The Bulletin

New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

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The Bulletin

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MUNICIPAL OPERATION OF WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE TROLLEY CARS BEGAN 80 YEARS AGO

New York City's Department of Plant and Structures started operating the Williamsburg Bridge trolley cars on December 1, 1923 because of a dispute between the BMT and the city.

In 1920, the BRT notified Plant and Structures that the company would stop running trolley cars across the bridge if it had to pay tolls, about $60,000 per annum. The local bridge service was profitable, but the city got the profits while the through service operated at a loss. The city was able to obtain a judgment of $127,661, but it could not find any assets to levy upon. By not paying tolls for three years, the company diverted $231,317 in tolls. It carried 40,000 passengers a day on tracks it did not own and occupied the Delancey Street underground terminal, which was city property, and paid nothing for the privilege.

The city was determined to operate trolley cars on the bridge. An October 14, 1923 newspaper article revealed that the city had 40 trolley cars valued at $350,000 and two 1,000-kilowatt rotary converters valued at $150,000. The fare would be three tickets for a nickel. When the city tried to test its trolley cars at night, the BMT shut off the power.

A November 22 announcement stated that the city would start operating its cars on December 1. The BMT decided to discontinue its bridge service because it was not safe or practicable for both to operate. The company was unhappy that it was forced to discontinue bridge service and it displayed posters titled, "Interference with Public Service" in Brooklyn trolley cars.

On November 26, 1923, Grover Whalen, the Department of Plant and Structures Commissioner, demanded that the Transit Commission force the BMT to run the cars on the bridge. The commission replied that it has no power because the BMT did not have a franchise to operate the cars on the bridge. They operated under permits from the Department of Bridges and its successor, the Department of Plant and Structures. These permits expired June 1, 1920 and were not renewed. Under the charter, only Whalen could intervene.

The BMT shut off the power when the cars stopped running at 2 AM December 1, 1923, after which the cables were cut and spliced to the cables at the city's substation under the Brooklyn side of the bridge.

Rides were free and city officials rode the first city car, operated by Whalen, at 3:45 AM Saturday, December 1. When the car returned to Brooklyn, he was the ticket seller. Whalen claimed that 50 cars were in service and that 150 cars per hour were operated in the rush hour. The official tally revealed that there were only 47 cars in service and only 130 cars per hour were operated in the rush hour. Four days later, the bridge cars carried a 200% overload while the total traffic fell by 13,000 passengers. From 5 to 8 PM Monday, December 3, cars were overloaded 224%, because the smaller cars held half as many

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FOURTH AVENUE SUBWAY
by Bernard Linder

CORPORATE HISTORY

June 22, 1915	New York Consolidated Railroad Company (a Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company subsidiary)
June 7, 1923	New York Rapid Transit Corporation (a Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit Company subsidiary)
June 1, 1940	Board of Transportation of the City of New York
June 15, 1953	New York City Transit Authority

OPENING DATES

June 15, 1915	A one-car test train operated in the new Fourth Avenue Subway. The President of the BRT and officials rode this train, which departed from Sixth Avenue (Bay Ridge) at 11:45 AM and operated via the Manhattan Bridge, arriving at Chambers Street at 1:20 PM and leaving four minutes later. A two-car test train with the BRT's President and Public Service Commission officials departed from Chambers Street at 3:28 PM the same day
June 22, 1915	Passenger trains started operating in the new Fourth Avenue Subway. The first train departed from Coney Island at 12 noon, operating via the Sea Beach Line, Fourth Avenue Subway local tracks, and the south side of the Manhattan Bridge. Trains terminated at Chambers Street because the Broadway Subway was under construction
January 15, 1916	Extended to 86th Street. Express tracks north of 59th Street were placed in service. A special train with officials departed from Chambers Street at 2:10 PM. Regular service began with the 3 PM train from Chambers Street operating via the southerly Manhattan Bridge "H" tracks and Fourth Avenue local tracks to 86th Street. There was a pageant at Bay Ridge High School and a dinner at the Bay Ridge Club
May 7, 1920	Commissioner Delaney and staff opened the 60th Street Tunnel with girls singing and marching via the tunnel between Queens and Manhattan
August 1, 1920	At 2 AM, trains were rerouted via the Montague Street Tunnel, Broadway Subway, and 60th Street Tunnel to Queensboro Plaza
June 11, 1924	Lawrence Street station was opened at 12:30 PM. A special train took the committee to Prospect Park, then to DeKalb Avenue, where they boarded a regular train
October 31, 1925	Extended to 95th Street at 2 PM
July 16, 1956	The Myrtle Avenue station was closed

TRANSFER PRIVILEGES

Under the Dual Contracts, the BRT was required to issue transfers from the Fourth Avenue Subway to southbound Fifth Avenue and Third Avenue trolley cars at 86th Street. We know that the BRT started issuing Fifth Avenue trolley transfers on July 25, 1916, but we do not know when the company started issuing Third Avenue transfers. When the BRT abrogated most transfer privileges between the trolley cars and the elevated lines at 1 AM October 16, 1919, it continued issuing transfers between the subway and the trolley at 86th Street. This unusual transfer privilege was finally discontinued on April 1, 1948.

When the rapid transit fare rose to ten cents and the surface lines fare was increased to seven cents on July 1, 1948, the Board of Transportation tried to pacify the riders by issuing two-cent transfers valid between rapid transit and surface lines. Vending machines which sold small theater-type tickets were installed in stations and on trolley cars and buses. This privilege was discontinued on July 1, 1952 to help reduce the deficit.

Transfer privileges between the subway and buses went into effect again on July 4, 1997. Passengers using MetroCards were allowed to use their cards again on intersecting bus or subway lines within two hours without paying an additional fare.

THE FIRST D-TYPES

On August 31, 1925, cars 6000-6003 were placed in service on the Fourth Avenue Local because the BMT needed additional cars when the line was extended to 95th Street on October 31, 1925. The next unit, 6004, was delivered on January 27, 1927. Additional D-Types delivered in 1927 and 1928 provided full service on the Fourth Avenue Local and occasional service on the Brighton Local until they were transferred to

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Fourth Avenue Subway

(Continued from page 2)

the Sea Beach Line on September 22, 1928. They were never seen again on the Fourth Avenue Local.

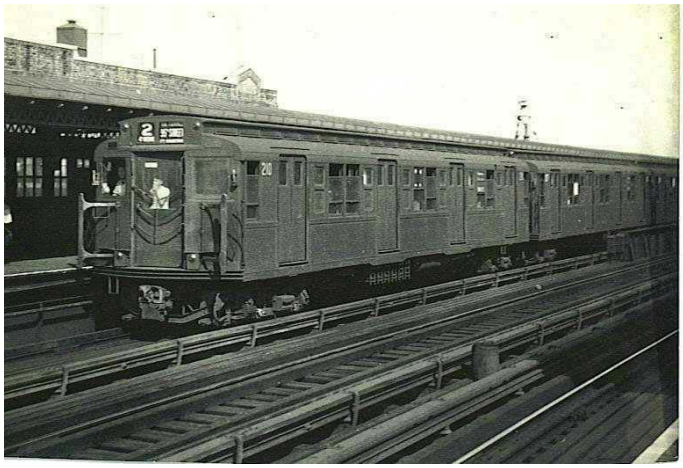
R-1 TO R-9 CARS

When through service started operating from Brooklyn and Manhattan to Astoria on October 17, 1949, R-1 cars 100-102 and 104-200 were transferred from the IND to the Fourth Avenue Local. Starting February 14, 1951, R-1 cars 201-220 were transferred to this line. From July 24 to July 27, 1953, 221-241 were also transferred. All cars were returned to the IND between October 9, 1954 and June 23, 1955.

Two years later, the following R-9 cars were in service on this line:

CARS	TRANSFERRED TO BMT
1793-1802	September 5, 1956
1773-1792	September 10-12, 1956
1768-1772	October 1, 1956
1753-1767	December 19, 1956
1748-1752	October 18, 1957

The cars were returned to the IND between September 2 and September 15, 1958.



R-1 210 leads a train on the Astoria Line.
Bernard Linder collection

A train of R-1 cars at Queensboro Plaza, signed "Astoria via Tunnel."
Bernard Linder collection

R-1s on the Astoria Line, location unknown.
Bernard Linder collection

Williamsburg Bridge Cars

(Continued from page 1)

passengers as the big BMT cars.

PASSENGER TRAFFIC STATISTICS—MUNICIPAL OPERATION

	NUMBER OF PASSENGERS	REVENUE
First 6 hours	20,537	N.A.
First 24 hours	112,956	$2,255.84
First 44 hours	186,721	$4,099.77

Municipal operation was inconvenient. Passengers were formerly able to take a one-seat ride for several miles beyond Bridge Plaza and transfer to other lines. Under municipal operation, transfers were no longer issued and everybody had to change cars at Bridge Plaza. Many passengers who formerly rode BMT trolley cars across the bridge took the train or Third Avenue trolley cars instead. Trains were overcrowded in non-rush hours; there were 2,000-2,500 more passengers on the Broadway "L."

CAR ROSTER

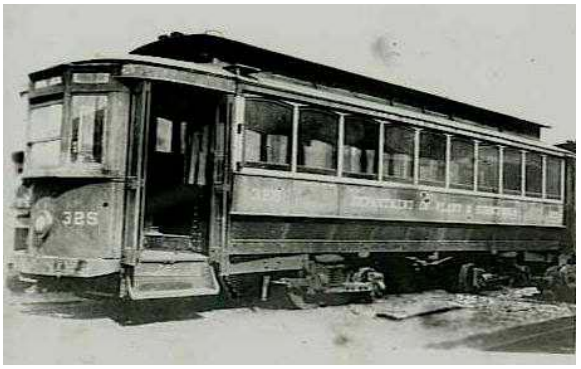
We were able to compile the following incomplete roster:

CAR NUMBERS	MANUFACTURER	YEAR BUILT	TYPE
201-233	Brill	1921	7-window Birney
301-340	Brill	1898	10-window box car

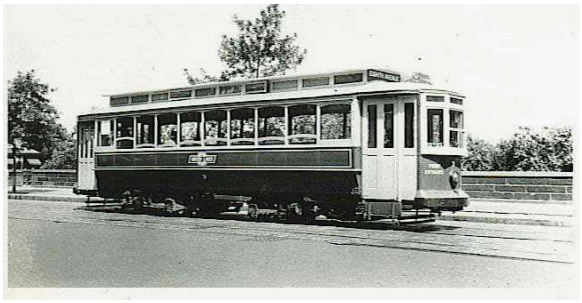
The Staten Island Midland history in the December, 1959 issue of Electric Railroads supplied information about the 300-series cars. On June 16, 1921, 301-340, which were bought from the Second Avenue Railroad Company, arrived in Staten Island and were placed in service on lines operated by Plant and Structures. Cars 327-340 were transferred to the Williamsburg Bridge Line on December 1, 1923. During the intervening years, cars were transferred frequently between Brooklyn and Staten Island. In our album, we found a picture of 325 on the bridge local. The front ends of these cars were different from the front ends of most 10-window box cars, but were similar to the front ends of Third Avenue Railway's convertibles, with the destination signs in the middle.

On February 15, 1931, municipal operation was discontinued and the BMT resumed operating the Nostrand Avenue, Ralph-Rockaway Avenues, Reid Avenue, and Tompkins Avenue cars across the bridge. On December 1, 1923, Broadway, Franklin Avenue, Grand Street, Sumner Avenue, and Wilson Avenue cars ceased operating across the bridge. This service was never resumed.

Department of Plant and Structures 7-window Birney 208 on the Williamsburg Bridge Line.
Bernard Linder collection



Department of Plant and Structures 10-window box car 325.
Bernard Linder collection



New York Railways 3 (ex-Department of Plant and Structures 317 for Williamsburg Bridge Line) at W. 60th Street and Central Park West.
Bernard Linder collection

Around New York's Transit System

(Continued from page 16)

The September, 2003 issue of NYC Transit's ***Running Times*** newsletter explains that SMEE is an acronym for Self-lapping Mechanical Electrical Equipment, the control group and braking systems on the R-10 to R-68A cars (except the R-44 and R-46s). This technology, which featured blended air and dynamic brakes, was perfected and first installed in the Brooklyn PCC cars that were placed in service in 1936.

NYC Transit's Rehabilitation Program

While surfing the Internet, we found a list of proposed new contracts. The following are of interest to our readers:

STATION REHABILITATION: NYC Transit would like to restore three 99-year-old stations — Simpson Street, Jackson Avenue, and Prospect Avenue. The work will maintain the stations' historic elements and comply with State Historic Preservation Office guidelines. The entire mezzanine (floors, walls, leaders, and gutters) will be replaced and wood canopies will be installed over the platforms and stairways. The 174th Street station, which was closed for rehabilitation for several months, was scheduled to reopen on November 24.

REPLACE GAP FILLERS, UNION SQUARE STATION: This contract provides for the replacement of five gap fillers at the Union Square station, Lexington Avenue Line. New platform edge warning strips will be installed. To conform with ADA requirements, the gap between the platform edge and the car door sill will be reduced to less than 2 inches vertically and 4 inches horizontally.

PAINT WEST END STRUCTURE: From Bent 365 south of 24th Avenue to Bent 535 adjacent to Stillwell Avenue, including Coney Island Creek Bridge and Coney Island Yard leads.

REPLACE ESCALATORS—34TH STREET-SIXTH AVENUE STATION: NYC Transit expects to replace 12 escalators in the 34th Street-Sixth Avenue station with heavy-duty escalators, 24 to 40 inches wide, featuring up and down options. The contractor will remove four additional escalators and replace them with two new stairways. Additional lighting will be installed above the escalators.

INSTALL SIGNAL EQUIPMENT—FLUSHING LINE: Signal equipment will be placed in service for rehabilitating the interlocking areas at Queensboro Plaza, 33rd Street, and 74th Street. Relay rooms will be constructed.

Correction

In last month's issue, we provided the numbers of the cars that had tennis ball decals affixed for the U.S. Open. However, we made two errors. Cars 9602 and 9697, not 9601 and 9691, had the decals. We thank member Benjamin W. Schaeffer, who provided the original information, for following up.

KENT AVENUE POWER HOUSE
by Thomas J. Blalock

The Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company (eventually the BMT) received the power necessary for its 600-volt d.c. third rail operation from an organization known as the "Transit Development Company."

In 1909, this company completed a new power house in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, on Wallabout Channel. The new "Williamsburg" power house was built immediately south of the 1893 "Eastern District" power house. The latter was bounded by Division Avenue on the north and Kent Avenue on the east.

The Eastern District power house contained seven 600-volt d.c. generators, driven by steam engines and having a total capacity of 11,900 kilowatts. Another earlier power house (the "Central District") was located near the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, at Third Avenue and Second Street. It contained two 600-volt d.c. generators as well as six 11,000-volt, three-phase, 25-cycle alternating current generators. The latter distributed high voltage a.c. to rotary converter substations, which provided 600-volt d.c. third rail power. The total generating capacity of this station was 25,000 kilowatts.

The Williamsburg Power House eventually became known simply as the "Kent Avenue" power station, especially after 1918 when the older "Eastern" station was abandoned.

In 1909, the Kent Avenue Power House contained eight Westinghouse steam turbine-driven 11,000-volt, three-phase, 25-cycle generators with a total capacity of 70,000 kilowatts. Soon after this, however, a 20,000-kilowatt turbine unit was added, and, in 1915, one of the original (7,500-kilowatt) turbine units was replaced with a 30,000-kilowatt unit.

Then, in 1918, an "annex" was built (presumably on the site of the former "Eastern" station). This addition contained two 35,000-kilowatt turbine units. A second enlargement of the station, in 1936, added two 18,750-kilowatt units. Thus, the total generating capacity of the station was then 220,000 kilowatts.

In 1959, the operation of the Kent Avenue Power House was taken over by the Consolidated Edison Company. By this time, two high voltage (25-cycle) tie lines had been installed between Kent Avenue and a generating station located on E. 14th Street in Manhattan. This was done so as to improve the reliability of the BMT power system in recognition of the fact that the equipment at Kent Avenue was aging. By 1981, Kent Avenue was no longer generating electric power. The building still stands today, but is vacant.

TECH TALK
by Jeffrey Erlitz

Contract S-32309-R saw major progress last month. The new interlocking at Jackson Avenue on the Lenox Avenue-White Plains Road Line was placed in service in three phases between November 8 and November 24. The new switches for this interlocking were installed and some of the existing switches were relocated back in February (see track diagram below). On the first weekend (November 8-9) the signals on southbound local Track 2 were placed in service. During the week of November 10 and through the following weekend (November 15-16) the signals on middle Track M, as well as the switches between Tracks 2 and M, were placed in service. Lastly, the signals and switches on northbound Track 3 were placed in service over the weekend of November 22-23. This interlocking is now configured to provide moves from all tracks to all tracks, something that could not be done with the track arrangement at the previous Brook Avenue Interlocking. With this work done, there is no longer a need for the interlocking at Freeman Street and this plant will be removed from service in December.

Brook Avenue had its interlocking machine replaced in the 1970s. As I understand it, a fire damaged or destroyed the older 23-lever US&S Model 14 machine. Though not part of the original contract, a new relay room was built at Brook Avenue as additional work under the Jerome Avenue Line signal contract, S-160. WABCO (US&S Division) equipped this room and it included a Style UR all-relay Maintainer's control panel for local control of the interlocking. The Master Tower at 149th Street-Grand Concourse remotely controlled it, like 138th Street and 167th Street Interlockings. The old tower, which was located on the south side of the structure, was subsequently torn down. The new interlocking, like the rest of the lower White Plains Road Line, is furnished with Alstom signal equipment and a Mauell Maintainer's control panel.

Still to be done on this contract are the automatic signals between Jackson Avenue and Freeman Street and the portion of line between Jackson Avenue and 142nd Street Junction in Manhattan.

Below is a view of the US&S Model 14 interlocking machine at Freeman Street taken earlier this year.

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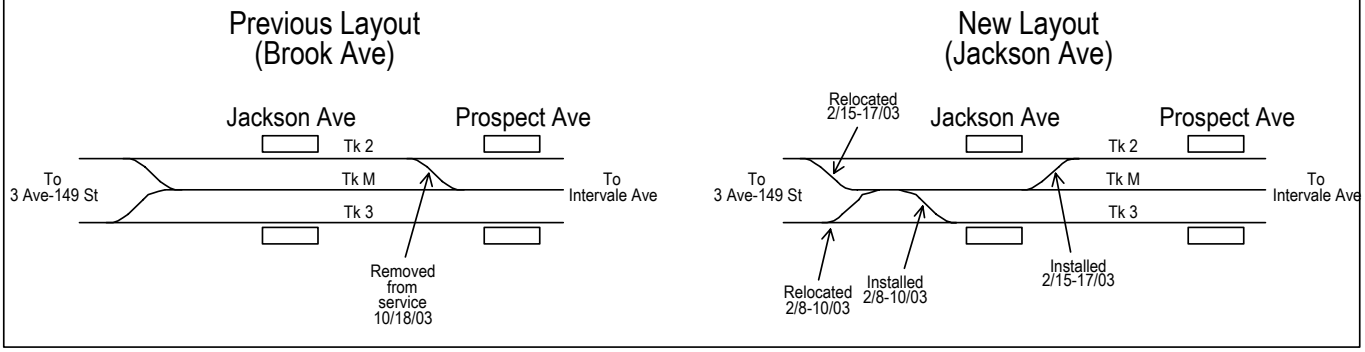
Brook Ave/Jackson Ave Interlockings
IRT Lenox Ave-White Plains Road Line



Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Nearly six months into the new higher fare structure, the MTA announced that by January, 2005, it would need additional revenues (see November issue). The early word is that the $2 base subway fare would remain untouched, but the cost of purchasing (discounted) *MetroCard*s, which the majority of bus and subway riders use, would increase. The deficit for 2005 was stated as $840 million, plus another $2.8 billion in 2005. A commentary in the October 30 edition of ***amny***, a free newspaper that began distribution during October, reported that the main reason that the MTA is in a fiscal crunch is because since George Pataki has been Governor state funding for public transit has been steadily cut. The MTA has had to rely on borrowing money, and as of now it owes $17 billion, which will be paid back over the next 30 years. 14% of the cost of each ride goes towards debt repayment. In closing, the columnist wrote that it would be up to the Governor and the Legislature to come up with new funding.

MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

Homeward-bound Harlem Line riders were delayed for what turned out to be a highly unusual reason. On October 30, Train #375 (6:19 Grand Central Terminal/Mount Vernon West) was halted at Fordham Road while emergency response personnel worked to free the arm of a passenger from a toilet. It seems that the passenger had dropped his cell phone into the toilet of car 8371, and he was unable to get himself free. Even assistance at Harlem-125th Street to no avail. Three sets of tools, including the "jaws-of-life," had to be used to free the arm of the 41-year-old male passenger and the toilet compartment was destroyed. Metro-North intimated that it might go after the individual for compensation, because the rebuilding could run into the thousands of dollars. Trains were rerouted around the stopped train, and passengers who missed their bypassed stations had to go to Mount Vernon West and ride back. His cell phone was not recovered.

A special timetable was once again issued for the New York City Marathon®, which was held on November 2. The train service was as has been provided previously.

Cortlandt, which opened on June 30, 1996, replacing the Crugers and Montrose stations, is a victim of its own success. With its 795-space parking lot at capacity, and permits sold out, there is a waiting list. To help alleviate this situation, a contract has been awarded to the Allright Corporation, manager of this and other Metro-North lots, to reconfigure the lot. By the end of this month, there will be an additional 90 spaces. It is anticipated that by the year 2013, there would be a shortfall of over 1,100 spaces.

The 90th birthday of Grand Central Terminal was celebrated in late October with a five-day event held in Vanderbilt Hall. A 1978 U.S. Supreme Court ruling granted the building landmark status, and since the 1990s the building has been undergoing a thorough renovation.

It has been a while since I have updated you on the Mid-Harlem Third Track project. The contractor has completed work on one set of retaining walls and installed precast concrete columns for another retaining wall. Work continues on testing new d.c. switchgear at Bronxville Substation B-15, as well as electrical work at Mount Vernon Substation B-13. The Power Department has completed installation of third rail for the new Track 2 between the Bronxville station and CP 116. Protection boards and contact rail power bonds were in the process of being of being installed.

Member Rodney Swain corrected his own report in the October ***Bulletin*** regarding the new catenary system that is being installed along the Connecticut portion of the New Haven Line. He wrote that while riding to the October Division meeting, from the front of the train he saw that between Port Chester and Stamford, crews are installing a weight-loaded tension system that is similar to the one installed in New York State. The system he described, wire pulled to a fixed tension based on the temperature at the time, was used when the new catenary was installed on the New Canaan Branch several years ago. He does not know why they were not consistent.

In early October, a ten-year-long project to transfer control of all towers along the New Haven Line was completed. Now, all switches and signals are controlled from 347 Madison Avenue. Thanks to member David A. Cohen for sending the report from ***The New Haven Register***.

"Open House" at Croton-Harmon, which was held on October 18, had to be the best-attended Open House ever. The lines for the shuttle buses extended to the south end of the station parking lot and turned north.

One thing that many of us did not know is that while President Bush was in New York City for the United Nations General Assembly in September, a special "escape train" was positioned on tracks below the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, ready to carry him away quickly in the event of a terrorist attack. There is a platform that is accessible from inside the hotel, next to its parking garage. It was known that President Franklin D. Roosevelt frequently used this method when he visited New York City. Thanks to the ***Delaware Valley Rail Passenger***, a publication of DVARP, for this report from ***The New York Post***.

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Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 7)

In the November ***Bulletin*** I reported that the location of the Highbridge employee stop was at MP 6.6. According to the Metro-North employee timetable it is MP 6.7. The station is just 82 feet long!

MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

Shipment of two remanufactured F-40 locomotives has been delayed, but they were expected to be delivered by the end of this month.

Metro-North held a groundbreaking ceremony in Nanuet during September for a new parking lot that can accommodate 225 cars. Parking capacity is also being increased by 310 spaces at two parking lots at Pearl River. With Secaucus Transfer set to open this month on weekdays, the railroad is anticipating increased ridership. On the Port Jervis Line, where ridership has grown by 55% in the past ten years and is expected to increase by a similar amount over the next few years, additional parking has already been added at Tuxedo. Work is underway at Harriman, Salisbury Mills-Cornwall, Campbell Hall, Otisville, and Port Jervis. When complete, the Pascack Valley Line will have 1,255 spaces and the Port Jervis Line 2,310, for a total of 3,565. While this sounds like a lot, railroad officials believe that there will still be a shortfall in Orange County, and they are looking at other options.

Connecticut Department of Transportation

CDOT issued a Shore Line East timetable, which went into effect on October 27. There are a few minor changes, a new graphic style, and Train #1674, which had been a "Bus" under the April 28, 2003 schedules, appears as a train. Thanks to members David A. Cohen and Bob Underwood, who sent copies.

MTA Long Island Rail Road

The new timetables that were issued as of October 27 will remain in effect through January 4, 2004 and return some services that were cut due to various construction projects that have been completed. These include installation of concrete ties (Port Jefferson), drainage improvement (Port Washington), and switch work (Westbury). After November 14, tie and surfacing work moved to between Valley Stream and Rockville Centre. Over the weekend of November 8-9, buses substituted for trains between Babylon and Speonk to enable work to be performed on the Connetquot River Bridge. The following weekend (November 15-16), there was signal replacement work between Rockville Centre and Wantagh, with service being provided by shuttle trains/buses. All timetables read "Happy Thanksgiving" atop a cornucopia and had a note that special schedules would be in effect on November 28 and December 26.

An early morning incident involving a New York & Atlantic Railroad freight train disrupted the morning commute for Ronkonkoma riders on November 4. Two cars of a 35-car train knocked down a 20-foot signal bridge near Deer Park. Service was out for more than 11 hours. Eastbound service was resumed in the mid-afternoon, and westbound in time for Wednesday morning's trip to work. Passengers were directed to use other Long Island rail lines, although there was some limited bus service.

NJ Transit

NJ Transit suffered its third derailment since July, when at about 7:15 AM October 31, two cars of Train #3818 (6:30 AM Trenton/New York Penn Station) left the rails as it was changing tracks ¼ mile south of Rahway. None of the 700 passengers aboard were injured. The other eight cars were cut from the derailed cars and returned to the Metropark station, where passengers were able to board other trains. Riders were delayed about 85 minutes. Derailment number one occurred on July 14, near the Portal Draw, and the other on October 9, when a Dover/New York Penn Station train derailed as it was entering Penn Station.

The new timetables that were issued on October 26 contained an entirely new cover style, with one or two symbols for each line. These symbols recognize "something" about each line. Atlantic City (Lighthouse), Main/Bergen (Waterwheel and Cattails), Montclair/Boonton (Eastern Goldfinch), Morris & Essex (Drum and a racing horse), Northeast Corridor (Dome of Capitol), North Jersey Coast (Sailboat), Pascack Valley (Pine tree), and Raritan Valley (partial Statue of Liberty). Line colors were retained. With these timetables, NJ Transit has changed the format, wherein the weekday service is now presented on one side, and the weekend service is on the other. Metro-North uses this style.

Several construction contracts were recently awarded. At Bay Head Yard, J.H. Reid, under a $10.823 million contract, will construct a 950-foot pedestal inspection pit, which is large enough to accommodate an 8-car train, plus miscellaneous yard improvements. This track will permit compliance with current FRA regulations regarding inspection and maintenance of braking systems. Along NJ Transit's rail lines, are 602 undergrade and 108 overgrade bridges. A contract was awarded to three firms to perform inspections at 153 of these bridges. This work is done on a recurring cycle. HX Draw, over which Bergen County and Pascack Valley Line trains run, was built in 1912, and the substructure is in need of repair. IEW Construction will rehabilitate this bridge, as well as two bridges in Plainfield on the Raritan Valley Line. These contracts were valued at $1.841 million and $5.215 million, respectively.

NJ-ARP representatives met with NJ Transit Executive Director George Warrington and his staff on September 15. What came out of the meeting was published in the October issue of NJ-ARP's ***Newsletter Report***. In summary, NJ Transit is interested in through running service at New York Penn Station, and were exploring possibility that with SEPTA. (*Ed. This will become significant in*

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Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 8)

the next few years when NJ Transit takes over responsibility for Amtrak's Clockers*, which now originate in Philadelphia*.) One sore point with NJ-ARP and many others is NJ Transit's policy of using push/pull trains rather than EMUs on its electrified track. Mr. Warrington told NJ-ARP that a "moderate" overhaul was planned for the Arrow IIIs very soon, and that there are plans for a more thorough overhaul. Then, on September 24, George Warrington addressed Morris County Freeholders and told them that he was in favor of electrification west of Montclair to Dover, and perhaps west of Dover, so that service could be upgraded and transfers eliminated. There is even interest restoring service on the Lackawanna Cut-off. On the same day, Art Silber, Chief of NJ Transit's Capital Planning, told planners and public officials in Burlington, Mercer, Hunterdon, and Middlesex Counties that the agency supported numerous rail projects including M-O-M (Middlesex-Ocean-Monmouth) rail and extension of SNJLRT to the State Capital in Trenton. Other NJ Transit officials hinted that when the opening date for SNJLRT is announced, at the same time its new appellation would be made public.

In the November 2 edition of the (Newark) ***Star-Ledger***, reporter Joe Malinconico wrote about passengers' reluctance to occupy the "dreaded" middle seat. In spite of NJ Transit's efforts to publicize all of the seating that has been added recently, the reporter found standees aboard many trains, and empty middle seats. Some of the standing passengers had reasons why they would not or could not sit there, such as not wanting to be jammed in, other commuters not wanting to let you in, and a perceived "smaller" seat. In reality, using the Comet Vs as an example, on the two-seat side, each seat is 33 inches wide, and on the three-seat side, 53 inches wide. This equates to 16.5 inches per seat vs. 17.6 inches, respectively. NJ Transit expects its bi-level cars to start entering service in 2005, and they will only have 2x2 seating.

On October 22, state Superior Court Judge Thomas P. Olivieri ruled that NJ Transit must hold one public hearing in order to abandon the portion of the Boonton Line that was "abandoned" on September 27, 2002. This action was brought by NY and Greenwood Lake President Jim Wilson, who has been unsuccessful in his attempts to operate passenger service between Benson Street (Glen Ridge), Arlington (Kearny), Rowe Street (Bloomfield), and Hoboken.

NJ Transit's light rail lines also got new timetables, October 4 for the Newark City Subway and November 15 for HBLRT's extension to 22nd Street in Bayonne. A quick check of the Newark City Subway timetable found that Sunday service, which had been operating on a 17-minute headway, is now every 20 minutes.

The Southern New Jersey LRT will be named the River Line, a name that "is reflective" of the towns along the Delaware River the light rail system will serve. Revenue service is set to begin on February 15, 2004. But, beginning January 4, simulated passenger service will be operated every 30 minutes (the off-peak headway), with the goal of reducing headways to 15 minutes (the planned peak hour headway).

Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation

On October 22, PATH began operating test trains between Exchange Place and the temporary World Trade Center station, which is at the same location as existed on 9/11. These test runs were being conducted in order to check out power, clearances, signals, and communications. Car 800 was given the honor of leading the first train, while 843 brought up the rear. New York Governor George Pataki announced on October 30 that service would resume to the World Trade Center station on Sunday, November 23. It was also on a Sunday, June 29, that Exchange Place was re-opened. The station did in fact open on the 23rd, with the last trainset to make it out of the station on 9/11 becoming the ceremonial first PATH train back into lower Manhattan.

The concourse of the temporary World Trade Center station on opening day, November 23, 2003.
John Pappas photograph

Shortly before opening day, Newsradio880 reported that the World Trade Center station would be the first PATH station to accept *MetroCard*s, and by the middle of 2004 all stations are to be capable of accepting them.

Santiago Calatrava, a noted Spanish architect, has been selected to design the new transit hub at the World Trade Center. According to ***The New York Times***. Mr. Calatrava, who lives in Manhattan part of the time, described the structure as one that would have "the most universal character" of any at the site. There were few details provided, but what is known is that there would be four 10-car platforms in the new

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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station. The original station had five 10-car tracks. He also said that he sometimes walks through Grand Central Terminal just for the pleasure of it, and that he would think "large," such as on the scale of Grand Central or the original Pennsylvania Station. Some of Calatrava's previous creations are the Orient Station in Lisbon and the train station at Satolas Airport in Lyon, France.

Amtrak

A new record for carrying passengers was set for FY 2002, when 23.5 million passengers rode Amtrak. This exceeded by 2.7% the total for FY 2001, which was 23.4 million.

The U.S. Senate approved legislation that would provide Amtrak with $1.34 billion for FY 2004. Unfortunately, the House of Representative's version of the bill is for $900 million. The two versions were slated to go to a conference committee to be settled. The Bush Administration favors the lower amount. If that occurs, President David Gunn has stated that it would force a shutdown of the nation's rail system.

When the clocks reverted to Standard Time on October 26, new timetables were issued but instead of two separate booklets for the National (Form T-2) and Northeast Corridor (Form T-3), Amtrak returned to producing a SYSTEM (Form T-1) timetable. System timetables were last issued for October 25, 1992-April 3, 1993. Within its 128 pages are the usual train schedules, plus three pages of sample fares, explanations of various discounts that are available, and tables that describe the peak and off-peak periods. On page 1, there is a "Welcome Aboard" letter from Amtrak President & CEO David L. Gunn.

Museums

A three-way trade among the Branford, Electric City, and National Capital Trolley Museums was completed in October. This deal involved Branford acquiring Philadelphia Suburban (Red Arrow) center door car 75. ***Tripper*** Editor (and Division member) Jeff Hakner wrote that further details would appear in the November issue of that newsletter, and they did.

Since June 28, the Seashore Trolley Museum has been operating one of its own cars, former New Orleans Public Service 966, in Lowell, Massachusetts. According to ***The Dispatch***, which is published by STM, 966 is the first "original generation" streetcar to operate in that city. Lowell's cars are replicas, built by GOMACO in 1983 and 1987. The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority assisted in this venture by loaning a pair of Brill 76E-1 trucks, equipped with wide, railroad profile wheels, which were used by cars on the Riverfront Line before that line was converted to broad gauge.

Miscellaneous

On September 30, at the eleventh hour, President Bush approved a bill that extended TEA-21's authorizarion through February 29, 2004. Under this legislation, the DOT can continue to distribute federal transit and highway funds. Hopefully before the expiration date, the Congress will have approved a full-six year bill. Each house of Congress has its own six-year version of this bill, but there are differences. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has proposed spending $375 billion, the Senate $311.5 billion, and President Bush $247 billion.

Over the next few years, Bombardier plans to close at least six of its European train factories, according to an article in the ***South Florida Sun-Sentinel***. Thanks to member Joe Gagne for the report.

2003 In Review

During the early first half of 2003 there were few additions to the nation's transit systems. However, the number of new services that came on line during the second half more than made up for it, as can be seen in the table below.

DATE	OPERATOR	CITY	LINE	NOTES
May 30	Miami Dade Transit	Miami	Palmetto Extension	One Station – 1.5 miles
June 22	BART	San Francisco	SFO Extension	Four Stations – 8.7 miles
June 24	Bi-State Transit	St. Louis	Scott AFB Extension	One Station – 3.5 miles
June 29	PATH	Jersey City	Exchange Place Re-opens	One Station
July 19	San Pedro Trolley	San Pedro	Port of Los Angeles	Four Stations – 1.5 miles
July 26	Los Angeles County MTA	Pasadena	Pasadena Gold Line	13 Stations – 13.7 miles
August 22	Sound Transit	Tacoma	Tacoma Link	Five Stations – 1.6 miles
September 4	NJ Transit	Secaucus	Secaucus Transfer Station	One Station – Weekends only
September 26	Sacramento RTD	Sacramento	South Line	Seven Stations – 6.3 miles
September 29	TRAX	Salt Lake City	University of Utah Medical Ext.	Three Stations – 1.5 miles
November 15	NJ Transit – HBLRT	Bayonne	Extension to 22 Street	One Station – 0 .6 mile
November 23	PATH	New York	World Trade Center Re-opens	One Station
December 15	NJ Transit	Secaucus	Secaucus Transfer Station	One Station – Daily service

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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Those systems that missed the mark this year were SNJLRT, Tren Urbano (which was a holdover from 20020, AND New Orleans RTA's Canal Street Line (which had been scheduled for June, 2003).

Other Transit Systems

Boston, Massachusetts

New timetables were issued as of October 27, and as has been done recently included a line that it replaced the timetable of April 28, 2003. Member Todd Glickman who sent copies, reported that there were minor changes on most of the lines. Also, the MBTA operated its usual extra service to Salem, Massachusetts on Halloween, October 31.

With a goal of equipping a portion of its underground network to enable use of cell phones by the end of 2004, the "T" is re-advertising its bid for this project. To reduce costs, the transit agency will also offer use of its fiber-optic cable. Companies who bid would also be given the option of including the Orange Line North Station platforms, the Red Line South Station platforms, and the Orange Line, and commuter rail facilities at the Back Bay station. They could then expand service in the future to all 19.5 miles of MBTA tunnels in Boston and Cambridge. The MBTA envisions awarding a contract to one company or consortium that would install the wireless gear, then make it available for use by the six carriers serving the market: AT&T Wireless, Cingular, Nextel Communications, Sprint PCS, T-Mobile, and Verizon Wireless. Thanks to Todd for this report from ***The Boston Globe***. The company that was awarded the contract last year abandoned the project after failing to convince the aforementioned companies to pay rental charges, which were deemed to be high.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

New timetables were issued for Market-Frankford and the Subway/Surface lines (10, 11, 34, and 36) on September 7. The next day, former Red Arrow Routes 100, 101, and 102 got new timetables. SEPTA did not issue new Regional Rail timetables with the October 26 time change, opting to continue using those that were issued on July 6.

On October 16, rebuilt PCC 2320 (ex-2750), now referred to as a PCC-II, was presented to the public, in an event that was staged on the 12th Street siding adjacent to Reading Terminal. Member Karl Groh forwarded the following report, which was written by long-time member Russ Jackson. Russ was able to ride the car back to Elmwood Depot, and wrote that the trip involved many miles of track that have no service, much of it on narrow Philly streets. For those who are interested, the routing was, 12th to Bainbridge, then up 11th to Girard, across Girard, out Lancaster to the cutback loop at 54th, then inbound on Route 10 on Lancaster, across the surface diversion on 40th and 42nd, and then out Woodland and Elmwood over Route 36. The trip took 2 hours 15 minutes and then his return downtown from the depot on regular trolley Route 36 took 30 minutes. The operation was slow due to many trucks and cars blocking the tracks, as well as tree branches that had grown under the wire, but he was able to experience a ride under various conditions. The air conditioning is nice and quiet, but he found the Kiepe propulsion system to be noisy despite the fact that the traction motor is fully enclosed. Brookville's trucks have a decent riding quality vertically, and do quite well on the broken joints and special work, but are not very good for lateral motion. He suspects that they do not have sufficient lateral travel allowed for the bolster and the stops are not progressive. The cars' seats came from retired Volvo buses, but they now contain new interior linings.

Member David W. Safford sent a few articles from ***metro***. One such article reported that SEPTA operates 2,802 buses, trains, trolleys, and vans over 204 routes that serve 218 stations. 31% of the population of the State of Pennsylvania is served. This equates to 1.1 million passengers every day or 296 million riders each year. David took SEPTA up on its offer to see 2320, and wrote that on the outside, the main distinctive feature is the air conditioning housing. He wrote that takes away from the original design, but certainly the cool air will be appreciated. Finally, SEPTA crews have installed another crossover at Neshaminy Falls on the R-3/West Trenton Line. These crossovers will work in conjunction with the new ATC signal system that is being installed between Neshaminy Falls and Woodburne. Another project on this line will replace all 42 miles of catenary with new wire. Thus far, 24 miles have been completed.

This year, SEPTA, like NJ Transit and Metro-North, will be employing a high-pressure washer mounted atop trucks to clean the tracks of leaves and the oily residue that causes wheel slippage, and ultimately flat wheels. Water is discharged at a rate of 5,000 pounds per square inch.

The PATCO timetable that was in effect in late-October was issued on May 12, 2003. This was the first one in recent history that did not have a "season" attached to it. Prior to this edition, as an example, timetables were issued that read "Winter 2003."

Apparently there can be a problem when PATCO's fare tickets encounter magnets, because a flyer was issued warning riders to keep their tickets away from all magnets. Defective tickets may show up as a "Defect Code" if affected. PATCO advised its riders that if this occurs, they should try another turnstile/gate. If the card still does not work, they should use the Call for Aid phone for assistance. A new fare collection system using "Smart Cards" is planned, but still a while away. So, in the meantime, the transit agency advises that some possible "magnet locations" can be found in a purse or wallet – round closing snaps are magnets, Key Entry

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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Cards, Medical Testing Equipment (X ray, MRI), and refrigerator magnets. Thanks to member Greg Campolo for sending copies.

Washington, D.C. area

MARC only issued a new timetable for the Penn and Camden Lines. Member Steve Erlitz, who sent copies, reported that there were only minor changes.

Virginia Railway Express issued new timetables on October 27. Most changes were Amtrak-connected, but Train #301 now departs Union Station for Fredericksburg five minutes earlier, at 1:00 PM. "S" schedules were operated on November 11 and November 28, as a result of VRE deferring a decision on whether to eliminate service on certain holidays (October ***Bulletin***).

October 14 was the date that VRE launched its "Quiet Car[SM] trains. This car is located next to the engine (south end), and initially two AM and two PM trains on each line were designated to test out this amenity. By early November, the experiment was declared a success, and beginning November 5, every train had one. Passengers seated in the Quiet Cars are asked to refrain from cell phone use; keep pagers, cell phones, laptop and PDA sounds off; and speak only in whispers. Seating in this car is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

According to ***Weekly Rail Review***, VRE and METRA have worked out a deal that will send 35 additional surplus gallery cars to Washington, D.C. And because the cars were acquired with federal funding, VRE only has to pay $1 for each car, plus shipping. These cars had been built in the 1970s and rebuilt in the 1990s.

Orlando, Florida

On October 27, 2003, the Florida High Speed Rail Authority selected the Green Way Route as the preferred route and Fluor-Bombardier as the preferred supplier for the first segment of the Florida High Speed Rail Network. The proposed route is to start at Orlando International Airport and follow the Central Florida Greene Way (Expressway) to a stop at Disney World, then continue East along Interstate 4 to Tampa. Disney objected to the other proposed route, which would have followed the Bee Line Expressway with an intermediate stop at the Orange County Convention Center on International Drive. Fluor-Bombardier is an alliance between Fluor Corporation, which is based in Aliso Viejo, California and Bombardier, which is based in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Tampa, Florida

Fluor and Bombardier placed an advertisement in the *Orlando Sentinel* to announce that its 150-mph *JetTrain* engine would be on display in Orlando between 10 AM and 2 PM, October 11. This was done to "remind" Floridian's that this engine has the high-speed technology for the proposed Tampa-Orlando rail line. Joe Gagne sent an article from the ***South Florida Sun-Sentinel*** reported that more than 1,000 people stopped by to visit the locomotive. The caption under the picture read that "powered by a jet engine, the high-speed locomotive is designed specifically for the American market, avoiding the need for costly electrification of tracks." Reminder – Bombardier also built the *Acela*s!

In celebration of the TECO Line's first anniversary, all rides on October 18 and 19 were free. An advertisement appearing in ***The Tampa Tribune*** announced that the "1st Birthday Bash" would be held in Centennial Park, with a cake to feed 1,000. Thanks to Dennis Zaccardi for these reports.

Detroit, Michigan

If you, like me, have never ridden the Motor City's historic trolley line, it is probably too late. According to an email from Karl Groh, the city's fleet of eight trolleys was to be replaced by rubber-tired versions. Although the line was but a quarter-mile in length, it carried about 3,000 passengers per year. Operating as "The Downtown Trolley" (formerly the Detroit Citizen's Railway), it opened in 1976. The fleet was composed of single-truck cars: seven from Lisbon, one English double-decker, and one from Switzerland. There had been some reports that track conditions had been allowed to deteriorate in recent years.

Seattle, Washington

Sound Transit operates two trains to Seattle Seahawks games.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on November 8 at the future site of the Central Link Maintenance and Operations Base for the new 14-mile line. The initial segment will run from Convention Place to South 154th Place, where shuttle buses will connect to Sea-Tac Airport.

Tacoma, Washington

Beginning October 27, *Tacoma Link* trolleys began operating 20 minutes earlier, at 5:40 AM instead of 6 AM.

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Over the next five years VIA will receive $700 million in funding that will be used to purchase new locomotives and cars, improve stations and roadbeds, and preserve the option for a high-speed link in the Windsor-Toronto-Montréal-Québec City corridor. Thanks to Dennis Zaccardi for sending this report from the ***St. Petersburg Times***.

From the History Files

155 Years Ago: On December 29, 1848, New York, New Haven & Hartford trains began running into the New York Central's terminal at Fourth (Park) Avenue, between E. 26th and 27th Streets, using trackage rights.

45 Years Ago: On December 31, 1958, electric power was shut off on the Bay Ridge (freight) Line. Although this line is still in service, diesel-powered trains serve it.

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

Tech Talk

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Below is a close-up of the model board at Freeman Street.

Jeff may be contacted via e-mail at jerlitz@pipeline.com.

HELLO GOODBYE

R-36s 9632/9633 were delivered via E. 180th Street Yard and are seen here at the yard on November 5, 1963. Bernard Linder collection

Five years later (November 2, 1968), Bernard Linder photographed R-36 9744 at 69th Street. Several of the cars had been labeled for states or organizations for the 1964-65 World's Fair.

On November 3, 2003, Jeff Erlitz took this rooftop shot of the last train of Redbirds in passenger service as it left Queensboro Plaza for the last time.

For more on the end of the reign of the Redbirds, see **IRT Car Update** on page 14 and **Around New York's Transit System** on page 16.

IRT CAR UPDATE
By George Chiasson

Perhaps this Update should more appropriately be headed "Hail and Farewell," given that the last train of hallowed Redbirds has now run, but it would be both a discredit to its contributors and disservice to its readers or this undertaking to fade away on such solitary grounds. For although the Redbirds' demise is indeed fact, there are remaining equipment changes on Subdivision "A" which have yet to play out, and various and sundry issues as well with Subdivision "B" and even PATH. At any rate, along with retirement of the last Redbird train comes the conclusion of the R-142 program and associated movement of the R-62 and R-62A fleets. The timetable of succeeding Updates will be modified for a while, but in their stead features prepared which look back on the time-honored service life of the IRT's SMEE equipment. With that, let's begin our "last ride."

R-142s (Mission Accomplished--At Last!)

The final train of Primary R-142s (6961-6970) was accepted and began service in the morning rush hour of November 6, 2003, putting in for the 6:49 AM Dyre Avenue-Flatbush Avenue 5 interval. Option I R-142s 7061-7070 were running as a solid train on 5 for more than a week in advance of this event, and actually relocated to 4 a day previous on November 5. Residual R-142 movement is anticipated between 2, 4, and 5 to round out this stage of the IRT's equipment deployment, but their exact timing not widely known.

On October 19, the experimental 6-car R-142A unit (7715/7714/7713/7712/7717/7716) turned up at Corona, teamed up with 7691-7695 to form a prototype 11-car New Technology Train. Once again, rumors abounded as to its purpose, including widespread speculation that a swap would be executed with 6 resulting in a return of some R-62As to Pelham. Meanwhile, the special train stayed put at Corona for three days, finally venturing toward Times Square on October 22. Technical glitches related to 7's unconventional third rail profile prevented this trip from being completed, so much so that the train lost power near Queensboro Plaza and was immediately removed to Pitkin Yard. By November 6, R-142A unit 7691-7695 had been returned to Jerome for 4 service, while the 6-car set was forwarded to 207th Street Shop, where it will presumably be reunited with "leftover" cars 7711 and 7718-7720.

R-62/R-62A Transfers (Rounding Things Down)

Through October 27, R-62s 1391-1395, 1531-1535, and 1621-1625 were transferred from 4 to 3, for a total of 260 cars or 26 trains. Conversely, there remained 55 R-62s assigned to 4 as of November 7, and there are indications this will remain unchanged in the immediate future. On October 20, twenty R-62As were evenly swapped for purposes of numerical grouping, with 1726-1735 moving from 1 to 7 in exchange for 1851-1855 and 1876-1880. The latter set was observed in 1 service October 25, fully signed and bearing red identification stickers beneath the number boards, but with purple "7" strip maps inside. Single unit R-62As 1960-1965 were the last to be transferred from 3 directly to 7 on October 23, rounding out their distribution to 55 at Livonia (1901-1908, 1910-1956) and 199 at Corona (1957-2155). Cars 1960, 1961, and 1965 had been outfitted with full-width cabs at one end since 1999 for use on S/42nd Street Shuttle and for their first few days of life on 7 exhibited them at seemingly random locations in their consists. As of October 30, all three were in service as "complete" single units with the full-width cabs removed. The last influx of R-62s also brought about the relocation of Livonia's final "unitized" R-62A set, 1891-1895, to 1 on October 28, which pushed 1826-1830 to the Flushing Line and completed Corona's "replacement" fleet at 399 cars. With the R-142s all in service and the Redbirds gone, the swap of now-equal R-62 and R-62A fleets between 3 and 4 (55 each) remains likely at a later date.

The Redbirds' Farewell (A Last Hurrah)

While R-62As were being sorted between 1 and 7 as the shadows of autumn grew long, the second-to-last Redbird train was laid up at Corona on October 20 and half of the remaining equipment shipped summarily to 207th Street for reefing preparation. Though the last train of R-142s had not yet been accepted, or the usual chain of secondary events totally complete, the arrival of single cars 1960-1965 on October 23 signaled that sufficient R-62As were now on hand to comfortably provide all 7 service. As a result, the lone remaining Redbird train was permitted to finish out the service day on Friday, October 24 before going into "stand-by" mode. Its consist was (N) 9564/9565-9316*-9582/9583-9586/9587-9584/9585 9613/9612 (S).

Initially, it was disclosed that the train would be available for one last week of revenue service, with a special "Farewell" ceremony scheduled for Monday, November 3. In reality, observers of the Flushing Line were disappointed to find only R-62As in operation the following Monday and again on Tuesday. Meanwhile, the Redbird remained inside the shop, its scratchitied window glass being partially replaced, and some touch-up black paint applied for its farewell tour. On Wednesday morning, October 29, the Redbird's last opportunity came, and as it had done so faithfully over 40 years of daily routine, answered the call to duty if only for two round trips. As it turned out, this would be the last time the World's Fair

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IRT Car Update

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cars would carry passengers into the Main Street terminal. Returning to Corona, the train was spotted showing signs of its age and declining fitness: flat wheels on the south motor (9612) and uncooperative doors on the single R-33 (9309). In the days leading up to its Grand Finale, the Redbird consist was switched around, cleaned, inspected, and otherwise primped inside Corona. (For details on the "Last Redbird" ceremony, see page 16.)

By early November 54 of the 58 "Reserve" (nee SMS) Mainline R-33s had returned to Concourse Yard, including 8888/8889 from 38th Street Yard and the ten cars farmed out to Corona in early September (8820/8821, 8862/8863, 8878/8879, 8914/8915, 8996/8997). Most recently 8816/8817 and 9020/9021 have been removed from Revenue and Refuse Trains at Concourse and at last report were at Coney Island being re-inspected for potential use. Thus, although the ceremonies have been conducted and eulogies delivered for withdrawal of the Redbird fleet from regular passenger service, the Reserve cars are to remain at the ready for "what if" reactivation, where and when needed. A few other Redbird pairs also survive, including 8986 and 8987, at Coney Island Shops for a separate Work Service conversion, and a small number of others being held aside for potential preservation purposes on and off the property. Most notable among these is the balance of the equipment used for the November 3 retirement ceremony (R-36s 9564/9565 and 9582-9587, plus 9588/9589), now dubbed "The Commercial Train." The last unlucky sets turned out to be R-33s 9082/9083, which had been stationed as a Yard Office at E. 180th Street since early this year, and R-28s 7862/7863 (last of the ex-Westinghouse 6 cars), which were finally turned away as a potential trolley museum acquisition after their retirement more than a year ago. Both were moved to 207th Street by October 22 and prepared for reefing. Of additional note was the disposition of 9712/9713, last of the "Subway Series" R-36s, which had been withdrawn without much notoriety back on October 3.

Redbird Reefing

Ceremonial trains aside, as most of the Redbirds were gradually removed from service on 7 they quickly made their way to be prepared for reefing. The last four cars to proceed through the so-called "Chop Shop" at 207th Street Shop were 9594, 9595, 9616, and 9617, which were in position to be loaded on the Weeks Marine barge by November 5. Immediately following their removal, an asbestos mitigation contractor was brought in and the Redbird preparation work area thoroughly cleaned so it could be returned to its preceding function. All 52 Redbird bodies were loaded as of Friday, November 7 and spent part of the weekend floating by 207th Street Shop until they left their home of 40-plus years the following Sunday morning, November 9. Ironically, the arrangements for shipment of this final barge had been made quite some time ago with the Delaware Department of Environmental Protection, and with that, the disposition process which had begun to such fanfare in August, 2001 concluded almost exactly as it had begun. Herewith are the contents of that closing shipment:

R-28:7862, 7863

R-33: 9082, 9083

R-36: 9574, 9575, 9594, 9595, 9608, 9609, 9610, 9611, 9612, 9613, 9616, 9617, 9618, 9619, 9620, 9621, 9634, 9635, 9650, 9651, 9652, 9653, 9668, 9669, 9674, 9675, 9684, 9685, 9696, 9697, 9706, 9707, 9712ss, 9713ss, 9714, 9715, 9720, 9721, 9734, 9735, 9738, 9739, 9742, 9743, 9748, 9749 (ss = Subway Series)

Conclusion

Following removal of the Redbirds, and the necessary shifting of equipment to accomplish this achievement, the velocity of events will slow dramatically. As such the intervals of these Updates will be accordingly reduced in regularity with the next appearance projected for January, 2004. In time, the events surrounding arrival of the R-142S and finally the R-160 (starting late 2005) will hopefully result in new and exciting opportunities to chronicle the forever-ongoing process of history for the New York Subway System. At this point all that is left is to reiterate what a pleasure it has been to pen these Updates; I only hope you have all had as much pleasure reading them as I have had writing them. So, too, does most of the credit belong to those individuals and organizations which have opened doors and "kept the ball rolling" for these past three years. We all owe each of you a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Thanks to all and have a very happy holiday season...see you next year!

CAR ASSIGNMENTS AND DEVIATIONS THEREFROM
by Bill Zucker

On Monday, October 20, we observed one train of slant R-40s on Q and two trains of slant R-40s on W.

When weekend Q trains were temporarily routed via tunnel, additional trains were in service because of the longer running time. Several slant and modified R-40s were observed on Q and W. Effective November 2, weekend Q trains were routed via bridge.

Around New York's Transit System

Redbird Era Ends

On Monday, November 3, 2003, an era ended in New York City as the last second-generation Subdivision "A" (IRT) subway cars were officially retired. The train, consisting of N-9564/9565-9309-9582/9583-9584/9585-9617/9616-9587/9586-S (all R-36 except for R-33S 9309), left Times Square as an "extra" around 10:35 AM, making all stops to Willets Point-Shea Stadium. The trip took longer than usual because the police inspected the train at Hunters Point Avenue (an occasional occurrence these days) and because the Conductor announced at every stop that the train would be the last "Redbird."

R-36 9564 rests after leading its consist to the Willets Point-Shea Stadium station for the last time in passenger service. Note the "Toot-toot Tootsie Goodbye" poster applied to the side of the car. This poster featured photographs of R-33S/R-36 cars in the various paint schemes they wore over their 40 years of service.

NYCT President Lawrence Reuter (front) and MTA Chairman Peter Kalikow (behind Mr. Reuter) talk about the Redbirds and the new cars that have replaced them after the last Redbird trip.

Upon arrival at Willets Point, the train was spotted on Track 2 and the side platform on the northbound side, which is not normally used, became the scene of a news conference hosted by MTA Chairman Peter Kalikow and NYCT President Lawrence Reuter while railfans and the media photographed the train.

The train was sent to Corona Yard in the early afternoon, and the consist was broken up by the evening. Member Bill Ingolia reports that just before midnight, cars 9564/9565 and 9617/9616 from the farewell train arrived at 207th Street Yard for stripping, along with R-36s 9588/9589 and 9595/9594. Within about two days, stripping was complete. Ultimately 9564/65 and 9588/89 were saved. 9616/17 and 9594/95 were the last two pairs to be prepared for reefing and were on the last barge to leave for New Jersey, which left the weekend of November 9-10. He also reports that single-unit R-33s being used in refuse collection service have had a "1" added at the beginning of their car numbers (for example, 9315 is now 19315).

125th Street Station is a Landmark

In 1981, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the 125th Street station and the viaduct on Broadway between W. 122nd Street and W. 135th Street. The next year the City Planning Commission issued a report objecting to the designation. It stated that the huge structure had a "blighting effect on the neighboring community and continues to affect adversely its potential redevelopment."

The viaduct is 2,174 feet long and the 168.5-foot span across W. 125th Street is 54 feet high. The publication ***Tramway and Railway World*** stated that 30 to 40 men built this viaduct and span in two weeks. The 1904 ***Scientific American*** called the viaduct an extremely creditable piece of work both in its detail and the artistic character of its design, especially the skewbacks — the sloped plates against which the arch rests on each side of W. 125th Street.

The 99-year-old station is being rehabilitated and the work should be completed in time for the centennial celebration. NYC Transit is spending $12 million to repair stairways, leaks in the platform and mezzanine roofs, and structural deterioration. At the present time, the western half of the mezzanine is completely gutted. On the platform, the corrugated metal paneling installed thirty years ago is being replaced by a wall with built-in windows. The canopies have been rebuilt and the original stanchions and the wooden rafters have been retained. Unfortunately, the structure will not be painted.

What is a SMEE?

We have all seen references to SMEE equipment and we have often wondered what is the meaning of this acronym.

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