



SEMAPHORE



February 2019

The LIST meeting will be held on **Friday, February 15th, 8pm** at the **Historic Van Bourgondien House in West Babylon**. This house is located at 600 Albin Avenue in West Babylon. The LIRR West Babylon Team Yard is located approximately 1/4 mile NW from the house also on Albin Avenue. Immediately adjacent to the house are soccer fields with a large parking lot for our use. Parking is also on site at the rear of the house down a long driveway. Albin Avenue is just off Arnold Avenue. Arnold Avenue begins at Route 109 on the north, just south of Sunrise Highway and on the south end it is off Great East Neck Road.

THIS MONTH:

Gerard Jewels will provide a slide show on the King Park VA Hospital siding and its facilities as well as a video titled "Action on the Long Island Rail Road."

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For regular updates and other important information, visit the Chapter website at:

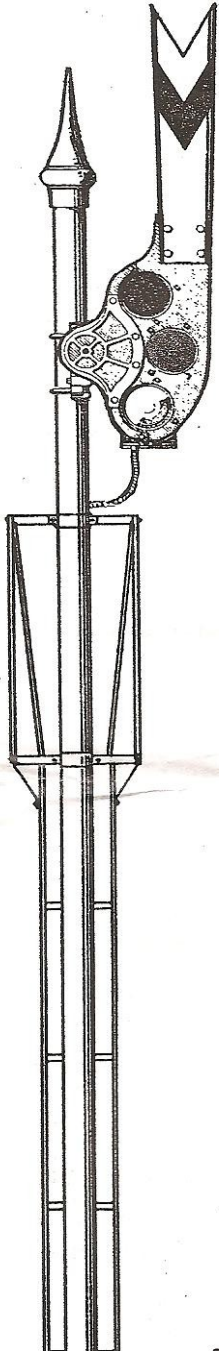
www.LIST-NRHS.org

The Chapter mailing address is:

LIST—NRHS

P O Box 507

Babylon, New York 11702-0507



THE PUBLICATION OF THE
LONG ISLAND-SUNRISE TRAIL CHAPTER
OF THE
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY





The following price list is for LIST members only!



# _____ LIRR Main Line East by D. Morrison *new book	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR Trackside with Matt Herson by M. Boland	@48 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR Oyster Bay Branch	@18 each Total _____
# _____ 2019 LIRR Calendar	@\$5 each Total _____
# _____ 2018 LIRR Calendar	@\$2 each Total _____
# _____ The LIRR Co. A Hist. 1834-1965 by Bob Sturm	@\$38 each Total _____
# _____ From a Nickel to a Token by A. Sparberg	@ \$25 each Total _____
# _____ Shortline RR's of LI by LIST	@\$27 each Total _____
# _____ Steel Road Nostalgia, Vol. 1 the Northeast	@\$32 each Total _____
# _____ Steel Road Nostalgia, Vol.2 the Northeast	@\$32 each Total _____
# _____ Jamaica Station by Dave Morrison	@ \$18 each Total _____
# _____ Sunnyside Yard+Hell Gate Bridge- D. Morrison	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR 175 th Anniversary 60 page book	@\$2 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR Stations by Dave Morrison	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR Port Jefferson Branch by D. Morrison	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____ The Long Island Rail Road, in color Vol. 1	@\$48 each Total _____
# _____ The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 2	@\$48 each Total _____
# _____ The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 3	@\$48 each Total _____
# _____ The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 4	@\$48 each Total _____
# _____ The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 5	@48 each Total _____
# _____ The LIRR, In Color Power 1952-2015	@\$48 each Total _____
# _____ The LIRR Part Seven by V. Seyfried	@\$25 each Total _____
# _____ Victorian Stations of the LIRR by Ron Ziel	@\$25 each Total _____

Shipping for 1 of the books or calendar, \$3.50.

Shipping for extra books, please call or e mail Steve Quigley for the shipping cost.

NY State Residents, please add 8.625% tax to the total of the merchandise PLUS the shipping]

*****NY RESIDENTS, THE COST OF THE CALENDAR IS \$9.23*****



List Happenings by Steve Quigley

The January meeting took place with Mr. Philip Eng, President of LIRR as the guest presenter. In addition to Mr. Eng, Elisa Picca, Executive Vice-President of the LIRR and Mr. Edward Dumas, Vice-President of Public Affairs and Market Development were also in attendance. Mr. Eng started with a power point presentation showing recent major accomplishments such as the 2nd track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma which then led into future plans. The future plans were among other items, the 3rd track between Hicksville and Floral Park and East Side Access. He also mentioned the plan to electrify the Central Branch of the LIRR between Babylon and "B" Tower.

The power point presentation ended and an extensive question and answer session was next. The Q + A session would have lasted a lot longer if I didn't say last question so that our guests could go home.

Many thanks to Philip Eng, Elisa Picca and Ed Dumas whom provided an enlightening and informative as well as an enjoyable meeting. We all appreciated the time they spent with us answering questions as well as providing an insider's look of the LIRR.

The LIST February 2019 meeting will be held at the Historic Van Bourgondien house at 600 Albin Avenue in West Babylon. There is plenty of parking immediately adjacent to the house in the soccer field's parking lot next door with a gate in the fence separating the soccer field's parking lot from the house.

As I mentioned at the meeting, if you need a ride from or to the LIRR Babylon train station, please call or email me and we will make arrangements. The LIRR's Babylon station is approximately 1.5 miles from the site. This building has a kitchen as well as 2 bathrooms for our accommodation.

We have mailed out many copies of our 2019 LIRR calendar and books. If you have NOT received your items, please let me know and I will send you a duplicate copy.

You will notice on the order form that we have reduced the price of a few of the items that we have remaining. The few remaining copies of our 2019 LIRR calendar have been reduced in price!

The LIRR's 185th Anniversary is April 24th 2019. Among other items, we plan on publishing a book similar to the one we published for the 175th Anniversary. If you would like to write an article for this book, please let me know your idea as soon as possible. We already have 4 articles but are in need of a couple more.

If you would like to receive an electronic version of the Semaphore, please email me with your email address and I will send you the electronic version which will have color pictures when we publish pictures.

The Winter Model Train Show & Exhibition was held Sunday January 13th 2019 at the Freeport LI Recreation Center. Our Chapter had 2 tables at this show and the assistance of several Chapter members was appreciated. Bob Myers, Richie Schulman and I staffed our tables all day.

If you wish to write an article for the Semaphore, just let me know and I am sure that we will be able to print it [sooner or later]. My e mail address is csquigley@optonline.net and my telephone # is **631-487-4766**. Please email your articles.

Long Island Rail Road News by By Steve Quigley

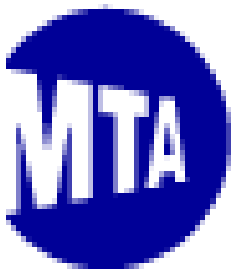
The Long Island Rail Road had one of its best months in one time performance in December. 93.5% of its trains ran on time the most since April. LIRR management attributed the railroads performance to its LIRR Forward service improvement initiative taking hold which was initiated in May 2018. The program aims to tackle the railroads most persistent problems, including by more quickly upgrading and hardening the system against severe weather.

The LIRR carried 89.8 million riders in 2018. The most in nearly seven decades the number of customers was 0.7% more than in 2017. The management of the LIRR attributed the growth in ridership to the regions improving economy as well as big gains in non commuters such as ridership to the East End. Sales on non monthly tickets grew by 1.3% The railroad carried 50.8 million regular commuters which was up 0.2% from 2017. LIRR President Phillip Eng stated "The LIRR is a key pillar of the Long Island economy and we are working hard to strengthen it by providing more reliable train service and outstanding customer service." The railroad said economic and demographic trends suggest its ridership growth will continue "as a generation now entering the workforce shows a greater reliance on the railroad than prior generations.

An agreement reached between Amtrak, the MTA and the state will explore the potential for a direct rail link between Long Island and cities throughout the Northeast. At the same time, a controversial plan to add another railroad [Metro-North] to the already crowded Penn Station. There will be a joint study on the feasibility of Amtrak running several trains daily from Long Island to Penn Station and continuing either north to Boston or south to Washington. Several obstacles exist regarding running trains to Long Island, one of which is that fact that Amtrak uses overhead catenary versus the LIRR uses 3rd rail. Another obstacle is the limited capacity on LIRR tracks between Penn and Jamaica stations.

In a light note, the LIRR's heightened efforts to clean and beautify its stations [i.e. Wyandanch station] and trains will include doing away with the longtime practice of repairing and patching torn train seats with duct tape and posters. It was announced that going forward, holes and rips in the vinyl train seats will be repaired using a full seat patch that covers the seat which gives the appearance of new upholstery. The duct tape repairs are in widespread use on the 1980's era M-3 cars. The new patches are mad by 3M.

President Eng has mentioned that the LIRR announced that the real estate company CBRE Group Inc. paid \$65,000 to adopt Jamaica station and fund new customer information upgrades there. LAZ Parking is paying \$20,000 over 2 years to fund enhancements at the Ronkonkoma station.



Long Island Rail Road

THE LIRR MODELER by Mike Boland

This Month's Feature:

RETURN TO THE AMHERST RAILROAD SOCIETY'S TRAIN SHOW AT THE BIG E

Sometimes things really do work out for the better, or even the best. I had to return from Florida to attend to some things back on Cape Cod and these activities kept me on the Cape up north through the end of last month (January). So this made the annual train show at the Big E in West Springfield, MA available for me to attend and I did not miss this golden opportunity. I did miss the show last year since I was in Florida and this year's activities also forced me to miss the Prototype Rails 2019 RPM Meet in Cocoa Beach, FL earlier last month. Fortunately, I was able to ride a nice, comfortable bus (boy, I never thought I'd ever say that) to the show from nearby my home and I had a wonderful time.

I attended the show on Saturday, January 25th, and our bus rolled up to the Big E at about 9:45am, in plenty of time to get my wristband, get off the bus, which was parked right by the main entrance of the Better Living Center (BLC) and get six hours of shopping and browsing at the four buildings that house the show, the BLC, the Stroh, Young and Mallery structures.

The Amherst Railway Society's annual Train Show continues to be overwhelming in scope with new vendors appearing every year. It has lost some vendors over the years, LIST's Gene Collora and his wonderful photos, comes to mind immediately and Charlie Lehman's unfortunate passing a couple of years ago has made his Railworks' fine brass models no longer on the scene but the show continues to roll along—no pun intended—and get bigger and greater.

This year was a little different for me. I really didn't purchase too many items, maybe because I already have a sizeable amount of motive power and rolling stock.

But I did buy a few freight cars as well as a number of decals for my future LIRR projects.

What's nice about this show is the amount of retail vendors and model railroading manufacturers who have tables and displays. It is a good mix and gives modelers a chance to talk to the manufacturers about upcoming models. As you may know, the chaos in China is affecting model railroad manufacturers, their products and their delivery dates but this is our reality. Many products will be delayed so one just has to be patient and the model you want will come out. An example of this is the LIRR RS3 that is being manufactured by Bowser. Bowser's Lee English had a Phase 3 model available on his table and it really looked good, but it will be awhile before it comes out.

I'm sure LIRR modelers can wait this out, if this is what it takes for a good model to be manufacturer. A good model...and an accurate model...that's all we want, right?

There were many, many items for sale and the number of fantastic layouts was staggering. All were worth a good, long visit to observe, admire and enjoy! There was even a live steam engine in the parking lot outside, complete with whistle.

Long Island was represented by TRAINLAND of Lynbrook and the Twin Forks Chapter of the NRHS. In keeping with a recent innovation, a number of clinics were offered on a variety of topics.

All in all, it was a great even and I'm glad I went. Next time, I'll be starting a new series on LIRR cabin cars, "hacks" and cabooses. Until then, happy modeling!

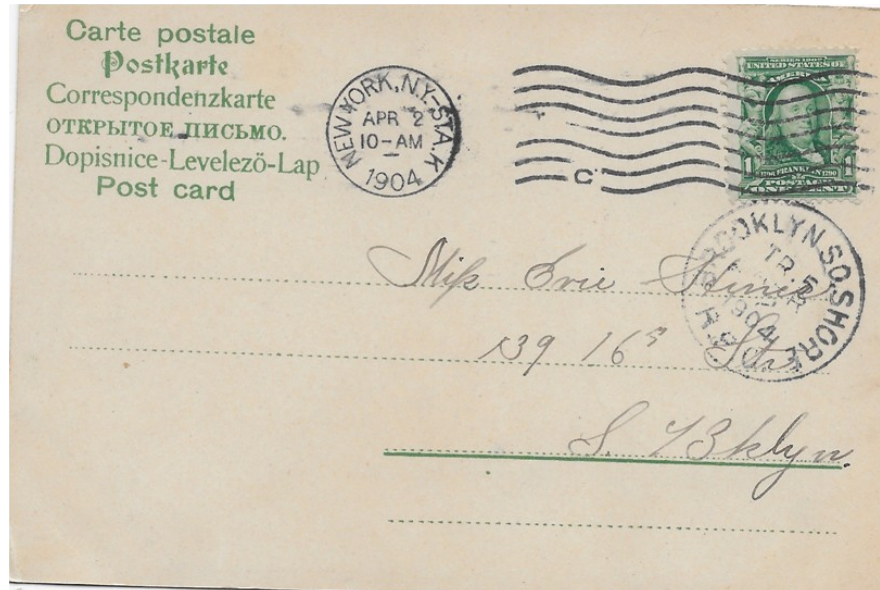


Brooklyn Rapid Transit Street Car R.P.O. Service by Ken Katta

The Brooklyn & South Shore RPO:

This RPO was established on Feb. 12, 1900 under contract with the **Brooklyn Heights RR Co.** to service the entire south shore of Brooklyn. This RPO was by closed pouch only. The line was 14.91 miles long. It served the communities of Prospect Park, West Brooklyn, Blythebourne, Ft. Hamilton, Bay Ridge, Bath Beach, and Sheepshead Bay. This service ended on Dec 4, 1906.

Brooklyn & South Shore RR postcard postmarked Apr 2, 1904 in New York City and delivered in Brooklyn the very same day. Very fast service!



The Brooklyn & Ft. Hamilton RPO and the Second Brooklyn & Coney Island RPO:

On Dec. 4, 1896, the Brooklyn South Shore RPO ended service and was divided into the Brooklyn & Coney Island RPO and the Brooklyn & Ft. Hamilton RPO. The second Brooklyn & Coney Island RPO served central Brooklyn south to Coney Island and Sheepshead Bay. It was 12.07 miles long.



FRONT AND BACK OF 1903 ENVELOPE WITH THE **BROOKLYN, N.Y. CIRCUIT RPO/TRIP 8/MARCH 23, 1903 CANCEL**

Brooklyn Rapid Transit Street Car R.P.O. Service by Ken Katta



POSTCARD ORIGINATED IN ATLANTIC CITY, N.J./APRIL 6, 1905. DESTINATION POSTMARK ALSO BROOKLYN, N.Y./APRIL 7, 1905. POSTCARD CARRIED ON BROOKLYN STREETCAR, TRIP 2 WITH CANCEL **BROOKLYN CIR. R.P.O./TR. 2/APR. 7, 1905.**

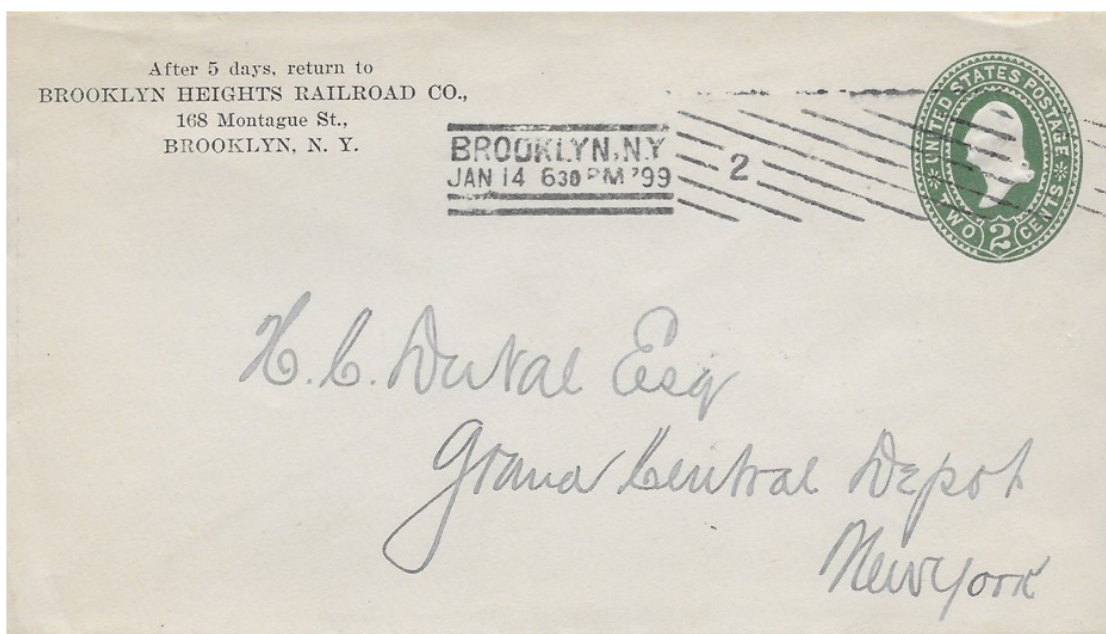
Finally, another closed pouch street-car service in Brooklyn was opened in April 1897 as a suburban mail route along Grand Street to Corona Avenue out to Flushing, Queens. The post offices served were Flushing, Maspeth, and branches in Corona, Newtown, and Metropolitan. The route was 11.81 miles long, and the trip was 45 minutes from Newtown to downtown Brooklyn. The route was designated Route 307022, and the contract was with the **Brooklyn Heights RR Co.** This service ended on Mar. 31, 1913.

In the 1899 Annual Report of the Postmaster General, the Brooklyn postmaster on August 31, 1899 provided an interesting review of the street-car postal service in Brooklyn. He reported that there were 16 branch post-office stations in Brooklyn, all of which were supplied solely by mails transported by street-cars. Six of these had street railway postal car service while the remainder had the closed pouch service on regular passenger cars. The closed pouch service totaled 132,074.77 miles annually while the railway post-office service totaled 119,111.76 miles annually. The clerks of the railway post-office worked during July an average of 6199 pieces of first-class mail per clerk per day for carrier's delivery. It was the opinion of the Brooklyn postmaster that the Brooklyn RPO street-car service was the best and cheapest service obtainable. Further, he stated that "The electric-railway mail service is an unqualified success in Brooklyn, and must not only be retained, but rapidly extended.

Brooklyn Rapid Transit Street Car R.P.O. Service by Ken Katta

Unfortunately, the combination mail cars proved to be less than satisfactory. Passengers became irritated when the mail crew stopped for mail pickups. Conversely, the mail crews fussed at the numerous delays in picking up and discharging passengers. The **Brooklyn Heights RR Co.** then had new mail cars constructed for the exclusive purpose of handling the mail. These were rebuilt single truck cars, 16 feet long, with doors on each side to receive and discharge mail sacks. The motorman and conductor wore the uniforms of the United States Postal Service. In Oct. 1899, the **BHRR** charged 12 cents a mile for pulling mail cars. On Nov. 2, 1899 with a new agreement the charge was reduced to 10½ cents a mile.

But the trolley car RPO service in Brooklyn was destined to terminate. With the advent of automobiles, it was only a matter of time when the trolley RPO service would be discontinued. Postmaster Wilson of Brooklyn in an effort to reduce the cost of mail transport, planned to use automobiles for mail delivery saving thousands of dollars a year.



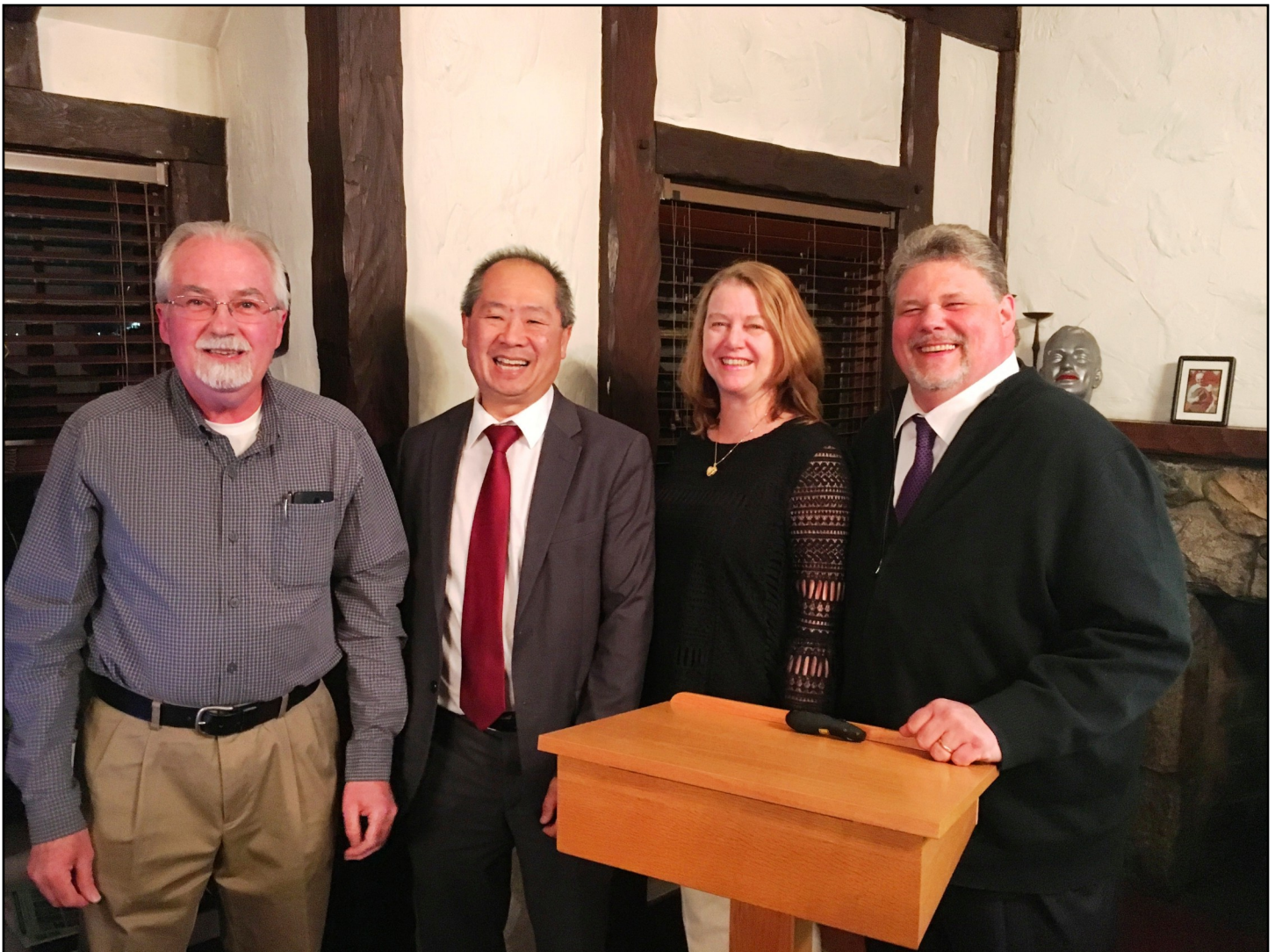
Cover posted in Brooklyn from the Brooklyn Heights RR in 1899. Notice that the addresses for both the Brooklyn City RR and the Brooklyn Heights RR are very near to each other. The Brooklyn Heights RR had leased the Brooklyn City RR as part of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit System.

In the period of 1900-1910, mail cars increasingly interfered with passenger car service. This resulted in friction between **BRT** operations and the post office. Thus on Jan. 6, 1913, the **BRT** ceased handling closed pouch mail on its passenger cars. On August 31, 1914, the mail cars made their last trip. The Brooklyn Railway Post Office ceased to exist.

This article was based information obtained from "Street Car R.P.O. Service in Brooklyn and New York City" by John M. Price, M.D. published by the Mobile Post Office Society Street Car Monograph Series 1979. The photos of the R.P.O. covers are from the author's personal collection.

LIRR President and Executive Staff Address LIST-NRHS

At last month's meeting, Long Island Rail Road President Philip Eng addressed the LIST-NRHS Chapter with a power point presentation showing recent major accomplishments such as the 2nd track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma which then led into future plans. The future plans were among other items, the 3rd track between Hicksville and Floral Park and East Side Access. He also mentioned the plan to electrify the Central Branch of the LIRR between Babylon and "B" Tower. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Stephen Quigley, Philip Eng, Elisa Picca and Edward Dumas

The Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society is a non-profit 501c3 Educational Organization. The Chapter was founded in 1966 to serve the Long Island area. The SEMAPHORE is the official publication of the Chapter. Articles appearing herein do not necessarily express the attitude of the Chapter or the NRHS. Please address all correspondence and membership inquiries to: LIST-NRHS, PO Box 507, Babylon, New York 11702-0507

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