

# The Bulletin



**Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated**

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## The Bulletin

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**In This Issue:  
From Recognition to Dominance—  
The New York Connecting Railroad  
(Continued)  
...Page 2**

## STATEN ISLAND'S 157-YEAR-OLD RAILROAD

Staten Island's trains have been providing regular service for more than a century, but most people living in the other boroughs are not aware that the railroad exists.

The Staten Island Rail Road Company was incorporated on October 18, 1851 to construct a railroad from the easterly shore of Staten Island between Quarantine and Clifton to a point nearly opposite Amboy, New Jersey. Construction began in November, 1855 and was completed in 1860. This 13-mile route extended from Townsend's Dock at Vanderbilt's Landing to Tottenville. An inspection trip from Vanderbilt's Landing to Eltingville was held for officials and stockholders on February 1, 1860. Regular passenger service to Eltingville began on April 23, 1860. Trains started operating to Annadale on May 16 and to Tottenville, where a big celebration was held, on June 2. At first the railroad operated five daily trains, which were scheduled to meet the steam boats from South Ferry. Running time was about 50 minutes from South Ferry to Clifton and about 50 minutes from Clifton to Tottenville. Fuel for the wood-burning locomotives was obtained by cutting down trees on railroad-owned land.

The original stations were as follows:  
Vanderbilt's Landing (Clifton)

Garretson  
New Dorp  
Richmond (Court House)  
Giffords  
Eltingville  
Annadale  
Huguenot  
Princes Bay  
Pleasant Plains  
Richmond Valley  
Tottenville

Because the railroad could not provide ade-

quate service with only one locomotive, it decided to buy another one. When the trains were running less than a year, it was unable to pay for the locomotives and the creditors threatened to seize the property. To protect the assets, the company declared bankruptcy and Cornelius Vanderbilt's son, William, was appointed receiver.

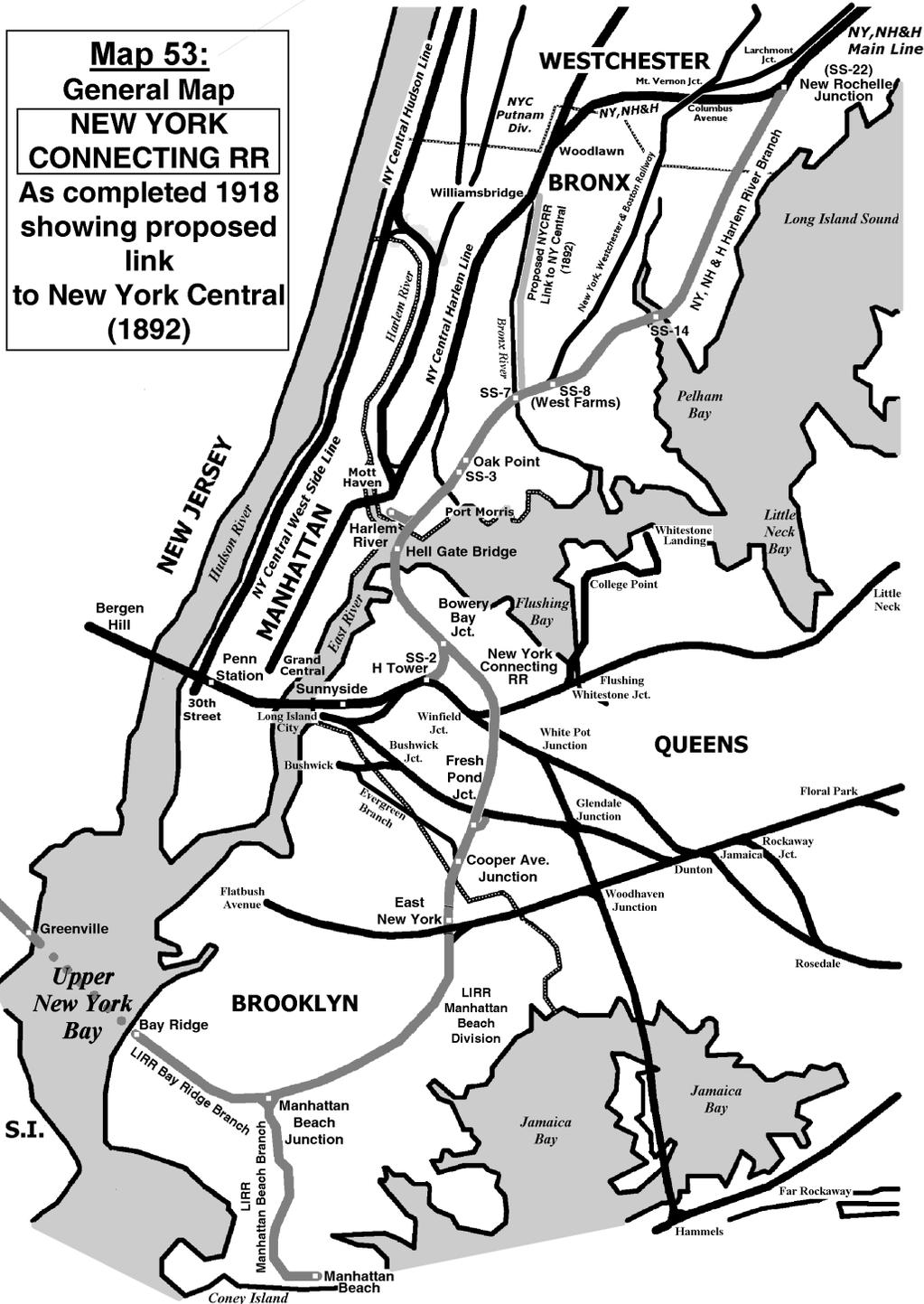
Meanwhile, the company bought the privately-owned ferries, which provided unreliable service between South Ferry (Manhattan) and Staten Island. Also bought and operated until 1948 was the Perth Amboy to South Ferry route, which was rerouted from Perth Amboy to Tottenville.

The company continued to prosper for several years. Unfortunately one of its boats exploded on July 30, 1871 and it was forced to declare bankruptcy, because it could not pay the claims that were submitted. A receiver was appointed on March 28, 1872. The property was sold at foreclosure and transferred by deed to George Law on September 17, 1872. The Staten Island Railway Company was incorporated March 20, 1873 for the purpose of operating the Staten Island Rail Road Company, whose property was transferred to Staten Island Railway by George Law in a deed dated April 1, 1873. Another corporation, the Staten Island Rapid Transit Railroad Company, was incorporated on April 14, 1880 for the purpose of building a railroad from a point on the shore near New Dorp Lane and Peteler's South Beach Pavilion and Port Richmond. On June 30, 1883, the company leased the Staten Island Railway Company, which was operating from Clifton to Tottenville. The lease went into effect on July 31, 1884, when the company started operating from Clifton to Tompkinsville. But it was unable to reach St. George

*(Continued on page 4)*

# FROM RECOGNITION TO DOMINANCE: THE NEW YORK CONNECTING RAILROAD (BRIDGING THE BAY AND CONNECTING THE PIECES)

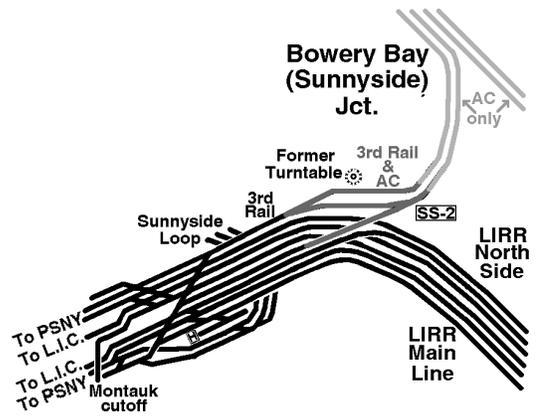
by George Chiasson  
(Continued from May, 2017 issue)



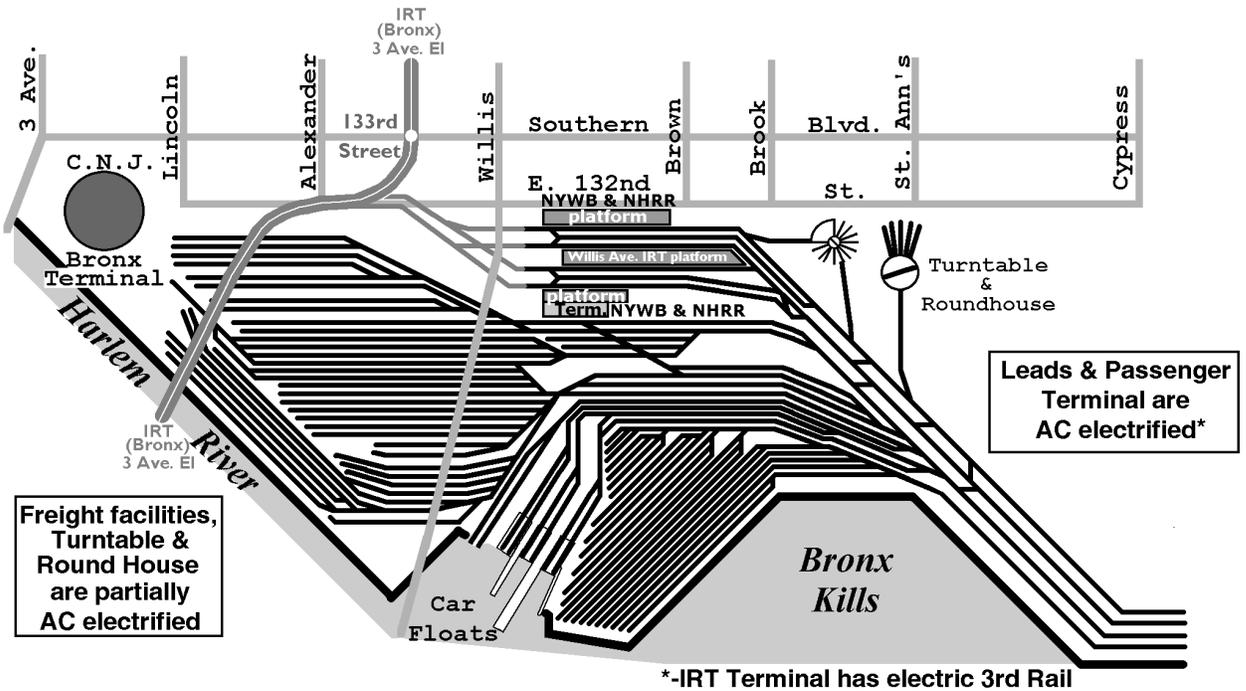
(Continued on page 3)

From Recognition to Dominance  
 (Continued from page 2)

**Map 77:**  
**New York Connecting Railroad**  
**Signal Station 2**  
 PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD  
 "H" (Harold) Interlocking  
**January 1930**

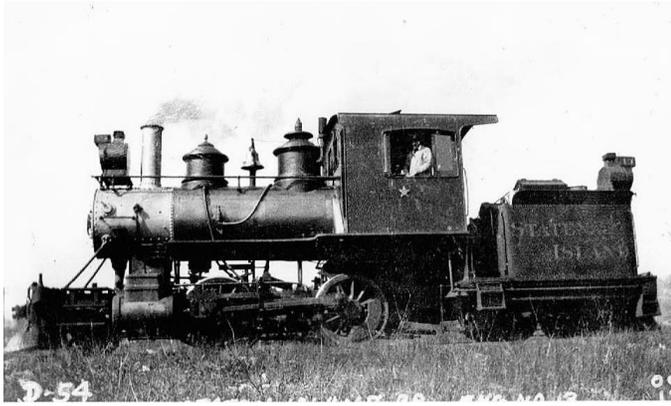


**Map 78:**  
**New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad**  
**New York, Westchester & Boston**  
**Harlem River Terminal**  
**Circa 1918**



(Continued on page 6)

# STATEN ISLAND RAILWAY SCENES



**A Staten Island Rapid Transit steam engine, October, 1914.**  
Bernard Linder collection



**Beldaire Road station, South Beach Branch.**  
Bernard Linder collection



**Two views of Fort Wadsworth station, South Beach Branch.**  
Bernard Linder collection



**South Beach station, South Beach Branch.**  
Bernard Linder collection



**South Beach Branch, July 2, 1950.**  
Bernard Linder photograph

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Staten Island's 157-Year-Old Railroad

*(Continued from page 1)*

because it was not allowed to cross the land owned by the U.S. Lighthouse Service, the present-day U.S.

Coast Guard. After long negotiations, the railroad received permission to build a 512-foot two-track brick-arch tunnel through mostly solid rock under the property just south of St. George. This tunnel, which was built in

*(Continued on page 5)*

**Staten Island Railway Scenes**

*(Continued from page 4)*



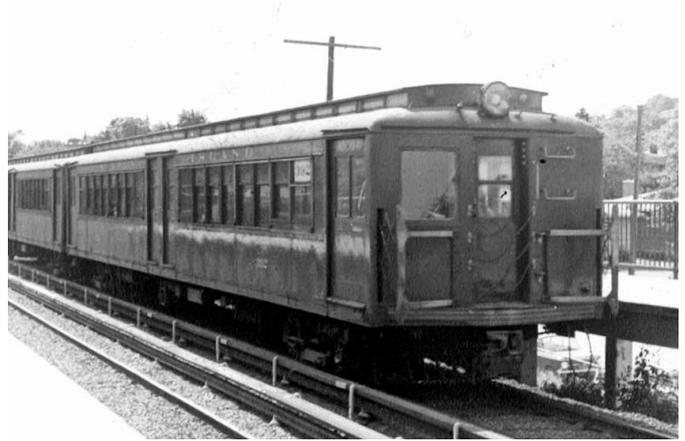
**Sweeper X600 at Clifton, May 23, 1945.**  
Bernard Linder collection



**Staten Island Rapid Transit train.**  
Bernard Linder collection



**Interior of car 343, August 20, 1969.**  
Lawrence Linder photograph



**Car 392 at Jefferson Avenue, August 30, 1968.**  
Lawrence Linder photograph



**Train of ex-Long Island Rail Road cars on fantrip, April 28, 1973.**  
Bernard Linder collection



**Train of R-44 cars, April 28, 1973.**  
Bernard Linder collection

**Staten Island's 157-Year-Old Railroad**

*(Continued from page 4)*

1885, is still in service at the present time. The compa-

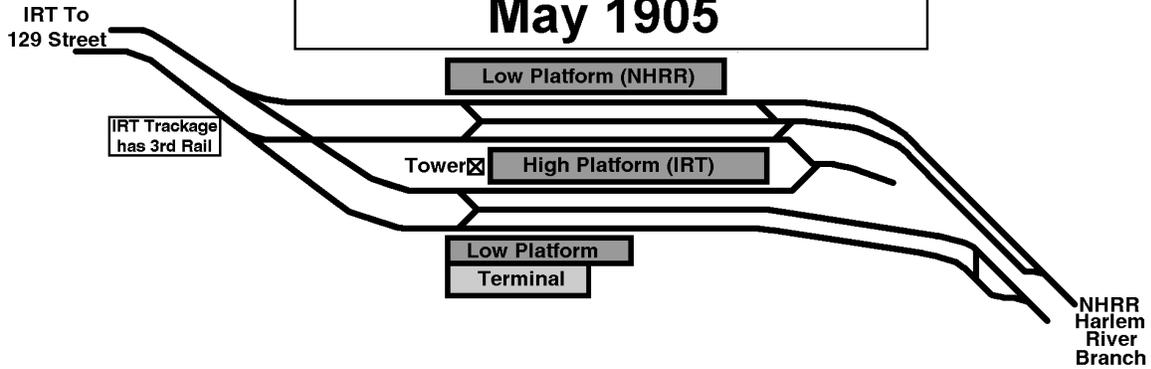
ny's 1886 report revealed that a new ferry landing at St. George and eight first-class station buildings, with the necessary platforms, had been constructed.

*(To be continued)*

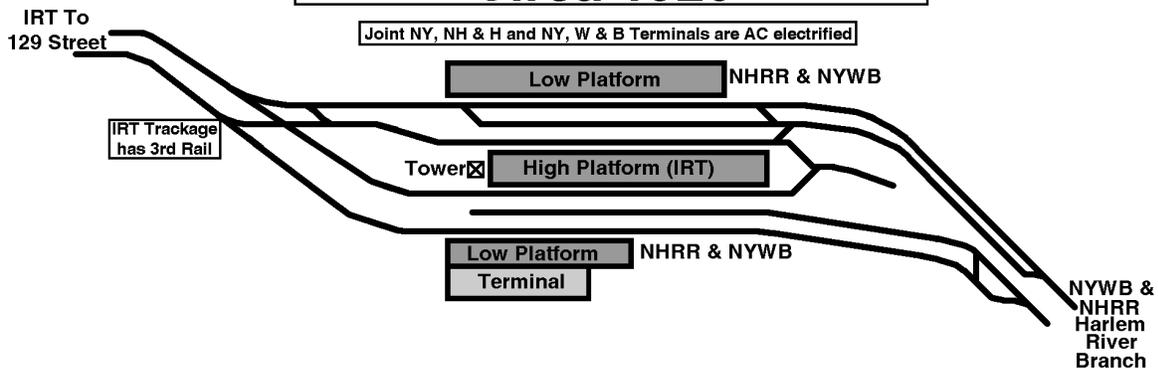
**From Recognition to Dominance**

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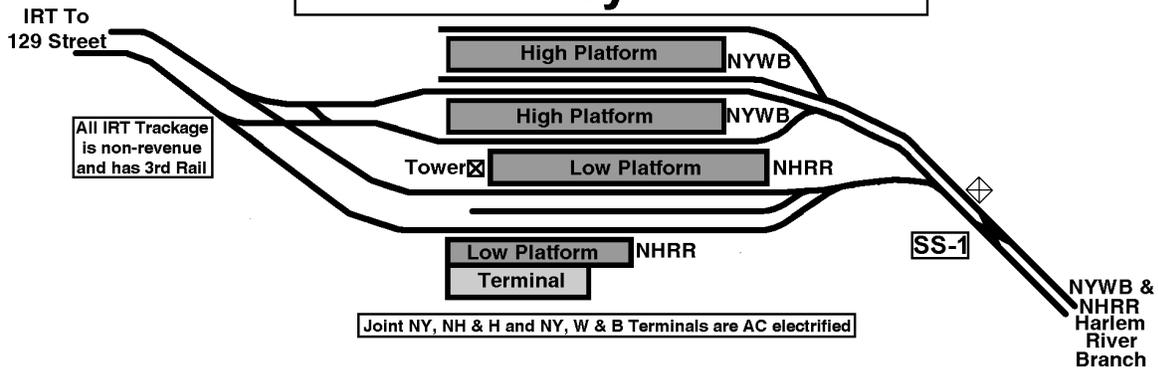
Map 79a:  
**New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad**  
 Interborough Rapid Transit Co.  
**Harlem River (Willis Ave.) Terminal**  
**May 1905**



Map 79b:  
**New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad**  
 Interborough Rapid Transit Co.  
 New York, Westchester & Boston  
**Harlem River (Willis Ave.) Terminal**  
**Circa 1920**

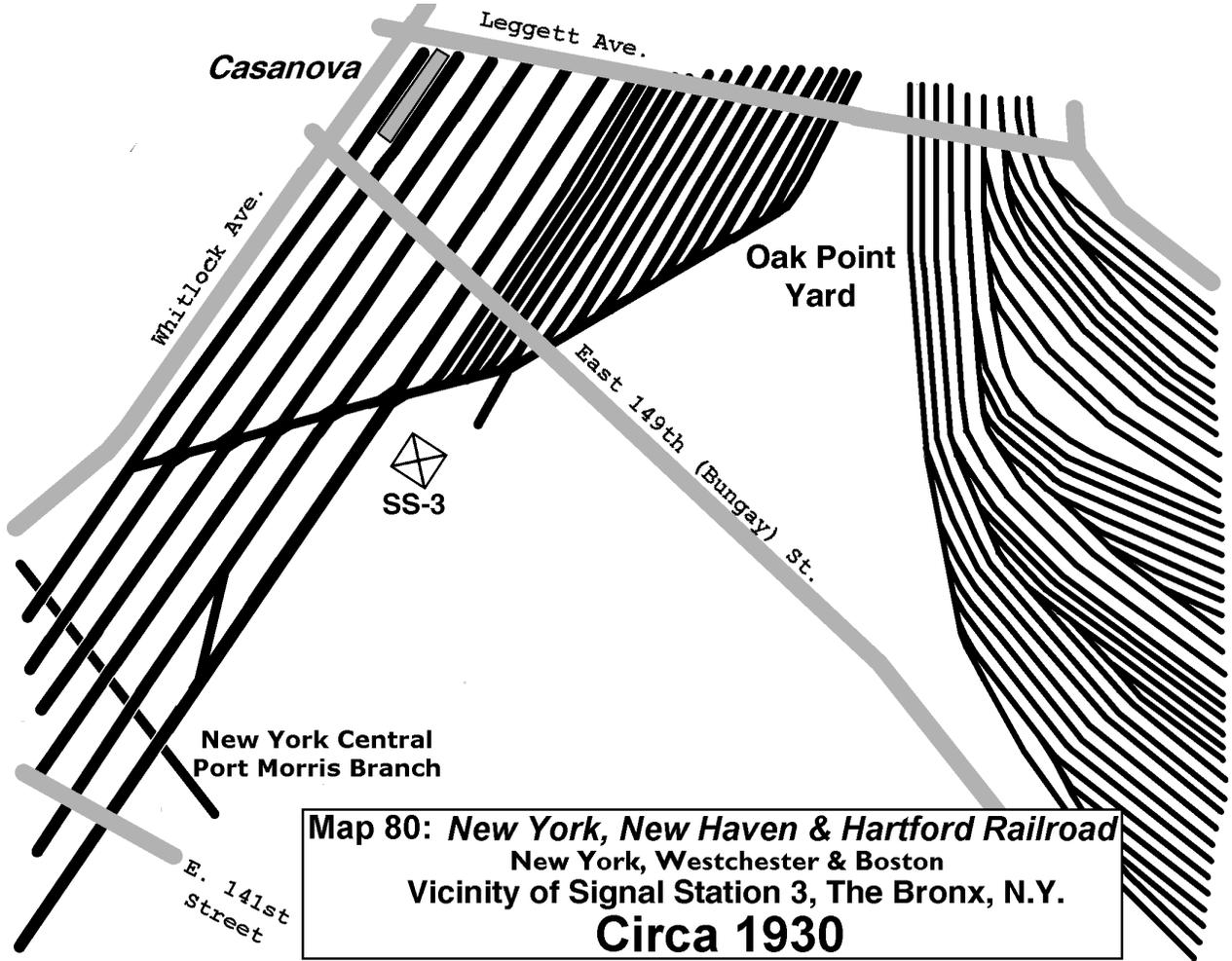


Map 79c:  
**New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad**  
 Interborough Rapid Transit Co.  
 New York, Westchester & Boston  
**Harlem River (Willis Ave.) Terminal**  
**January 1930**

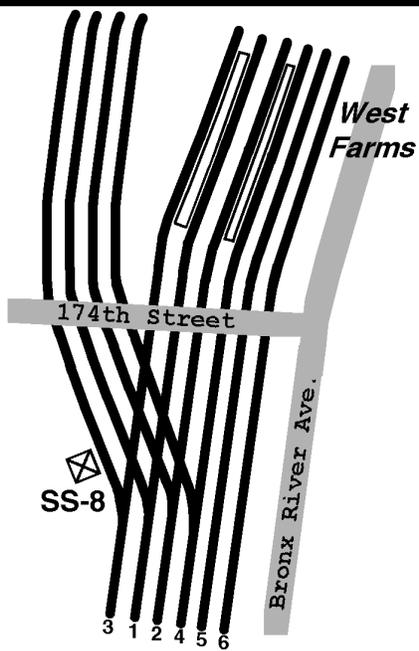


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**From Recognition to Dominance**  
(Continued from page 6)



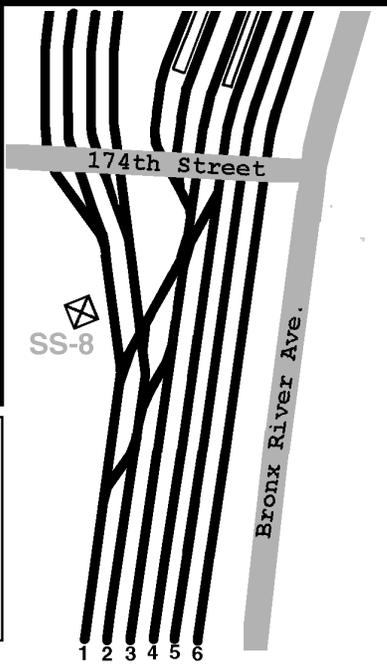
**Map 80: New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad**  
 New York, Westchester & Boston  
 Vicinity of Signal Station 3, The Bronx, N.Y.  
**Circa 1930**



**Map 81a:**  
 NY, NH & H Railroad  
 NY, Westchester & Boston  
 Vicinity of Signal Station 8  
 (West Farms Jct.)  
 July 1914

**West Farms Junction**  
**(SS-8)**

**Map 81b:**  
 NY, NH & H Railroad  
 NY, Westchester & Boston  
 Vicinity of Signal Station 8  
 (West Farms Jct.)  
 January 1930



(Continued next issue)

# Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 342

by Ronald Yee, James Giovan, and Alexander Ivanoff

## MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

A relatively unknown fact is that LIRR has recently been finding itself short of passenger coaches for its diesel-hauled services to the East End of Long Island during the peak Summer travel season. In a surprise move, the railroad announced that it will seek MTA Board approval for a non-competitive inter-governmental lease agreement to rent 8 single-level push-pull coaches from the MARC system in Maryland. The monthly lease rate is expected to be \$15,570 per car and is the same rate that had been charged to Amtrak and SEPTA when they had leased this equipment last year. LIRR plans to initially lease these 8 cars for 2017 and increase the number of leased cars to a maximum of 21 for option years 2018 and 2019. These cars have been in storage on MARC property since 2015 as they have been rendered surplus by the latest order of 54 MARC IV Bombardier multi-level push-pull coaches, which were placed in service beginning in 2014. MARC also has 63 MARC III multi-levels built by Kawasaki 1999-2001, 33 MARC IIB single-level coaches, and 24 MARC IIA single-level coaches, the latter two subclasses both built by Sumitomo Nippon-Sharyo in 1991-3 and 1985-7 respectively. (note: two MARC IIA and one MARC IIB class coaches were destroyed in the collision with Amtrak's *Capitol Limited* at Silver Spring, Maryland in 1996. The 24 MARC IIAs are the fleet currently in storage and would be the pool of cars to be leased by LIRR. The initial 8 cars would likely be the same ones leased by SEPTA during its Rotem Silverliner V crisis of July-November, 2016. Mechanically, only some minor modifications would be required to make these cars compatible with LIRR signal infrastructure as well as the LIRR DE-30 and DM-30 locomotive fleet that would power them. (Randy Glucksman, May 19)

LIRR issued new schedules effective May 22. Interestingly, these schedule folders will be unique in that they do not have an expiration date printed on their covers due to the uncertainty of when the Penn Station track repair project (see below) will commence. The expected service reductions of up to 25% during peak periods to accommodate this work are rumored to start July 7, but the date is not firm. Therefore, to provide maximum flexibility, no end date was provided for these schedules. (*Editor's Note by Ron Yee: timetable collectors, be on the alert all Summer for rare timetable printings, not just LIRR but NJ Transit as well.*) In summary, the new schedules for the Port Jefferson Branch and the Ronkonkoma Line will reflect operational changes required for the next phase of the Hicksville station platform replacement project. Platform A on the north side will be closed for demolition and replacement, taking Track 1 out of service. As a result, the 5:33 PM from Penn Station to Hicksville will now terminate at Westbury and the 6:01 PM from Penn Station that ran express to Hicksville will

now terminate at Westbury, with its passengers required to transfer to the 6:04 PM from Atlantic Terminal to Ronkonkoma, which will make additional stops at Westbury and Hicksville or the 6:08 PM train from Hunterspoint Avenue, which will stop at Westbury to receive passengers and make all local stops to Port Jefferson. On the Montauk Branch, the Summer season *Cannonball* express service to the Hamptons and Montauk resumed on May 26, departing Penn Station at 4:06 PM. Additional Friday-only departures include a 1:47 PM train to Montauk from Hunterspoint Avenue, a 5:09 PM from Penn Station to Montauk and a 7:38 PM from Jamaica to Montauk. In addition, two extra trains will operate on Fridays only to Patchogue and are coordinated with Fire Island ferryboat departures there. One train departs Jamaica at 8:08 AM to Patchogue and the other train departs Babylon at 12:02 PM. Beginning Memorial Day weekend, half-hourly service was restored at Lynbrook following the completion of Babylon Branch concrete tie work in the vicinity of that station. With the completion of midday track work, two weekday off-peak Oyster Bay Branch trains were restored to the schedule, the 12:08 PM from Jamaica to Oyster Bay and the 1:35 PM from Oyster Bay to Jamaica. Minor 1-2-minute changes were made to three other off-peak trains on that branch. Lastly, a new Fisherman's Train was introduced to the "Greenport Scoot" schedule, departing Ronkonkoma at 3:49 AM and arriving at Greenport at 5:04 AM as a Summer service and the result of efforts to improve LIRR train service on the North Fork of Long Island. (LIRR press release, May 19)

## MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD

Metro-North is rebuilding the Prospect Hill Road Bridge in Southeast, New York through a \$9.5 million investment made possible by MTA's 2015-9 Capital Program.

The 270-foot-long bridge, which is 107 years old, is located just south of the Southeast station, which serves Putnam County commuters; it carries Prospect Hill Road over the Harlem Line tracks and parts of Metro-North's Brewster Yard. The bridge has been deemed beyond the point of repair. The MTA Board approved a contract to the firm Halmar International for the design and construction of the replacement bridge on April 26.

The first element of the reconstruction will involve the demolition and removal of the bridge, piers, abutments, and roadway approaches, as well as clearing trees, shrubs, stumps and rubbish from the future right-of-way. Utility poles will be excavated, removed, and re-installed for structural work; crews will then construct new utilities, including communications, signals, and power. When this work is finished, the stage will be set for crews to install new abutments, piers, bridge substructure and superstructure, roadway approaches, sidewalk,

(Continued on page 9)

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

striping, signage, guide rails, fencing, retaining walls, grading, and drainage. Metro-North estimates the project will take approximately 20 months to complete.

MTA's 2015-9 Capital Program, secured by Governor Andrew Cuomo, calls for the investment of \$29.4 billion for the renewal, enhancement, or expansion of the region's transportation infrastructure, and is the largest capital program in MTA's history. *(Editor's Note from Sasha Ivanoff: The Prospect Hill Road Bridge has been closed since I was in high school and for years was a popular link between Route 312 past Exit 19 on I-84 (heading towards Route 6) and the Village of Brewster. I am pleasantly surprised that the bridge is being rebuilt, seeing as the intersection of Prospect Hill Road and Tonetta Lake Road is a hair-pin turn. Many years ago, Independence Way met up with Tonetta Lake Road (and for years the grade crossing at what is now the Southeast station existed), but that road was closed and I assume has been lost to nature.) (Railway Age, May 1)*

New schedules for the Hudson, Harlem and New Haven Lines will take effect on Sunday, June 4 and be in effect through Saturday, October 7. They will accommodate a \$5 million, 18-week-long mid-Harlem Line track improvement project between the Mount Vernon West and Crestwood stations. 1,000 new crossties, 1,160 feet of new rail, improved drainage, and railbed renewal are in the scope of this project. At any time during this period, one of three tracks through this area will be taken out of service to be worked on. On the Harlem Line, in the morning, 17 AM peak trains will operate 4 minutes earlier and up to 6 minutes later. Five AM reverse peak trains will operate between 6 minutes earlier and 3 minutes later. In the evening, 11 PM peak trains will operate 2-6 minutes later and six PM reverse peak trains will operate 4-8 minutes later. There are no changes to weekend service on the Harlem Line. On the Hudson Line, 2 PM peak trains will operate 4 minutes later to coordinate with Harlem Line schedule changes and on weekends, all northbound Upper Hudson Line trains will stop at Beacon, New Hamburg, and Poughkeepsie up to 10 minutes later to accommodate a switch replacement project near the Beacon station. The New Haven line schedule is simply being re-issued with a new date range; there are no changes in the schedules. (Metro-North Press Release, May 16)

In the late afternoon of May 18, in the middle of a springtime heat wave with temperatures suddenly soaring from the 60s to above 90 with constant sunshine, a heat kink developed just east of Rye on Track 3, the westbound local track of the New Haven Line. Reported by previous trains passing by or over it, it was deemed passable and the track was not immediately removed from service. A speed restriction of 10 mph was imposed to keep trains running through and avoid a track closure, which would have been extremely disruptive to the oncoming PM peak. This worked out satisfactorily for a couple of trains until #1373 derailed five of its 12

M-8 EMU cars, causing minor injuries to at least 12 people among the 185 aboard. Initial reports indicate that the train may have been traveling faster than the 10 mph temporary speed restriction and a full investigation is underway as this report goes to press. The derailed cars were not removed until late Friday, May 19 and repairs to 700 feet of torn-up track and concrete ties were carried out over the weekend of May 20-21. As the work had not been completed by the start of the Monday morning peak on May 22, AM peak period trains operated "left handed" between Stamford and Rye until 10 AM, utilizing the line's full bi-directional signaling to run trains on the opposite direction tracks. (Editor's Note by Ron Yee: This practice is commonly followed in such situations or for planned long-term construction projects where a local track adjacent to the platform is removed from service. To avoid extreme delays in associated with loading and unloading passengers with bridge plates, peak period trains are routed on the track with full access to high-level platforms while trains operating in the reverse peak with lower passenger volumes utilize an express track that require the use of bridge plates to span the out-of-service track to provide passenger access. M-8 cars 9213 (head car), 9226, 9177, and 9353 were shown in the various news videos of the derailed train. (WCBS-TV, WPIX-TV News, May 18)

**NJ TRANSIT**

A Hudson-Bergen light rail train collided with a Jersey City Fire Department truck near Washington Boulevard and 6<sup>th</sup> Street Friday evening, May 5. Four firefighters and the LRV Operator were taken to the hospital for minor injuries. Service was suspended well into the evening while the investigation was conducted and the LRV and fire truck were removed from the scene. (WPIX-TV News, May 5)

NJ Transit will be forced to significantly reduce service at New York Penn Station by as much as 25% to accommodate emergency trackwork and repairs following a series of derailments and severe service disruptions caused by failing tracks, switches, and other infrastructure during March-April, 2017. At press time, NJ Transit has not yet announced which trains will be affected. The reductions are expected to significantly affect train services during both AM and PM peak periods into and out of New York Penn Station. The track outages causing a loss of capacity at Penn Station and resulting service cuts are expected to occur July 7-25 and August 4-28. The July outage will be a 19-day continuous outage to accommodate the rebuilding of the crossover tracks leading to Tracks 12 and 13. During that time, one of the Hudson River tunnels will be assigned exclusively for use by work trains removing debris and excavated materiel from the work zone to a removal site in New Jersey. The work on these "scissors tracks" will be completed during the second continuous track outage, a 25-day span from August 4-28. Deteriorated portions of Tracks 9, 10, and 13 will also be rebuilt during overnight hours between 10 PM and 5 AM. Ties and rail found deficient and in need of replacement will also be ad-

*(Continued on page 10)*

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

dressed within the scope of work. (nj.com, May 2)

**AMTRAK**

After two derailment incidents on March 25 and April 3 that were caused by deficiencies in the tracks and switches of the west interlocking of New York City's Penn Station, beginning on or around July 7, Amtrak will be undertaking emergency track and infrastructure repairs to remedy the situation and prevent further incidents. The extensive work will require track outages, reducing the station's capacity to handle train traffic by around 25%. These outages are expected to cover two three-week periods in July and August, during which NJ Transit and LIRR will be forced to reduce service levels. Amtrak may be considering moving an unspecified number of its *Empire Corridor* trains between Albany and New York City out of Penn Station and into Grand Central Terminal (GCT) temporarily. While it is reported that New York State Governor Andrew M. Cuomo is negotiating with Amtrak officials for this shift and select Amtrak train crews have begun the process of qualifying on Metro-North tracks into GCT, as of press time, nothing has been confirmed by either New York State or Amtrak. (*Time Out Magazine*, May 17)

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

A new station named Boston Landing on MBTA's now 17-station-long Worcester-Framingham Line opened on May 22. The \$20 million station, located in Allston/Brighton, is the product of a collaborative public-private effort by state and local government with financing by a private corporation, New Balance, whose headquarters building is located next to the new station. In the near future, the station will also anchor transit oriented development in the form of a new community with 295 residences, a 175-room hotel and the new practice facility of the Boston Bruins hockey and Celtics basketball teams. Eventually, it is expected that retail and restaurant businesses will establish themselves in the area, adding to the development spurred by the new station. Interstate highway I-90 is also adjacent to the Boston Landing and the entire station facility will be maintained by New Balance for the next 10 years. The fully ADA-compliant station is a center-island high-level platform with a canopy with two elevators, ramps, and an enclosed overpass linking the platform with the street level. Boston Landing will be served by six AM peak inbound and six PM peak outbound trains as well as eight inbound and five outbound weekday off-peak trains. On weekends, all trains (nine in each direction) will stop there. Located within fare zone 1A, fares to and from South Station, just 15 minutes away, will be \$2.25. (*Editor's Note by Ron Yee: Member Dave Klepper notes that while this restores rail service from Brighton to downtown Boston decades after the abandonment of the Park Street-Brighton-Newton-Watertown subway-surface PCC line, the amount of service offered at Boston Landing, while a start, is paltry in comparison. The Watertown Line was abandoned in*

*part due to a shortage of PCC cars caused by the opening and subsequent ridership growths on the Highland Branch or Riverside Line, which diverted more and more PCCs to that new line at the expense of the Watertown.)* (masslive.com, *Framingham Source*, May 22)

**PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority is debuting a new electronic bidding system that can be useful for projects where solicitations go above \$100,000. The eBid system will be an addition to an already existing eQuote system for bids that fall below \$100,000. SEPTA is hoping that the new eBid system will ease the process of procurements at the agency. Even though SEPTA is adopting new technologies, it is still committed to connecting local businesses to one another as well as the agency, according to representatives from SEPTA. SEPTA had a networking event at its headquarters on April 25 in Philadelphia where private and public sector attendees were able to network with small, minority, and women-owned businesses that are interested in doing business with SEPTA. (*Trains Magazine*, April 21)

**WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA**

Commuters on the Red Line in Washington D.C. can now stay connected while on the go. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority has partnered with major U.S. cell carriers to offer wireless cellular voice and data service in a section of tunnel on the Red Line. Metro riders commuting between Glenmont and Silver Spring will have continuous phone service, according to a WMATA press release. The Red Line tunnel is the second portion of the system to have wireless service, following a segment between Potomac Avenue and Stadium Armory on the Blue, Orange, and Silver Lines. Installation is also in progress for 100 miles of cabling along tunnel walls that will support wireless service and a new radio system for trains and emergency responders. Additionally, WMATA is also planning to have free Wi-Fi at 30 underground stations by the end of 2017. Currently, only 6 stations have Wi-Fi. According to WMATA, all underground stations will have Wi-Fi by mid-2018. (*Trains Magazine*, April 21)

**ROANOKE, VIRGINIA**

City leaders in Bristol want to conduct a study on the benefits of extending passenger rail service from Roanoke to Bristol in southwest Virginia. The city has partnered with the Community Transportation Association of America to secure a firm to conduct a \$450,000 study, the *Bristol Herald Courier* reports.

While passenger rail service has not even started in Roanoke, the city of Bristol wants to look at the benefits of continuing the regional service into southwest Virginia. Bristol-area advocates say that Amtrak service would offer multiple benefits to the area and would help make Bristol more of a destination for tourists and business. While local and regional groups are on board for the study, the State of Virginia wants to see a considerable amount of data from the Roanoke service before diving into a Bristol study.

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 10)

Amtrak service between Lynchburg and Roanoke will start later this year.

The study would take about six to nine months to complete and would focus on how rail service would reduce vehicular traffic from Interstate 81 and provide benefits to local economic development efforts, tourism, access to education, and other criteria.

Funds for the city's study include a \$250,000 grant from the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, a \$100,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, and other local funds. (*Editor's Note from Sasha Ivanoff: If history shows us anything, the likelihood of the Roanoke train being extended to Bristol is pretty much a definite down the road.*) (**Trains Magazine** via Al Holtz, May 15)

### FLORIDA

Due to ridership levels that have fallen by around 6% which have resulted in lowered fare revenues, Miami-Dade reduced the hours of operation of its Metrorail system effective May 22. It was announced that Metrorail operations would shut down nightly an hour earlier at 11 PM Monday through Thursday. However, preliminary train schedules indicate the last trains may depart their initial terminals around 11:30 PM, 30 minutes earlier than current service. An extension of service hours on Friday and Saturday nights to 2 AM that began in October, 2016 will be discontinued, with service reverting to a midnight closure time. Citing low ridership and the presence of bus routes paralleling Metrorail, service will also commence an hour later at 6 AM on Saturday and Sunday. Miami Airport service on the Orange Line will also be reduced by 50%, the 15-minute headways introduced in October, 2016 reverting to 30 minutes. Miami-Dade's bus system has also experienced a 10% loss of ridership and some bus stops on the more severely affected routes will be eliminated and some routes contracted out. This comes as Miami-Dade's Mayor, Carlos A. Gimenez, is making a push for an expansion of the Miami-Dade transit system known as the SMART Plan that would include an expansion of the rapid transit system over six corridors that is expected to cost \$3-6 billion. These financial woes could lead to the replacement of the rail expansion plans with bus rapid transit to reduce costs. (**Miami Herald**, May 16 and 21)

Brightline, the new privately funded express inter-city passenger rail service in Florida, is making preparations to soon welcome its third and fourth trainsets. The two new trainsets, dubbed BrightGreen and BrightOrange, were to depart Siemens Rolling Stock facility in Sacramento on May 5, marking the first time two Brightline trains, totaling nearly 1,000 feet in length, have set off on the cross-country journey simultaneously. The trains were built by 1,000 employees at Siemens' 60-acre rail manufacturing hub in California. Brightline's trains are 100 percent Buy America compliant utilizing components from more than 40 different U.S. suppliers across

20 states.

BrightGreen and BrightOrange will join Brightline's other two trains, BrightBlue and BrightPink, at Workshop b, the 12-acre railroad operations facility in West Palm Beach that serves to maintain, clean, and store Brightline's trains. Once service begins, Workshop b will serve as the on-duty location for train crews, providing more than 120 jobs at the facility alone. The trains were expected to arrive at Workshop b late the following week. The fifth and final trainset, BrightRed, is being completed at Siemens and is expected to ship in mid-June. Brightline's trains abound with innovations and comfortable features, from automatic level boarding platforms and aisles that exceed ADA compliance standards to custom seats with multiple outlets for devices and complimentary robust Wi-Fi, powered by multiple antennas on every car. The send-off milestone signals Brightline's ongoing commitment of private investment toward transportation infrastructure benefiting the public. Brightline will provide a much-needed, hospitality-driven alternative to South Florida's congested roadways. Introductory express service is scheduled to begin between West Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale in late July, with initial service to Miami added in late August. The company is anticipating a grand opening and official launch of the full service in September. (Brightline press release via Al Holtz, May 5)

Wabtec Corporation has signed a \$40 million contract to design, install, test, and commission Positive Train Control for South Florida Regional Transportation Authority's Tri-Rail commuter rail service.

Wabtec is to supply its Interoperable Electronic Train Management System (I-EMTS) for 42 locomotives and cab cars, along with a back-office server and lineside communications, signaling, and a dispatching system for the 68-mile route linking Mangonia Park and Miami. It will also provide staff training. Installation is expected to be completed by the end of 2018. The PTC system will be fully interoperable with those being implemented by all the Class I railways. (**Railway Gazette**, May 19)

### DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Streetcars returned to Woodward Avenue in Detroit for the first time in 61 years with the May 12 inauguration of the 3.3-mile Q Line from Larned Street to West Grand Boulevard.

The \$140-million project is claimed to be the first public-private partnership deal to be funded by private businesses and philanthropic organizations, in partnership with local, state, and federal governments.

Supporters of the project include Bank of America, Detroit Downtown Development Authority, Detroit Medical Center, Ford Foundation, Ford Motor Company, General Motors, JPMorgan Chase, Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and the United States Department of Transportation. The project was also supported by the federal government through a \$25-million grant from the Transport Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program.

(Continued on page 12)

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

In 2007, the project's backers formed the non-profit M-1 Rail to lead the design, construction, and operation of the 20-station line. Stacy & Witbeck was subsequently awarded the contract to build the line and major construction began in July, 2014.

Service is operated by a fleet of six bi-directional Liberty LRVs supplied by Brookville Equipment Corporation.

The articulated LRVs will operate without catenary on 60% of the line, then draw power from 750-volt rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. The 70% low-floor vehicles will also operate in catenary-free mode around the line's depot.

Each vehicle accommodates up to 125 passengers, 32 of them seated. *(Editor's Note from Sasha Ivanoff: ERA Program Chair Andrew Grahl was present for the opening and there is little doubt that we will see photos of his from the opening at his next show.)* (**Railway Age**, May 15)

**CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

Ground was broken, commencing the construction of Metra's newest station, Romeoville, on the Heritage Corridor Line linking Chicago Union Station with Joliet. The \$4.9 million project is expected to be completed this Autumn and will add the first new station on Metra's commuter rail system since 2011. Romeoville will be located near the intersection of 135<sup>th</sup> Street and New Avenue. (Al Holtz, May 19)

**SEATTLE, WASHINGTON**

Sound Transit has signed an agreement meant to last 10 years with Puget Sound Energy that will enable light rail trains to run on 100 percent clean energy starting in 2019. The agency will buy wind-generated electricity from the utility company's Green Direct program. According to a Sound Transit news release, it is the first program of its kind in Washington State. The agreement is a part of a combined effort among Puget Sound Energy, its customers, and the World Resources Institute and World Wildlife Fund on a program that will make it possible for the construction of wind power facilities and other environmentally conscious initiatives. Sound Transit's choice to pursue wind energy follows its most recent ballot measure, which promised to lower greenhouse emissions and grow the use of renewable energy that makes all facilities and electricity carbon-neutral by 2030. No capital cost will be incurred for entering the agreement. (**Trains Magazine**, April 21)

A portion of federal funding committed to Sound Transit for the Lynnwood Link Extension was saved as part of the Federal Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations Bill, which gained congressional approval on May 4.

The bill is part of a deal to keep the federal government operating through September and is expected to receive President Donald Trump's signature. The bill calls for Sound Transit to receive \$100 million in federal funds. The funds are the first installment of a potential \$1.174 billion full funding grant agreement (FFGA) for the Lynnwood Link Extension, which is slated for con-

struction next year.

The FFGA is expected to be executed with the Federal Transit Administration in 2018. Sound Transit noted that engineering approval by FTA last year enabled the agency to move forward with final engineering work on the extension and gave the project its second-highest possible rating under its competitive grant process.

The 8.5-mile extension is set to open in 2023 and trains on the Lynnwood Link Extension will run along the I-5 corridor from Northgate to Lynnwood with four new stations including Northeast 145<sup>th</sup> Street, Northeast 185<sup>th</sup> Street, the Mountlake Terrace Transit Center at 236<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest, and at the Lynnwood Transit Center. The project will be built to accommodate the potential for future stations at Northeast 130<sup>th</sup> Street in Seattle and 220<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest in Mountlake Terrace. New parking structures at 145<sup>th</sup>, 185<sup>th</sup>, and Lynnwood Transit Center will add approximately 1,500 park and ride spaces in the corridor as part of the project. (**Railway Age**, May 5)

**SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

Bay Area Rapid Transit officials believe that mysterious power surges that lead to 24 train cars being taken out of service on April 14 were caused by metallic dust, according to the **San Jose Mercury News**. BART employees first discovered the problems at around 10:30 AM on April 14 between the North Concord/Martinez and Pittsburg/Bay Point stations, according to spokesperson Jim Allison. The agency decided to switch to shuttle trains at 1:30 PM, after the power surges had disabled 22 cars. BART experienced similar problems back in February, 2016 when voltage spikes were found near the West Oakland station and also in March, 2016 between the North Concord and Pittsburg stations. The power issues that affected the 22 cars appeared to be resulting from a buildup of metallic dust on the underside of the train cars. This metallic dust is generated from rail grinding and can cause electrical surges when it conducts electricity from the third rail. BART is in the process of purchasing magnets for non-passenger trains that will remove the metallic dust from the rails to ensure that the problem does not continue. (**Trains Magazine**, April 20)

While Caltrain officials wait for feedback on a federal grant that would fully fund the Peninsula Corridor electrification project, agency officials are adding a new online resource to better educate the public on the benefits of the project.

The new website gives the public an overview of the design and amenities of the proposed electrified trainsets and allows visitors to weigh in on their own design preferences. The agency hopes to add a new virtual tour feature of the exterior and interior of the new trainsets in the future.

Funding for the \$2 billion electrification of the CalTrain corridor has become a political football at the federal level with the Trump Administration intending on withholding any such funding until the start of fiscal year 2018 in September and Senator Diane Feinstein (D-

*(Continued on page 13)*

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

California) promising to block all nominees to the Department of Transportation. Funding was supposed to be in place by the end of March, 2017; an extension was granted to the end of June. The continuing delays translated into a waste of \$1 million per week and placed 10,000 jobs at risk nationwide. Finally, on Monday, May 22, the Trump Administration and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao announced that it would fully fund a \$650 million federal grant that will help finance the electrification of the commuter rail line that will also serve as the northern end of the California high-speed rail line that will ultimately link that city with Los Angeles. The electrification will enable faster point-to-point running times and increased train service that will carry more people in an environmentally friendly manner that reduces reliance on fossil fuels. Until this development, some Republican Party lawmakers in California had been pressuring federal officials to block this funding on the grounds that it was an inappropriate way to spend public funds masquerading as a local transit improvement but really aimed at forwarding the construction efforts for a financially questionable high-speed rail project. They had sought to delay all funding for the electrification until a full audit of the California high speed rail project was completed. (Associated Press, TheHill.com, May 15 and 22; Trains Magazine via Al Holtz)

**CANADA (NATIONWIDE)**

A recent report issued by VIA Rail Canada is highlighting new ridership gains and efforts to expand capacity on regional services. In 2016, VIA Rail Canada ridership grew more than 4 percent compared to 2015. It is the third consecutive year the passenger railroad has seen an uptick in ridership.

According to VIA Rail, the railroad hauled almost 4 million passengers who traveled approximately 858 million miles.

Some of the highlights in 2016 include record summer ridership when VIA Rail trains hauled more than 926,000 passengers, an increase of about 4.8 percent compared to ridership levels from 2015. VIA Rail representatives say its holiday season was also busier than normal. Holiday travel resulted in a 20 percent increase in revenue and a 16 percent increase in ridership compared to 2015.

Compared to 2015, revenues from regional services were up more than 10 percent on several routes and the Winnipeg-Churchill route in Manitoba logged double-digit revenue growth for the second year in a row. Due to growing ridership, the railroad added capacity on several trains in the Quebec City, Quebec to Windsor, Ontario, corridor and made other timetable adjustments to offer greater flexibility for passengers. By the end of 2016, capacity had increased by more than 8 percent compared to 2015. (*Trains Magazine via Al Holtz*)

**TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA**

Following up on what was reported in the April *Bulle-*

*tin* regarding the threatened cancellation of an order for up to 182 Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs) with Bombardier due to the severe delays in the delivery of the Flexity LRVs to Toronto's TTC, Metrolinx made good on its threat and placed a C\$529 million order with Siemens for 61 Low Floor Citadis Spirit class LRVs. 17 cars will be assigned to the Finch West Line and 44 LRVs will be assigned to the Eglinton Crosstown Line. While the cancellation of the Bombardier order is currently held up in the courts, Metrolinx could not afford to wait for the 8-12-month litigation process to be completed and risk not having any LRVs to operate on the two new lines. The Siemens order, for now, is viewed as a stopgap measure to guarantee an available car fleet. Should the Metrolinx-Bombardier litigation issue be resolved in Bombardier's favor, the Siemens LRVs can be reassigned to the Hurontario light rail project as Bombardier delivers the LRVs to Metrolinx. If not, the 61 Siemens LRVs will be the first of an upwards of 182-car order replacing Bombardier. Presently, 34 Siemens Citadis Spirit LRVs are being delivered to Ottawa's Confederation light rail line, with a third of the car order already undergoing testing in Ottawa. (RailJournal.com, May 12)

**BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA**

Electric service began operating between Berazategui and City Bell on April 24, marking completion of the latest phase of the project to electrify the Roca commuter route between Buenos Aires and La Plata at 25,000 volts/50 Hz.

According to the Ministry of Transport, work continues with the aim of completing electrification of the remaining 6 kilometers between Berazategui and La Plata "as soon as possible." It reports that the new elevated alignment over the 2 kilometers between Ringuet and Tolosa has been finished, and that the 132,000-volt traction substation at Quilmes that will feed the La Plata branch is over 60% complete.

Including the construction of new, higher platforms for level boarding, station refurbishment work continues at Plátanos, Hudson, Villa Elisa, Gonnet, Ringuet, and Tolosa. Work at Pereyra, Berazategui, and Quilmes was due to start shortly.

Funded by the Inter-American Development Bank, work on the US\$500 million Roca electrification program had started in 2015. (*Railway Gazette*, May 2)

**SCOTLAND**

British law enforcement officials have put in place extra security, including using a helicopter to spot trespassers as the *Flying Scotsman* steam train toured Scotland. Last year, when the famous 4-6-2 Pacific-type locomotive made its inaugural trip to Scotland after a long-term restoration, the rights-of-way were overwhelmed with trespassers who were attempting to get a closer peek at the train. Network Rail paid thousands of dollars because of delayed trains that were slowed by the trespassers. Law enforcement are now threatening a \$1,300 fine for entering non-public property. "We understand that the return of *Flying Scotsman* is an exciting event. However, we want you to view the iconic

*(Continued on page 14)*

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

steam train safely, and there are lots of safe places to see it and take photographs,” British Transportation Police Chief Inspector Sue Maxwell informed the BBC. Transit police also were closely monitoring the air for flying drones, which are not permitted to fly within 150 feet of the train. Last year, the train was hit by a drone that was too close to the tracks. (*Trains Magazine*, May 17)

**SWITZERLAND**

President of the Swiss Confederation Doris Leuthard joined 500 guests at the official roll-out of the first compete EC250 Giruno 250 km/h inter-city trainset at Stadler’s Bussnang plant on May 18. In October, 2014 Swiss Federal Railways placed a SFr970 million order for 29 of the 11-car articulated trainsets for use from December, 2019 on routes from Milano via the Gotthard Base Tunnel to Basel and Zürich, and later to Frankfurt. There is an option for 92 additional sets. The name Giruno is derived from the Rhaeto-Romansch name for the common buzzard.

Stadler developed the new design in 2½ years, drawing on its Flirt family, and an initial five cars were unveiled at the InnoTrans trade fair in Berlin in September, 2016. The Giruno is to be certified in accordance with High Speed TSI and DIN EN 15227 crashworthiness requirements, and the roll-out of the first complete 11-car train marks the start of the complicated process of obtaining approval for use in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and Italy, which will include testing at Rail Tec Arsenal in Wien.

The Giruno is “the first ever mass-produced low-floor high-speed multiple-unit,” Stadler owner and Chief Executive Officer Peter Spuhler said at the roll-out, with stepless entry from 550-millimeter and 760-millimeter-high platforms. It is also the first trainset to meet all the requirements of the Swiss BehiG disability discrimination act.

The trainset is 202 meters long with 117 first- and 288 second-class seats, multifunctional zones, and a bicycle compartment. The interior features bright lighting, a 3G/4G amplifier, power sockets at every seat, large luggage racks and separate toilets for men and women, as well accessible toilets.

Operation through the Gotthard Base Tunnel requires pressure protection and air-conditioning able to cope with the temperatures and humidity, while Stadler said the advanced thermal and acoustic insulation “sets new standards” for long-distance trains. (*Railway Gazette*, May 18)

BLS has selected Stadler for the largest rolling stock order it has placed, a SFr650m contract covering the supply of 58 single-deck electric multiple-units in 2021-6. The order includes 30 EMUs for RegioExpress service and 28 for S-Bahn Bern routes.

The 105-meter-long, six-car, 160-kilometer-per-hour Flirt units will replace EW III coaches, RBDe565 and RBDe 566II railcars. They will have two classes of ac-

commodation, power sockets, and enhanced mobile phone reception. The RegioExpress trains will also incorporate a catering zone.

BLS said the decision followed an extensive procurement process, undertaken with input from passenger body Pro Bahn. Final bids were submitted by Stadler and Bombardier Transportation. The two bidders were formally notified of the selection on May 1. Signing of the contract is subject to a 20-day standstill period, and the finalization of BLS, cantonal, and federal funding. (*Railway Gazette*, May 2)

**GERMANY**

DB Regio has signed a €150m contract for 25 four-car Coradia Continental electric multiple-units, Alstom announced on May 3. The firm order has been placed within a 2012 framework agreement covering up to 400 units.

The latest batch of units are to be used on SaarRB Lot 1 service, which DB Regio is to operate under a contract awarded jointly by the Saarland and Rheinland-Pfalz south and north transport authorities earlier this year. This covers operation of regional services on the Schweich-Trier-Saarbrücken-Kaiserslautern route for 15 years from December, 2019, and the Trier Hafenstraße-Konz-Saarburg route from December, 2020.

The 160-kilometer-per-hour EMUs will have up to 200 seats, with multi-purpose areas for wheelchairs, bicycles, and prams. The roof-mounted traction equipment will provide a spacious interior, with access at platform height, movable steps, and continuous low-floor areas for step-free access. The units will be equipped with mobile phone repeaters, power sockets, CCTV, and a real-time passenger information system showing connecting trains. (*Railway Gazette*, May 3)

Abellio has placed a firm order for Bombardier Transportation to supply a further five Talent 2 electric multiple-units for use on the Neckartal services from Stuttgart which it is to operate from June, 2019 under a contract awarded by the *Land* of Baden-Württemberg.

The order for two three-car and three five-car EMUs announced on April 27 has been placed as an option on a €215 million June, 2016 contract for the supply of 43 units. The procurement is being carried out using the “Baden-Württemberg model,” whereby the operator orders the vehicles, which are then sold to *Land* rail authority SFBW and leased back.

Abellio Rail Baden-Württemberg Chief Executive Officer Dr. Andreas Moschinski said the latest order would provide the capacity to handle an expected growth in traffic, and ensure that the operator had a standardized fleet of a consistent quality. (*Railway Gazette*, April 28)

**ISRAEL**

A new round of orders with Bombardier Transportation will add 33 bilevel coaches and eight a.c. electric locomotives to the existing fleet of Israel Railways, the company announced.

The eight-car TWINDEXX Vario trainsets powered by TRAXX locomotives will carry up to 1,000 passengers. Similar trainsets are in operation across Europe, ac-

*(Continued on page 17)*

## SWITZERLAND IN THE LATE SUMMER

by Jack May

(Photographs by the author)

(Continued from May, 2017 issue)

The train from Montreux arrived in Lausanne on the advertised at 14:14, and job one was to find the next locker for our luggage, which I accomplished rapidly. With a population of about 140,000, Lausanne is Switzerland's fourth largest city. Like Montreux, it looks out on Lake Lemman, and similar to the other places I visited today, the local language is French (so please change any earlier references to the SBB for this day to CFF).

The city's most distinctive feature is its setting on a steep slope, where a good thousand feet of elevation separates the lakeshore at Ouchy with the Flon transit station at Place de l'Europe in the city center. The gorge of the Flon River runs through the city (I suspect similar to the canyon in Constantine, Algeria, which we had visited a few months earlier). The waterway was covered over in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and short bridges bring the diffuse neighborhoods together seamlessly. With the busy CFF railway station located between Ouchy and Flon, as early as 1877 a funicular was built to connect the lakeshore with the station and the heights. It was converted to a single-track rack railway in 1958, using electric locomotives for power. A passing siding downhill from the railway depot allowed for the operation of two trains. A third unit, shuttling back and forth over an additional track between the Gare and Flon, provided further carrying capacity to the city center. Running time was short and service was frequent.

I did not get to Lausanne until 1989 as the rack metro had not been high on my to-do list, but I finally inspected it when I visited the group of interurban lines located between Geneva and Lausanne at that time. But soon thereafter I had to return, as in 1991 a new interurban line was built from Flon to the suburb of Renens, signaling the spread of the French "light rail revolution" to the French section of Switzerland. Called Metro West, the five-mile-long railway was built in a frugal but effective manner to serve two universities and other traffic generators. It is mainly single track and runs mostly at grade, but has passing sidings at almost all of its 13 way-stations. Traffic light preemption keeps the cars moving and limits delays from waiting for opposite numbers at stations. It was built for five-minute headways, but service tends to run every ten minutes, meaning LRVs pass at every other station.

In 2006 the rack line was torn out. Two years later its replacement, a four-mile-long automated rubber-tired metro, opened for service. Equipped with platform-edge screen doors, it has 14 stations and is now more than double the length of the old cog-wheel system, extending well beyond Flon. Its inner portion uses the alignment of the old line, although most of the original above-ground sections were covered over and turned into steep linear parkland; however, a short portion still

remains in the open air. The extension has two additional outdoor sections (see <http://www.urbanrail.net/eu/ch/vd/lausanne.htm>). Of interest is the fact that the line's maximum gradient is 12 percent and the platforms at the Gare CFF station are built on a slope of 11.5 percent. (You will definitely lose all your marbles if you drop them there.)

The rolling stock was manufactured by Alstom, and is technically similar to the equipment operated on Paris Metro Lines 1 and 14, and Lyon's Line D, with the trains consisting of single two-section articulated units. (I thought it interesting to contemplate whether Westinghouse's Skybus for Pittsburgh would have been much different.) Although headways are limited by a single-track section between the Gare and Flon, service is frequent — every two-and-a-half minutes, but not as good on Sundays. The traditional steel-wheeled Metro West is now numbered M1 and the rubber-tired line, M2. Both are standard gauge.

After depositing the luggage I walked the few steps to the Gare CFF stop of M2 and quickly rode the line. I paused for photos at the Delices station on the lower section, hoping to contrast the new views with shots of the rack line taken in the same area 25 years earlier. I then continued to Bessieres, just beyond where the line crosses the gully on the lower level of a bridge — and was lucky that the sun was in the right place.

With those photos under my belt I rode back to Flon and boarded an M1 train, which runs every 15 minutes on Sundays. I rode three stations out to the Provence stop, where I was able to take photos from a nearby overpass. At that point the line runs alongside a busy arterial road that bisects a pleasant verdant area. I continued further for only two more stops, being unable to get past the UNIL-Dorigny station, as a bus bridge was being operated beyond that point due to a construction project. I then rode back to the Montelley stop for a couple more pictures before returning to Flon.

In addition to being the transfer point between Lines M1 and M2, the underground Flon station is the terminal for the Lausanne-Echallens-Bercher (LEB) interurban line. I rode this typical Swiss light railway on my first visit to Lausanne, when it still operated along a busy street to reach its terminal (Chauderon), but since 2000 the innermost portion of the meter-gauge line runs through a new subway tunnel to Flon, where it meets the other lines. In fact there is an across-the-platform transfer between LEB's stub-end terminal and inbound M2 trains. Also since my last visit, LEB acquired six new 70 percent low-floor cars from Stadler (2010), which now hold down a great deal of the base service. *(Note: I ended up riding various versions of these fine new Stadler-*

*Continued on page 16)*

## Switzerland in the Late Summer

*(Continued from page 15)*

built three-section articulated 70 -percent low-floor cars on several other interurban lines before returning from Switzerland, including Frauenfeld-Wil, Dietikon-Wohlen, Oensingen-Solothurn and Solothurn-Bern.) Thus I wanted to sample these attractive cars, but with little time left, I just rode out five stations to Cery Fleur-de-Lys, where I was able to get a few photos before taking the next train back. Service was running every half-hour, which is the norm for this 14.7-mile-long railway. However, on other days of the week, short-turn cars cut the headway to every 15 minutes on the line's inner portion. Apparently traffic is booming, but the single track at the side of a congested street just beyond the tunnel portal presents an obstacle to increasing service. Thus the double-track subway will be extended. Similarly, the single-track portion of Line M2 will be doubled. It is good to see such investment.

I arrived back at the station at 16:45 and soon Clare joined me. She indicated that she used some taxis to get to the museums because walking was difficult due all the steps she needed to navigate. One of the guidebooks described this phenomenon as follows: "Due to the considerable differences in elevation, visitors should make a note as to which plane of elevation they are on and where they want to go, otherwise they will find themselves tens of metres below or above the street which they are trying to negotiate."

She rested on a bench while I retrieved the luggage. Service from Lausanne to Basel, our base of operations for the next five days, is available via two routes, each running hourly, with both requiring a change of trains. We arrived at the Gare in time for the 17:20 via Bern, our fallback being the 17:45 via Biel. Running time for both is roughly the same, two hours, including a short period of time to change trains. When we arrived at Bern at 18:26 I was dismayed to see that we did not have an across-the-platform transfer, but instead had to

ride an escalator up to a mezzanine and another one back down to our train. We boarded at 18:31, which turned out to be in plenty of time to stow our bags and find a pair of seats for its 18:34 departure.

Our arrival at Basel's Bahnhof SBB was right on the advertised, 19:29, and soon we reached the vast trolley station in the forecourt. Our apartment was on Holbeinstrasse, a long street with a tram stop for the 1 and 8 Lines (Zoo-Bachletten) on one end and another for the 6 (Holbeinstr) on the other. Since the 6 does not go to the Bahnhof, we had to take the 1 or 8. But which, as they stopped at different platforms? It really did not matter, as both have great headways, even on Sundays. For the record, the platform for Line 1 was the closer, and a tram pulled in just as we reached it. We only had to ride for two stops and then found it was an easy walk to our accommodations with our wheeled luggage. I had indicated to the management that we would arrive about 20:15, but even though we were almost a half-hour early, the caretaker was waiting at the front door of the apartment house. Within a few minutes we were ensconced in what New Yorkers call a studio apartment, which was cool, clean, and spacious, and on the lobby floor — especially desirable. It clearly was newly renovated, and was equipped with a fully-stocked open kitchen, a large flat-screen TV, and a modern bathroom. It also had a back door to an outside patio.

We had noticed an Italian restaurant near the tram stop, so after unpacking and freshening up, we walked to the establishment and had dinner. Clare ordered some pasta while I ate a very tasty veal Marsala — which turned out to be a mistake. I awoke at about 1 AM with incredible stomach pain, which eventually manifested itself into ejections. This kept repeating every 15 minutes or so, and by about 4 o'clock I was wondering if it would ever end — it had now developed into dry heaves, but the pain kept coming back. But by 5 it finally stopped, and I got some sleep. In retrospect, I think I had an extensive case of food poisoning.

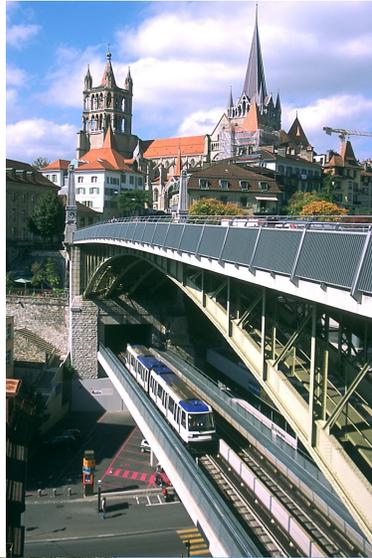


Two views of Lausanne's automated rubber-tired Metro. The left photo shows an outbound train that has just left the Delices station. The two-car unit is about to go under the pedestrian overpass from which the right photo was taken. It shows the residential nature of the area around the Grancy station, where the M2 goes back underground. Note the pedestrian walkway at right and the elevators used to access the platforms at Grancy.

*(Continued on page 17)*

**Switzerland in the Late Summer**

*(Continued from page 16)*



An outbound M2 train crosses Lausanne's gully on a bi-level bridge as it approaches Bessieres station. The Flon River flows beneath the street level while the towers of the city's 12<sup>th</sup> century Gothic Cathedral of Notre Dame dominate the background.



The Provence station on Lausanne's Line M1 is one of the few without a passing track. The high-platform "Metro West" line is squeezed in between a park and an arterial boulevard (Avenue de Provence), which leads to a limited-access highway.



Another view of Lausanne's M1-Metro West line along Avenue de Provence. The Montelly station is atop the ramp in the background. Although classified as a metro, the line is really closer to light rail, with its single track and grade crossings.



A view of the primarily single-track Lausanne-Echallens-Bercher interurban line just north of the Cery-Fleur de Lys station. Only five stops (about 7 minutes) from the underground terminal of the LEB in the center of Lausanne, the area is lush with grass and trees, typical of the European discouragement of sprawl.

*(Continued next issue)*

**Commuter and Transit Notes**

*(Continued from page 14)*

ording to the company.

The \$61 million deal falls under a 2010 contract that, when delivered upon in 2019, will bring the Bombardier fleet of TWINDEXX coaches to 462. Nearly 300 of the earlier models are being upgraded at Bombardier shops in Haifa for electric traction and speeds of up to 99 miles per hour.

While Bombardier is based in Canada, its global reach in railroad and aircraft manufacturing includes the Kassel, Germany, plant making the TRAXX locomotives. (*Trains Magazine* via Al Holtz, May 11)

**TEHRAN, IRAN**

The 267-kilometer railway linking Tehran with the city

of Hamadan was officially opened on May 8 by President Hassan Rouhani and Minister of Roads and Urban Development Abbas Akhoundi.

Construction of the line began in 2001, but work stopped in 2004 before being restarted after the easing of sanctions in 2015. "The people of Hamadan Province were waiting a long time for this railway," said Rouhani at the opening ceremony. "The inauguration of the line is a source of joy for those people."

The line has cost 9.7 trillion rials to build. It starts at a junction at Robat Karim near Imam Khomeini International Airport southwest of the capital, then runs west via Saveh and Famenin. The alignment is designed for passenger trains running at a maximum speed of 160 kilometers per hour and 120-kilometer-per-hour

*(Continued on page 18)*

## Around New York's Transit System

### Astoria Line Service Suspensions

Ⓝ train service between Ditmars Boulevard in Astoria and Queensboro Plaza in Long Island City will be suspended for eight weekends this summer. The closures will be in effect from shortly after midnight Saturday morning to around 5 AM the following Monday (or Tuesday after the Memorial Day and Labor Day holidays) on May 20-22, 27-30, June 3-5, August 12-14, August 19-21, August 26-28, September 2-5, and September 9-11. This is being done to accommodate track work and switch replacement between Astoria Boulevard-Hoyt Avenue and Ditmars Boulevard as well as noise mitigation measures such as rubber pads under rail tie plates and noise barriers around and under the tracks in the vicinity of Public School 85 adjacent to the switches leading to the Ditmars Boulevard terminus.

### Sea Beach Line Station Rehabilitation Progress

Nine Manhattan-bound station platforms on the Ⓝ Sea Beach Line were returned to service May 22 following the completion of the first half of a \$395.7 million reconstruction project that will completely rebuild the century-old former BMT stations and bring them up to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards. The scope of work included the installation of ramps at the Eighth Avenue station and four elevators at the New Utrecht Avenue station, bringing those two stations to full ADA standards. All nine stations have received accessibility-compliant platforms, rebuilt stairways, walls, canopies and columns, new lighting, signage, communications and security systems, improvements of the fare collection areas, and,

finally, a fresh coat of paint. The northbound platforms had been closed since January 18, 2016 for an expected 14 months, the actual work taking 2 months longer than expected. After a month of preparation work, the southbound platforms of these nine stations are expected to undergo the same rebuilding starting sometime in July, 2017. Service changes to accommodate this work will be similar to the northbound service changes that had been in effect for the past 16 months, with Eighth Avenue and Bay Parkway serving as the two stations that will provide the ability for passengers to transfer between northbound and southbound trains on the line by utilizing temporary platforms over the middle track. The entire project is expected to be completed in late 2018.

### R-68 Cars with Cameras and Other Devices

According to a NYC Transit bulletin dated April 17, R-68 cars 2892-5 assigned to Ⓞ have been equipped with CCTV surveillance cameras, event recorders, and communications equipment. The specialized equipment is mounted on racks in the unused #2 cabs on cars 2892 and 2893. Also, two passenger information displays have been mounted on the inward facing surfaces at the end of the low ceiling areas that house the air-conditioning units mounted at each end of the cars. Yard Dispatchers have been instructed to keep this four-car set separate from the rest of the fleet, never couple them to other trains, and only operate them in passenger service on Ⓞ.

### Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 17)

freight service, and the line has an annual capacity of 2 million passengers and 4 million tons of freight.

The 70-kilometer Malayer-Firouzan route built at a cost of 941 billion rials was also opened on the same day.

Rouhani said developing national and international rail links was a crucial part of his administration's agenda, and called for cutting the bureaucracy, which has impeded progress.

Tracklaying has begun on the Hamedan-Sanandaj line, one of several projects currently underway including Arak-Khosravi, Mahabad-Orumiyeh, Mianeh-Tabriz, and the North-South corridor, which will connect Europe and the port of Bandar Abbas. (*Railway Gazette*, May 9)

#### JAPAN

West Japan Railway is to launch the *Twilight Express Mizukaze* (fresh breeze) luxury cruise train in June, adopting a similar concept to JR East's *Train Suite Shiki-Shima*.

With five one-night or two-night itineraries, the luxury 10-car train will give up to 30 passengers the opportunity to travel to or from the Kansai area to visit national parks and cultural sites in the Sanyo and Sanin regions.

Accommodation is in single or two-person rooms, with the option of travelling in "The Suite," which occupies an entire car with a living area, bedroom, and bathroom. There is a dining car, a panoramic lounge car, and an observation car with a balcony at each end.

Design and styling of the *Twilight Express Mizukaze* was entrusted to Kazuya Ura, an architect and interior designer who was head of Nikken Space Design before establishing the URA Kazuya Design Laboratory, Tetsuo Fukuda, an industrial designer responsible for the *Sunrise Seto* and *Sunrise Izumo* sleeping cars and the N700 Series Shinkansen, and Takeshi Kadokami, Editorial Advisor to culinary magazine *Amakara Techo*. Catering is in the hands of top-class chefs who prepare dishes onboard from locally-sourced produce.

Fares range from ¥270 000 in a twin-berth cabin for a two-day trip to ¥1.2 million for a three-day itinerary in "The Suite." The train is fully booked until September. (*Railway Gazette*, May 13)