

The previous year I had met Ron Ziel and George Foster when they had come over to our house to look thru my collection of LIRR maps and photos. They were doing a book on the LIRR and I was able to furnish them with the names of other people that had LIRR material. They planned to title their book, "Steel Rails To the Sunrise".

One April day I noticed six PRR "P70" coaches sitting over back of the Morris Park Shops. These non-air conditioned cars from the recently abolished Pittsburgh commuter service would be the last "2nd Hand" heavyweights the LI would buy. "Lightweight" cars would be purchased from 1967 on. All six cars after being "modernized" and painted in the new "World's Fair" paint scheme were placed in trains 33 and 40, which was an "intact" train in Speonk-Hunterspoint service Monday to Friday.

Several changes were made on the Montauk Br. with the summer timetable. On Friday evenings former train no. 26 leaving at seven p.m. was now split into "two sections", only a few minutes apart out of Jamaica. The first section, now known as the "Advance Weekender", left at seven sharp, being all parlor car with the business car "Jamaica" on the rear, used as a "lounge car". The second section, train 28, "The Weekender", left at seven three, only three minutes behind no. 24, the first section. No. 28 had a single parlor and a dozen coaches.

By use of the "Temporary Block Stas." (previously described), east of "PD" tower in Patchogue, the two trains although minutes apart all the way out, were able to stay "on time". There were now a total of thirty eight cars with six wheel trucks, all in use in the Friday "parlor parade"!

Coming west on Sunday afternoons, train 4007 always carried the "Jamaica" next to the locomotive. The "Jamaica" was not turned on the Montauk wye after her trip east on Friday, so the open-end "Observation" was on the west end. If you could have set on that open-platform next to the Alco "Century", you would really ^{HAVE} had an "earfull" of Alco "stack talk"!

The RR made one last attempt to run the "Montauk Fisherman's Special" starting on June tenth and for the following three weekends. It didn't pay as it had't ran for some years and people now all had automobiles, plus the Sunrise Highway to speed them out to Montauk and back.



**MU "Zip cars" scheme
1964-65 NY World's Fair
Archive: Steve Lynch**

As far as the 1964-65 New York Worlds Fair, the MU "Zip car" shuttle-service to it from Penn. Sta. was in no way as well-patronized as was the 1939-40 "Ten Minutes-Ten Cents" was. For awhile thru service from Jamaica to the new Worlds Fair station was tried with the train changing direction at "Win" tower east of Woodside. Two motormen, one at each end, made this a fairly "quick move". The LI had a neat little exhibit at the fair, but in no way could



1965-65 NY World's Fair LIRR Exhibit Entrance - Miniature Train Ride Depot
it compare with the "Eastern Railroads Presidents Conference" gigantic effort at the N.Y.W.F. in 1939 and 1940. By this time, railroads were out of

popularity with the general public and a "big" RR exhibit was not called for. This time there were no special trains to the fair from PRR points rolling in behind DDs!



Montauk to NY RPO cover
Train #37 6/18/1965
Last Mail Run on the LIRR
Archive: Dave Keller

The last day of U.S. Mail service on the LIRR was June eighteenth, 1965. As I was into the storage yard that morning on train 605, I was able to walk up the "bank" to the Richmond Hill mail dock and post letters on the various outgoing RPO cars. This was done to get the "last day" cancellations. After work I went up with my "Argus" and shot train 610 coming into Port Jefferson with its ex B&M RPO car for the very last time.



ex-B&M RPO Baggage #7753
MORRIS PARK 6/22/1965
(Rugen-Huneke)

Not long into August, one evening I got a real surprise party! Ron Ziel's latest book "Steel Rails To The Sunrise" had just come from the publishers and he was going to present me with a copy for helping him with the gathering of material for it. What I did not know and everyone else at the house did, was that the book was dedicated to me! "Coffee and Cake" at the small party were enjoyed by Ron, "Win" Boerckel, Jeff. Skinner, co-author George Foster and wife Helen, his mother, and of course our own family, including "Chuck", only two and a half at the time. The date was August third, 1965.

That weekend Friday George Foster and I rode "The Cannonball" from Hunterspoint Ave. sta. to Montauk on the "Setauket's" observation platform. "Art" Huneke happened to be taking photos at Great River and "got us" on the rear deck. By chance, "Herb" Mc Carthy's Bowden Square Restaurant at Southampton was serving unlimited cocktails on that day to "Setauket's" passengers, so George and I traveled in the "grand manner" in more ways than one!

Now that I had experienced riding the "observation platform", I wanted to enjoy a ride in a genuine "heavyweight" parlor car. Right after the "fall" change of timetable an opportunity presented itself. Now that I was back on the job out of "Port" with the "eight hour Sat. swing" in Jamaica I could ride train 4012, leaving Jamaica at twelve fifty two p.m. and arriving at Montauk at three forty six. Fourteen minutes later I could return on train 4007, arriving Jamaica at six fifty one, just in time to make my last train on the "job", due out at seven fourteen.

As "4012" glided into track eight at Jamaica, I noted my "parlor ride" would be in the "Quogue". This car was one of the few to have the original Pullman "Dutch doors", so handy for photo taking. We headed east over the Montauk Branch instead of via Main Line and Central Br. The parlor seat was everything it was



Parlor Massapequa #2026
Interior 4/24/1966
Archive: Dave Keller

"cracked-up to be"! Revolving in a full circle, what more could one ask for scenery viewing? Extremely comfortable, the almost sound-proof riding in the heavy, well insulated car, Yes, Mr. Pullman knew how to do it!

Nelson Steele was the conductor that day, a very good "railroader", and I

would get to work with him many times in a few years.

Later on in November, the evening of the "Northeast Blackout", I was able to see the sun go down in the west and arise next morning in the east, all without moving an inch in the same station, (Hunterspoint Avenue), in L.I. City! As train 658 we always left the passenger yard about five twenty five in order to arrive "early" at Hunterspoint. This gave our passengers a warm place to wait since we did not leave until five fifty six, next to last train out of there.

Right after "sundown" the lights all went on as usual, but not for long, as the "big blackout" begin to affect the N.Y. City area! All train service on the LIRR that consisted of MU equipment came to a halt wherever it happened to be at the time the third rail current went off, while diesel-hauled trains operated fine until they arrived at any "wayside signal". All the signals also blinked-out as well without electricity. With an "automatic signal", a diesel train had to stop, but could proceed to the next signal at restricted speed, and so on, at each "automatic type signal". Signals at interlocking towers could not be passed in this way, as all the switches were \longleftrightarrow operated by "air" and without current to keep the pumps going that supplied it, the routes thru the interlocking plants remained in whatever position they were in when the power went off.



LI City Passenger Yard - View W
Photo/Archive: Richard Makse

The movement Bureau at Jamaica told us to remain at Hunterspoint Ave. sta. until the power came back on, which turned out to be just after sun-up, about thirteen hours after we pulled into the station! Luckily our engine, an Alco "Century" type, had enough fuel and "steam heat boiler water" to keep our train heated. We had car lights, thanks to the "undercar power plants", so actually we were in fairly "good shape". The two bartenders in the ex R&M "full-bar" car kept everybody happy after liquor supplies were exhausted by making plenty of hot coffee. They really made the long night more bearable for all!

During the night we had to back the train the short distance into the L.I. City passenger yard to take on more water for the locomotive's steam heat boiler. While we were doing that, I hurriedly walked to the river front to look at the completely dark N.Y. City skyline. All those tall buildings without any lights, it gave you an odd feeling, believe me! The only lights were autos moving along on Manhattan's East River Drive.

Rumors during the night that passengers marooned in heatless and mostly lightless MU trains in the East River tunnels were stumbling along in the darkened tunnels toward the L.I. City portals proved to be false. We arrived back in "Port" nearly twenty four hours after leaving there the morning before and had the "day off" as a result. Almost no one commuted into the city that day, everybody needed some sleep after the long, long night!

The date of the "great Northeast Blackout" was November ninth, nineteen sixty five. One rainy December afternoon, whiling away the "swing time" in L.I City, I thought of all the men's "nicknames" I ^{HAD} heard over the years such as:

"Screaming Larry, The Goat Lover, Paper Hanger, Herman The German, The Baron, Do Very Little, Hard Working, The five "Doctors", ("Doc." Sherman, Smith, Briggs, Overton and Scholar.), Whistling Buck, Aches & Pains, Snow White, On Time Jesse, Green Hornet, Muscles, The Cow, Horsecollar, High Salary, Flounderfoot, Woody, "S.H.", The Bull, Dirty Neck, Moon, Quack; Tanky, Spoony, Alphabetical Jr. & Sr., Lying Willie, Sweet Willie, Duck, Footsie, Boss Jonn, Hoople, Joe Miles, Little Chief, Snowshoes, Plinky, Bunkie, Buddy, Jake The Snake, Chew Tobacco, Whiskey, Hot Pipe, Knuckle, Wimpy, Popeye, High Pockets, Judy, Big Ears, Donald Duck, Deacon, Tin Ear, Lard, Money Bags, Eveready, Boxcar, Mule, Leaky Pen, Debbie, Tiny, Father, Mom, The "Prez", Hot Lips, Limey, at least twelve assorted "Macs", Bug Eyes, Sandbox, Sandy, Hard-Pressed, Happy, Bunny, Chippy, Den Mother, Happy Days, Flip, Black Market, Dildock, Donkey, Balloon Joe, Moonbeam, Pleasant Moments, Bosco, Grumpy, Silver, The Count, Dipstick, Mad Russian, Bundles, Scottie, Tock, Misery Pills, Pickles, Cry Baby, Pot Belly, Rags, King George, Slice Bar, Zeke, etc., etc., etc."

There were many more in all departments, the above are, or were, mostly in Train and Engine Service. During October a "general order" came out eliminating



**Aquebogue shelter shed
View E - 3/1966
Photo/Archive: Brad Phillips**



**Laurel Station MP80
View NW - 3/1966
Photo/Archive: Brad Phillips**



**Peconic Shelter Shed
5/03/1964 view W
Photo/Archive: Richard Makse**



**Holbrook depot razed in June, 1962
Replaced by a metal shelter-shed
View E 1969 - Photo/Archive: Dave Keller**

stops at Aquebogue, Laurel and Peconic, although they were still listed in the employees timetable until 1967. Holbrook would follow out of "existence" as a station in 1968.

During the weekday afternoon "swings" on my "winter timetable" job, I sometimes took a pleasant, even in winter, ride across the Hudson River on the CNJ's Liberty St. ferry to the Jersey City Terminal. No one ever collected any fares for some reason at either end in later years. Wonder if that had any bearing on the CNJ's bankruptcy? Often I was the only passenger on the two fifteen p.m. boat going over, as it had no train connection.

What memories that huge terminal and yards brought back when it was busy all day long with trains of the B&O to Chicago and St. Louis, The Reading's hourly "clockers" to Phila., thru CNJ trains to Harrisburg and Scranton and of course the copious service to Raritan, Newark and Bay Head Jct. One summer Sunday my dad and I took the 23rd. St. CNJ Ferry over, which was like a "mini-harbor cruise" compared with the much shorter Liberty St. crossing.

We dined on a delicious roast veal dinner served on those appealing "three-section" plates with Japanese designs in blue on them. At that time the Sta. boasted a first rate restaurant opposite the ticket windows. That enjoyable meal over, we boarded a two car train for Newark pulled by a 4-6-4 T "tank" engine. There were some really deep cuts thru solid rock in Jersey City on the Newark Br.