



# SEMAPHORE



## June 2019

The LIST meeting will be held on **Friday, June 21st, 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:

John Kilbride will provide a slide presentation, "Inside Sunnyside," the first hundred years of Sunnyside Yard's operation initiated with its construction, explain the operational practices and provide present-day views, beginning with a cab ride trip from Penn Station. The role of the yard as part of the entire PRR's Tunnel and Terminal Railroad project will be explained and a handout provided to assist in understanding the facility's contribution to the organized dispatching of out-bound trains throughout the first century!

### ***THIS WILL BE THE LAST MEETING UNTIL SEPTEMBER!***

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

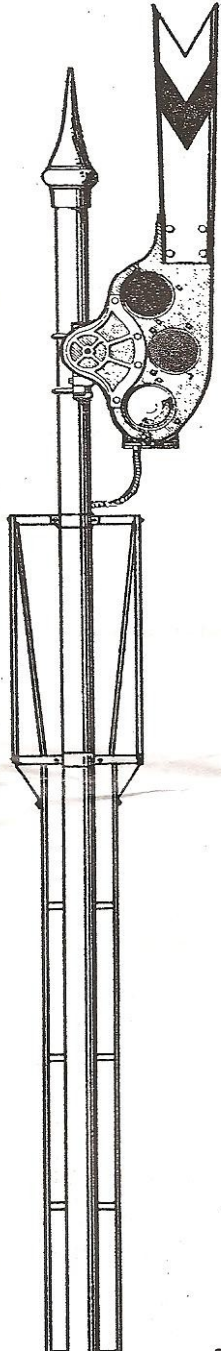
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THE PUBLICATION OF THE  
LONG ISLAND-SUNRISE TRAIL CHAPTER  
OF THE  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY





**The following price list is for LIST members only!**

# _____	The 185 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the LIRR NEW	@\$12 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Main Line East by D. Morrison	@\$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	@\$25 each Total _____
# _____	Steel Road Nostalgia, Vol.2 the Northeast	@\$25 each Total _____
# _____	Jamaica Station by Dave Morrison	@ \$18 each Total _____
# _____	Sunnyside Yard+Hell Gate Bridge- D. Morrison	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR 175 <sup>th</sup> 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

We will have a short business meeting at the beginning of this month's meeting. The annual elections will take place. As a reminder, we do not have Chapter meetings in July and August. We will resume our meetings starting in September so enjoy rail fanning this summer.

We always need assistance at our tables when the annual RMLI Rail fest is held the weekend before Labor Day. Please come out to Riverhead and help us for an hour or more on Saturday or Sunday. Your assistance is appreciated.

The Lindenhurst Historical Society's 1901 restored LIRR depot and freight house Museum will open on Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup> from 2 to 4 PM. The site is open on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays through the end of September. Admission is free. The interior of the depot tells the story of the South Side Railroad and later the LIRR from 1867 on.

The Long Island Live Steamers train club picnic will be held on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is an annual event in which our organization as well as others were invited to attend. The Live Steamers are located in Southaven Park in Shirley on the North service road of Sunrise Highway. They have a mile+ of track and run various actual steam locomotives as well as replicas of diesel and electric locos. If you have never been there, bring your family as their railroad is fascinating and enjoyable.

Our Chapters new book, titled "The 185<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Long Island Rail Road" is available and selling well. The book is 72 pages and consists of 8 articles concerning the people, places and things of the LIRR. The articles are different from but will complement our Chapters 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book that we published 10 years ago. Our members' price is \$12.00 plus \$3.50 shipping. [New York members pay sales tax of \$1.34; the total is \$16.84 for people living in N Y State] I believe you have never seen the topics of the articles in print before so I know you will enjoy the information presented.

The June 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.

I made a special purchase of the two books that were written by Gene Collura. The books are Volumes 1 and 2 of "Steel Road Nostalgia." These are books of black and white photos of railroads around the Northeast and of course include shots of the LIRR. If you are familiar with Gene's photos, you are acquainted with his excellent photography. The price of these copies is now \$25 which is reduced from the original price of \$32. There are only a few copies remaining that are available at this reduced price.

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. For the time being, I am sending a paper copy of the Semaphore as well as an electronic version if you have requested an electronic version. I will be doing it in this manner until the end of this season which is June. So for now, you will see the paper copy a few days after you receive the emailed version.

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](mailto:csquigley@optonline.net) and my telephone # is **631-487-4766**. Please email your articles.



**LIRR NEWS by Steve Quigley**

This month, construction of a new Penn Station entrance and a wider LIRR concourse is expected to begin. The new entrance will be at 33<sup>rd</sup> street and Seventh Avenue and will connect commuters to the LIRR concourse as well as the Seventh and Eighth Avenue subway lines. The new entrance will be a triangular glass shed supported by steel cables and it is expected to bring natural light down on to the LIRR concourse.

The width of the LIRR concourse is being expanded from 30' to 60' and the ceiling will be raised 7 to 18 feet. The construction is expected to cost \$600 million and completed by December 2020.

Transportation experts have tried to pressure NY Governor Cuomo by forming a coalition called the Public for Penn Station. This group calls for the moving of Madison Square Garden to allow for a true rebuilding of Penn Station to make room for additional passenger capacity as well as a landmark New Yorkers can be proud of again.

The LIRR ran on time more often in April than in any month in almost 7 years. The on time performance was calculated at 95.3% which was the best since October 2012. The evening rush hour was slightly better than the morning rush. Through the first four months of 2019, the LIRR has operated 93.7% of its trains on time which is an improvement of 4 points over the same period last year.

LIRR President Phillip Eng, whom was the guest speaker at our January meeting, attributed the improvement in on time performance to his "LIRR Forward" initiative which addresses the LIRR's most persistent problems. These problems include accidents on the tracks, cars turning onto rail road tracks, severe weather and problematic track switches. Also, vegetation, especially trees, growing onto rail road lines have been cleared at an accelerated pace which helps reduce issues.

Look for the new M – 9's to be rolled out this summer. Test trains of M – 9's have been seen on various lines in anticipation of their introduction. Their introduction has been delayed due a variety of issues including some that were noted by LIRR personnel. The cars must operate 4,000 miles in test runs without a problem before they can enter into regular service. The first order of 92 cars will be introduced into service from next month until January of 2020. The LIRR has exercised an option to buy an additional 110 cars.

Enjoy viewing all of the changes and construction that is occurring this summer on the LIRR and

HAPPY RAILFANNING!



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

Stephen F. Quigley, President

Steven R. Torborg, Editor

## ***THE LIRR MODELER by Mike Boland***

### ***This Month's Feature:***

## ***BUILDING CABIN CARS 51-55 CONCLUSION***

Back in 1992 in the October issue of the now-defunct magazine *Mainline Modeler*, modeler Glenn Bartolotti wrote an interesting article about kitbashing Boston & Maine “buggies,” or transfer cabooses. It turns out that this car was almost a clone for LIRR cabin cars #51 through #55, built by the International Car Company. An extremely close model of the LIRR “hacks” can be made by kitbashing the Athearn wide-vision caboose, which is still available. By removing the wide-vision cupola and the area beneath it and reattaching both ends, an accurate model of these steel LIRR cabooses can be made.

Remove the cupola—it pops off—and cut through the body and floor. Discard the middle of the car and then you’ll need to put the car halves together again, with some styrene stiffeners added to give strength to the “new” car. Fill whatever gaps you have with putty, sand and reassemble the car but don’t put it together until you’re done as you will have to put clear plastic behind the windows to resemble the glass of the prototype. One window on each end of the car will have to be filled in; use putty or styrene or both to do this. When you face the end of the car, the window to the left has to be filled, or when you come out of the door while riding the caboose, it’s the window on the right that has to be filled in since it doesn’t exist on the prototype. The underframe will need to be cut up, remeasured and reattached so it resembles the prototype. The middle window on the side of the car that has three windows must be filled and then a new window added to one side of the car as it exists on the prototype.

You’ll have to make a new end for the roof on both ends of the car by cutting and then gluing the piece onto the roof. Purchase a ladder from Plano to use rather than the original metal ladder provided by Athearn; discard it. You can reuse the brake wheel and apparatus or make one of your own. You’ll have to add new .012 railings here. A new roofwalk and ends from Plano might be better to install, too. The short platforms where the ladder ends have handles to climb on the roof are can be formed from brass wire. After the cars were painted in MTA blue and yellow, the roofwalks were removed and the ladders cut to half their length; I probably will model my MTA caboose with a roof walk along with the earlier orange LIRR cabin cars.

These cars had some interesting variations in their paint schemes so obtain prototype photos before modeling. There are decals available for both the orange LIRR version and later MTA cabooses. Glenn’s article mentioned that he moved the bolsters and trucks a little bit closer to the end of the car but I chose not to. These five cabin cars had a number of handrails which are molded on so you can choose to leave them or removed them by sanding them off and adding your own from .012 brass railing stock. I hope to do the latter. An interesting detail item on these five cabin cars were the upper handrails to the left and right of the door on the platform. These rails extended outward and then bent upward at an angle and sank into the roof. Later cabooses did not have these.

Replace the trucks with Bettendorfs and your cabin car is ready to roll! Enjoy the summer and see you in the fall!



## ***NRHS CONVENTION: A CHANCE TO SEE "BIG BOY NO. 4014"***

This year's National Rail Historical Convention was based in Salt Lake City UT and tied closely to "Spike 150," the official group running the Sesquicentennial of the completion of the first transcontinental railroad, May 10, 1869. Unlike most NRHS convention there were minimal rail excursion focusing instead on the pageantry surrounding the ceremonies at Promontory Summit. Perhaps one of the best offering of the convention committee was a 5-day unlimited use pass on the city's "Trax" light-rail system as well as on the "Fronrunner," the commuter rail line linking Ogden, Salt Lake City and Provo. There were the usual seminars and displays but the action really began on Thursday, May 9 with a ceremonial meeting of UP Big Boy 4019 and UP Legend No. 844 in Ogden. The meeting was enhanced by a concert and street fair in downtown Ogden. The snow-capped mountains provided a picture-perfect photo op for the assembled crowds.

Friday, May 10 - a spectacularly beautiful spring day, much the same as it was in 1869 -had the convention attendees join 20,000 other celebrants at Promontory Summit for the official 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The program featured speeches by national and state leaders, the keynote address by Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian Jon Meacham gave a heartfelt and captivating speech that inspired the crowd and even moved some to tears. After the re-enactment, the crowd dispersed to visit indigenous peoples' ceremonies, the usual craft booths and a food court. Perhaps it's a good time to mention that restaurants in the area featured an excellent IPA style brew named logically, "Spike 150."

Saturday offered the only excursion of the convention, a trip on the Heber Valley Railroad. The excursion train had travelled no more than 80 feet when the rear truck of the engine and both trucks of the first (Business-parlor) car derailed at a switch. After a bumpy halt, police and emergency vehicles responded but fortunately, there were no injuries. After a 90 minute wait it was clear that there would be no rail trip that day and the group reboarded the buses for a ride that paralleled the scenic route the train would have travelled. The early returns to Salt Lake City afforded time to visit the Utah State Capitol to see artifacts from the 1860's. For the first time since May 10, 1869, three out of four of the spikes used at Promontory Summit were on display together, and, traveling from the National Archives in Washington DC., was the original 1862 Pacific Railway Act signed by President Abraham Lincoln.

The convention came to an official close Saturday night with a banquet held in conjunction with the Spike 150 Host Committee and other historic/preservation societies that participated in the week's festivities.

Sunday afforded some the opportunity to ride behind Big Boy 4014 and UP 844 in the UP corporate train or to chase the excursion through the mountains to Wyoming.

***Story by: Pierre A Lehmuller***



## *1960 Port Jefferson By Walter Jack Hilsenbeck*

Having been promoted from clerk to agent in early 1959, I was assigned to various agencies involving block operator duties. Such was the case in March 1960 when the agent at Port Jefferson was awarded the Greenport agent position and I was assigned to cover the vacancy.

I resided in Queens Village, so it was quite a trek out to Port Jeff. Along Route 347 was almost a completely wooded area as there were no shopping centers etc. in those days. The agent hours at Port Jeff were 7 AM to 4 PM and the operator clerks were there from 5 AM to 10 AM and 4 PM to Midnight. Upon arriving at the station, I was greeted by the 1<sup>st</sup> trick operator, Mr. Milt Jackson. He had a brother Bill whom was an engineer who was a few years older than Milt. Milt liked his coffee and had a hot plate on continuously boiling his hot water for his Maxwell House Instant. The operator's desk was standard with the bay window and had the usual phones and jacks for the dispatcher, Stony Brook [BK] and the Central Line. The machine that controlled eastbound [Wading River] was still in position but blocked off. The westbound machine also lowered the gates on Route 112 before displaying a clear block signal. I recall the time delay being 20 – 30 seconds.

When Milt Jackson departed at 1 PM, it was the agent's duty to handle traffic and also sell tickets and receive the cash reports from the train crews. At 4 PM, operator /clerk Tony DeSant relieved the agent.

Two ticket cases were used, one for the operator clerks and the other for the agent. The agent's ticket case would be used on some Sundays for ticket sales. My late father – in – law, John Duryea, would sometimes work this tour of duty on his relief day.

There was no access to the waiting room from our area in the ticket office which was not unusual. We had to go out through the rear entrance and around the building. The rear room was also the reporting place for the many crews that ran out of Port Jeff.

The agents duties beside those described above, was to handle freight transactions. At that time there were farms in the area and in the spring, many carloads of seed potatoes were received from Maine. They each had charcoal heaters to maintain the temperature in the car and this was overseen by Bob Bobolett of Fruit Growers Express Co.

The other carloads were building materials for Loper Bros. Lumber Co. and farm & garden supplies for Renz. All totaled, about 40 cars a month on average for these firms.

The freight crew at that time was the L-56 and it originated at Holban Yard. The crew and engineer were George Weego and Tom Stanford. Most days it handled 50 cars of building materials, coal and seed potatoes. Keep in mind there was a building boom along the Port Jeff Branch and the State Hospital at Kings Park also used coal. The freight crew worked a 6 day week with Sundays off. Eastbound it was the L-56 [M-W-F] and westbound it was the L-57[T-TH-S]

After working Port Jeff, I got married to Juanita Duryea of Bay Shore and we went to Florida on a 2 week honeymoon. I was on the LIRR from 4/1/1956 to 11/1/1988.

*[Editors note. The Hilsenbeck family has had over 225 years of service on the LIRR with Walter Hilsenbeck presently being #1 in engineer service with almost 35 years on the job]*

## An LIRR Reunion in Scranton by Edward M. Koehler Jr.



**Left:** Long Island Rail Road L1 third 211 on a Montauk train passing Bellerose in July 1973.

**Right:** LIRR PC6 power car leading a westbound at Ronkonkoma in January 1973.

Many Long Island rail enthusiasts are well aware of the former Long Island Rail Road rotary snow plow that is part of the Steamtown National Historic Site collection. It has been subject to an asbestos removal project and is in need of having conservation work performed. At the time that Steamtown moved to the Electric City, the museum had a number of former Long Island Rail Road P54D coaches in their collection, but those coaches have long been auctioned off.

But we are not talking about Steamtown here, we were moving about two miles away to the shop of the Delaware Lackawanna Railroad at the north west end of Breck Street in south Scranton. The Delaware Lackawanna Railroad is a subsidiary of the Genesee Valley Transportation Company which operates four railroads and a warehouse (the Delaware Lackawanna Railroad; the Depew, Lancaster and Western Railroad; the Batavia Transload Warehouse; the Falls Road Railroad; and the Mohawk, Adirondack and Northern Railroad). The shop in south Scranton is a centralized facility for all four of these lines. The master mechanic of the Genesee Valley system is an ardent supporter of the diesel locomotives produced by the American Locomotive Company or Alco Products and has filled the operating rosters of the four rail lines with a large number of Schenectady built products. To support the operating Alco's and to provide for future motive power a number of non operating Alco locomotives have been acquired and moved to a siding opposite the shop in south Scranton. Among these 'dead line' acquisitions are two veterans of the Long Island Rail Road.

The first LIRR veteran to arrive in south Scranton was the former third 211. It had been built by Alco Products (serial number 84782) in March 1964 and served the Sunrise Trail faithfully until October 1976 when it was returned to its lessor, Railroad Traction Company; replaced by the delivery of the first group of Electromotive Division ("EMD") GP38-2's. The former 211 was then shipped to the shops of the Morristown and Erie where it was prepared for a brief lease to the McCormack Sand and Gravel Company in South Amboy, New Jersey. After that service it was leased to the Delaware and Hudson Railroad from March 1977 until May 1978; still bearing the number 211. This locomotive was then sold to the Roberval and Saguenay Railroad located in Quebec as their 41 in May 1978 via the United Railroad Supply Company.



## An LIRR Reunion in Scranton by Edward M. Koehler Jr.

A number of former Long Island Rail Road C420's or DL721A's as Alco Products called them; were acquired in this period by the R&S (their numbers were 33 to 41). Starting in 1993 these locomotives were sent out for scrapping as major failures occurred. The number 41, the former 211 was sold to the Benoit Girard Metal Company during 2000 but was not scrapped, instead it was sold to the Vintage Locomotive Company who identified it as VTLX 41. The Vintage Locomotive Company appears to have been the private collection of an individual who specialized in acquiring locomotives that had been produced by Alco Products. Circa 2005 the subject of this part of our story, VTLX 41 / nee R&S 41 / nee LIRR 211 was sold to the Genesee Valley Transportation organization (along with a number of other Vintage Locomotive Company pieces of rolling stock) and shipped to south Scranton where it has been both stored and used as a parts source for other Alco Products locomotive by the Delaware Lackawanna Railroad shops. The former 211 when viewed in 2019 was still quite intact as the pictures below attest. Be advised that the Delaware Lackawanna has a locomotive numbered 211 that has been operational in the past; this red painted piece of rolling stock however originated as Southern Pacific 7302 and is an Alco Products RS32 that now has a low short hood.

The second Long Island Rail Road veteran that can be found along the former Delaware and Hudson Railroad trackage in south Scranton is the former class PC6 power car 603. The history of this locomotive begins in Schenectady in June 1956 when the Alco-GE combine outshopped Louisville and Nashville 315, a model FA2 (DL212 on the Alco specification sheets). This 1500 horsepower freight 'A' unit toiled for the 'Old Reliable' until May 1970 when it was traded in for new motive power. The General Electric Company did not scrap it but used it (as one of six) to produce power and control cars for the Long Island Rail Road's new push pull program. The 603 was delivered to the Long Island Rail Road on July 29, 1971. Unlike most of its brethren, the 603 was never upgraded with the 'Penske Sled' and retained its Alco prime mover. The 603 was sold to the Anthracite Railroads Preservation Society ("ARPS") in 1986 and was shipped to Reading, Pennsylvania. The ARPS had hopes of restoring this FA2 as an operating locomotive; but this did not happen. It did get repainted into a New York Central scheme and was briefly renumbered to 1111. It later was renumbered to 592 and was eventually stored in Winslow, New Jersey. In January In January 2011 it was sold to the Genesee Valley Transportation and shipped to the Delaware Lackawanna Railroad shops in south Scranton.



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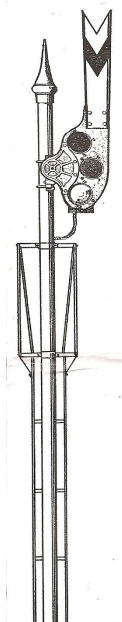
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