The Bulletin

Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated

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The Bulletin

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TWO ANNIVERSARIES — SEA BEACH AND STEINWAY TUNNEL

The first Brooklyn Rapid Transit (BRT) steel cars started operating in revenue service on the Sea Beach Line (now Ⓝ) and the new Fourth Avenue Subway one hundred years ago, June 22, 1915. Revenue operation began at noon with trains departing from Chambers Street and Coney Island at the same time. Two– and three-car trains were routed via Fourth Avenue local tracks and southerly Manhattan Bridge tracks.

On March 31, 1915, Interborough Rapid Transit, Brooklyn Rapid Transit, and Public Service Commission officials attended BRT's exhibit of the new B-Type cars, nicknamed "steels," on the Sea Beach Line. On June 5, 1915, BRT's President and Directors and PSC's Commissioner rode a two-car test train, which departed from Chambers Street at 3:28 PM. On June 19, 1915, the Brooklyn Allied Civic Association participated in a celebration on another test train.

The Sea Beach Line has an interesting history of mergers. Brooklyn residents living near the Sea Beach Line have been enjoying rapid transit for more than a century. The New York & Sea Beach Railroad Company was founded on September 25, 1876 and was allowed to operate from 65th Street and First Avenue to W. 10th Street and Mermaid Avenue. Construction started in 1877 and locomotive-hauled steam trains began running on the surface in 1879 on a route nearly the same as the existing Ⓝ trains. On May 12, 1883, the company was reorganized as the New York & Sea Beach Railway Company and was allowed to operate from the New York harbor to the Sea Beach Palace in Coney Island. A receiver was appointed January 15, 1896 and the company was sold at foreclosure by the Sea Beach Railway, which was incorporated on August 29, 1896.

BRT acquired the company's stock on or about November 5, 1897. The line was electrified with overhead trolley wire at an unknown date.

A March 1, 1907 agreement allowed the company to operate through service from the Coney Island terminal to 38th Street and New Utrecht Avenue. Starting 1908 or earlier, trains operate via the Sea Beach Line to 62nd Street and New Utrecht Avenue, the West End (now Ⓓ) Line, and the Fifth Avenue "L." Sea Beach cars were coupled to West End or Culver cars. Shuttles continued operating between 62nd Street and New Utrecht Avenue and 65th Street and Third Avenue.

When the Fourth Avenue Subway was under construction, the company dug an open cut and built high-level platforms for subway train operation on the Sea Beach Line.

On the portion of the line between 62nd Street and New Utrecht Avenue and Third Avenue, buses replaced elevated trains from December 1, 1913 to June 23, 1914, after which trolley cars operated until service was discontinued at noon June 22, 1915. Trolley cars started operating in the new cut on January 9, 1914 from Avenue T to 86th Street. Service was extended gradually until they were replaced by subway trains. Starting March 16, 1915, two subway cars with poles were operated between Third Avenue and New Utrecht Avenue. Several additional cars were equipped with poles that were required between Coney Island and Hubbards Creek. They provided service between Coney Island and Third Avenue from May 1, 1915 until subway service began on June 22.

(Continued on page 4)

NEXT TRIP: CONNECTICUT DAY TRIP, SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

RAILS UNDER THE RIVER REVISITED — THE HUDSON & MANHATTAN by George Chiasson (Continued from July, 2015 issue)

On November 10, 1910, just over two weeks before Penn Station's opening, the Hudson & Manhattan Railroad was finally able to unveil its rapid transit subway under Sixth Avenue as far as 33rd Street, just shy of Herald Square. Included were a new station at 28th Street and the now-completed southbound (No. 2) track, with trains offering service to both Hoboken and Grove & Henderson Streets station in Jersey City. This was actually seen as the company's last provisional step in its ultimate progression to Grand Central, but with only one (long) city block separating it from the new Penn Station as it passed through Manhattan, the "McAdoo Tunnel" was as close to a connecting subway line as PRR could initially claim to have. For better or worse, the proposed H&M Grand Central extension was destined to head a number of issues that would remain partially resolved or continue to be completely unsettled for the fledgling rapid transit system after its preliminary formulation. While such a terminal would have truly enabled H&M to unify almost all of the area's major suburban railroad terminals as part of one operation, the political, economic, and institutional obstacles to its accomplishment ultimately proved to be too great to overcome. Tragically, the precious few opportunities that Manhattan provided for rapid transit expansion in later times were strictly reserved, both politically and financially, for transport purveyors operating within New York City as strictly defined by its geographic boundaries, as opposed to diverting in part through New Jersey. This measure was later applied against any number of additional proposals for interstate rapid transit through succeeding decades (mostly concerning the potential of extending certain New York subway routes to the New Jersey side of the Hudson), but has remained a consistent, if unwritten, barrier to its accomplishment.

From a construction perspective, that original 33rd Street terminal was actually designed as an enlarged "pass through" facility where the two-track subway would expand to three, with the middle iron to be used a turning track, while the outer two were to be reunited as the envisioned subway continued northward under Sixth Avenue. At 42nd Street, they were to bear east to an underground stub terminal at Madison Avenue right outside the doors of Grand Central Terminal (but presumably stacked beneath the existing IRT tunnel). The three-track Hudson & Manhattan subway was built concurrent with that from Penn Station beneath W. 32nd Street. It passed above the Pennsylvania at about 35 feet below true ground level (thereby leaving a 22-foot overhead clearance for the railroad) and sported a mezzanine which was accessed right in front of the huge Gimbel Brothers department store, before ending at a solid wall beneath the southerly curb line of W. 33rd Street. As such, when the city-sponsored Dual Contracts project to add the Broadway Subway was undertaken by 1914 (and finally opened on January 5, 1918), its passage across the site was minimal, breaking only through the extreme northeast corner of the 33rd Street H&M station. The Broadway Subway (present MTA New York City Transit ⓃⓆⓇ) was laid somewhat in engineering conflict with the proposed H&M extension to Grand Central in order to squeeze horizontally between the street and the Pennsy's tunnels in its own right. As things sorted out, were the H&M extension to Grand Central to actually be built, it would have required a sudden and severe down-slope to get under the Broadway Subway after it passed above the Pennsy's 33rd Street cross tunnel (which was precisely how the Sixth Avenue IND Subway was finally constructed more than 20 years later).

Upon genuinely reaching Midtown Manhattan at last, H&M also began using its own "real" equipment maintenance and repair facility on the same date, which, true to form, incorporated even more unusual and innovative features. As the power house had been, so were its "Jersey City Shops" physically shaped by the brusque plot of land on which it could be placed in the middle of an existing, dense urban neighborhood, this time within "Block 138," a mixed residential community bounded by the Pennsylvania Railroad (which was on a steel viaduct above Railroad Avenue) and Henderson, Steuben, and Warren Streets. This was at a point almost directly above the railroad's Grove and Henderson Streets station and adjacent to its northward tunnel beneath Washington Street, but to connect between the subway system centered along the Pennsylvania Railroad's alignment and the surface level shop, a single lead was appended eastward from the Grove & Henderson station into a tunnel configured like a "helix" which made a complete, clockwise revolution as it climbed at grades of 2½% on curves and 4% on tangent track. This lead emerged directly into the southeast edge of the facility's 200- by 500-foot parcel, from which two routings could be followed: one into the 13-track, 119-car outdoor storage yard or another into the two-track, 397-foot-long open-pit inspection shed. Any of the three sections in the actual shop building could then finally be reached by making one added reverse move after exiting the inspection house, with a tight loop connecting both main leads at the yard's westerly (Henderson Street) end. The plot's entire eastern and half of its northern frontage was occupied by the brick, 47-foot-high shop building, which included a two-story office in its extreme southeast corner. In sum, the four-section building took the form of a highly-modified trapezoid measuring 130

(Continued on page 3)

Rails Under the River Revisited

(Continued from page 2)

feet (east) x 75 (south) x 625 (west) x 375 (north), but individually each of the active sections (Paint, Repair, and Truck Shops from north to south) was squared off to a 34-foot width, while the tiny office enclosure occupied just 25 by 28½ feet. This compact facility would jointly turn out to be H&M's (and later PATH's) rolling stock headquarters for some 80 years. It was supported through most of that time by the miniature underground shop at Hoboken, though as the Jersey City facility opened there was no longer a need to use Track 1 in the Lackawanna terminal for the storage of rapid transit equipment.

H&M UNIFIES NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY —THE START OF JOINT P.R.R. SERVICE

Having somewhat defied standard corporate logic by accepting the fledgling and cost-intense Hudson & Manhattan as an indispensable "downtown" ally in 1903, it then behooved the Pennsylvania to address the smaller carrier's matters with a certain degree of tenderness. As demonstrated above PRR had a long body of experience with relationships of this sort, though the need to establish such associations had been greatly alleviated in more recent times, with the company solidly established as one of, if not *the*, foremost transportation companies in the United States since its consolidations in the 1870s. To be sure, there were significant advantages to be had by the Pennsy through its intrinsic affiliation with McAdoo's enterprise, despite outward appearances to the contrary. The most imperative of these would be its ability to establish and maintain an assured, hard-bound market presence in New York by offering a full degree of service to not one, but two of Manhattan's premier destinations (Midtown via Penn Station and Downtown via H&M), and do so directly by rail, a manner over which its water bound competitors could only watch in envy. Indeed, while history has bestowed the status of true visionary upon a precious few, it was most providential for both the Pennsylvania and the Hudson & Manhattan Railroads that the open-minded Alexander Cassatt proved to be a member of this precious fraternity, as it was he who realized that the future of transport between Manhattan and the USA (and with it the long-term fortune of his company) would have to transcend the multitudinous Hudson River ferry boats of that age, even those which the Pennsylvania Railroad spent lavish sums to maintain.

So it was that the Pennsy stood sentry at H&M's gate, helping it to grow into the early tradition it became in a state of semi-independence, through capital actions that were in part guided by its possession of the original New Jersey Railroad survey that had conquered the Palisades some 75 years before. By granting a physical dimension to McAdoo's ideas, the mere historical presence of "The Exchange Place" soon gave rise to H&M's "Downtown" tubes and Hudson Terminal (which even later grew into the landmark, mammoth World Trade Center), and helped to transform Lower Manhattan from a hectic mish-mash into the world's most dynamic financial center, providing it with sustenance as a commercial destination point. It should then come as no surprise that as H&M evolved into a proven entity, PRR emerged as a full-fledged operational partner to provide the ready assets and some of the capital that were required to "reach within" and fill a contemporary transportation void in Greater Hudson County, one created by a geographic anomaly which the railroad company had historically been ill-positioned to counter.

By late 1909 the first concrete steps toward full-blown mutual operation of the Hudson & Manhattan and Pennsylvania Railroads within the Northern New Jersey system of subways were already being taken, with preliminary construction about to commence which would extend H&M's Hudson Terminal-Jersey City leg west of its original (and really fictitious) "headwall" at Barrow Street. In addition, the same Altoona Shops that had bred the initial electric rolling stock for IRT, Long Island Rail Road, and the Pennsy itself was invited to come up with yet another new design that would be satisfactory to the operational uniqueness presented by H&M. Meanwhile, other business considerations of such a combined effort were the subject of ongoing (and by all indication, at times tense) negotiation between the two transportation providers, encompassing affairs which basically boiled down to how much each entity should pay or be paid for the proposed service's various attributes. Hinting at this edgy undertone was H&M's short-lived "Baggage Car" service, which is believed to have been run for a brief period starting in September, 1910 between Exchange Place and a dedicated platform at Hudson Terminal using two specially-built trailer cars from J.G. Brill. Designated B2 and B3, they were little more than open-sided steel shells with bays (somewhat akin to MTA New York City Transit's fleet of "garbage flats") that could receive carts filled with the baggage of connecting PRR patrons from the railroad terminal above by elevator, their contents completely intact, and speed them under the Hudson in a standard H&M train to and from Manhattan. While of great utility in the short term, this arrangement evidently ran counter to real or perceived divisions of endeavor that had been agreed upon between the two companies, and was immediately dropped when the Pennsy moved its long-range, intercity operations over to Penn Station just two months later, after which the two specially-constructed cars remained unused for more than a decade prior to their formal retirement around 1922. Whatever the case, any doubts being cast as to a long-term operational alliance being forged after the inauguration of Hudson & Manhattan service to 33rd Street were formally dispelled when the Pennsylvania issued a notice in the New York Times and most city papers on November 13, 1910 (during the run-up in publicity to Penn Station's opening) that the Hudson Tubes would indeed be extended all the way to Newark, complete with added through-ticketing for all PRR users between its expansive roster of stations and those of H&M. For routine commuting,

(Continued on page 6)

Two Anniversaries

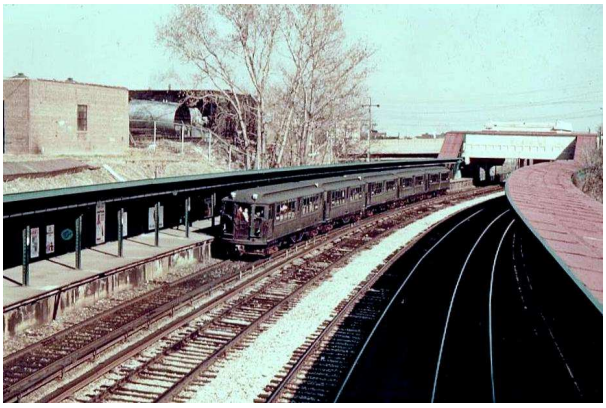
(Continued from page 1)

Kings Highway, Sea Beach Line, June 11, 1915.
Bernard Linder collection

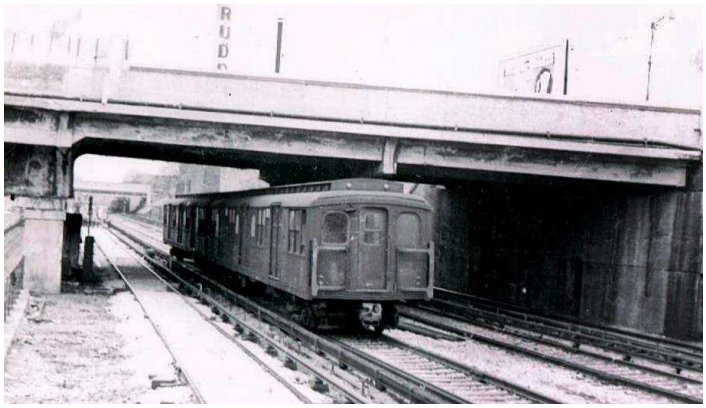
New Utrecht Avenue, Sea Beach Line, June 11, 1915.
Bernard Linder collection

Cut west of 11th Avenue.
Bernard Linder collection

A train of Multis led by unit 7022 at 8th Avenue.
Bernard Linder collection



A train of IRT Lo-Vs at 8th Avenue, April, 1968.
Bernard Linder collection



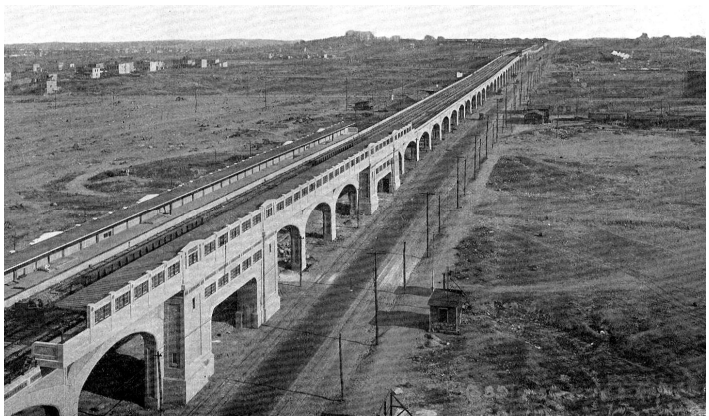
Looking west from 8th Avenue station.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 5)

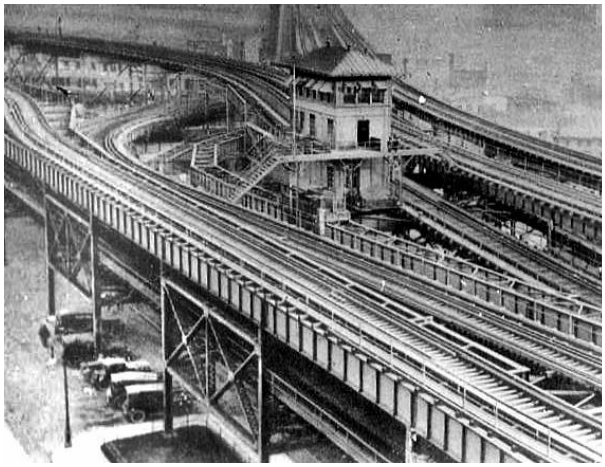
Two Anniversaries

(Continued from page 4)

Flushing Line looking west toward Willets Point Boulevard, 1928.
Bernard Linder collection



Birdseye view of Flushing Line reinforced concrete structure over Queens Boulevard.
Bernard Linder collection



Queensboro Plaza looking east, circa 1935.
Bernard Linder collection

Unused north platform of Queensboro Plaza station, looking east, June 7, 1962.
Bernard Linder collection

❼ train leaving Queensboro Plaza, January 13, 1986.
Bernard Linder collection

Corona Yard.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 6)

Two Anniversaries—Sea Beach and Steinway Tunnel

(Continued from page 5)

STEINWAY TUNNEL ANNIVERSARY

June 22, 1915 was an unusual day. Trains started running on two subway lines at exactly the same time, 12 noon. On June 13, 1915, twelve cars, probably 4025 -36, were transferred to Long Island City. At 4:15 PM June 15, 1915, a test train made the first trip to Manhattan. IRT President Shonts, Vice President Hedley, the Chief Engineer, and other officials inspected the tunnel. On June 22, a special train with officials and invited guests departed from Grand Central at 10:45 AM and arrived at Jackson Avenue 4 minutes later. The Queens Borough President, IRT officials, and reporters participated in a ceremony on the platform, after which the train departed at 11:44 AM. Revenue service began at noon with three four-car trains running on a seven-minute headway.

The Steinway Tunnel has an interesting history. It was built to provide through trolley service from Queens to E. 42nd Street and Park Avenue, Manhattan. Construction started in 1890 and proceeded slowly until it was completed on September 26, 1907. The trolley car made one round trip and was removed in October, 1907. Because of litigation over the franchise, the tunnel remained unused. After the Interborough Rapid Transit Company signed Contract 3 in 1913, it installed third rails and operated subway trains.

Rails Under the River Revisited

(Continued from page 3)

PRR would add an on-board surcharge to basic cash fares that were to be collected otherwise. Less publicized, but of equal note was that this service was to be provided by a separate fleet of new rolling stock that the two companies were teaming up to procure, with H&M charged to provide their maintenance at its facility in Jersey City.

West of the new Grove and Henderson Streets station, the Hudson & Manhattan was extended through the subway as located beneath the centerline of the Pennsylvania Railroad, tunneling under its 1891-built steel elevated structure as far as Brunswick Street, then gradually rising as the railroad progressed onto a solid fill, reaching the surface next to the Pennsy's "RU" interlocking. As noted above, this point of emergence was required by the shallow, pre-existing tunnel that had carried the New Jersey Junction Railway under the Pennsylvania's alignment since 1897. H&M's Newark Extension then shared trackage with PRR's Exchange Place passenger trains west of that point to "N" Tower just past Manhattan Transfer, where the rapid transit line diverged to make its own way into Newark. At the point where subway trains reached ground level past the Grove and Henderson Streets station, near Merseles Street in Jersey City, the Pennsy inserted a shoo-fly on the northerly side of the right-of-way to enable its Exchange Place passenger trains to get around the rapid transit portal. Third rail for the diminutive electric trains was also installed on all 5.4 miles of (passenger) main line from that location through the complex at Manhattan Transfer.

After a non-revenue, inaugural Special was run on September 27, joint Pennsylvania-H&M rapid transit operations between Hudson Terminal and Manhattan Transfer were finally initiated on October 1, 1911 as an extension of the existing H&M route from Lower Manhattan to Grove & Henderson Streets in Jersey City. Such extended trains followed Tracks 1 and 2 as they then existed through the 1887 Shanley's Cut, between the interlockings at "SC" (Waldo) and "NA" (Newark Avenue) and were initially required to funnel through a single track at Summit Avenue. Nonetheless, initial construction on a major Jersey City way station at the same locale had already commenced by late in 1910 using part of the original, now-dormant 1838 Bergen Cut. Rapid transit trains then continued to share the main line with the Pennsylvania past the Marion (PRR) local station and across the southerly lift bridge over the Hackensack River. Together they were situated alongside the Pennsy's Meadows Yard complex (where the bigger railroad's two freight mains turned southward toward Waverly Yard at "GY" interlocking), and then continued all the way into Manhattan Transfer as Tracks 1 and 4. There a set of electrified bypass and gauntlet tracks were positioned on the outside of each platform, the former to accommodate anticipated express trains and the latter to nuzzle the narrower rapid transit trains a little closer to the station's platform edge while still providing the Pennsy's full-sized equipment with a normal berth. As has been noted many times here and elsewhere, the new "terminal" at Manhattan Transfer was solely utilized for its named purpose of enabling the free exchange of customers between joint rapid transit trains and the Pennsylvania's massive schedule of through passenger trains serving the Northeast Corridor, Penn Station in New York, and Exchange Place in Jersey City (but not PRR local trains between Exchange Place and Newark, which were already gone). Beyond Manhattan Transfer the westbound rapid transit iron rose to meet a three-track, ballasted right-of-way mounted on a steel elevated above the Pennsy's Center Street Branch, similar in nature to the Market Street Elevated in Philadelphia. Its middle siding was used as an interim turnback until the new double-deck lift bridge across the Passaic River could be completed. Trains then returned to the New York-bound side of the station by crossing a long, sturdy truss bridge over the Pennsylvania's main line before they descended back to ground level, while west of the station a lead coming off the electrified by-pass went into H&M's loop-style yard across from Tower "N." Each of these features had been added to the original layout of Manhattan Transfer that

(Continued on page 7)

Rails Under the River Revisited

(Continued from page 6)

dated from only a year earlier, taking advantage of various provisions that were supplied during the construction associated with the creation of Penn Station.

Being delivered for this jointly-operated venture by that time were a total of 96 brand new steel cars, 36 designated as "Class D" for the Hudson & Manhattan by the Pressed Steel Car Company, numbered 701-36, and 60 "MP-38s" for the Pennsylvania Railroad by American Car & Foundry, numbered 1901-60. Both types were identical in every way, completely interchangeable with each other and totally compatible with the H&M's existing fleet (though not actually combined with it in practice). Their overall dimensions of 48 feet 3½ inches in length, 8 feet 10½ inches in width, and 11 feet 8½ inches in height were very similar to those of the original H&M cars, but they embodied a completely different body design that incorporated the principles originated on George Gibbs' 1903 IRT prototype, as had been the prior case with the LIRR MP-41 and MP-54 MUs, as well as the standard P-70 passenger car. Unlike those existing models, it was necessary that this newest variation be shrunken to conform to H&M's miniaturized sizing guidelines and amplified with a built-in center (i.e. side) door and all-longitudinal seating to accommodate the Hudson Tubes' fast-paced, high-capacity operating environment. The resultant 38-foot passenger cabin was of a modular construction, similar to that applied to Altoona's prior touchstone designs, composed of six sections about 6 feet, 4½ inches wide, built around a lightweight, cantilevered steel frame that was pieced together mainly with unified, shaped channel members engineered in whole to deflect weight stresses toward the center beam and cross-bearers, and away from the cars' end and side doors. Each section was sheathed by a thin steel plate $^{3}/_{32}$ of an inch thick, with all spliced together beneath a common window sill (belt) of 4-inch depth by bridge plates that were approximately 4¾ inches wide. The first, second, fifth, and sixth sections had paired window sashes approximately 34 inches in width, while the third and fourth sections were modified to permit insertion of the 3½-foot-wide center door frame through both, containing a vertical door pillar 1 foot 9½ inches in width that was also divided by the common belt member, and a single sash that was matched to the width of those adjacent to create a window profile of 2+2+1 and 1+2+2 on either side of the middle door opening.

In a manner similar to the MP-54 (with which it was readily compared by the trade press) the end vestibules were composed of two 38-inch wide doorways, complemented by thin steel end walls of 6 feet $3^{7}/_{8}$ inches in height that sported a riveted horizontal bridge plate, 2 inches in width, about 4 feet up from the bottom and also incorporated reinforced "porthole" vestibule windows that were matched to a Motorman's approximate visual positioning, maintained tensile strength, and kept the cars' overall weight down. The somewhat over-sized vestibules (in deference to the crush loads already often experienced) were 4 feet deep at the corner and nearly 5 by the end storm door, with the center line set outward to 62 inches above the cars' main structural skeleton to form an end buffer, on which Conductors stood to open and close the doors. The end walls were positioned on either side of a flush, sliding storm door with that on the right-hand (operating) side sporting four outward connecting chains, covered by a rubber sleeve, that formed a flexible barrier along the consist edge when cars were coupled together to protect the open space. This was in addition to the common vestibule chains, which were either strung across the storm door at the end of a given consist, or joined between coupled cars to form an inner area of protection for passage between vestibules. A large, external hand brake setting wheel was positioned at the end of each car on the left-hand (Fireman's) side like those so prominent on rapid transit cars in Boston and Philadelphia, while door control units were positioned on either side of the storm door above the 2-inch horizontal bridge plate. The cars' canvas-covered steel roofs (also similar in nature to previous PRR designs) had a large headlight and sealed, multi-lensed marker fixtures built in to the sloped ends of an abbreviated, yet pronounced railroad-style clerestory that had no less than 14 rectangular steel ventilation grates. There were as yet no lower marker light housings present; red railroad lanterns were then being hung on the end walls of all consists to denote "rear of train," while the entire car body was covered in a glossy coat of Tuscan Red paint and lettered either "Hudson & Manhattan" or "Pennsylvania" in buff, a final touch which left little doubt as to the identity of their possessors. In fact, this fleet of so-called "McAdoo Reds" was assigned exclusively to joint PRR New York-Newark service throughout their service life of more than four decades, leaving trains of H&M's "black" cars to cover the rest of the original system.

(Continued next month)

Around New York's Transit System

(Continued from page 18)

as far as west of Queens Plaza, where it splits away to join ⓃⓆ in the 60th Street Tunnel. Design work will commence this year with actual construction beginning in mid-2017 as the CBTC installation process on ❼ winds down.

Flushing Line Extension Update

On July 20, MTA announced that the $2.4 billion Flushing Line extension to 34th Street-Hudson Yards will open by September 13, 2015. Construction has been basically finished since March, but opening has been delayed due to testing of the communication and fire alarm systems.

Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 321

by Ronald Yee and Alexander Ivanoff

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

On July 1, MTA Chairman Tom Prendergast began a new six-year term in a position he assumed from former Chairman Jay Walder, who left MTA in October, 2011 to head the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) of Hong Kong and Joe Lhota, who resigned so that he could mount what ultimately was an unsuccessful campaign to become the Mayor of New York City in 2013. He will continue to bring a measure of stability to MTA, which has seen a significant upheaval of leadership figures over the past two years, especially at Metro-North Railroad and at the Long Island Rail Road. Prior to his assuming the chairmanship of the MTA, Prendergast ran New York City Transit, the Long Island Railroad, and the Vancouver (British Columbia, Canada) SkyTrain. He began his transit career with the Chicago Transit Authority. (MTA website, July 17)

On July 22, MTA announced that it had identified a combination of project cost savings, additional revenues, and operating savings in the amount of up to $2.4 billion, to be applied to the proposed 2015-9 Capital Program. This reduced the funding gap in the proposed $32 billion program from $14 billion to less than $12 billion. On July 23, New York State Governor Andrew M. Cuomo indicated that the state would commit $8.3 billion to the program, an increase of $7.3 billion over its previous commitment, though it is unclear where the additional funds would come from. MTA is also looking for an increase in New York City's contribution to the Capital Program. (MTA website, July 22; wnyc.org, July 23)

MTA Metro-North Railroad

With the completion of delivery and acceptance of the 380 M-8 class dual-voltage (12,500/25,000 volts catenary and 700 volts d.c.) third rail-equipped electric multiple unit (EMU) and 25 single non-powered coaches with M-8 carbodies, the New Haven Line's Cosmopolitan-style EMU fleet was officially retired over the July 4 weekend. All class M-4 (54 cars) and M-6 (48 cars) EMUs, which were configured as 3 car sets ("A" car and "B" car, each with an Engineer's cab on one end, and a cabless powered "D" car in the middle) were retired and set aside for towing to Frontier Salvage in Ohio for scrapping. The class M-2 EMUs, which were built as pairs in 1973 and 1976, were also retired, with the exception of 24 cars (three 8-car trainsets) being retained in ready-to-run operational condition for use whenever MNR is short of M-8s. (*Editor's Note by Ron Yee: It is anticipated that the M-8s will soon replace the current fleet of diesel locomotive-propelled push-pull trains used for Shore Line East service operating on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor between New Haven and Old Saybrook, freeing up those consists for use on a commuter service on the Springfield Line to Hartford, Connecticut and Springfield, Massachusetts. With some rearrangement of the fleet utilization and rewriting of the schedules, the 405 M-8s should be able to cover this added service by extending select trains currently originating or terminating in New Haven to operate farther east to Old Saybrook. However, an order for M-10(?)-class EMUs will likely be required to provide enough EMU cars to cover the proposed New Haven Line service to Co-Op City, the east Bronx, and onward over the Hell Gate Bridge to Queens and New York's Penn Station. However, it is unlikely that this service will start until the Long Island Rail Road frees up operating time slots in the East River Tunnels and at New York's Penn Station by rerouting some of its trains to its new terminal under Grand Central Terminal. One last note: the M-2 sets being held in reserve ARE being utilized. On July 16, an M-2 consist was seen departing New Rochelle at 7:10 AM and leaving Grand Central Terminal at 8:17 AM as an outbound deadhead equipment move.)* (Metro-North website, July 13, 2015)

13 recently hired train and engine service employees actively serving as Engineers and Conductors on the railroad were suspended, indicted, and arraigned by the MTA Police following the conclusion of a year-long investigation by the MTA Inspector General and MTAPD regarding significant cheating on tests during their new-hire training courses as well as (in at least one instance) a recertification exam, which is done periodically to insure employees remain fully qualified on operating rules and physical characteristics of the line. Nine Conductors and four Engineers were involved, at least one being accused of stealing at least one exam from an instructor's bag, making photos with their cell phone camera, and distributing it by e-mail and text to select classmates, making them all accessories to the original crime. (***New York Daily News***, June 29)

The "DEVON" drawbridge over the Housatonic River became stuck in the open position when it was opened during the early morning hours of Wednesday July 1 and failed to fully close and lock to allow trains to pass. This resulted in two of four tracks being closed to rail traffic. Engineering staff finally got that balky bridge span to lock closed the next day and re-open for train traffic a few days later. The bridge outage resulted in moderate delays of 10-15 minutes. (Metro-North website, July 1)

Two trains moving slowly in opposite directions on the New Canaan Branch of the New Haven Line found themselves facing each other's headlights just south of the New Canaan station. After some conflicting reports, the railroad stated that there had been an "undesired train routing" but that there was no danger of a head-on collision. Metro-North is investigating the cause. *Editor's Note by Ron Yee: the location where this incident occurred was within "Yard Limits" of New Canaan Yard which encompasses the passenger track leading to the station. The home signals of CP-307 demarking the beginning (southbound) or end (northbound) of signalized track with cab signals and*

(Continued on page 9)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 8)

speed control, are located quite a way south of the throat of the yard along single track and are not visible to the Engineer of a train on the station platform track as the track curves sharply to the left. Any train operating within yard limits is limited to speeds of less than 15 mph and for this particular location, just 10 mph. It seems that while the southbound train departed at its scheduled time, the last deadhead equipment move was running late and had not yet arrived at New Canaan and taken the switch that would line it away from the platform track and into the yard. A witness aboard the southbound train, who is a New Canaan Councilman, stated that the Conductor commented to him that the Engineer of the southbound train departing New Canaan was not familiar with the branch line operations. While the training and certification process requires crews to be familiar with the operating rules and signals of the entire railroad as well as the physical characteristics of the lines and branch lines they are certified (qualified) to operate over, how a line operates or is dispatched is not taught as part of the class curriculum. All morning peak period trains departing south out of New Canaan reach that terminal in the form of northbound deadhead equipment moves coming out of Stamford. One train occupies the track with the platform and all others are routed into the yard tracks and stored until needed. As soon as the platformed train leaves, the equipment for the next train pulls south out of the yard and reverses back into the platform track for its southward journey. The last deadhead move must arrive and be yarded before the first train is due to leave. If any of the deadhead trains to New Canaan are delayed, the entire branch ends up "stuck" waiting for it. If the Conductor's statement does turn out to be true, it will be a case of the Engineer not knowing how many deadhead trains are scheduled to arrive into the yard before he can proceed south. In the days of manual block signals and train orders, the rules governing train movements such as "meets" would prevent this from happening. Keep in mind that this section of track is within un-signaled yard limits. Coming out of New Canaan, there is a sharp curve to the left with limited sight lines before reaching CP-307's signal and the start of signaled track. The rules do allow for a southward movement to proceed up to the signal under yard limit rules, which call for "restricted speed, proceed and be prepared to stop within one half range of vision, looking for other trains, personnel, signals, misaligned switches, fouling equipment and any other obstruction to safe train movement." The northward train had a proceed signal at CP-307 and was allowed to pass it, albeit at "slow speed," which at this location is 10 mph. The result was that they both entered the curve and ended up looking at one another's headlights, stopping well short of colliding. This incident will likely result in a new procedure where the first southward train out of New Canaan must confirm with the Control Center that all northbound moves on the branch have indeed arrived at New Canaan and that the current of traffic of the signal system has been changed to south. Moving the signal at CP-307 to a location visible to the Engineer of a train standing at the platform track would be a permanent fix but would entail the hefty expense of relocating signal circuits and wayside signal masts as well as complications in the movement of trains from the yard tracks to the platform track, namely needing to get permission to pass a home signal just to make a yard move.) (***New Canaan Advisor***, June 30)

Metro-North Railroad operated four extra trains on Friday, July 10 to accommodate expected crowds attending the ticker-tape parade in lower Manhattan honoring the U.S. women's soccer team, which won the World Championship. An extra train departed New Haven at 8:10 AM, making all stops to Fairfield and then running express to Manhattan, arriving at Grand Central Terminal at 9:54 AM, while another extra train departed Poughkeepsie at 8:26 AM stopping at New Hamburg, Beacon, Peekskill, Cortlandt, and Croton-Harmon before running nonstop to Manhattan, arriving at Grand Central Terminal 10:03 AM. After the parade, the Hudson Line extra departed Grand Central Terminal at 3:45 PM and the New Haven Line extra departed at 3:29 PM. (Metro-North website, July 9)

MTA Long Island Rail Road

As part of an ongoing program of bringing its station facilities and buildings up to a state of good repair, LIRR opened the renovated Smithtown station to the public on July 13. The exterior siding on the front of the building was replaced and an exterior mural restored. Inside, new flooring with built-in radiant heating systems was installed, walls and ceilings of the waiting room replaced with finishing touches such as wainscoting and crown moldings, and new doors and windows were installed. Stations already repaired and upgraded include Belmont Racetrack (instrumental in the railroad's ability to handle the crowds for the Triple Crown race event on June 6), Oakdale, Sayville, Babylon, Lynbrook, Floral Park, Ronkonkoma, Great Neck, Little Neck, and Murray Hill. (LIRR website, July 13)

A M-3 car and a bilevel coach on a diesel-propelled train sideswiped one another just east of the Jamaica station just after 6 PM on Friday, July 17, causing up to 30-minute delays systemwide during the latter portion of the evening rush. One train reportedly had passengers aboard and was evacuated without incident. No injuries were reported. From TV news reports, it appears M-3 9868 was involved and equipment damage did not appear to be severe with both cars leaning away from one another at the point of contact. For a brief time, LIRR tickets were cross-honored on New York City Transit subway routes Ⓔ②③ for a brief period. Normal service was restored later that evening. (WPIX-TV, July 17)

NJ Transit

NJ Transit's Board, despite vocal protests from the public as well as transit advocacy groups, approved a nine percent fare increase combined with some service reductions to close a $56 million shortfall. Two late-night trains, the last trains out of Hoboken on the Pascack Valley and Montclair-Boonton Lines, were eliminated. One consolation for those on the Pascack Valley Line: the 12:45 AM train that was eliminated on weeknights in this round of service reductions was, at press time, to be retained on Saturday and Sunday, serving those who

(Continued on page 10)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 9)

wish to stay late in New York City on Friday and Saturday evenings and not have to run for the 10:42 PM out of Hoboken. These changes will take effect on October 1. Blame for this "less for more" fare and service package landed on the State Legislature's failure to add $56 million to NJT's budget, which would have prevented the fare increase, and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, who failed to take any leadership initiative and simply signed the budget into law without offering any additional relief to NJT. Contributing to the funding shortfall was Governor Christie's halt on the effort to find new sources of revenue for the state's Transportation Trust Fund (which supplies around $462 million to NJT) and the fact that the gasoline tax (of which a portion goes toward NJT) has not been raised since 1988 while NJT fares have increased five times during the same period. This may just be the tip of the iceberg that lies ahead in 2016. NJT will likely be losing $295 million in highway toll revenues that it receives from the New Jersey Turnpike Authority as the agency has promised investors that the cross-subsidization will end in 2016. If the cross-subsidy continues, there could well be a lawsuit by those investors. In addition, contract costs loom with labor unions, which are demanding an 18% increase over six years plus retroactive pay for the four-year period where they worked without a contract and were subject to a pay freeze. The cost to NJT would be around $69 million, while a NJT counteroffer with a 5.2% raise for the same period would cost $20 million. Concurrent with the announcement of the aforementioned fare hike and service cut, President Obama created a Presidential Emergency Board to address the dispute with the 4,263 rail employees. If that mediation process ultimately fails to wrangle out an agreement, the rail unions will be free to strike in March, 2016. All of these factors point to far larger and more painful fare increases and service cuts as early as next year. (lohud.com, July 12; ***Newark Star-Ledger***, ***The Record***, WNBC-TV, July 15-16)

NJ Transit's Board will approve a $7 million contract to install 1,200 inward facing, "bird's eye" view overhead cameras in the ceilings of 353 all operating cabs on locomotives, cab control cars, and Arrow III EMU cars. A recommendation by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), inward facing cameras would provide a video record of the activities of the Engineer in the event there was an incident or crash. The cameras had been in NTSB's recommendations since the two fatal wrecks on Metro-North and Amtrak over the past two years where the Engineer either could not recall the minute(s) leading up to the wreck or may have become unconscious while at the controls. (nj.com, July 15)

NJT's summertime track work programs will result in some rail services being suspended on the Morristown Line and the Princeton Shuttle, otherwise known as the "Dinky". The "Dinky" will be suspended on weekdays between 9:30 AM and 3:25 PM. Buses will replace trains August 3-7. On the Morristown Line, weekday rail service is suspended on the Gladstone Branch between 9:30 AM and 3:30 PM from July 6-August 28. These trains will continue to operate between Hoboken Terminal and Summit. (NJT website, June 22 and July 19)

Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation

A PATH car that survived the collapse of the twin towers of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 and discovered relatively undamaged in the PATH tunnels adjacent to the site of the Center's north tower was donated to the Shore Line Trolley Museum in Branford, Connecticut. It is one of 46 cars of the PA-3 class built by Hawker-Siddeley in 1972. The car is scheduled to arrive on August 6. (Branford Electric Railway Association website, July 17)

Amtrak

An Amtrak train bound for Penn Station got stranded for about five hours on June 23, leaving irate passengers without snacks, air conditioning or working bathrooms, according to weary customers caught on the stalled train. Amtrak confirmed to the ***Daily News*** the delay on *Keystone* train #654 from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to New York City, saying it lasted four and a half hours. The day's stormy weather caused a power outage that started the delay, Amtrak representative Christina Lee said. Lee acknowledged that *Keystone* trains do not offer food service.

The train was due at Penn Station at 8:15 PM. After being pulled by another engine, the disabled train arrived in Philadelphia around 11:20 PM, where all riders finally got off the disabled line. Those heading to New York transferred to another train leaving at midnight.

Amtrak customers on several other Northeast trains, mostly around the Washington, D.C. area, also complained on social media about hours-long delays attributed to "signal problems." Amtrak acknowledged several delays but did not reveal the full extent of the caboose congestion. *(Editor's Note by Sasha Ivanoff: I was on a very late train #129 (New York Penn-Washington, D.C.) that left 58 minutes late due to mechanical issues and lost another hour sitting in Philadelphia because of the weather and another hour and a half due to speed restrictions south of Wilmington, Delaware.)* (***New York Daily News***, June 24)

On behalf of the Departments of Transportation of the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin, Amtrak is conducting feasibility studies aimed at increasing Saint Paul-Chicago service by adding a second midday train over a route now covered once daily by the *Empire Builder,* which operates all the way to the west coast of the nation. Operating costs, equipment needs, ridership, passenger revenue projections, infrastructure improvements, and scheduling reliability (especially in the eastward direction) all need to be factored into the study. The states would be required to shoulder 85% of the operating costs of the additional train service. (Minnesota Department of Transportation, July 4)

Other Transit Systems

Vermont

A major expansion of passenger rail service in Ver-

(Continued on page 11)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 10)

mont is proposed as part of the state's new rail plan, which identifies capital investment priorities for the next 20 years.

Vermont is currently served by two state-sponsored Amtrak trains, the *Vermonter* from New York to St. Albans and the *Ethan Allen Express* from Washington, D.C. to Rutland. New York is the key destination for passengers on these services, accounting for around three-quarters of ridership in 2013.

Vermont Transportation Agency's rail plan — the first since 2006 — aims to support the goal set out in the 2011 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, which seeks to quadruple inter-city passenger rail ridership in the state to 400,000 by 2030.

A core proposal is the long-planned extension of the *Ethan Allen Express* from Rutland to the state's largest city, Burlington, providing direct links to New York and stations on the Northeast Corridor. This would require the upgrading of the Rutland-Burlington Line for 60 mph operation, and while $18.5 million is committed for improvements to the Rutland-Leicester section, the plan anticipates a further $26.4 million would be required to complete the project. Annual operating subsidies for the service would also need to increase by around $1 million.

Another key proposal is the extension of the *Vermonter* from St, Albans to Montreal, Quebec, Canada, a route that has been without passenger trains since the withdrawal of the overnight *Montrealer* in 1995. The plan suggests that reinstating passenger services on this route will be made easier thanks to an agreement signed by the U.S. and Canadian governments in March this year that clarifies border crossing and customs procedures for cross-border trains.

More than $90 million has been invested in recent years in upgrading the route used by the *Vermonter* in the state, and given that the train would share much of the route used by Amtrak's New York-Montreal *Adirondack* in Canada, the plan suggests no significant investment would be required in infrastructure. However, the operation of the daily service would require a $2 million annual increase in subsidies.

The second priority after these extensions is a completely new daily service between Burlington and Albany, which would run via Rutland, Manchester, North Bennington, and Mechanicville. Currently there are few public transport options on this corridor and the service would be beneficial not just for residents of southwest Vermont but the state's tourism industry. Capital costs are estimated at $88 million, including new stations and track, signaling, and level crossing improvements. Operating subsidies would be around $4 million per year.

The third priority identified in the report is to upgrade all passenger lines to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Class 4 standards, enabling 79 mph operation. The total cost of this long-term proposal, which includes upgrading lines to centralized traffic control (CTC) dispatching and some track-doubling on the *Vermonter* route, is estimated at $255.9 million.

The rail plan envisages a total investment in freight and passenger rail of $665 million over 20 years, although additional funding will need to be sought to fully implement the capital program as currently only $380 million in state and federal funding is allocated to the network over this period. (***International Rail Journal***, July 15)

Boston, Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announced that it had completed the acquisition process by the state of the 21-mile Framingham Secondary Line, guaranteeing MBTA passenger train access to Foxborough, home of the New England Patriots football team. This line also provides a vital alternative routing should the Framingham Line become blocked or be taken out of service for maintenance. A lot of upgrade work needs to be done on this line before regular daily passenger service can begin, that date being estimated as sometime in 2017. (Todd Glickman, MBTA, June 18)

Keolis, the company operating MTA's commuter rail services, reported that it had lost $9.7 million during the six months it ran the services after taking over in July, 2014. The company has sought to reduce expenses amidst a crisis atmosphere involving an unusually severe winter of 2015 coupled with an aging locomotive and car fleet. Some of the losses stem from fines imposed by MBTA for late or dirty trains. A spokeperson from Keolis stated that the company did not expect to immediately turn a profit on its $2.68 billion, eight-year contract with MBTA but did expect to eventually turn its operation into a profitable one in the years to come. (Todd Glickman, MBTA, June 17)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Member Bob Wright forwarded a link to SEPTA's website detailing the agency's plans for Pope Francis' visit to Philadelphia. SEPTA is to dramatically alter its services, ostensibly to better handle the anticipated crowds the papal visit will generate during the weekend of September 26-27. One-day passes valid for travel on the Regional Rail network will be sold online, but the quantity of passes will be limited in order to prevent the system from being overwhelmed. Schedules on the Regional Rail routes will be modified to double their capacity. This enhanced capacity service will serve only 18 outlying stations, with the rest of the stations closed for the day. Passengers purchasing these "Papal Passes" from SEPTA will have three designated stations by which they will access the event in Center City Philadelphia and they will have to arrive and depart from the same station. Listed below are the 18 stations that will be open, grouped by the three stations which will provide access to the papal event:

Jefferson:

Norristown/Manayunk Line — Norristown Transportation Center

Lansdale/Doylestown Line — Pennbrook and Fort

(Continued on page 12)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 11)

Washington
Warminster Line — Warminster
West Trenton Line — Woodbourne
Fox Chase Line — Fox Chase
Airport Line —Terminal A/B, Terminal C/D, 30th Street:
Paoli/Thorndale Line — Paoli and Radnor
Chestnut Hill West Line — Chestnut Hill West
Trenton Line — Levittown and Croydon/Cornwells Heights
Wilmington/Newark Line — Wilmington and Marcus Hook
University City:
Airport Line — Eastwick
Media/Elwyn Line — Media and Primos

(Editor's Note by Ron Yee: Closing all but 18 stations will dramatically shorten travel times by reducing the amount of time each train spends at stations receiving or discharging passengers. The faster each trip, the more quickly that set of equipment can be "recycled" (sent back) for use as another train to carry more passengers. Literally, SEPTA will be able to "manufacture" more trainsets for this event by recycling trainsets far more quickly than is possible during normal operations. The drawback is that SEPTA's regular customers seeking to travel as they normally do will be severely inconvenienced that weekend. They literally may not be able to travel on SEPTA Regional as they normally would. (Bob Wright, SEPTA website, July 14, 2015)

SEPTA will also perform a 16-day "maintenance blitz," which will enable the operating agency to replace miles of worn rail, make numerous repairs to stations such as new LED lighting both in the stations as well as in the tunnels around the 13th Street curve, heavy cleaning and graffiti removal in stations and tunnels, repair and cleaning of track drains to reduce flooding, and repairs to the stairways and platforms at the 13th and 19th Street stations. It will require the suspension of all operations around the clock in the trolley tunnel between 40th Street and Center City from 10 PM Friday, July 31 through Sunday, August 16. (SEPTA website, July 19)

PATCO will offer a $5 one-day farecard and a $10 two-day farecard for the Papal weekend with trains only stopping at 9th/10th & Locust Street in Philadelphia and at Lindenwold, Woodcrest, Ferry Avenue, and Broadway in New Jersey. (PATCO website, July 15)

A PATCO train made up of its first set of newly refurbished cars became disabled around 5 PM while traveling east on the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. Service was delayed 20 minutes until the train could get moving again. PATCO is investigating the cause but has already ruled out traction motors as being the culprit. (***Mass Transit,*** July 10)

To facilitate the installation of Positive Train Control (PTC) systems aboard all of PATCO's trains, many trains may be operating a car short of the normal consist. Ten or more railcars will be shopped at any given time as the agency strives to meet the December 31, 2015 deadline to install and cut-in a working PTC system designed to prevent wrecks from excessive speed as seen on Amtrak and Metro-North in the past two years as well as collisions due to Engineers failing to comply with a signal. (philly.com, July 9)

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

To address the long-term issue of excessive wait times for Blue Line service, the Washington Metro (WMATA) is proposing to reduce the headways from the current 12 minutes to eight minutes. However, this improvement would come at the expense of service on the Orange, Silver, Green, and Yellow lines which would see their headways increase from six minutes to eight. While the 7000-series cars now being delivered will allow capacity increases by lengthening consists to 8 cars, the true bottleneck in the system is the Rosslyn Tunnel, which can only accommodate 26 trains per hour. The 7000-series cars are also slated to replace the 1000-series, the oldest cars in the fleet, dating back to 1976 and deemed unsafe with regard to structural strength for crashworthiness. As a side note, it was also reported that the 4000-series cars, a small fleet of 100 cars, were out of service to correct an un-commanded door opening issue while the trains were in motion. To address fleet reliability issues, many 8-car trains will be operating with reduced consists during the summer months to allow maintenance workers to address ongoing issues with the poorest performing classes of cars. *(Editor's Note by Ron Yee: the relatively young 4000-series (1991-3) and 5000-series (2001-4) cars will not undergo mid-life overhauls and will be replaced by the 7000-series, now totaling 748 cars, all to be delivered by 2020.)* (***Washington Post***, June 30)

Virginia Railway Express (VRE) exercised its option with Keolis to extend its contract for operating its commuter trains for an additional five years. The original contract dates back to 2010 and VRE has been quite satisfied with how the system has been operated and maintained. This contract will be in effect until 2020 at up to $21 million annually in its first year, with Keolis being eligible for yet another contract extension in 2020. (***Railway Gazette***, July 14)

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

MARTA is about to unveil an $8 billion transit plan that would transform the Atlanta region, possibly without an increase in taxes to fund the expansion of the current rail system. Under the leadership of MARTA CEO Keith Parker, the transit agency has operated under budget for the past three consecutive years. DeKalb County would receive a new rail line linking the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with as Emory University as well as a line going eastward along I-20. Within the city limits, a beltline would be constructed. A line extension farther northward into Fulton County could present that county with enormous competitive advantages over adjacent Cobb and Gwinnett Counties, both of which have been long-time opponents of MARTA rail lines. With the advent of the generally automobile-averse "Millennial" generation into the workforce, MARTA is

(Continued on page 13)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 12)

now being viewed as being an essential part of the transit picture in Atlanta to make it competitive with other major cities with established rail transit systems. (***Atlanta Journal-Constitution***, July 11)

Cleveland, Ohio

Construction on the replacement Brookpark station on Cleveland's Red Line (Rapid) began in late July with demolition of the tunnel connecting the old station's east and west parking lots. The new station, costing $16.5 million, replaces one that opened on April 20, 1969, about six months after a four-mile extension of the line to Hopkins International Airport opened. (***Cleveland Plain Dealer*** via Ralph W. Deitrick, July 16, 2015)

Chicago, Illinois

The South Shore Line's new express service from South Bend is an apparent success, having added at least 100 new passengers to and from Chicago. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transit District is now studying the possibility of adding more express trains and reducing the travel time between Chicago and Odgen Dunes to 45 minutes, Michigan City to 60 minutes, and South Bend to 90 minutes within 5 years. This could be achieved by moving the line's terminus to the western side of the South Bend Airport, saving up to ten minutes of travel time, double-tracking key sections of the line, and addressing the issues of slow trip times through the streets of Michigan City. (WSBT-TV, July 9)

Metra began a four month, $530,000 rehabilitation of the Waukegan station on the Union Pacific Northwest Line. The work will include roof replacement, repair and repainting of the ceiling and masonry walls and floor tiles, new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps, and rehabilitation of two entrance vestibules. (***Progressive Railroading***, June 3)

On July 9, Metra began a three-month-long project to extend the platforms at the Mayfair station on the Milwaukee Line. Located just south of the intersection of the two-track Milwaukee Line with the three-track Union Pacific Northwest Line, the current station is only three cars long and forces trains stopping there to spend more time barding and disembarking passengers and stop in a manner that does not occupy the track circuit that controls the intersection with the UP line. The new platforms will be seven cars long with new lighting and shelters for the 350 riders who use this station. (Metra website, July 9)

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) began a four-month, $30 million track renewal project on the express tracks of the Purple Line between the Lawrence and Jarvis stations. Commencing July 20 with an expected completion date around the end of November, this will be the first major track renewal project for this section of track in 40 years and will involve the replacement of ties, replacement of running rail where necessary, and restoration of track alignment to eliminate the slow orders that have plagued the line for years, permitting the resumption of higher speeds. The work will be confined to weeknights and weekends to minimize the degree of service disruption to the riders as well as the neighborhoods along the line. (***Chicago Sun-Times***, July 9)

Metra dedicated its rebuilt Flossmoor station along the former Illinois Central electric line. Costing around $4 million, the station's platform and headhouse were rebuilt with a new foundation and the elevator was renovated along with the accessible ramp, stairs, and concrete support columns. New retaining walls and a warming house for Chicago's cold winters were constructed. (Al Holtz, June 27)

The six-week experiment that started on June 1 offering late evening express service on the Chicago Transit Authority's Purple Line to Evanston/Wilmette has not attracted enough ridership to justify the costs of continuing it beyond the trial period. Only an average of 89 additional passengers rode each train; the break-even point had been 468 passengers to justify its continuation. (***Daily Northwestern***, July 13)

Minneapolis-St. Paul Minnesota

After much controversy, the Southwest Corridor light-rail route has been shortened to save $250 million. This spring, despite discussion, legislators took no action on a request for $3 million in transit planning for the Gold Line, a bus-rapid transit commuter route that will follow Interstate 94 from St. Paul east to Woodbury. (***Lacrosse Tribune***, July 4)

Phoenix, Arizona

Valley Metro Rail expects to open its line extension into downtown Mesa seven months early, with a projected opening date of August 22. The three-mile extension along Main Street is expected to attract 5,000 new daily riders. (***Metro***, June 4)

Tucson, Arizona

Tucson's Sun Link streetcar celebrated its first anniversary of service on July 25. Ridership has steadily grown, exceeding projected levels and the line has carried over 1.1 million since opening in 2014, contributing greatly to the economic growth and development in downtown. (***Metro***, July 15)

San Francisco, California

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) has begun its testing process on the subsystems of the "Fleet of the Future" cars being built by Bombardier. If all goes well, the testing process will verify that all systems are functional and will operate in an integrated manner on the cars. Delivery of the first car is expected in November with the other nine cars of the first ten-car set received by BART by March, 2016. Testing will continue during the overnight periods and eventually off-peak hours and could be completed by as early as fall, 2016. As the new trainsets are delivered, the older cars will be phased out. All 775 cars are scheduled to be delivered by 2021. (Al Holtz, June 27)

Los Angeles, California

On Monday, July 13, Los Angeles' Metro marked 25 years of modern Metro Rail — and an astonishing 87 miles of rail built — by re-creating the opening of the

(Continued on page 14)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 13)

Metro Blue Line at the same spot where it occurred 25 years earlier.

A Metro Blue Line train appeared from the 7th Street/ Metro Center station tunnel through a veil of smoke to break through a banner as it did in 1990. From zero miles of rail in 1990 to 87 miles today and with five major rail lines under construction, including two more set to open next year that will add 17.6 more miles, modern Metro Rail is an amazing accomplishment, according to an agency statement. (*Editor's Note by Sasha Ivanoff: How amazing is that in 1990 the only passenger rail in the Los Angeles Basin whatsoever was the* San Diegan*s and today not only is there Metro Rail and the subway but Metrolink as well, quite a change from the car culture that Southern California is quite often known for.)*

Since 1990, the expanding Metro Rail system has carried 1.5 billion rides, which has led to a reduction of particulate matter in the air by 4,800 pounds per car for each year that the car is left at home. Additionally, the rail system has contributed to the positive reversal of surrounding neighborhoods such as Hollywood, Long Beach, Pasadena, and Little Tokyo. Better lighting, commercial development, and the in-and-out of travelers have all made the surrounding neighborhoods more prosperous and attractive to business and community.

In celebration of the Metro Rail event, 5,000 25th Anniversary commemorative TAP cards are being loaded into ticket vending machines in Union Station and the 7th/Metro, Pico, and Willowbrook stations. A Metro website has been established at metro.net/25 with details on upcoming 25th Anniversary events, including concerts and art and architecture tours of the rail stations, scheduled for the next year, as well as a chance to share stories through an interactive literary program that is open to the public. (***Metro*** Magazine, July 14)

Santa Ana, California

The prospect of a light-rail streetcar traversing a segment of the county's urban core took another step forward recently when the county transportation board approved a framework agreement with the city of Santa Ana.

Under the agreement, the Orange County Transportation Authority will bear responsibility for the construction, maintenance, and operation of the estimated $250 million Santa Ana to Garden Grove rail line.

The four-mile hop-on/hop-off service would carry commuters, shoppers, and tourists on a dozen stops to the county seat, jobs, and entertainment. It is expected to open in 2019.

There are still several steps to go. The agency must submit a final plan to the Federal Transit Administration in September, secure property along the rail line, and hire a contractor to design the route. OCTA and the City of Garden Grove also are expected to arrive at a framework agreement that will specify that city's role in operations.

Santa Ana Mayor and OCTA Director Miguel Pulido called the light-rail line a game-changer for car-centric Orange County, providing much-needed public transit for workers. Anaheim Mayor and OCTA Director Tom Tait, who favors buses over light rail, cast the sole vote against it. He questioned ridership estimates.

By 2035, the streetcar is expected to carry more than 6,000 a day. The fare would likely be $2 one-way and $5 for a day pass. Fares are projected to cover 30 percent of the estimated $5 million annual operating cost. Under the deal, Santa Ana will pay 10 percent of the balance, while OCTA will cover the rest.

When complete, up to seven streetcars will run from the Santa Ana train station, through downtown Santa Ana, along an old right-of-way used in an earlier era by Pacific Electric Red Cars. Streetcars would connect to a new transit hub at Harbor Boulevard and Westminster Avenue in Garden Grove.

In May, the project qualified for federal funding status that could provide half its construction money, with the rest coming from state, local, and other federal sources.

The streetcar is the county's second recent attempt at light rail. The $1 billion CenterLine project, scuttled about a decade ago, was to run from Santa Ana to John Wayne Airport. (***Orange County Register*** via Al Holtz, July 15)

San Diego, California

The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and UC San Diego Health announced the system's Blue Line trolley system, which is in the process of being extended, will be renamed the "UC San Diego Blue Line," to highlight the opportunity for all San Diegans to seek medical care at UC San Diego Health facilities.

MTS is currently working in conjunction with the San Diego Association of Governments, the California Department of Transportation, elected officials, and other stakeholders to develop and complete the 11-mile Blue Line extension (Mid-Coast Project) from Old Town to University Town Center by 2019.

The 30-year agreement includes naming rights to three stations on the line: the existing station at Old Town, to be renamed Old Town UC San Diego Health South, and planned stations at the UC San Diego main campus and at the health campus in La Jolla, which includes UC San Diego Jacobs Medical Center, slated to open in 2016.

MTS will receive an annual fee, beginning at $675,000 with subsequent increases tied to Mid-Coast project completion and the local Consumer Price Index. All funding for the sponsorship is from non-state sources. (***Metro*** Magazine, July 17)

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

GO Transit operated its first trains carrying revenue passengers on Thursday, July 9 from the James Street North station in Hamilton, Ontario. This marks the return of GO Train service to James Street North since service was moved from the CN station at James Street in 1996. Two round trips will be operated during the rush hours on weekdays, departing to Toronto at 6:16 and 6:46 AM and leaving Toronto at 4:47 and 5:23 PM arriv-

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

ing at Hamilton at 8:30 and 9:00 PM respectively. This service is expected to attract 200 new weekday passengers. Up to six additional trains served this station during the 2015 Pan Am Games between July 11 and July 26. Work is also continuing on constructing new elevators, staircases, and pedestrian bridges and a second platform to enable connections to the Niagara Falls summer seasonal services. Local people have complained that the station was hurriedly pressed into service just in time for the Pan Am Games and that much of the station was not quite up to standards when it opened. A station sign marked "West Harbour" was seen being erected at the station as the train carrying dedication ceremony dignitaries was enroute. This will apparently be the station's official name once construction work is completed. A third station named "Confederation" is planned for Hamilton while GO continues construction of the Lewis Road layover facility, which will accommodate equipment layovers. (CBC-Hamilton, July 6)

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) completed the renovation of its Union Station complex, linking it to Union Station, serving Go Transit and VIA Rail. A second platform with elevators for full accessibility was constructed to alleviate the overcrowding that had plagued the station in its old configuration. The original platform will no longer have to accommodate two trains unloading simultaneously or passengers waiting for trains in both directions as one platform will be used for one direction while the new platform will serve the other. In addition, there is now a new concourse encompassing a single paid fare area, widened stairways and ramps, redesigned fare collection queuing area and Collector booth, glazed partitions, and ceramic tile walls with an artwork wall and improved signage. Throughout the project, TTC's Union Station remained in operation, handling its normal ridership volumes exceeding 100,000 per weekday. Meanwhile, the renovation and modernization of Toronto's Union Station, across the street, continues on. (***Progressive Railroading***, July 6)

France

On July 7, Secretary of State for Transport Alain Vidalies presented the government's proposals for reviving the Trains d'Equilibre du Territoire, SNCF's network of conventional long-distance passenger trains, which have seen traffic fall by 20% since 2011. From €330 million in 2014, operating losses are expected to rise to an "unsustainable" €450 million in 2016 if action is not taken, according to the government.

The strategy has three main components, the first being a new TET operating agreement with SNCF Mobilités for 2016-20. This will see central government become "a true organizing authority" with the full powers enjoyed by France's regions for the TER network, able to intervene more effectively alongside local partners.

In consultation with local authorities, SNCF, trade unions, and other parties, the government is to consider how the TET network might be restructured to better meet new transport needs. Taking into account the findings of the Duron report submitted in May, work is to due to take place between January and May, 2016, and should enable government "to make the necessary decisions." Particular consideration will be given to overnight service where the need for change is urgent, according to the government.

The third strand of the strategy focuses on rolling stock and service quality, where the government intends to entirely renew the TET fleet by 2025 under a €1.5 billion investment program. This is due to get underway by the end of 2015, and in the meantime 34 Alstom multiple-units ordered at a cost of €510 million are to be deployed from the end of 2016 to replace locomotive-hauled TET stock. (***Railway Gazette***, July 7)

Germany

The light rail network in Freiburg has unveiled its new fleet of CAF Urbos 100 LRVs, which have been ordered as part of a €150 million investment in modernizing and expanding the meter-gauge network.

Following a European tender, Freiburg Transport (VAG) awarded CAF a contract in March, 2013 to supply 12 vehicles. The first six of these vehicles was to enter service on July 27 and expand the fleet in readiness for the opening of the extension city's exhibition center. The remaining six vehicles will be delivered in 2017, when the line to Rotteckring is due to be completed.

The 650-volt d.c. bidirectional vehicles are 42 meters long and accommodate up to 241 passengers, 72 of them seated.

VAG has not disclosed the purchase price for the vehicles, although it says the value of the contract, which includes spare parts and maintenance, is "less than €40 million."

The contract is CAF's first order for LRVs from a German customer. (***International Railway Journal***, July 17)

Russia

Russian Railways (RZD) announced that it was to introduce a Moscow-St. Petersburg-Tallinn service on July 10, two months after Estonian operator GoRail ceased operation of its remaining Estonia-Russia cross-border trains. The new train departs Moscow at 9:20 PM, arriving in St. Petersburg at 5:16 the following morning, getting into Tallinn at 1:38 PM, a 16-hour journey. Service from Estonia to Russia also was to commence on July 11, with the train departing Tallinn at 3:20 PM, arriving in St. Petersburg a little after 11 PM and arriving in Moscow around 9:30 AM, an 18-hour trip.

The train consists of four second-class coaches, third class coaches, and a staff car, while the train will feature a compartment for passengers with disabilities.

The GoRail service was introduced on an experimental basis in May, 2012, but GoRail began cutting back its offerings in February, blaming political tensions and the declining value of the ruble for a reduction in the number of tourists visiting Estonia. It operated its final Tallinn-St. Petersburg train on May 11 and the

(Continued on page 16)

TRACTION TOUR TO SOUTHERN EUROPE
by Jack May
(Photographs by the author)
(Continued from July, 2015 issue)

I got up bright and early the next morning, made and consumed a hearty breakfast, and was out the door before my companion from Belarus had even stirred. I left my bag and took the key, figuring I had plenty of time to get back before the noon checkout time. I arrived at the interurban terminal on this gloomy morning at about 8:45, and then spied an annunciator listing the departure times of the next cars. Uh, oh. While I knew today was May 1, it hadn't struck me until now that all of Italy (if not Europe) would be celebrating Labor Day. Perhaps this explained the hotelkeeper's absence. Consequently Sunday/Holiday schedules were in effect with service on the light rail line running only twice an hour. I was going to suffer some long waits. I rode a virtually empty 8:33 car to the end of the line, Albino, a 30-minute trip (see http://www.urbanrail.net/eu/it/berg/bergamo.htm).

Bergamo has a population of about 130,000. If this was the United States the city would be considered to be a suburb of Milan, which is only 35 miles to the southwest. Its standard-gauge light rail line is double-track, and runs for about 8 miles over the route of the former Valle Seriana Railway, which was abandoned in 1967. Its inner portion was rebuilt some 4 decades later and electrified at 900 volts d.c. (do not ask me how they came up with that number), opening in 2009. Interestingly, there had been a meter-gauge carline in a street parallel to the railway that operated from 1912 to 1953. It had been electrified at 800 volts d.c.

Eight Ansaldo Breda 100-percent low-floor units operate on the 16-station line, with just three needed to hold down the 30-minute headway on Sundays. At most other times the frequency is every 15 minutes, which is reduced to 7.5 minutes during weekday rush hours. From a look at the timetable, it seems the rush hours correspond with the opening and closing of schools, so it is quite possible that many students use the line. Fares are zoned, with most tickets being purchased from vending machines. Interestingly, the time limit for one-way trips varies depending on the number of zones to be traversed, and ranges from 75 minutes to 2 hours. There are 5 zones, and they appear to be part of a regional tariff, which includes the city's bus lines.

The sun was now breaking through and I was feeling better about things. I rode the same car (at 9:09) back to a way station, Alzano Sopra, for photos, and then took the next outbound for a couple of stops to Nembro Saletti, where I photographed both my car and the following inbound arriving (the same car). I boarded it (the 9:39 out of Albino), which allowed me to get back to the Bergamo interurban terminal at 10:09. The line is not fast. There are some 30 grade crossings that are controlled by traffic signals or stop signs (not gates), with LRVs slowing down for each. Thus the average speed from one end of the line to the other is only 15 mph. There were a large number of bicycles on the road this holiday morning pacing the interurban cars.

Upon arrival back in Bergamo, I came across the start of the May Day parade, with a festive group of marchers carrying musical instruments, flags, and banners. By now it was time to photograph the next outbound car (10:33) and inbound one (10:39), which I accomplished from the right-of-way just beyond the station, and immediately after I rushed back to my B&B, arriving at about 10:45. I quickly picked up my bag, said goodbye to the owner, who was now on the scene, left the key with her, and hurriedly returned to the railroad station, just in time to catch the 10:57 train to Milan. While my visit was a bit rushed, and I did not have sufficient time to ride Bergamo's two funiculars, I had a productive morning in Bergamo.

(Continued on page 17)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 15)

overnight Tallinn-Moscow train on May 19. In general, the route has been discontinued on numerous occasions. (***International Railway Journal***, July 3)

AFRICA

The first of 12 Alstom Duplex high-speed trainsets for national railway ONCF was unloaded at the Port of Tanger on June 29. It had been shipped from the Port of La Pallice near La Rochelle in France onboard Ville de Bordeaux, a roll-on roll-off vessel custom-built to carry Airbus A-380 aircraft sections.

The double-deck trainsets are based on the TGV Duplex design that has been in service with French national operator SNCF since 1996, but adapted for local operating conditions.

They are to be used on Tanger–Casablanca trains, using a 320-kilometer route including a 183-kilometer high-speed line between Tanger and Kénitra that is being built for operation at up to 320 kilometers per hour. From Kénitra to Casablanca the trains will use a conventional line upgraded for speeds up to 220 kilometers per hour.

Opening of the new line was planned for December, 2015 when construction was launched by King Mohammed VI and French President Nicolas Sarkozy in Sep-

(Continued on page 18)

Traction Tour to Southern Europe

(Continued from page 16)

Bergamo's "interurban terminal" is adjacent to the railroad station. An Ansaldo Breda low-floor Sirio LRV waits for its departure time in a venue that cries out for an upgrade, or at least some paint. Note the more traditional front end of this model, compared with the units used in Florence and Naples.

The bumper block at Albino with the old railroad station alongside.

An outbound car enters the simple station facility at Alzano Sopra. Note the graffiti on the shelter.

Car 13 approaches the inner terminal of the light rail line. At left is a garage used by Bergamo's bus system. All three cars on the line had one of its 5 sections wrapped in advertising.

Italy tolerates a Communist party, which marched peacefully in the parade. May 1 is the day to celebrate workers, and most businesses were closed.

A view of one of the funiculars from the Internet. Photo from lebaccanti.com.

(Continued next issue)

Around New York's Transit System

More Information About BRT/BMT Subway Anniversary Celebration

MTA New York City Subway held a special commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the subway line from Manhattan to Coney Island via the Sea Beach Line (see article in July, 2015 issue). Opened on June 22, 1915, the initial line built by the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company (BRT) in what would eventually become BMT paved the way to the construction of many other lines, forming the city's first complete subway. This milestone was celebrated during the weekend of June 27-28, 2015 with a gala "Centennial Parade of Trains" featuring four vintage trainsets from the Transit Museum's collection of operable cars. Three of the trainsets operated back and forth between Brighton Beach and Kings Highway on the two express tracks of the Brighton Line, which had been reserved for their exclusive use between noon and 4 pm. The result of a Herculean effort by the dedicated people who restore, and maintain this fleet; for the first time in around 35 years, three B-Type Standards (S-2390-1-2-N) carried passengers under their own power. The last time the set operated in service was on the Nostalgia Specials of the 1970s. It operated on a two-station shuttle between Brighton Beach and Ocean Parkway, traveling back and forth on its own track. Also making their first appearance in passenger service in 11 years were two sets of the D-Type triplex articulated subway cars, 6112A on the north end and 6095A on the south end. They had last operated for the New York City Subway Centennial Parade of Trains in late October, 2004 when they had suffered a serious mechanical issue which prevented them from operating under their own power until now. Five R-1 to R-9-class IND cars made an appearance: Car 1000 was parked at Brighton Beach and was used as a traveling retail store for the Transit Museum while a four car set of R-1 to R-9s (N-381-401-1300-1802-S) operated in excursion service. Rounding out the vintage train operations was the "Train of Many Metals" consisting of R-16 6387 on the north end, R38s 4029-8, R42s 4573-2, and R-11/R-34 8013 at the south end to round out the museum operations. The Train Operators were most accommodating to the multitudes of railway photographers lining the platform edges between the Kings Highway and Ocean Parkway stations. On some occasions, they even stopped opposite the local platforms at Avenue U and Neck Road to pose for individual pictures as well as to pose for a "meet" with another vintage train as it passed by on the adjacent track. There were even a few occasions where they posed on the express track so the railfans could get a passing shot of the vintage train with the current and newest model of subway car on that line, the R-160. Even the weather cooperated for the most part. It was cloudy on both days with rain at the end of the day's activities on Saturday, June 27, but the sun did shine on the entire scene for about 90 minutes on Sunday, June 28, making for even greater photos.

R-33 Tourist Information Center Out of Business

R-33 9075, which has been on display outside the Queens Borough Hall and the adjacent courthouse complex and used as a tourist information center on weekdays for only four hours a day since 2008 was ordered closed on July 13, 2015 by Queens Borough President Melinda Katz due to low patronage. Apparently, its only visitors were people on jury duty at the courthouse on their breaks. The fate of the car is unknown at press time.

Station Closures Due to Parade

To prevent dangerous overcrowding during the ticker-tape parade on July 10 honoring the U.S. women's soccer team winning the world championship, NYC Transit closed the City Hall station (R) and may have temporarily closed the following five stations as crowds warranted. Fulton Street (4 5 A C); Wall Street (4 5); Chambers Street (A C); and World Trade Center (E).

Queens Boulevard Line to Get CBTC

The Queens Boulevard line, carrying E F M R trains, will be the third NYCT line where Communications-Based Train Control (CBTC) signals will be installed. The advanced signal system will permit trains to operate on closer headways, translating into more trains per hour over each track, reducing delays and increasing capacity. A $205.8 million contract to Siemens and Thales Transport & Security was given preliminary approval by MTA. A side benefit of this system will be the installation of "countdown clocks," a display of the status of approaching trains and when they will arrive. Phase one of the project will install the signal system on all four tracks of the Queens Boulevard Line from just north of the Union Turnpike station to the 47th-50th Street station at Rockefeller Center on F M and the 50th Street station on E. It can be assumed that R would be covered

(Continued on page 7)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 16)

tember, 2011, but delays to the infrastructure works mean this has now been put back to 2017.

ONCF expects the new line to reduce Tanger–Casablanca journey times from 4 hours 45 minutes to 2 hours 10 minutes.

The rolling stock contract worth almost €400 million was signed by ONCF and Alstom in December, 2010. The trainsets are to be maintained by Société Marocaine de Maintenance des Rames à Grande Vitesse, a 60:40 joint venture of ONCF and SNCF under a separate 15-year deal worth €175 million. (***Railway Gazette***, July 1)