The Bulletin

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STATEN ISLAND'S 157-YEAR-OLD RAILROAD
(Continued from September, 2017 issue)

In the previous issue, we described the route of the North Shore Line, which was abandoned on March 31, 1953, but we omitted the South Beach Line because of the lack of space. On the same date, South Beach trains also ceased operating from St. George to South Beach and switched away from the Tottenville Line at Clifton Junction. Photos show one-car trains operating on both lines. Following are the stations and mileage:

The East Shore Branch extended from Clifton Junction near Greenfield Avenue between Tompkins Avenue and Bay Street on a right-of-way between the above streets to St. Johns Avenue, then adjacent to Lily Pond Avenue, then between Railroad Avenue and Seaside Avenue to Sand Lane, South Beach. There was no passenger service to Wentworth Avenue, a short station where only one door could be opened.

The June 17, 1951 timetable listed the following stations and mileages:

STATION	MILES	STATION	MILES
Clifton Junction	0	Arrochar	1.4
Rosebank	0.3	Cedar Avenue	1.6
Belair Road	0.7	South Beach	2.1
Fort Wadsworth	0.9	Wentworth Avenue	2.2

All of the original MU cars were no longer in service. Several were destroyed by fires, but the company w as able to maintain adequate service. In 1927, five cars were damaged by a fire at Tottenville and on June 25, 1946, a fire destroyed the St. George terminal and 8 cars.

After discontinuing service on two branches in 1953, the company sold 30 surplus cars to New York City Transit, which had a car shortage. These cars were slow loaders because of their door and seating arrangement.

Between October 3 and October 10, 1955, the following Staten Island cars were placed in service on the lightly traveled Franklin Avenue Shuttle, Culver, and West End Local Lines:

NYCT NUMBER	SIR NUMBER	NYCT NUMBER	SIR NUMBER
2900	391 (A)	2913	362
2901	349	2914	342
2902	341	2915	394 (A)
2903	309	2916	339
2904	329	2917	357
2905	344	2918	300
2906	373	2919	310
2907	301	2920	340
2908	305	2921	350
2909	387	2922	345
2910	336	2923	354
2911	364	2924	304
2912	383		

(A) Cars were originally 500-series trailers, which were motorized and renumbered in 1928

All of the above cars were out of service on April 29, 1961. They were authorized to be scrapped on June 13, 1961 and September 5, 1961 and were towed away by the South Brooklyn Railway to the scrap yard on September 8, 1961 and December 18, 1961.

In addition to the above cars, the company

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FROM RECOGNITION TO DOMINANCE: THE NEW YORK CONNECTING RAILROAD (BRIDGING THE BAY AND CONNECTING THE PIECES)
by George Chiasson
(Continued from September, 2017 issue)

FINAL DEMISE OF THE MANHATTAN BEACH BRANCH

As noted previously, the resort-oriented flavor of Manhattan Beach was being heavily compromised by urban development by the time railroad operations were truncated at a replacement terminal next to its namesake resort in 1909. This process rapidly accelerated through those years and as it did a transit-oriented ridership market was created, one for which the Long Island Rail Road was entirely ill-positioned. No more were there well-heeled summertime crowds coming by the trainload from the cramped confines of Manhattan and Brooklyn in search of comfort at its beaches, opulent hotel rooms, and outdoor concerts. Instead there were ever-increasing quantities of working folks (widely varied in socioeconomic standing) who were establishing full-time homes and whose transportation needs were of a far more prosaic nature than that which Austin Corbin had originally envisioned. So came the gradual destruction of the Manhattan Beach Branch itself as a leisure-oriented destination, an outcome epitomized through realization that the great Manhattan Beach Hotel would never reopen after its 1911 program concluded that September. Five seasonal trains per day continued to service patrons of the neighboring Oriental Hotel for the warm weather months of 1912, utilizing a seasonal terminal that had been re-laid in front of the Manhattan Beach Hotel and first opened on July 29, 1909. Nevertheless their number seemed to diminish as rapidly as the new residential lots were being carved out of Corbin's seaside resort property and sold off. As noted previously, LIRR cut service on the Manhattan Beach Branch to four trains daily as the 1913 season opened, a "skeletal" offering that justified the railroad's lack of expensive signals on its recently-reconstructed line. This resulted in the practice of "manual block" control, which in turn enabled only one train to be on the branch at any time in either direction.

A semblance of railroad service was restored in the immediate vicinity of the Oriental Hotel later the same year when a new trolley line was opened as a re-embodiment of the Marine Railway. This was an intramural (beach) operation that shuttled on its own tracks between the Oriental Hotel and Brighton Beach utilizing various modes through its decade-and-a-half of previous existence, including a steam train and a self-powered "Duplex" car between 1899 and 1905, then a lone electric trolley through the 1912 summer season. For the following year the Marine Railroad, under the auspices of the Manhattan Beach Estate Company, changed its service orientation toward the growing residential neighborhood as well as the bath houses along Oriental Boulevard, and its tracks were extended eastward from the Manhattan Beach "plaza" in front of the (1909) LIRR terminal to a surface car stop situated past the Oriental Hotel. On August 7, 1913 the Marine Railroad began the year-round use of rented LIRR battery car 5 as a shuttle on Oriental Boulevard to the Manhattan Beach Branch terminal, from which it continued on LIRR itself to the Sheepshead Bay station where a convenient transfer could be made to BRT's Brighton Line. Not surprisingly this operation met with some measure of success completely independent of the railroad's service from Long Island City, which was continuously offered each year despite ever-decreasing ridership. This was particularly so after the Oriental Hotel was permanently closed in September of 1915 and soon demolished, at which time operations on the six-year-old (relocated) Manhattan Beach Branch were reduced to a single track. Two months later, between November 6 and 24 of 1915, its pair of daily off-season trips making their way to and from Long Island City were routed through the East New York Tunnel and the line was set into its final arrangement, including station stops at Long Island City, Penny Bridge, Haberman, Maspeth, Fresh Pond, Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood (Cypress Avenue), Fulton Street (East New York), Rugby, Kouwenhoven, Vanderveer Park, Manhattan Beach Junction, South Greenfield, Kings Highway, Neck Road, Sheepshead Bay, and Manhattan Beach.

A further indication of the increasingly subservient status that the Manhattan Beach Branch had gained by late 1915 was its single-tracking, which included the westward connection toward Bay Ridge that was still used by Brooklyn-based local freights serving its industrial customers. In May, 1918 seasonal service was cut from four to three trains per day (with four only on Sundays), then finally bottomed out three years later in May of 1921, when just a pair of round trips were scheduled all year round. By the same time, the Marine Railroad had discovered a resurgent ridership market for its original service from Manhattan Beach to Brighton Beach, where a number of new beachfront attractions and bath houses were being built, and petitioned to the Public Service Commission for its line to be so modified on August 1, 1920. As a result of this proposal the former LIRR battery car that shuttled on Oriental Boulevard was diverted from the Sheepshead Bay LIRR station to Brighton Beach by way of newly-restored track west of the Manhattan Beach terminal starting on April 1, 1921

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From Recognition to Dominance

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and the railroad left strictly to its primary (albeit anemic) user. Ultimately the reconfigured battery car service was never a financial success and lasted only until June of 1923, when the company acquiesced to a newer, cheaper, and duplicative bus service that had sprouted up. In 2017 there are two MTA New York City Bus routes that in part cover the Marine Railroad's alignment and modern-day Manhattan Beach: B1 along Oriental Boulevard and Brighton Beach Avenue to NYCT's Brighton Beach station (BQ) and B49, which carves an "L"-shaped path from Manhattan Beach to the Sheepshead Bay subway station (BQ).

After surviving for years on the equivalent of life support for railroad operations, passenger service on the Long Island Rail Road's Manhattan Beach Branch breathed its last on May 13, 1924 as part of the company's greatest cycle of reductions since the time of Conrad Poppenhusen in 1876. Such was a hallmark of that particular period, as the company sought to remedy the effects of rising costs and restricted revenues. This was particularly the case within Brooklyn and Queens, where local fares were fixed by PSC fiat and had been capped at 25¢, almost in a manner that the infamous 5¢ transit fare had been a staple of the rapid transit companies since the first subway was opened in 1904. As demonstrated above the line's remaining ridership was less than a shadow of its past levels, with little hope of resurgence given the limitations of its infrastructure (even in its recently-enhanced state) which was unelectrified and did not mesh well with LIRR's greater orientation toward the now maturing Long Island suburbs. Moreover, the remainder of the "Manhattan Beach Division" from Bay Ridge to Fresh Pond Junction (as formally re-designated the "Bay Ridge Division") was now well-established as part of the New York Connecting Railroad and had been successfully re-dedicated to the primary purpose of supporting the mass movement of freight between Bay Ridge and the Bronx, a mission that had no relationship to the transport of pleasure-seekers heading to the Brooklyn beachfront or the timely conveyance of day-to-day commuters between tract housing and their places of employment.

There was some level of freight service continued along the Manhattan Beach Branch after its last passenger trains were dropped, but this was not the case for its more southerly reaches and just over a year later, on June 19, 1925, the line was formally abandoned beyond the station at Neck Road to avoid the cost of upkeep on unneeded facilities. Ironically this was also the date when the New York, Brooklyn & Manhattan Beach Railway (as corporate successor to Austin Corbin's New York & Manhattan Beach) was formally merged into the Long Island Rail Road Company. With its traffic levels reduced to a bare minimum and service provided by one of LIRR's "way freights," the interlocking at "MJ" (Manhattan Beach Junction) was heavily modified in January, 1927 and the rarely-used, extraneous track connections toward Fresh Pond (which also passed through the former station) removed outright. As a result all moves to and from the Manhattan Beach Branch had to be made using the lone remaining connection toward the Bay Ridge side in either direction. Like its long-declining patronage base, the volume of local freight that was moved to and from customers along the Manhattan Beach Branch also dropped across the few remaining years it survived, precipitously so after the Great Depression set in. The right-of-way past South Greenfield was no longer in use by the end of 1932, then the last trains were removed from the line when that final abbreviated segment was embargoed starting in July, 1935. Formal abandonment of the Manhattan Beach Branch was approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission on July 28, 1937 and the track and bridges were removed immediately. The balance of the empty right-of-way was then sold off to a pair of developers and eventually re-used for housing lots (*what else?*), which still tightly border the eastern edge of MTA New York City Transit's Brighton Line. The portion from Emmons Avenue (Sheepshead Bay) to Avenue J was taken off LIRR's corporate hands on March 4, 1939 and that from Avenue J to Avenue I on April 3, 1941, and so ended, quite conclusively, the history of the Manhattan Beach railroad in its various forms.

ELECTRIFICATION PART TWO—THE NEW HAVEN'S WIRES REACH BAY RIDGE

The decade-long lag so evident in implementing electrification on the "freight side" of the New York Connecting Railroad venture stemmed from the vastly different nature of its utilization versus those facilities deemed essential to the New Haven's optimal handling of passenger trains that passed through Pennsylvania Station. As noted above, progress on the line's overall plan of operation and with it a desired level of profitability for all parties were stifled when confronted with reality, in large measure by the intercession of World War I and its long-lasting effects on industry and commerce both nationally and worldwide. While a solid traffic base had indeed materialized between the Pennsylvania Railroad system and destinations made available through its alliance with the New Haven (and was even known to exist even prior to formulation of the New York Connecting Railroad), the financial, corporate, and governmental aftershocks of war had impeded its full maturation as a marketplace and was leaving both railroads in a slightly diminished position to carry on with the incomplete railroad's grand vision. Action in this regard was quickly deferred while the New Haven's first electrified passenger trains crossed the Hell Gate Bridge as war raged in Europe, though the company remained committed to its implementation at the earliest (and most favorable) opportunity, given the large investment that would be required to generate sufficient electrical capacity for the reliability of such a large-scale operation.

While this might engender an impassioned judgment on our part a century later, there was also one now-

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Staten Island's 157-Year-Old Railroad

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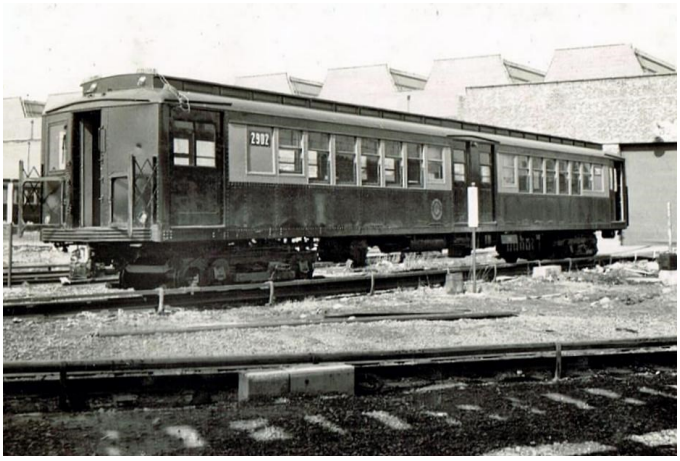
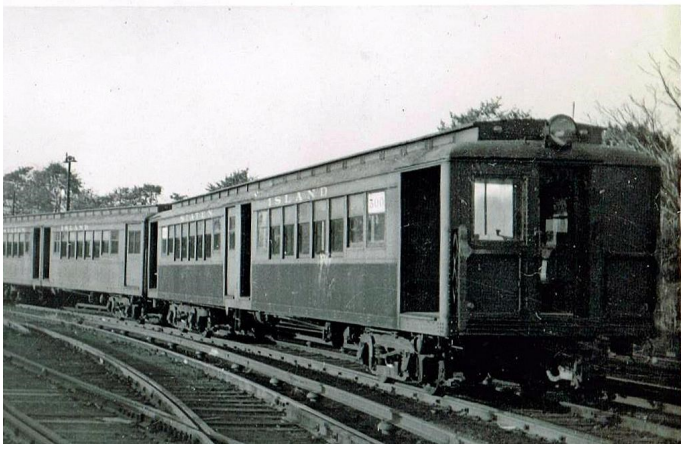
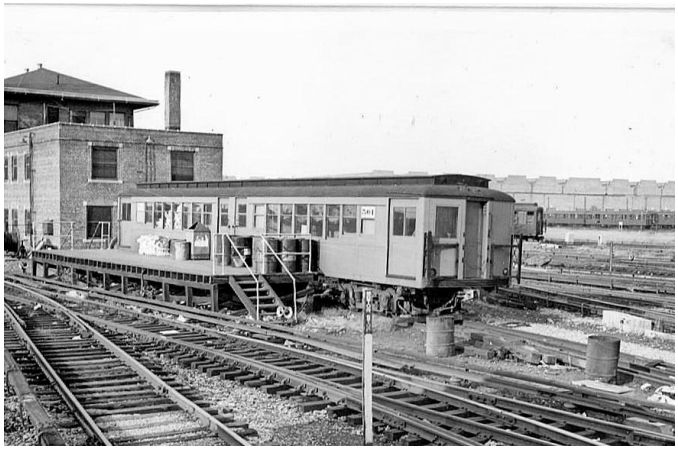


NYCT 2902 (ex-SIR) in Coney Island Yard, March 3, 1955.
Bernard Linder photograph

Interior of NYCT 2902 (ex-SIR) in Coney Island Yard, March 3, 1955. Note Axiflow fans that were installed by NYCT,
Bernard Linder photograph



SIR car 500 in NYCT 36th Street Yard.
Bernard Linder collection



SIR car 501 in Coney Island Yard, October 30, 1959.
Bernard Linder photograph

SIR car 501 in Coney Island Yard, March 7, 1962.
Bernard Linder photograph

NYCT car 2925T (ex-SIR 504) serving as an office in Fresh Pond Yard, March 3, 1957.
Bernard Linder photograph

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Staten Island's 157-Year-Old Railroad

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Baltimore & Ohio Railroad yard near St. George, June 15, 1957.
Bernard Linder photographs

Portal near St. George, October 15, 1968.
Lawrence Linder photographs

Looking toward Tompkinsville station, October, 1968.
Lawrence Linder photograph

Looking north from Tompkinsville station, October, 1968.
Lawrence Linder photograph

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From Recognition to Dominance

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forgotten circumstance which *may* have helped to spur this objective onward in terms of real investment as time and circumstances permitted: the United States coal shortage of December, 1917. This was a domestic calamity on the order of a latter-day "energy crisis," self-inflicted through the governmental and industrial muddle and mayhem of a new kind of international warfare that denied many thousands of American companies and households this vital fuel, then so commonly used for cooking, heating, and (on the railroads) transportation. It stemmed from the consequences of battle in war-torn Europe, where coal mining was rent asunder and left a great proportion of its population without this necessity of life and limb as winter approached. In its stead President Woodrow Wilson directed that large shipments of domestic coal be diverted to its allies by sea, but such was attempted through a system of railways and shipping companies that were already overburdened by other strategic priorities. In turn this resulted in the movement of coal being "frozen" in the eastern United States due to a simple lack of inertia. As such American interests (including ordinary citizens as well as railroads, utilities and traction companies) were left to fend for themselves and some otherwise essential functions had to be curtailed until the situation could be resolved. Naturally this dilemma, however temporary, held serious consequences for the New Haven and Pennsylvania Railroads, which underscored the desirability of electrification as a long-term propulsion strategy whatever its intrinsic costs.

Delayed by the uncertain operational economics to which the New York Connecting Railroad's partners had become wed for many years after the Great War, work to complete the physical plant on its southern half was at last undertaken by April of 1926. Most notably during that busy summer period, all remaining track was laid to create the railroad as originally planned from Fresh Pond to Manhattan Beach Junction, as such: Track 1 was installed from Cooper to New Lots Avenues, which included replacement (actually extension) of the original siding through the East New York Tunnel. Track 3 was also added from Pitkin to Rockaway Aves., while the original Track 2 was realigned as Track 4 and the original Track 1 was realigned as Track 3, all to create a line four tracks in width (arranged 3-1-2-4, west to east) from Fremont Interlocking (FN) to Rockaway Avenue, including the East New York Tunnel. Tracks 2 and 4, which had been terminated at a set of bumping blocks in 1921, were extended from Rockaway Avenue to Remsen Avenue, while the existing Track 1 became an extension of Track 3 and Track 2 was incorporated into Track 1 between the same points, with the now-abandoned Rugby station removed at the E. 92nd Street overpass. New Tracks 1 and 3 were also laid from Remsen to Troy Avenues, with the existing Track 1 through this brief section then becoming Track 2 and the existing Track 2 changing to Track 4, while the abandoned Kouwenhoven platform (located on the Kings Highway overpass) survived. Finally, the new Track 3 was continued all the way from Troy to Brooklyn Avenues, being joined by a new Track 4 across a short distance between Troy Avenue and Avenue H. To address the line's logistical shortcomings, no less than four contiguous yards were also added in a tightly-packed fashion along the westerly edge of the right-of-way in Brownsville, yielding a total of eight intermediate facilities between Bay Ridge and Fresh Pond.

By the end of that October the newly-coined Bay Ridge Division had at last achieved a state of full completion and was comprised as follows:

Track Arrangement

- 4 tracks from 3rd Avenue to New Utrecht Avenue
- 2 tracks from New Utrecht Avenue to Manhattan Beach Junction (MJ)
- 4 tracks from Manhattan Beach Junction to Fremont (FN)
- 2 tracks from Fremont (FN) to Bowery Bay (Sunnyside) Junction

Yard Locations

- Bay Ridge Terminal (1st Avenue)
- Bath Junction Yard (16th Avenue)
- Parkville Yard (Gravesend Avenue)
- Vanderveer Park Yard (Flatbush Avenue)
- Glenwood Yard (Utica Avenue)
- New Lots Classification Yard (New Lots Avenue)
- New Lots Team and Blake Avenue Yard (Blake Avenue)
- Pitkin Avenue Yard (Pitkin Avenue)
- Fresh Pond Interchange Yard (Fresh Pond Junction)

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SUBDIVISION "B" CAR ASSIGNMENTS

CARS REQUIRED SEPTEMBER 2, 2017

The following are different from the assignment that appeared in the August, 2017 ***Bulletin***:

LINE	AM RUSH	PM RUSH
Ⓜ Shuttle*	12 R-42	12 R-42

*Service operates between Metropolitan Avenue and Wyckoff Avenue.

Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 345

by Ronald Yee and Alexander Ivanoff

MTA Long Island Rail Road

Service returned to normal on September 5 with the completion of the Penn Station repair project. New timetables were issued effective September 5 through November 12.

With the summer high ridership season over for the diesel fleet, the MARC cars were withdrawn from service after September 1. They, as well as additional MARC cars, are expected to return to LIRR service between just before Memorial Day and Labor Day Weekend, 2018. (LIRR press release, Ron Yee notes, September 1)

MTA Metro-North Railroad

The Breakneck Ridge station near milepost 55 on the Hudson Line will be receiving a major upgrade in the near future. The current low-level station platforms on both sides of the track consisting of railroad tie timbers and gravel with just a station sign on twin posts will be replaced by a mini-high level platform similar to the ones at Mount Pleasant Cemetery on the Harlem Line. This will help reduce the long dwell times resulting from large numbers of hikers taking advantage of the rail service to the trailhead. The station access from nearby Route 9D will also be upgraded to provide ADA accessibility, paved walkways, a welcome center, a formal parking lot, security fencing to separate pedestrians from the tracks, and a 12-foot-wide trail connecting the station with the popular Breakneck Ridge Trail. This station will serve as the trailhead for a proposed new Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail stretching seven miles between Cold Spring and Beacon. Currently, access to this station is via an ad hoc path from the highway up and over rock and woodlands to a bridge and long stairway down to the southbound platform. Northbound customers alighting at this station must currently navigate a dirt path away from the tracks to Route 9D. The primary safety issue at this station occurs when hikers trespass and cross the two-track mainline to reach the southbound platform. *(Editor's Note by Ronald Yee: This part of the Hudson Line has a maximum speed limit of 80 mph for Metro-North as well as Amtrak trains on the Empire Corridor to Albany. When PTC is cut in by the end of 2018, track speed through this area may be restored to its former 90 mph. In the southbound direction, at 80 mph, this station is literally around a blind curve and provides very little warning to trespassers of oncoming trains. Many a near miss has occurred with hikers crossing the tracks for local service to Grand Central Terminal, only to get surprised by an Amtrak express barreling through, running ahead of the Metro-North train they intended to catch. This adds urgency to the need to fence off the right-of-way to ward off people taking a risky shortcut.)* (***Mileposts***, August, 2017)

To insure a state of good repair on the Port Jervis Line, beginning September 11 and continuing until late fall, Maintenance of Way and bridge repair crews will be performing work at several locations along the line. The scope of work will include structural repairs to the Moodna Viaduct just south of the Campbell Hall station as well as removing a now unused bridge at Day Road near that station. Rock slopes adjacent to the tracks between Port Jervis and Harriman will be cleared of loose rock, brush, and other materiel and the remaining rock face reinforced to prevent future rock slides. During this work program, weekday midday train service will be replaced with buses between Port Jervis and Harriman. Eastbound trains affected will be #58, 62, 64, and 66 (starting with the 9:26 AM train from Port Jervis and ending with the 3:19 PM train from Middletown) and westbound trains #43 and 45 to Port Jervis and #47 and 49 to Middletown. Bus service will mirror the schedules of the trains they replace. (MTA press release, September 4)

The Pascack Valley Line will also undergo track maintenance work this fall. From Sunday, September 17 through Saturday, October 28, weekend train service is replaced by buses between Spring Valley and Secaucus. Weekday midday off-peak trains from #1622 through 1630 inbound and #1605 thru 1653 (except Fridays) are replaced by buses operating in two sections: A semi-express between Spring Valley and New Bridge Landing, operating non-stop to Secaucus, and a local bus from New Bridge Landing to Secaucus. Due to ridership volumes, Train #1622's substitute buses will operate in three sections: a New York State-only covering Spring Valley, Nanuet, and Pearl River then express to/from Secaucus; Montvale through New Bridge Landing and non-stop to/from Secaucus; and between New Bridge Landing and Secaucus. During these periods, Pascack Valley trains will continue to operate between Hoboken and Secaucus, transferring their passengers to/from buses at Secaucus platforms 9 and 10. (NJ Transit press release, September 8)

NJ Transit

After the hoopla of "The Summer from Hell," during which trains servicing New York's Penn Station were adjusted to accommodate the rebuilding of Track 10 as well as much of the interlocking west of the station leading to the Hudson River tunnels, NJ Transit service returned to normal patterns on Tuesday morning, September 5, with *Midtown Direct* service once again operating to New York Penn Station instead of being diverted to Hoboken. Overall, the adjusted train schedules worked quite well, with customers accommodated by the wide range of alternative means of transport to Manhattan: PATH, buses, and ferries. (NJ Transit press release, September 1)

NJ Transit will spend $185 million to purchase and develop a 25-acre plot of land and freight track called Delco Lead in North Brunswick to be used as an emergency storage yard location during storm events that

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Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 7)

could lead to its current yards at Hoboken and shops at the Meadowlands Maintenance Complex becoming flooded and damaging/ruining rolling stock and locomotives, as did happen to over 300 cars and engines during Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Critics were quick to raise the issue that this new location is also on a flood plain and will require a tremendous amount of effort and materiel to raise the level of the yard high enough. The same critics also pointed out various locations along its main lines where equipment can be stored to avoid flood damage, such as the third track between Milburn and Newark and much of the Raritan Valley Line. The Federal Transit Administration has already awarded a grant that will cover most of the other half of the project's expected $368 million cost. This new facility is not expected to be operational until 2021. *(Editor's Note by Ronald Yee: While it may seem to make sense simply storing equipment on mainline tracks far above any flood danger, in the event of a storm that would require the use of such storage plans, logistically, it makes sense to store the cars in one secure facility. The cars and engines would be in one location for mechanical inspection and crews would have one location to report to when the process of restoring service commences. Having the trains lined up end to end along a mainline has its own set of issues, such as being damaged or blocked from movement by fallen trees and windblown debris, getting mechanical and operating department staff and crews to return them to service, providing security from vandalism, etc. One just has to hope the elevation of this new emergency yard will be high enough to stay above flood levels stemming from a once every 1,000 years type of storm.)* (NJTV News, September 7)

Amtrak

Amtrak returned to normal operations at New York Penn Station on Tuesday morning, September 5. Three round trips on the Empire Corridor were moved out of their temporary terminus at Grand Central Terminal back to Penn Station and the *Crescent* resumed operation north of Washington, D.C. Harrisburg trains resumed north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and the regional trains cancelled for the summer were restored. Work will continue in various parts of the Penn Station complex on weekends and off-peak periods but will not impact service the way it did this past summer. The work in "A Interlocking" had included a total track and switch replacement program aimed at improving the reliability of train service through this section of the Penn Station track complex. In total, approximately 360 dedicated Amtrak employees worked around the clock to install 897 track ties, 1,100 feet of rails (or six football fields worth of track), 1,000 tons of ballast, 7 turnouts (switches), 4 complex diamond crossings, and 176 yards of concrete. (***Trains*** Magazine, September 5)

Amtrak will be overhauling its entire fleet of over 450 mid-1970s-vintage, Budd-built Amfleet I cars to provide a more modern and comfortable riding experience for its customers on its corridor services, most notably the Northeast Corridor but also including New York's Empire Corridor and some Midwestern corridors based around Chicago. Amtrak will spend $16 million on providing each car with new seat cushions, flooring, and carpeting, LED lighting, upgraded wainscoting and bulkheads, new curtains in the business class cars, and redesigned galleys in the cafe cars. This process is expected to be completed in a span of nine months. 492 Amfleet Is were built between 1975 and 1977 based upon the carbody design of the 1967 *Metroliner* high-speed electric multiple unit cars, also built by Budd. Over the fleet's 42-year service life, around 30 or so cars have left the roster, having fallen victim to wrecks or severe damage stemming from accidents. Look for these refurbished cars on an Amtrak corridor service train near you. (***Railway Age***, September 8)

Amtrak suspended or truncated most of its passenger train service in advance of Hurricane Irma, which was expected to wreak havoc on CSX rail lines with flooding, washouts, signal issues, and fallen trees and debris. Leading up to the storm, southbound Train #91, the *Silver Star*, departing New York City on September 7, terminated at Orlando, Florida, and southbound Train #97 (*Silver Meteor*) was terminated at Jacksonville, Florida. Northbound Trains #92 (*Silver Star*) and 98 (*Silver Meteor*) were cancelled for September 9-11. Southbound *AutoTrain* #53 was cancelled September 8 and 9 and northbound *AutoTrain* #52 was cancelled September 9-11. At press time, Amtrak service was restored between Washington, D.C. and Jacksonville, Florida, the *Palmetto* resuming service and the *Silver Star* operating as far south as Jacksonville. The *Silver Meteor* and *AutoTrain* remained suspended as CSX crews performed cleanup and restoration work to its track and infrastructure. (Amtrak, September 7; NARP Newsletter, September 15)

Amtrak has officially introduced the first of 33 new "Charger" locomotives into regular passenger service on its Midwest corridors into and out of Chicago. The new units sport a new "Amtrak Midwest" paint scheme reflecting its five-state network of train services based out of Chicago and will be utilized on the *Lincoln Service, Illini/Saluki, Illinois Zephyr/Carl Sandberg* to southern Illinois, the *Hiawathas* to Wisconsin, *Wolverine/Blue Water/Pere Marquette* to Michigan, and *Missouri River Runner* between Kansas City and St Louis. Capable of 125 mph and quick acceleration and braking rates with a 16-cylinder, 4,400-horsepower (3,300 kW) Cummins QSK95 diesel engine meeting EPA Tier IV emissions requirements to provide power to a.c. traction motors, the $216.5 million order was produced by Siemens at its plant in Sacramento, California. (***Progressive Railroading***, August 29)

Industry

The California Department of Transportation announced at the end of August it they will be substituting Siemens equipment for the Midwest passenger railcar procurement of 130 bi-level passenger railcars, replacing current manufacturer Nippon Sharyo.

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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Since Siemens does not produce bi-level equipment, the procurement will be amended to 130 single-level railcars. While this will reduce the total number of seats, it will shorten the delivery frame for the railcars from approximately 5 years for a bi-level railcar to 24-34 months for a single-level railcar.

The procurement is led by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in joint agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), which represents a coalition of Midwestern states. The bi-levels were to be manufactured in Sharyo's new manufacturing plant in Rochelle, Illinois. However, the Japanese company hit problems early in the manufacturing process, unable to meet the requirements for high structural rigidity, which are unique to the U.S. passenger rail market. *(Editor's Note by Alexander Ivanoff: I echo NARP CEO Jim Matthews' statement in that U.S. rail safety regulations should be brought more in line with international best practices, as the current standards far exceed what other nations have. While safety is paramount, the focus should be on crash avoidance, not crashworthiness, and in regards to body rigidity, the English have hit the head, with a balance of both. Nippon Sharyo was given a contract in my eyes that no vendor could have reasonably completed. However, I see the new cars as at best a compromise, as the bilevels have proven popular outside of the Northeast, and the replacement cars will not be able to carry as many passengers as a bilevel. If the Siemens cars prove to be the sweet spot, this could morph into potentially an order for a thousand railcars to replace most of Amtrak's single-level fleet. The cars that would be replaced should still be kept on reserve for charter trips, service expansions, etc. I could not find anything from the AASHTO site on the procurement process.)* (National Association of Railroad Passengers NARP, September 1)

Other Transit Systems

Washington, D.C. area

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on September 8 announced completion of the Tier II Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the 123-mile section of the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor linking Washington, D.C. to south of Richmond, Va. The DEIS is a NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) requirement.

FRA and the Virginia DRPT (Department of Rail and Public Transportation) have recommended a Preferred Alternative in the DEIS that will reduce passenger and freight congestion and improve on-time performance, accommodate planned and funded Virginia Rail Express (VRE) growth of four new round-trip trains, accommodate forecasted CSX freight growth through 2045 (doubling from approximately 21 trains in 2015 to 42 in 2045), increase maximum train speeds from 69 mph to 79 mph between D.C. and Fredericksburg and to 90 mph between Fredericksburg and Richmond, and add nine new round-trip trains from D.C. to Richmond, with four continuing east to Hampton Roads and four south to Raleigh.

Total project cost is approximately $5 billion, estimated in 2025 dollars to reflect the first year of service. However, no construction funding commitments have been made.

FRA and Virginia DRPT will accept public comments on the DEIS for 60 days beginning September 8. Based on those comments on the DEIS and the Preferred Alternative, DRPT and FRA will prepare a Final EIS (FEIS), which will list environmental commitments to mitigate unavoidable impacts. (***Railway Age***, September 8)

Miami, Florida

Following the impacts of Hurricane Irma, TriRail and Metro-Dade's Metrorail service on Wednesday, September 13. Service had been suspended Friday, September 8 as the hurricane loomed offshore; at the time, forecasters were uncertain of the exact path the storm would plow its way through the state. Fortunately for the Miami metro area, the hurricane came ashore near Naples, Florida, sufficiently far away to reduce the wind impacts in the Miami area. ERA member Fernando Zavala reported that the MetroMover system remained suspended until the remnants of a collapsed crane could be removed from a building under construction adjacent to the guideways next to the College/Bayside station. The cab of the fallen crane actually fell between guideways for the inner and outer loops, barely missing both, rendering the entire MetroMover system inoperable for passenger service until the debris was removed and/or secured. As of press time, the MetroMover could operate cars over some lines but only in non-passenger work service. (NARP Hotline news #1,033, September 15; Fernando Zavala, September 13)

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The Department of Public Works has awarded Transdev Services a contract to operate the 2.5-mile Milwaukee Streetcar network, which is due to open next year.

The contract began at the end of August and runs until December, 2023, covering the first five years of operations with an option for a five-year extension. The contract encompasses all day-to-day operation of the system, together with maintenance of facilities, rolling stock, and infrastructure.

Transdev will subcontract maintenance of the tram fleet to Brookville Equipment, which is supplying five Liberty LRVs for the project. Delivery of the first vehicle is scheduled for December.

System testing on the first phase will take place between March and June, 2018, with revenue service due to commence in November, 2018. Revenue services will begin on the Lakefront Line in November, 2019. (***International Railway Journal***, September 11)

Chicago, Illinois

The Chicago Transit Authority opened a new station in the downtown loop on Thursday, August 31, its first in 20 years. Built between Madison and Washington Streets, the new station is named Washington/Wabash, replacing two 1896-vintage stations at Madison & Wabash and Randolph & Wabash and served by the

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Brown, Green, Orange, Pink, and Purple Lines. Featuring platforms wider than the 7 feet 6 inches of the old stations and a full-length glass-paneled canopy supported by white columns resembling the skeleton of a skinny reptile undulating along its 425-foot length mimicking a Santiago Calatrava style of design, it is not as elaborate (and expensive) as the Oculus he designed for the World Trade Center transit complex in New York City. The new station cost CTA $75 million, is fully accessible to the handicapped, and is expected to handle 10,000 daily riders accessing the east loop, Millennium Park, and Metra's Millennium Station (which houses the Metra Electric (former Illinois Central) and the South Shore Line to Indiana. The infrastructure for the Madison & Wabash station was removed during construction of the new station and the Randolph & Wabash station was closed September 3 and is slated for demolition to be completed by the end of 2017. Another CTA Loop station undergoing an improvement project is the Quincy & Wells station, one of the most well-preserved Loop stations. It is receiving elevators to make it compliant with ADA regulations. *(Editor's Note by Ronald Yee: The rectangular-shaped CTA Downtown Loop now has just two stations on each side.) (Editor's Note by Alexander Ivanoff: ERA First Vice President John Pappas and I were at the station at the beginning of July. Needless to say the station was a throwback to the 19th century, complete with wooden platforms. Its replacement is probably a welcome for the thousands of "L" users.)* (***Chicago Tribune***, August 30)

San Francisco, California

Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) commuter rail service commenced on August 25 over the initial 43-mile portion of the line between Sonoma County Airport and San Rafael. En route, the trains stop at: Santa Rosa North, Santa Rosa Downtown, Rohnert Park, Cotati, Petaluma Downtown, Novato-San Marin, Novato-Hamilton, and Marin Civic Center. 17 trains operate in each direction on weekdays with the first southbound out of Somoma County Airport at 4:19 AM and the last southbound departing at 6:49 PM. Northbound out of San Rafael, service starts at 5:59 AM and ends at 8:35 PM. On weekends, five trains operate in each direction, southbounds from 10:13 AM to 7:23 PM, northbounds 11:52 AM to 8:50 PM. Distance zone-based fares run from $3.50 (single zone) to $11.50 (five zones) and senior/disabled fares are 50% off. Proof of payment is in force on the line. SMART plans to extend this line southward to Larkspur, where connections can be made with ferry services to San Francisco, by 2020. Currently, shuttle buses out of San Rafael connect ferries with the SMART trains. The line uses seven two-car Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) trains built by Nippon-Sharyo that are similar to equipment used on the UPXpress, the airport rail service linking Toronto's Pearson Airport with Toronto Union Station in Canada. Two more two-car trains are on order for the extension of the line to Cloverdale, completing the line at 70 miles.

Los Angeles, California

After being closed for three years following a fatal accident involving a runaway train that had lost its braking system, killing one passenger and injuring scores of others, Los Angeles' famed landmark incline railway (funicular), Angels Flight, returned to service on August 31, beating Mayor Eric Garcetti's promise of Labor Day-made on March 1. Financed by ACS, a public-private partnership formed by Angels Flight Railway Foundation and Angels Flight Development Company, LLC, the line was rebuilt with state-of-the-art safety systems certified by the California Public Utilities Commission to meet the highest standards. Angels Flight opened in 1901 as a means of transport up and down a steep hillside between Hill and Olive Streets. After providing over 100 million rides, in 1969, the line fell victim to urban renewal projects and was closed. A new Angels Flight was brought back to life in 1996 when a new route alignment was built between California Plaza and Hill Street across from Grand Central Market, a half-block south of the original alignment and shortened to 298 feet. The rebuilt line commenced service in 1996 and operated until 2013 when it was closed following the fatal accident. ACS has a contractual agreement to operate and maintain this funicular line for 30 years. Fares are $1, 50 cents for those with a valid Metro Pass, and a 5 and 40 ride commuter ticket book valid for 30 days is offered. Angels Flight operates 6:45 AM to 10 PM 7 days per week, 365 days per year, including all holidays. (WordPress.com, August 31)

Tallinn, Estonia

A ceremony was held in the Estonian capital Tallinn on August 30 to mark the operation of the first tram on a new link from the future Rail Baltica station at Ülemiste to Tallinn Lennart Meri Airport.

The extension to the city's 39-kilometer tram network will become fully operational on September 1 although minor works such as landscaping still need to be completed. Trams will operate at 6-minute intervals during peak periods.

Construction of the 1.5 track-kilometer extension, which includes a 150-meter tunnel under the railway and a four-lane road, started in August, 2016. The project has cost €11.5 million, of which 85% was funded through the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) as part of the Rail Baltica project. The City of Tallinn funded the remaining 15%.

RB Rail, which is responsible for the Rail Baltica project to build an 870-kilometer standard-gauge 240-kilometer-per-hour mixed-traffic railway linking the Baltic state capitals with Poland and the broader European railway network, has invited bids to conduct a feasibility and technical framework study for a light rail connection from the Old City Harbor/Vanasadam in Tallinn to Ülemiste. (***International Railway Journal***, August 31)

Russia

PK Transportnye Systemy is to supply three 100% low-floor unidirectional three-section trams to St. Petersburg operator Gorelektrotrans under a 255 million

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ruble contract.

The only other bid came from trading company Elektrotransport, which works with UKVZ. However, the company's cheaper bid was rejected on the grounds of non-compliant documentation.

PK TS is likely to supply its 27.5-meter-long Vityaz-M model, which it is currently producing for Moscow under a contract signed last year by a consortium of Metrowagonmash and PK TS.

Deliveries are due by December. The trams will be equipped with wi-fi, a smart card and bank card fare collection system, and passenger counting technology.

PK TS recently won a separate 155 million ruble contract to supply three three-section Varyag trams to Gorelektrotrans. (***Metro Report International***, August 24)

Potsdam, Germany

The first of eight Combino trams that Siemens is lengthening for ViP Verkehrsbetrieb Potsdam returned to the city on September 7.

Work started earlier this year on a €50 million project to lengthen eight of the five-section trams to 42 meters. Siemens is producing two intermediate sections, 3 meters and 7 meters long, for each tram, which are being inserted at Wildenrath. The enlargement adds two sets of doors, giving each tram eight. The increase in capacity from 175 to 246 passengers is part of ViP's goal to transport 15 000 more passengers per day in 2025.

Three of the longer trams are planned to be in service for the opening of a norther extension of the network to Campus Jungfernsee in December. All eight would be delivered by 2019. An enlargement of ViP's workshops to accommodate the longer trams is due to begin later this month.

The trams were built by Siemens in 2000-1. (***Metro Report International***, September 8)

Vienna, Austria

Wiener Linien has awarded Siemens a contract to supply 34 driverless metro trains for Vienna's U-Bahn network.

Only Siemens and Bombardier submitted bids for the contract, which could be worth up to €550 million if Wiener Linien exercises an option for 11 additional trains.

Assembly will be carried out at Siemens plant in Simmering, Vienna, and deliveries will begin in 2020 with the final sets due to enter service by 2030.

Maintenance of the fleet accounts for 30% of the value of the contract, and Wiener Linien staff will maintain the trains under the supervision of Siemens.

While intended for primarily driverless operation, the new trains will be equipped with cabs to enable use on all U-Bahn lines except Line U6. This will enable the withdrawal of aging class U trains.

Driverless operation will be introduced on the new Line U5, which will open in stages from 2023 onwards. Wiener Linien is not currently planning to convert any other U-Bahn lines for driverless operation. (***International Railway Journal***, September 12)

Madrid, Spain

At its central rolling stock workshops in Canillejas, Metro de Madrid is currently undertaking a €20 million program to refurbish the 42 Series 2000 trainsets operating on Line 5 as well as 12 Series 3000 trainsets that are to be deployed on this route during 2018. This forms part of a €66.5 million program to upgrade Line 5, also including resignalling, the installation of Tetra digital radio and the replacement of the overhead contact wire with a rigid conductor.

As well as new onboard signaling equipment, the Line 5 fleet is receiving LED lighting, while air-conditioning is to be upgraded and the train doors overhauled to improve reliability. A new driver's desk is to be installed and formations of three two-car trainsets are to be replaced with six-car trains.

Following refurbishment, the first 21 Series 2000 trainsets are due to return to traffic on September 3 when Line 5 reopens following a 62-day closure for upgrade works. The remaining Series 2000 trainsets are due to be refurbished by January, 2018. (***Metro Report International***, August 23)

Jakarta, Indonesia

The railway systems contract has been signed for the first phase of the Jakarta light metro. The 100 billion won contract was won by a consortium of Korea Rail Network Authority (business management), Daea TI (signals), Samjin (power supplies), Woojin Industrial Systems (inspection), and LG CNS (screen doors).

Construction of the initial 5.8-kilometer section between Kelapa Gading and Velodrome began in June, 2016, with PT Wika undertaking civil works. This is scheduled to open in time for the Asian Games in August, 2018, which Jakarta is hosting.

A feasibility study is underway for an 8.9-kilometer second phase. Long-term plans envisage a 110-kilometer network of seven lines.

In February Hyundai Rotem announced that it had been selected with Woojin Industrial Systems to supply eight two-car trainsets for the first phase. The contract includes options for up to 110 cars to operate on further phases of the network. (***Metro Report International***, August 16)

Izmir, Turkey

Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım opened a 17-kilometer extension of Izmir's Southern Line from Tepeköy to Selçuk on September 8.

The extension cost TL300 million, of which 70% was covered by the national budget, and makes use of a railway alignment originally opened in the 1860s. There is one intermediate station at Sağlık.

Services are operated by Izban, which is owned 50-50 by national rail operator TCDD Taşımacılık and Izmir Metropolitan Municipality.

Meanwhile, on August 28 test running began with a Marmaray trainset that has been transferred to Izmir. The majority of the 440 Hyundai Rotem-built Marmaray cars will not be required in Istanbul until work to up-

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grade suburban lines either side of the Bosporus is completed, which is now expected at the end of 2018. If testing with the initial trainset is successful, six Marmaray trainsets would be transferred to Izmir to enable headways on the overcrowded suburban services to be reduced from 10 minutes to 6 minutes. (***Metro Report International***, September 11)

Perth, Australia

The government of Western Australia expects to complete two more extensions to the Perth suburban rail network by late 2021, Premier Mark McGowan announced on August 21.

Revised business cases for the two projects have been submitted to federal agency Infrastructure Australia for approval. One would add a 13.8-kilometer northern extension to the Joondalup Line, serving three new stations at Alkimos, Eglinton, and Yanchep, costed at A$386 million. The other would run for 17.5 kilometers across the south of the conurbation, linking the current Thornlie spur with the Cockburn Central station on the Mandurah Line. With stations at Nicholson Road, Ranford Road, and Canning Vale, this A$474 million project would parallel the existing mixed-gauge freight line to Fremantle.

The two lines are due to be built as part of the government's A$2.9 billion Metronet package, which also includes a 7.5-kilometer extension of the Armadale Line to Byford and a 21-kilometer Morley-Ellenbrook Line as well as the Forrestfield-Airport Link now under construction. Metronet has been promised A$1.26 billion of federal funding including A$416 million diverted from the cancelled Perth Freight Link road scheme. Describing Metronet as "one of the most ambitious public transport and planning initiatives in Western Australian history," McGowan said it would "revolutionize travel in Perth while creating countless jobs and apprenticeship opportunities for Western Australians."

Explaining that "projects of this scale require significant planning, legislative changes, and approvals," Transport Minister Rita Saffioti said tenders would be issued shortly to assist with the development of a planned station at Karnup, along with the reconstruction of the Midland and Bellevue stations. Public consultation for the Thornlie Line Extension has already started, and an industry briefing day was held on July 26 to inform local companies about Metronet's land use strategies, priorities, timetable, and likely scope of work.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has reportedly committed to funding the two projects as part of a so-called "cities deal" bringing together local, state, and federal governments to work on road and rail projects, housing, services, and job creation. "We're pretty confident Malcolm Turnbull will keep to his word and deliver funds for these two projects," Saffioti insisted (***Metro Report International***, August 23)

Around New York's Transit System

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stall elevators is another bone of contention amongst riders, with just 19 subway stations slated to receive them in the current capital budget.

...While Two Others Are To Close

NYCT will close two stations on the Astoria elevated line served by Ⓝ and Ⓦ trains beginning October 23 for an 8-month period during which the stations will be rehabilitated. The 30th and 36th Avenue stations will undergo structural repairs and receive new or rehabilitated station entrances and fare control mezzanines, stairs and platforms, countdown clocks, digital screens, and USB charging ports for personal electronic devices. However, the upgrades will not include elevators for the disabled. The work is expected to be completed by July, 2018, at which time the Broadway and 39th Avenue stations will undergo identical work for about seven months.

R-211 Mockup

MTA has constructed a full scale mockup of the next generation of subway cars intended for Subdivision "B" of its system, the R-211. It is currently hidden behind a blue painted construction wall on the mezzanine of the 34th Street-Hudson Yards ❼ station and features one full-sized subway car and one partial car with an open gangway (no doors between cars of a unitized set) that is dissected to its components for a display. The cars' silvery stainless steel exterior sports a New York State seal and a sash of blue and yellow stripes behind the Operator's cab windows. The intent of these mockups is to garner public opinion and feedback as well as test new features that may be incorporated into the new car design. MTA will be purchasing 940 new subway cars with ten cars being of an open gangway design. However, the exact mix of standard design cars and those of an open gangway design is subject to change as the contract is still open and subject to change. *(Editor's Note by Ronald Yee: There are rumors that most of the cars were to be of the open gangway design but Governor Cuomo had ordered that the schedule of acquisition of the R-211s be pushed up as an effort to more quickly replace the aging 1964 -vintage R-32 class and then the 1975-7-vintage R-46 class with more advanced and reliable subway cars. If so, a radical departure from standard practice at NYCT may not be possible in the few months before a contract is awarded to a railcar manufacturer for the R-211 and the open gangway concept not applied until the R-62/62A and R-68/68A-class fleets are ready for replacement.)*

Littering Fine Doubled

As part of its "Keep it Clean" campaign, NYCT has doubled the fine for littering in the subways to $100 effective September 13 in an effort to combat the issue of train delays stemming from trash-fed track fires and debris on the tracks as well as flooding caused by storm drains becoming clogged with litter. In 2016, around 700 track fires occurred on the subway system.

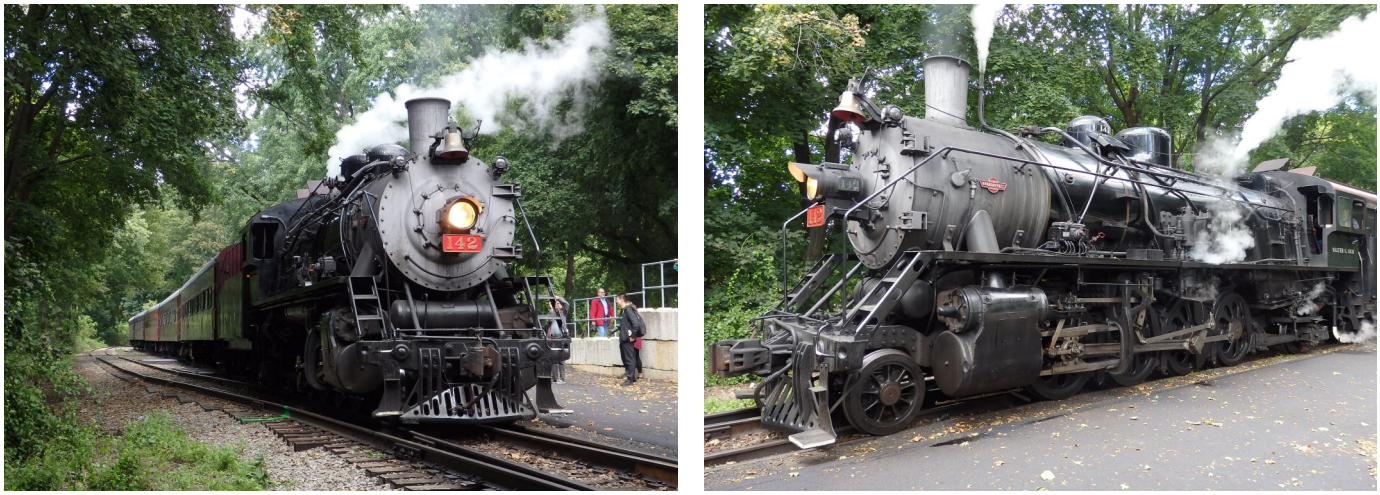
ERA PHILLIPSBURG, NEW JERSEY TRIP
by Ronald Yee
(Photographs by the author)

The Electric Railroaders' Association operated a day trip to Phillipsburg, New Jersey on September 9 to ride a steam locomotive-hauled excursion train on the Delaware River Railway, visit the historic train station at Phillipsburg (now undergoing a restoration), and ride a Public Service trolley car that once operated in Newark (that is also being restored). The ERA group of over 30 traveled there on a Coach Tours bus out of Eighth Avenue and W. 40th Street in Manhattan at 8:30 AM, arriving in Phillipsburg 90 minutes later. There was time to offer the group 20 minutes to view, walk over, and photograph the city's "Free Bridge" linking downtown Phillipsburg with Easton, Pennsylvania, albeit with a 3-ton weight limit due to its design and age (built in 1895).

Just after the ERA group arrived, a decently long Norfolk Southern local freight train, led by now-classic SD-40-2 diesel-electric locomotive 3489, trundled through town. affording the group a good photo opportunity in bright sunshine. The ERA group was then bused to the Delaware River Railway's depot and boarded the 11 AM departure of its excursion train for the 1 hour 15 minute ride southward toward Carpentersville and back over the tracks of the Belvedere & Delaware River Railway Company, operated by the New York, Susquehanna & Western Technical and Historical Society. The locomotive is a 2-8-2 Mikado hand-fired steam locomotive built in 1989 by the Tangshan Locomotive Works in China. Originally built for the Valley Railroad in Essex, Connecticut, it was sold to NYS&W in 1992 and placed in storage until 2004 when it was restored to service hauling excursion trains for the Delaware River Railroad. The train operated locomotive south to Carpentersville and then operated with the engine pushing the train back to Phillipsburg as a reverse move, requiring several stop and protect actions by the crew at all roadway grade crossings. The train operated around 25 mph southward and 15 mph northward.

Afterward, the group photographed the train's 12:30 PM departure going south before re-boarding the bus for a lunch at the Clinton Station Diner, featuring the *Blue Comet* open-end heavyweight observation car in which ERA reserved space. Another treat was a restaurant customer's classic Buick Riviera "boat tail" sport coupe (1972?) in the parking lot.

After lunch, the group returned to Phillipsburg and visited the Phillipsburg Railroad Historians Museum, a former railroad station that is being restored to its turn of the century appearance. Sporting a new roof, restored exterior brickwork, and re-plastered interior walls, the building is now undergoing a restoration effort inside and will eventually reach the lower levels via the stairwell that once led to the station platforms trackside. Afterward, the group was taken a quarter-mile east to the North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society's trolley barn housing some work locomotives and equipment and its star attraction, Public Service Car 2651, which once plied the streets of Newark. This car is in the midst of a major restoration effort including clear glass windows in the clerestory roof and wood work on interior seat benches, walls, and surfaces, etc. It is hoped that the entire project can be finished within just a few short years. The group was given a ride over the 100 feet of track outside of the barn. Power to the car's traction motors is provided by a generator and long extension wires linking it to the car. While there, another Norfolk Southern freight train presented itself for photography and passed by on the adjacent mainline, led by rebuilt locomotive D-9-30C 8817.



Delaware River Railroad Tangshan-built 2-8-2 steam locomotive 142 at Phillipsburg. New Jersey.

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ERA Phillipsburg, New Jersey Trip

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Another view of Delaware River Railroad Tangshan-built 2-8-2 steam locomotive 142 at Phillipsburg. New Jersey.

Blue Comet **observation car at Clinton Station Diner.**

Newark Public Service Car 2651, North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society, Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

Public Service Car 2651 control stand and handbrake.

Newark Public Service Car 2651 interior.

North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society Shop interior.

SWITZERLAND IN THE LATE SUMMER
by Jack May
(Photographs by the author)
(Continued from September, 2017 issue)

After I photographed the crossover as best I could I continued on a Route 9 car to the other end of the tunnel. Because of my location, I decided to ride and photograph two of the city's more unusual rail transit operations. Thus I continued on for five more stops to the Seilbahn Rigiblick station. Seilbahn in German means funicular and VBZ's two blue-and-white counterbalanced cars are propelled by cable over a steep single track at a 36-percent grade. The line is automated and contains a passing siding halfway up. Passengers desiring to alight at one of the three intermediate stops must press a corresponding button aboard their car. When this occurs the operation is slowed down substantially, as, for example, every time an upward car has to stop to unload, the downward one has to pause as well. I rode it and took a few photos.

Seven tram stops further down (including one change of cars) is Romerhof, the terminal of the Dolderbahn, a rack railway. Owned by a separate entity but operated by VBZ, the steep 0.8-mile-long meter-gauge line has four stops and runs on a fixed timetable that varies from a 10-minute headway in rush hours to as long as 20 during slower periods. Two bright red cars serve the single-track route, which has a passing siding. The line uses the Strub cog-wheel system and climbs grades of up to 18 percent. A one-way ride takes six minutes. I paused at a couple of way stations for photos and then returned to the foot of the line.

I continued from Romerhof on a Route 3 car to the Hbf. A total of 10 tram lines stop at this huge railroad station, which is served by three sets of streetcar platforms leading to different entrances. One is at the end of the Bahnhofstrasse, Zurich's most prestigious street, which hosts a large number of upscale shops and hotels. A dynamic underground shopping arcade connects it to the busy station complex.

I transferred there to Route 4 to cover the first phase of the "Tram Zurich West" project. A new two-mile extension to Altstetten was opened at the end of 2011 and this line was rerouted to serve it. Beyond Escher Wyss Platz the 4 formerly ran through a rather bleak industrial area to Werdholzli, but for now that trackage is covered by the newly created Route 17. The new extension is all on center reservation that alternates between sections of weed-like green grass and fine grey gravel. It passes some modern technology-oriented corporate-style buildings (similar to our Silicon Valley) and runs under a pedestrian overpass (which certainly encouraged me to stop for photos). (Since my visit the second phase of Tram Zurich West was approved, which means that still more new trackage will be constructed, connecting Route 8 from its current terminal at Hardplatz to the previous Route 4, thereby eliminating the need for the 17.)

The shadows were beginning to lengthen and I still had one more item on my agenda, so I had to hurry. Back at the Hbf, I boarded a Route 11 car and rode toward the end of the line at Rehalp in the hope of finding a location where the street was not in shadow — which I finally accomplished between the last two stops. This end of the line is shared with the Forchbahn, a 10-mile-long interurban that runs from the forecourt of SBB's Stadelhofen station to the outlying towns of Forch and Esslingen southeast of Zurich. Much like many North American interurbans this 1912-built line used (and continues to use) the tracks of an urban tramway to reach its ultimate destination in the heart of the city. Thus for the first two miles of their runs the red- and-cream interurban cars operate on the street interspersed with the blue-and-white cars of Route 11, but do not make local stops. Then at Rehalp they continue on their own right-of-way, which includes a subway tunnel under the village of Zumikon, built to eliminate a large amount of street running. I have ridden the line on several occasions, aboard typical interurban stock and then later a variant of Zurich's Tram 2000, which was introduced in 1976. In 2004 new Stadler 70-percent low-floor interurbans were added to the fleet, and now I had a chance to photograph them. The inner portion of the line (as far as Forch) operates on a 15-minute headway in base periods, which is increased in rush hours to include some express runs. This meant there was a great deal of action along this section of the 11 during the late afternoon.

I got back to the Hbf a few minutes after 17:30, our prescribed meeting time, and Clare was waiting. Because of my tardiness we missed two trains (the 17:34 and 17:36) and had to settle for the 18:00, a non-stop express to Basel, which arrived on time at 18:53. I could not help thinking of how user-friendly SBB is compared to Amtrak on the Northeast Corridor, where reservations have to be made and large penalties are extorted for missing a train.

We previously noticed an Asian café adjacent to the tram platforms at the Bahnhof and decided to have dinner there. We both enjoyed our day in Zurich, but I could not help thinking that if this had been my first visit to that city, I would have needed at least two more days.

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Switzerland in the Late Summer

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A view of a descending Seilbahn Rigiblick car from its opposite number as they both approach the Hardlaubstr midstation. The steep line was built in 1901 and its current rolling stock dates from the 1970s. It is a little more than a quarter-mile long, but I would not want to walk it.

The Dolderbahn was originally a funicular and was not converted to a rack railway until 1972. Its four-wheelers were built at that time by SLM (now Stadler) in Winterthur and contain Brown Boveri electrical equipment for operation from 600-volt d.c. overhead (the same as Zurich's streetcars). The left view is just beyond the Waldhaus station near the outer end of the line, while the right photo shows an outbound car just leaving the Titlisstr station before reaching the line's passing siding.

The Polybahn is Zurich's other incline railway. It is located just across the Limmat River from the Hauptbahnhof, and although I took this photo a few days later during a layover between trains at the large station, it is probably more appropriate to include this view in this portion of my narrative. The short single-track line, which has a passing siding halfway along its route, is just over a tenth of a mile long. Built in 1889 and automated during a complete renovation in 1996, its name is derived from the university located at its upper end, Zurich Poly, or officially, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. The funicular is sponsored by UBS, the Union Bank of Switzerland, one of the world's largest financial institutions, which pays VBZ to operate it.

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Switzerland in the Late Summer

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A six-axle Tram 2000 and its matching Pony are shown traversing a portion of Zurich's newest tram extension from a pedestrian bridge over Pfingstweidstr near the Technopark stop of Route 4. Note that VBZ eschewed using its normal lush green vegetation for this center-of-the-road reservation. The right view is from the Hardbrucke, an elevated arterial road that carries motor traffic (and several VBZ bus and trolley-bus routes) over Limmatstr and the Limmat River. The stops for the rubber-tired lines are accessible by stairs and elevators from Escher-Wyss -Platz below, where Routes 4, 13, and 17 ply Limmatstr. The right view shows an outbound Cobra unit on Route 17. Route 4 cars turn left here and run under the elevated structure for a few blocks.

A VBZ Route 11 tram is shown running inbound on Forchstr just after having started its journey from Rehalp at the city limits. The Tram 2000 equipment will travel through Zurich's central area and then proceed due north to the Glattal Valley suburb of Auzelg, the location of my first photos of the day (as shown in last month's installment), making 33 stops along the way.

Two views of trains of the Forchbahn operating inbound on Forchstr between Rehalp and Friedhof Enzenbuhl. Cars of this suburban tramway from the villages of Forch and Esslingen access their inner terminal at SBB's Stadelhofen station via VBZ's Route 11. The left photo shows a three-car train of Tram 2000 units while the right features the new Stadler 70-percent low-floor cars. Note the track entering Forchstr from VBZ's Route 11's Rehalp loop in the right view.

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Around New York's Transit System

Train of Many Colors Operates

The New York Transit Museum operated its Train of Many Colors (TOMC), a vintage consist of former IRT subway cars over the 7 Flushing Line in conjunction with a vintage baseball-themed baseball game in Corona Park on August 19. New to the TOMC was 1963-vintage R-33S 9307, freshly restored to its 1964 World's Fair color scheme of powder blue, cream white, and black stripe trim. Two round stainless steel, red, and black "TA" plaques were found and attached in their original positions on the side behind the Operator's cab. The car's four number boards were restored to their original position near the car ends in the middle of the white strip down the length of the side of the car, under the Operator's cab window at each end, and a gray Identra coil hoop (a 1960s version of a train annunciator indicating the approach of a train at the next station stop and whether it was a local or an express) was attached on the original mount on the lead end of the car to give it an historically accurate appearance. 9307 was one of four R-33S work motors assigned to Corona Yard until April, when they were all deemed surplus and moved off the line to 207th Street Yard. Another car in that four-car set, 9310, was restored to its "Redbird" colors and its number boards, like 9307, were also moved back to their original position. Restored to service for this trip was R-17 6609, a car that had languished out of service on a Transit Museum track lead near Court Street for over ten years. That car was seen under restoration at 207th Street Shop during the Electric Railroaders' Association's August 5 tour. The 11-car TOMC consist was: N-9307/9587-6/9310/9011-0/9016-7/9206-7/6609-S and was deadheaded from 207th Street Yard to Corona Yard on Thursday evening, August 17, where member Ronald Yee was able to record video and still images as it passed through 61st Street-Woodside after 9 PM on Track M.

R-33S 9307 at 61st Street-Woodside.
Ronald Yee photograph

One Station Reopens...

NYCT reopened the 53rd Street R station on September 8, three weeks ahead of the scheduled 6 months allocated to this project. The first of 33 NYCT stations slated for renovation and renewal, this station has been re-fitted with new enhanced LED lighting, train service countdown clocks at all five station entrances, wi-fi connectivity, new digital informational displays with USB ports, glass barriers replacing barrier walls made of metal bars, and a reconfigured and upgraded fare control area with improved sight lines, street level canopies over two of the five station entrances, and a mosaic art display. However, not all riders are completely happy with the rehabilitated station. A new option, a leaning bar, designed to offer some small degree of support for persons leaning against the wall while waiting for their train to arrive, is proving quite unpopular with riders. MTA has responded that while the number of seat benches remain the same as before the rehab project, this new feature offers more riders an opportunity to partially rest their legs and is widely used elsewhere around the world's transit systems. The inability to in-

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Staten Island's 157-Year-Old Railroad

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also sold NYCT cars 500, 501, 503, 504, and 508, which were trailers. They never entered revenue service, but were stationed in various yards.

Car 500 was in Coney Island Yard and 508 was a Car Inspector's shed, also in Coney Island Yard. Car 501 was a paper bailer at an unknown location. Car 504, which was renumbered to 2925, was the Yardmaster's office in Fresh Pond Yard. Most cars were scrapped before August, 1961, but 501 was still on the January, 1957 roster and 2925 was scrapped July 10, 1957.

In 1958, Consolidated Edison Company built a coal-fired power house in Travis and Staten Island Rapid Transit extended the siding from Port Ivory (0.8 miles west of Arlington) to the power house. Unit coal trains were operated until they were replaced by barges. The Travis Branch was abandoned in 1990. The Arlington Yard and the right-of-way to St. George were abandoned in 1989.

Unfortunately, the April 5, 1962 fire in Clifton Shop damaged 7 cars. With only 48 cars, the company had difficulty maintaining adequate service. NYCT was willing to sell Staten Island Railway surplus B-Types, but the cars were never transferred because the company believed that they would not pass the FRA inspection.

(To be continued)