in *Hiawatha Service* between Milwaukee and Chicago. The agreement includes an option to buy two more trains if the state gets federal stimulus money to extend rail service from Milwaukee to Madison. Talgo will perform final assembly of the car order at facilities yet to be determined in Wisconsin. Thanks to ***Railway Age*** for this news.

MUSEUMS

Pending final approval, the Trolley Museum of New York in Kingston will receive \$800,000 in federal funding to repair the trolley tracks on East Strand. The tracks run alongside the Rondout Creek in downtown King-

ston. Thanks to member Frank Pfuhrer for this news.

For those who keep track of preserved transit cars, according to the Trolley Museum of New York's August newsletter, four of the junk cars have been towed to Millens for scrap. Pictured were ex-H&M 510 and 513. The Editor wrote: "While many rail fans expressed unhappiness about the scrapping of the cars, no one stepped forward with a restoration plan, or the pledge of labor and money to save the cars. A number of these cars came to the Museum many years ago, I have been told, in good condition. Over the years, they have sat in place, used primarily as storage sheds. The Trolley Museum is a retail operation, and must be a safe, attractive and welcome place for the public to visit. With the removal of these cars, the Museum is coming closer to that goal. We should applaud the Board of Trustees for their efforts in these matters of providing a new public face for our Museum." Two more are slated for the scrap yard by the end of August.

The Shore Line Trolley Museum (Branford) reported that the Antique Auto Show, which was held on May 16, was successful and profitable, despite the cool and damp weather. Fifty-seven antique cars were on display and the event drew hundreds of visitors who saw cars with build dates ranging from 1912 to 1985! This event will be held again on May 15, 2010.

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

On July 23, the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) issued an order adopting, as final regulations, emergency rules prohibiting the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices by on-the-job MBTA vehicle operators. This was done on a temporary basis in May, at the request of Governor Patrick, following the May 9 Green Line (June ***Bulletin***) crash. In that incident, the trolley operator admitted he was sending a text message at the time of a two-trolley collision that sent more than 40 people to area hospitals for treatment. The emergency rules were set to expire on August 18, but are now permanent regulations with which MBTA must comply.

The State of Massachusetts set aside \$29 million during July to design a 0.4-mile subway tunnel under downtown Boston to connect the Red and Blue Lines. Unfortunately, planners concede they cannot afford to build — either now or any time in the next two decades.

On July 29, member Todd Glickman emailed a news report questioning how long MBTA General Manager Daniel T. Grabauskas would retain his position. Over the next several days, other reports were received on this subject, and then came the news that after an evening "marathon" meeting on August 6, Mr. Grabauskas had resigned, effective immediately. ***The Boston Globe*** reported that the MBTA Board, by a vote of 5-3, agreed to pay Grabauskas \$327,487 to settle the remaining nine months of his contract, including salary, vacation,

(Continued on page 15)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 14)*

and sick days. His job is being filled by William Mitchell, the "T"'s General Counsel, until a permanent General Manager can be found. Not to say that politics was involved, but Mr. Grabauskas is a Republican who was appointed by former Governor Mitt Romney. Democrat Deval Patrick is the present governor. Although he had several high-profile Democratic supporters, including House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo, Senate President Therese Murray, and Mayor Thomas M. Menino, Governor Patrick persisted in seeking his ouster. David D'Alessandro, a former John Hancock chief executive, was selected to perform a "top to bottom" review of the "T," which is to be completed by November 1.

On August 12, Governor Patrick's office announced that long-scheduled fare increase hearings had been canceled until after completion of the transit agency's review. Thanks to Todd for these reports.

WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND

Work is progressing on the new rail station at Warwick. *The Warwick Beacon* reported that RIDOT is confident that an agreement will be reached with MBTA by the Fall of 2010 to provide service to Boston before construction is completed. Even if there is an agreement, it will still be some time until trains will be running. In the mean time, Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri and a group of VIPs inspected the recently completed (steel work and concrete only) skywalk which will connect T.F. Green Airport with the Warwick station. Thanks again to Todd for this news.

LINDENWOLD, NEW JERSEY

A request for bids to overhaul the PATCO fleet of 121 rapid transit cars was issued in late February, and since then several car builders and system/component vendors have expressed interest in the project. They have made visits to PATCO to inspect the cars and have been able to formally ask questions regarding the specification's technical and contractual terms. The bids were received on August 7. PATCO is in the process of reviewing the received bids, and plans to award a contract in late 2009 or early 2010.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

There have been reports that SEPTA is considering abolishing the "R" series numbers that are used on its regional rail lines, to which member Dave Safford sent these comments: "SEPTA is taking a page from...MTA's book - when you haven't the capital to make system improvements, you can always muddle what you have enough so that there isn't time or energy to worry about real problems. Long threatened, SEPTA now appears serious about renaming all of its rail transit routes, now deemed 'confusing for infrequent riders and tourists.' The issue appears to be that the Regional Rail trains often switch routes in Center City, so an R5 might trans-

form itself into an R6 without warning. Clearly having them change instead from a #24 to a #8 would clear things right up. Also, having R5s that go to Doylestown labeled R5/Doylestown, and R5s going to Malvern labeled R5/Malvern is apparently too much for the average tourist. Separate designations for each end are clearly called for. Just as obvious the MTA should rename...④...when it passes 42nd Street to help out the tourists who might otherwise head for Brooklyn instead of the Bronx. A rather usual problem is they haven't a clue as to what a new system should be. Thirteen or more new colors should be a challenge (green, blue and orange are spoken for, serving trolleys, Market/Frankford, and Broad Street respectively). Separate numbers for every line segment is a possibility, but how someone boarding a #22 at 30th Street is to know instinctively that one or two stops later he will be on a #46 is unclear. Of course east and westbound trains on the same line could have different numbers, a solution reminiscent of Boston where a hapless tourist detraining at Summer Street must somehow divine that to return one must board at Winter Street).

"Simply labeling the trains by their terminals would be straightforward (the R100 is already tabbed to become the 'Norristown High Speed Line' in September, seemingly on the grounds that a 23-character designation is a simplification of a 4-character one). This has been used elsewhere (remember the Pelham Bay Line?), but doesn't help our archetypal befuddled tourist to know that both Malvern and Thorndale trains stop at Paoli. And the Media and Sharon Hill light rail lines are to become just two more Green Line (trolley) trains, presumably with new route numbers. This may not help the tourists, but it sure ought to shake up the regulars for a while. What with one thing and another it appears that this is an effort to DO SOMETHING so confusing and at the same time far reaching that it will discourage riders from asking for anything for a while."

The Inquirer (July 29) said editorially, "Well it was nice to see SEPTA making an effort toward a 'worthy goal,' but is this the best use of capital funds? This would be a 'major public step' and must be 'done right, if needed.' Given that it is, they like naming trains for their destination points, as do the Washington, D.C. and Paris, France Metros."

This subject is not new as the Delaware Valley Association of Railroad Passengers (DVARP) reported that it had been involved in discussions with SEPTA for a while, has discussed this at several DVARP meetings, and published an article in its June, 2009 *Delaware Valley Rail Passenger*. It is a very complicated issue as there are many alternatives and with new equipment coming on line in the next few years, DVARP believes that a decision should be made soon.

Member Joe Canfield sent an article from *The Phila-*

(Continued on page 16)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 15)

delphia Inquirer reporting on possible new schemes including 13 separate letters or numbers for the segments or simply going back to their pre-1984 names: Chestnut Hill West, Chestnut Hill East, etc. When originally implemented, the train lines ran through from one end to the other. However now, SEPTA says only 33% are end-to-end runs; some, after leaving Center City, head for a rail yard, while 19% change "R" designations as they leave Center City.

Dave sent these three reports from **The Philadelphia Inquirer** that there is good news and bad news: "Total ridership on SEPTA was up 1% for the fiscal year ending June 30, but there has been a steady slippage for the entire 4th quarter. Regional Rail was the hardest hit, with total ridership down slightly for the year. It's the economy, of course - all modes are losing riders. Auto traffic was down 1.2% for the year, and traffic on the Turnpike was down 3%. In basic English, those (like your correspondent) who have been laid off aren't commuting."

SEPTA, responding to an uptick in crime in the subways, is installing 10 security cameras in each of the 225 Market/Frankford El cars at a cost of \$3,349,560. Installation will begin "late this year or early next" when a similar project on the Broad Street line is complete. In addition, cameras have been installed on 20 Green Line and El underground stations, part of a plan to install cameras in all 57 stations of the Broad Street, El, and underground Green Line.

Construction began August 12 on SEPTA's biggest stimulus-funded project: a \$25 million makeover of the Spring Garden and Girard stations (Broad Street Line). The project, scheduled to take 2 years, includes new stairs, elevators, tiles, lights, and "safety and communications systems."

The **Delaware Valley Rail Passenger** reported that a major reconstruction of the Media and Sharon Hill trolley lines was to begin this month. Shuttle buses will replace the cars on one part of the lines through next Summer. This project includes installation of new welded rail over the entire system to upgrading stations and replacing some of the catenary poles. Signals and grade crossings will also be redone as part of the project. Also included is removal of the controversial gates from some of the Media line crossings. These gates had just been installed and helped prevent autos from encroaching on the tracks and getting hit by trolleys, but area residents complained and their state legislator demanded the gates be removed. Also controversial is the installation of a new CBTC system, which hopefully will be better than the one that has caused delays for Subway-Surface Line riders. Under the first phase, the Sharon Hill Line will be affected — it will be out-of-service until this December — with Media Line work

beginning after the holidays.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Member Steve Erlitz reported that new Camden/Penn Line timetables were issued effective July 20. "A few time changes on Penn Line. Big change on Camden is the second morning inbound and the first afternoon outbound added (at) College Park. In the afternoon, the first train would blow past CP leaving 50-60 people waiting for the three-car second train, which was SRO after Greenbelt. Many of the CP riders are already at CP when the first train comes through, so why not add them? In the morning, many of the same students would have to arrive at CP (at) 7:30 AM because the next train stopping was after 9 AM (if on time) and there is still a bus ride needed to get to the campus." Thanks to Steve for sending copies.

Virginia Railway Express, which is well known for its excellent communication with riders, included the following message in an email dated July 28. "Please Be Kind to Our Trains.' We've recently had several incidents of broken cup holders, ripped seat covers, and backed-up toilets. According to our Director of Equipments and Services, each broken cup holder costs taxpayers \$122.99. Every damaged seat cover costs \$223.45 and every time a toilet tank has to be removed and pumped out because its function is impaired by people putting paper towels in it: \$1,300.00. So please, do not use the cup holders to pull yourself out of a seat. Do not place heavy luggage on seats where they can rip or poke holes into the seat covers. And please, never ever put a paper towel into the toilet. Thank you for your cooperation."

On July 23, federal investigators reported that the track circuit at the center of the fatal June 22 collision had been malfunctioning since a key piece of equipment was replaced in December, 2007. Thanks to member Raymond Berger for sending this report from **The Washington Post**.

Raymond also sent this link, <http://www.dullesmetro.com/about/>, describing the Dulles Metrorail Project, which will be a 23-mile extension off the Orange Line to Dulles Airport. The work will be done in two phases and includes 11 new stations. Under Phase 1 the line will run from East Falls Church to Wiehle Avenue on the eastern edge of Reston with stations in Tysons Corner: Tysons East, Tysons Central 123, Tysons Central 7, and Tysons West. Construction began this past March 12 and is to be completed in 2013. Phase 2 will run from Wiehle Avenue to Ashburn in eastern Loudoun County. A construction date has not been set for the extension that will serve Reston Town Center, Herndon, Dulles Airport, Route 606, and Ashburn.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

My wife and I visited what is known as "The Queen City" in August. There were various sights to be seen in

(Continued on page 17)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 16)*

during our drive in both directions, and this was my first visit to Charlotte since the 9.6-mile, 15-station, Lynx LRT opened for revenue service on November 26, 2007. We also had a very nice visit with an Army buddy and his family, who I had not seen for many years. Lynx, also known as the Blue Line, is operated by the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS). Rush hours, cars operate every 10 minutes rush hours, 15 minutes middays, and 20 minutes evenings. On weekends, cars operate on 20-minute headways. When it opened, there were 8-minute headways in rush hours.

I began my ride at around 9:30 AM from the 7th Street (terminal) station in Uptown Charlotte aboard a two-car train. As we progressed, I observed that single-car trains were headed towards Uptown Charlotte. Upon arrival at the terminal, I-485, I saw that the cars that had been cut from the trains were stored on the tail tracks beyond the station. I got off at several of the stops to take photos. Automated announcements at stations inform passengers when the next cars will arrive, generally twice, six or seven minutes and one minute in advance of the car's arrival. There are also safety messages. In the "downtown" area, the trolley poles are topped by a gold crown and are located to the right of the tracks, all of which are set on concrete ties. Outside of this area, a single steel pole between the tracks supports the wires. The stations are at grade closer to the city and mostly elevated towards I-485. The end of the line is the I-485 station, which has a large garage. CATS owns 16 Siemens S-70 Avanto low-floor LRVs (101-116) that are maintained at the South Boulevard Light Rail Facility, which is located near to the New Bern station. New lines and an extension to the Blue Line are planned.

Charlotte Trolley, Inc., a non-profit, volunteer organization, owns historic car 85 and three Gomaco replica trolleys (91-93), which normally operate on weekends between 9th Street and Atherton Mills. Some of the stations are shared with CATS LRVs. On the day of my visit, a camp group chartered 93, and I was able to photograph it at the 7th Street station. The fares for the Charlotte Trolley are the same as for CATS: \$1.50 one-way, \$3.00 round-trip, and \$0.75 for seniors and students (K-12). Day passes are available for \$4.50. The organization has as its headquarters a new brick building, and inside is nicely restored ex-Connecticut Company 1339, which has no lettering of any kind.

CHESTERTON, INDIANA

NICTD announced that on five weekends, (August 29-31, September 12-14 and 26-28, October 10-12, and October 31-November 2) there would be no service between South Bend and Gary Metro Center in order to replace catenary under Phase II. In addition, there is no bus replacement for this reason: "Because of the high

number of weekend passengers and variability of demand the South Shore will not provide shuttle bus service between South Bend and Gary Metro Center. Stations affected by this outage include South Bend, Hudson Lake, Carroll Avenue and 11th Street in Michigan City, Beverly Shores, Dune Park, Portage/Ogden Dunes, and Miller." Passengers were encouraged to drive to the East Chicago station, which is conveniently located near I-94 and has parking, restrooms and high-level boarding.

If your plans include a trip to ride the South Shore, I received an email reporting that for a two-week period this fall (possibly between October 18 and November 6), there will be no Monday-Friday rail service east of Carroll Avenue, Michigan City, but there will be bus substitution. Work will be performed on four bridges.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Metra held a ground breaking ceremony on June 29 for the new 35th Street station on the Rock Island District Line. Construction is expected to be completed in the fall of 2010. The station will be named Lovana S. "Lou" Jones/Bronzeville Station, after the longtime Assistant Majority Leader for the State of Illinois who represented the area for nearly 20 years. She died in 2006. Funding for this project is being provided by the ARRA. Besides serving students and faculty at the Illinois Institute of Technology, the station is also located near U.S. Cellular Field, home to the Chicago White Sox, as well as Chicago Police Headquarters, De La Salle Institute, and the redeveloping Stateway Gardens housing complex.

On June 30, security teams from the Transportation Security Administration began patrolling Metra trains. These patrols are known as Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response teams, which consist of federal air marshals, security officers, TSA-certified canine teams, and officers from other police agencies.

The Chicago Transit Authority, on July 16, amended its operating budget due to reductions in funding from the Regional Transportation Authority in the amount of \$35.2 million. This loss is in addition to a reduction of \$154.7 million that the RTA required earlier this year. Still, CTA projected that it will be able to manage through this additional loss in funding and is not recommending service cuts or a fare increase to balance the budget.

You can add CTA to the growing list of transit agencies that have enacted a zero-tolerance policy for the use of cell phones, PDAs, MP3/music players, wireless headsets, or any other appliance or device. Employees who are caught using any of these devices are subject to being discharged. The effective date was August 5.

Sixteen months after it was closed, the Wellington station reopened on July 30. A formal dedication ceremony was held on August 14. Wellington is the sixteenth of 18 stations included in the Brown Line capacity expansion project to be completed. To date, work also has been

(Continued on page 18)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 17)*

completed at Kimball, Kedzie, Rockwell, Francisco, Western, Sedgwick, Montrose, Addison, Southport, Armitage, Diversey, Chicago, Damen, Irving Park, and Paulina. With the completion of Wellington, all of the Brown Line stations temporarily closed for renovation are open. Construction remains underway at Belmont and Fullerton, but service continues to operate at both stations. Thanks to Bob Hansen for these reports.

Last July, CTA announced that in order to provide additional capacity aboard its trains, it would remove 12-14 seats from some rail cars. The experiment began in September, 2008 (September, 2008 **Bulletin**). Member Jim Beeler sent an article from *The Chicago Tribune* reporting that CTA "quietly" called off this experiment due to complaints from riders. A letter writer to the "Getting Around" column complained that she observed four cars on a Brown Line train. When questioned about this (the policy is two such cars per train), the answer was that a crew had simply screwed up at the Kimball rail yard. Oh, one final word about this: CTA will not be converting the cars back to contain 39 seats.

Jim also sent an article from the same edition reporting about the last private club car in the United States, 553. Owned by club (which was not named) members who also maintain the car, it runs under an agreement with the Union Pacific Railroad, which operates the UP North Line (Kenosha). Currently, this car operates on Train #326 (7:15 AM Kenosha) and Train #341 (5:03 PM Ogilvie Transportation Center). It was constructed by Pullman-Standard in 1949 as a club-lounge car, complete with a barber chair, a shower, and a steward's room. Before I get inundated with emails, yes, NJ Transit does operate a commuter club car on the North Jersey Coast Line, but NJT owns the car, and members simply pay a fee for its use. Club members actually occupy about half of Comet II car 5459. Details on the NJ Transit operation were described in the August, 2007 **Bulletin**.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

During mid-July, construction crews energized the catenary system from the present terminus of the Hiawatha LRT to the Northstar station in downtown Minneapolis. Elsewhere, crews were putting the final touches on station construction for the seven stations. Service is set to begin on the 40.1-mile line to Big Lake by the end of this year.

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Rail Runner issued a new timetable effective August 1, to mark the opening of the Santa Fe County/NM 599 station. This station, the eleventh, was originally planned to open this past Spring. With this opening, two stations remain under construction: Zia Road and Sandia Pueblo. According to the Rail Runner web site, they are listed as "opening date to be determined."

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Seattle's Link LRT opened as scheduled on July 18 as thousands took advantage of free rides. Twelve two-car trains operated on 7½ minute headways to handle the crowds. Details were published in the June and August, 2009 **Bulletins**. Thanks to member Phil Hom for this report.

PORTLAND, OREGON

As a result of a Board of Directors vote on August 12, effective January 3, 2010, "Fareless Square" will become rail only. According to TriMet, "Fareless Square" was implemented 34 years ago to help address air quality issues, specifically reducing carbon monoxide, as well as reduce car trips downtown and increase transit usage. At that time, the transit system consisted only of buses, but has since expanded to four MAX lines and the Portland Streetcar. Nearly all trips within Fareless Square can be accommodated on rail. The change would make riding transit in downtown less confusing, since not all buses travel the length of the Mall. It also allows buses to operate more efficiently, and reduces any conflict with operators for riders who may not have paid a fare at the Fareless Square boundary."

New timetables were issued on August 30 for the Blue, Red and Yellow MAX Lines to implement service cuts that were proposed in February and approved in May.

On September 12, opening day ceremonies were scheduled for the Green Line, with revenue service beginning the following day. The Green Line extends from Gateway to Clackamas, a distance of 6.5 miles, with 8 stations. Weekdays, service will operate on 15-minute headways from 6 AM to 7 PM, and every 30 minutes during the early morning and evening hours. On Saturdays and Sundays, cars will run every 15 minutes from 10:30 AM-6:30 PM, and at 30-minute frequencies during early morning and evening hours.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

There was another rail car collision, this time involving two SF Muni LRVs on July 19. According to a report forwarded by member John Pappas, an NTSB investigator reported that there are indications that the Train Operator of the westbound L/Taraval car had switched off auto control and went into manual control somewhere between the Forest Hill and West Portal stations and then hit the standing K/Ingleside car at about 20-23 mph. Normal SF Muni procedure is to wait until the train enters the station to switch to manual. There were 48 injuries, including the Operator of the second car, 4 of which were classified as serious. On July 20, the head of the Muni's transit workers' union reported that the Train Operator had blacked out due to a medical condition. This is the fourth major subway/trolley/commuter rail crash in ten months, starting with Metrolink in Chatsworth, California (September 12, 2008); Boston's Green Line (May 8, 2009); and Metrorail, Washington, D.C.

(Continued on page 19)

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - SEPTEMBER, 2009

Brooklyn's Convertible Trolley Cars

(Continued from page 5)

TOW CARS	SALT CARS			
	Car	Depot	Car	Depot
3921	4344	Ninth Avenue	4553	Ninth Avenue
3963	4502	Flatbush	4558	Ninth Avenue
4335	4504	Flatbush	4559	Ninth Avenue
4343	4518	Crosstown	4563	Canarsie
4550*	4519	Crosstown Fresh Pond	4568	Canarsie
	4538	Fresh Pond	4573	58 th Street**
	4539	Fresh Pond	4587	Flatbush
	4540	Canarsie	4588	Canarsie
	4547	Canarsie Ninth Avenue	4594	N/A
	4548	Canarsie		

*Fan trip May 26, 1951

**Fan trips August 22, 1948 and October 10, 1948

SHELTER CARS

- 3740 Park Row Loop 1945-50
- 4550 Park Row Loop December, 1949-January, 1950
- 3904 Stillwell Avenue station, Norton's Point Line
- 4545 Bridge Plaza 1938-9

PRESERVED CARS

4547

This car was loaded on a trailer on Track 40, Coney Island Yard, November 28-29, 1956. It was transported

to Kennebunkport, Maine, home of the Seashore Electric Railroad Museum. Because New York City originally awarded car 4558, which was in poor condition, 4547 was renumbered 4558 on October 30, 1956. After the car left Coney Island Yard, it was renumbered back to 4547.

4550

This car was awarded to the Edaville Railroad, South Carver, Massachusetts by the Board of Estimate for one dollar. The car was loaded on a trailer at Coney Island Yard on October 15, 1957. It was transferred to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania on January 23, 1974 and to the Dushore, Pennsylvania trolley museum on February 19, 1975.

4573

In August, 1948, Edward B. Watson bought this car for \$340 and presented it to the Branford Electric Railway Association. It was loaded at DeKalb Shop on November 30, 1948 and unloaded at Branford on December 1, 1948.

COST OF CARS

CAR NUMBERS	COST
3700s	\$2,300
3900-74	\$2,300
3975-99	\$2,092
4100s	\$2,549
4300s	\$2,495
4500-49	\$2,234
4550-99	\$2,032

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 18)

(June 22, 2009).

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

At the end of November, 2007, the LACMTA Board voted to install fare gates at Metro stations (February and September, 2008 **Bulletins**) to stem the loss of an estimated \$5 million each year. By the end of last month, fare gates were to be in place at these Red Line stations: Normandie, Union Station, Westlake, and Pershing Square. Staff was assigned to assist passengers as they get accustomed to the gates, which were set to "free spin" until passengers become familiar with them. Until this time, Metro had been the only subway operator in the United States to have a barrier-free proof-of-payment system. If all goes well, installation of 379 additional fare gates will begin in all Red and Green Line and key light rail stations on the Metro Blue and Gold lines. This work is to be completed in six to eight months.

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Vancouver's third SkyTrain line opened on August 17,

amid celebrations. The Canada Line is 11.8 miles long and has 16 stations, nine of which are in Vancouver, while four are in Richmond and three on Sea Island, serving Vancouver's airport (YVR). Travel time from YVR to the Waterfront is just 26 minutes. Service operates from roughly from 5 AM to 1 AM.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Contributor James Chuang reported that the MTR Corporation has been selected as the preferred bidder to operate and maintain the Melbourne train system for an initial period of eight years. Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) is 60% owned by MTR with two leading Australian rail industry organizations, UGL Rail and John Holland, each also owning 20%.

FROM THE HISTORY FILES

100 Years ago: On September 19, 1909, the first trolley cars operated on the Queensborough Bridge from Queensborough Plaza to E. 59th-E. 60th Streets & Second Avenue. **Headlights** (February, 1949) reported that the Queensborough Bridge Railway was the first of three operators. The others were the Third Avenue Railway System until 1919 and the New York & Queens

(Continued on page 20)

Around New York's Transit System

Ceiling Collapses at 181st Street Station

At about 10:30 PM on August 16, ① service was disrupted when a section of the brick façade above the tracks collapsed at the 181st Street station. A train was in the station, but there were no injuries. A bus shuttle was set up to carry passengers between Dyckman Street and 168th Street, skipping 207th Street southbound (with M3 bus service operating fare-free northbound at 168th Street, in both directions at 181st Street, and southbound at 191st Street) while a contractor removed debris and made temporary repairs.

An MTA press release concerning the incident provides the following information about this station: "The 181st Street station is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The station is a two-track side platform station located within the Fort George Tunnel. It is one of three stations along this stretch of tunnel, which includes the 168th Street, 181st Street, and 191st Street stations. All three stations are of round bored-tunnel construction, approximately eight to ten stories (in this case 121 feet) beneath the street.

"The central portion of this station features soaring ceilings that are approximately three stories high. The keyblock of the central arch is heavily embellished with a volute draped with a laurel wreath. Along the center of the ceiling are six evenly spaced, multi-colored terra cotta medallions that once held light fixtures."

On August 18, MTA provided details on the work the contractor would perform. A protective barrier made of metal decking, about 300 feet long and 32 feet wide,

was to be constructed above the tracks and platforms. The barrier included temporary lighting. Once in place, the barrier was to be used as a work platform for the contractor to use in removing any loose bricks from the ceiling. A consultant was to investigate the incident and design a restoration project.

Local elected officials and riders claimed that they had been complaining for some time about the condition of the ceiling, but that NYC Transit had ignored their complaints. NYC Transit replied that it had been well aware of the condition at this station, and that it had amended its 2005-9 capital program in 2008 to add a rehabilitation project and had installed shielding over the pedestrian bridge that spans the tracks. A master plan for repair and rehabilitation of a significant part of the façade was completed in April, 2009, and a consultant started design work in June. The State Legislature approved funding for the project two days before the ceiling collapsed. Design work is expected to be completed in December and it is expected that a contract will be awarded early next year. The consultant contract will now be expanded to include inspection of the 168th Street station, which has a similar brick ceiling.

At 12:01 AM August 23, the bus shuttle was extended to operate between 137th Street and Dyckman Street to allow for inspection of the ceiling at 168th Street.

Through ① service resumed at 5 AM August 24, with trains bypassing 181st Street. Passengers were advised to use M3 buses to/from 181st Street.

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 19)

County Railway Company All trolley service ended on April 7, 1957.

60 Years ago: On September 23, 1969, the Lehigh

Valley Transit Company ended through service to 69th Street in Philadelphia. Passengers who were bound for Center City had to transfer to P&W (Red Arrow) cars at Norristown and again to the Market-Frankford El.

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

New York City Subway Car Update

(Continued from page 8)

the reefing program as they seek a final resting place.

Conclusion (Is It 40 Years, Already?)

And our chase goes on across the summer months, seeking to get out for those last (hopefully cool) rides in the 60-foot stainless steel SMEEs of yesteryear beneath the streets of Queens, Manhattan, and Brooklyn. As you notice above, the remaining time for the R-40Ms in particular grows short, and as they disappear, so, too, do more pieces of what is often referred to as our collectively "misspent youth." Strongly from this quarter, I urge you to try and use a little of this year's hot weather

to sit on one of their aging fiberglass bench seats, under their fading fluorescent lights, close your eyes, and let the coolness of an **R** or **V** train in the summer of 2009 take you back. Back to a time of being lucky enough to steal away, even for a few minutes, from bare, flickering incandescent bulbs; a sweaty, stale-smelling rattan seat; the annoying rattle of an Axiflo fan blowing warm air around; or the ozone whiff of hot steel; to that August evening in 1969. A time when we enjoyed the records of so many artists now lost to us, from Benny Goodman to The Beatles; a time of Men on the Moon, Love, War, and The Amazin' Mets!...Sweet dreams, all, and see you down the road!