



# SEMAPHORE



## March 2013

The next meeting of LIST will be on **Friday, March 15th at 8:00pm** at the Christ Episcopal Church, South Carll Avenue and Prospect Street, Babylon, New York.

### THIS MONTH:

Ed Koehler will present "THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD ELECTRIFICATION UP TO 1955". For more information on this presentation, see article on page 8.

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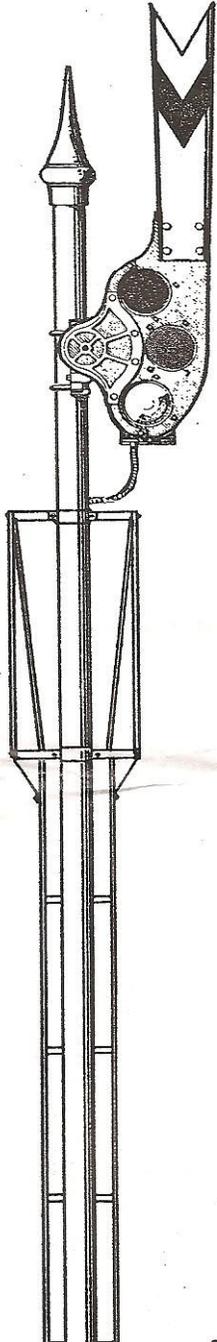
**For regular updates and other important information, visit the Chapter website at:**

**<http://www.nrhs-list.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!



# _____ 2013 LIRR calendar	@\$8 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR 175 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary 60 page book	@\$10 each Total _____
# _____ NY Connecting RR Book	@\$27 each Total _____
# _____ Jamaica Station by Dave Morrison	@ 18 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR Stations by Dave Morrison	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____ LIRR in the Fairbanks Morse Era	@ \$20 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 Cast Iron Eagles of Grand Central Station by Dave Morrison	@\$5 each Total _____
# _____ Revisiting The Long Island Rail Road By David Keller & Steven Lynch	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____ NY City Electrified Railroads, In Color By Alfred E. Fazio	@\$48 each Total _____

Shipping for 1 calendar or 1 of the books, \$2.50

Shipping for 2 to 4 calendars, total of \$5.00

For more than 4 calendars or extra books, please call or e mail Steve Quigley for the shipping cost.

Each additional book, add \$2.50.

[NY State Residents, please add 8.625% tax to the total of the merchandise PLUS the shipping. For example, 1 calendar shipped to an address in NY State would be a total of \$11.41]



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

## List Happenings by Steve Quigley

Due to increases in printing as well as postage costs, if you do not renew your membership by the end of March, this is your last edition of the Semaphore. Please renew before it's too late!

We are now sold out of the 2013 LIRR calendars. Thank you all for those who have purchased them. If you did not receive your calendar order or still wish to order one, please let me know. My contact numbers are at the bottom of this page.

I thank you again for your patience as I believe this year's calendar was worth the wait especially that this year is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the present day Jamaica Station. I believe that you will enjoy viewing some of the photos of Jamaica Station, then and now.

March 9 1913, is the official date of when the present day elevated Jamaica Station opened. At the present time, the LIRR Jamaica Headquarters building is shrouded in scaffolding and netting while the exterior of the building is being renovated. New windows are being installed as well as trim being painted, brick being pointed, etc. As a result, an anniversary celebration will be delayed while the scaffolding is in place. When an official anniversary celebration date is confirmed, I will let everyone know.

If any Chapter member is interested in purchasing a book published by Morning Sun Books Inc., please email or call me and I will purchase it for you. Go to [www.morningsunbooks.com](http://www.morningsunbooks.com) to view the selection and then send me an email or call me regarding the procedure to purchase. Naturally, Chapter members will receive a discount off the retail price. [If the retail price is \$59.95, Chapter members cost will be \$48 plus S +H and tax if applicable]

The Chapter's book on the "Shortline Railroads of Long Island" is in the final stages of being edited. This book is being produced by our Chapter with credit going to authors Ed Koehler and Harold Fagerberg. We hope to have this book available by late spring. The book will probably have 128 pages, filled with maps, photos and roster lists of the Short Lines of Brooklyn and Queens.

Feb. 1 was the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Grand Central Terminal in NY. Check out the Grand Central Terminal website for anniversary pictures and happenings. Also, the current edition of "Railfan & Railroad" magazine has its cover page and lead article about "Grand Central Turns 100." It is a very good article about the history of Grand Central as well as a brief sideline about the Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> celebration. Throughout 2013 special events will take place. More information to follow in future editions of the Semaphore.

We are always looking for new members. If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining NRHS – LIST, please let me know and I will send them information on how to join us.

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. I have a few articles waiting to be printed but we can always use more. My e mail address is [csquigley@optonline.net](mailto:csquigley@optonline.net) and my telephone # is 631-487-4766.

Thanks to all who have renewed their membership in LIST. If you have ideas as to how we can make our Chapter better, please let me know.



**LIRR NEWS by Steve Quigley**

Several diverse items regarding the LIRR and/or its real estate have been in the news recently and they are as follows:

1] We have all heard about the High Line in Manhattan, the stretch of abandoned NYC elevated tracks that go from the West Side Yards to the Meatpacking District. Well now, we have a possible High Line in Queens. This would be the abandoned 3 ½ miles LIRR Rockaway Branch that goes from Rego Park to Ozone Park and one time went as far as the Rockaway's. The branch was last used in the early 1960's [OK, who knows the exact date?] and the proposal is to turn it into a pedestrian and bicycle path as well as a park which would be designed with native trees and plant gardens. Since the branch closed, it has become overgrown and at places, a garbage dump. The Queens version of the High Line would be different from the Manhattan version in that it travels through some forested areas as well as residential ones. It is also elevated on a trestle at certain places.

However, a NY State lawmaker contends that if this abandoned rail line were returned to LIRR regular service, it could reduce commuting time to Manhattan for area residents by as much as 40 minutes and take thousands of cars off area roadways. The return to regular service could also bring more customers to the Casino at Aqueduct Racetrack.

This is still in the proposal and talking stage, so stay tuned for further developments.

2] The East Side Access project is still proceeding with a scheduled completion date of 2019. This is an \$8.24 Billion project that is expected to save 160,000 LIRR commuters as much as 40 minutes a day in their trip to Manhattan. At present, it is the largest public works projects under way in the United States. Beneath Grand Central Terminal [which just celebrated its' 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary] and environs, workers have begun to install concrete slabs for floors and the tunnel for the escalators to bring riders up to the mezzanine level is taking shape. The tunnel is as much as 160' below Park Avenue in certain places. All of the underground digging has been completed but sections of the tunnel are still rough. It is estimated that 45% of the work to complete the project has been done.

At least one of L.I.S.T.'s members has been on a tour in this massive project and if any member has been on the tour and wishes to write an article regarding the tour, please send it to me and if space permits, we will publish it.

3] On Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, Long Island had a snowstorm! As much as 32" of snow fell in certain areas of LI; primarily Central Suffolk. In Babylon, we had 18" of snow but the North Shore and Central Suffolk, had a substantial amount more. Through all of it, the LIRR never shut down as opposed to other rail road's in the NY Metro area which did shut down service. Service on the LIRR was greatly reduced while workers cleared tracks, switches and platforms but trains did go through on the 4 major lines. Some tracks had a much as 4' of snow! The LIRR was ready with a new fleet of snow removal equipment, new policies and priorities which allowed the LIRR to run even during the height of the storm which had winds up to 70+ - MPH.

Since a blizzard in December 2010, the LIRR has implemented a new policy which created specific snow emergency timetables with preplanned modified schedules on its 4 busiest branches, Babylon, Huntington, Port Washington and Ronkonkoma. The LIRR purchased 3 jet powered snow blowers and a Jordan Spreader in the past year and all were used clearing the lines during and after the snowstorm. [Too bad the LIRR's Rotary snow thrower is in Steamtown, what a sight that would have made!]

Most LIRR service was back by Sunday, Feb 10<sup>th</sup> and was near normal by the Monday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> rush hour. I experienced near normal service on my commute that Monday with delays on some of the branches. As you can imagine, increased ridership and crowding was experienced as many roads in Suffolk were not passable as much as a week after the storm.

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

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

***MODELING MB62S AND MBM62S FROM THE CON-COR  
MODEL IN HO SCALE PART 2***

Welcome back as our series continues. This time we write about headend MU cars. We tried very hard but were unsuccessful in convincing Con-Cor to do the MB62, the motorized baggage MU car that both the Pennsylvania and Long Island Rail Road had on their respective rosters. However, they brought out the MBM62, a motorized baggage-mail car, much to our pleasant surprise.

This car has a fascinating history on the LIRR, since there were only two cars in this class. The PRR had a number of these cars on their roster and the Con-Cor car more closely resembles the PRR version. The LIRR MBM62 is a prototype rebuild since the two cars in this class—originally numbered 1209 and 1210—were originally class MB62 cars built by American Car and Foundry (ACF) in 1910. Fifteen of these cars, numbered 1205 through 1219, were built in Berwick, Pa with controls at each end of the car. These cars had two motors mounted on one truck and had four windows on each side of the car. Unlike the PRR cars, the LIRR version had four windows on each side of the car, with two additional windows between the large baggage doors as well as a corner window, one of which was used by the engineman or engineer.

This car was imported in HO brass by our good buddy Jack LaRussa and NJ International many years ago and was brought out painted and lettered in Pennsylvania and Long Island paint schemes, with Tuscan Red body, black roof and gold lettering. Unfortunately the Long Island version was basically a PRR car with LONG ISLAND lettering; it included the air vents under the windows centered in the middle of the car body and an AC underbody. (These items have to be removed, a DC underbody fabricated and the two windows between the doors added as well as a few more “tweaks” to make this car a LIRR prototype, but more about this at a future date.)

A strange fate befell the last three cars in this class. Cars 1217, 1218 and 1219 were originally built as MU cars in the MB62 class and had their motors removed; they operated for many years of service as steam- and later diesel-pulled cars, due to a shortage of baggage cars. We’re not sure when these three cars went from MU to steam service but they did end their years in non-MU service in 1956. Even more strange was the fact that we believe these cars may not have had their headlights and destination lights removed when converted to steam service. Rather strange, isn’t it?

More about how to model 1209 and 1210 next time. Until then, happy modeling!



**BROOKLYN RAPID TRANSIT COMPANY (BRT) 1896–1923 by Ken Katta**

The beginning of mass transit in Brooklyn can be traced to July 3, 1854 with the first horse car line, the Myrtle Avenue Line of the Brooklyn City Railroad (BCRR). This horse car railroad was an important step in transit development in Brooklyn. However, on May 22, 1891, the BCRR changed from horse to electric motive power (trolley). The BCRR was not the only trolley system in Brooklyn. Brooklyn had an extensive trolley system. This prompted an attempt to unify these independent systems into a powerful combine. The notion of the unification of mass transit in Kings County was originally the idea behind the creation of Long Island Traction on March 13, 1893, but would not be realized by that company. Long Island Traction was also a street railway holding company, but it was doomed due to a devastating downturn in the nation's economy that began in 1893. And the company was not incorporated in New York. This forced the LI Traction in 1895 into foreclosure and reorganization. The reorganization gave birth to the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Co.

While the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company encompassed surface and elevated lines in Brooklyn, the BRT was envisioned as a holding company that would acquire properties but would not own or operate street car lines or the elevated lines. The BRT can date its founding to January 18, 1896 when papers were filed with the New York secretary of state. The purpose of the BRT was "to construct, repair, improve, equip, and furnish the motive power for railroads and other works." The BRT continued the acquisition of Brooklyn's street car companies with the Nassau Electric Railroad Co.(NERR) in 1899. The NERR had merged five companies already including the Atlantic Avenue RR. Also in the same year the BRT acquired the Brooklyn Union Elevated RR which included all the elevated lines in Brooklyn. NERR was a Brooklyn based enterprise with its primary service market as Brooklyn. Thus by 1900, the BRT became one of the world's greatest passenger carriers. There were five carriers still independent. These were the Brooklyn & Rockaway Beach RR(Canarsie Line), the Coney Island & Brooklyn RR, the Van Brunt Street and Erie Basin Ry.(1861-1927), the Marine Railway Co. of Manhattan Beach (1879-1923) and the Manhattan Bridge 3¢ Line (1912-1929). The Canarsie Line was acquired in 1906 and the CI&B RR in 1914. The others remained independent.

With the unprecedented growth in population of Brooklyn after the New York City Consolidation of 1898, there was an increase in the number of working people that needed to be transported daily to and from Manhattan. Since the BRT was the principal means of transportation, this meant more business and prosperity for the BRT. With increased population came the increased usage of leisure pursuits. Thus Coney Island and Brighton Beach, the playground of the entire Metropolitan area, were frequented by larger crowds. This increased the need for public transportation. Most people in that era could not afford the new automobiles and relied on mass transit.

The growth of the BRT put it into direct competition with the other main railroad in Brooklyn-the Long Island Railroad. This developed when Austin Corbin, chief officer of the LIRR, became interested in expanding the influence of the LIRR in King's County transportation. In the summer of 1891, Corbin and the LIRR acquired the Prospect Park and Coney Island Railroad from Andrew Culver, original promoter of the PP&CI RR. Culver desired to liquidate his PP&CI RR holdings because it was becoming necessary for him to electrify his steam railroad which would have required massive infusions of new capital. In addition, Culver was aware that two of his main excursion railway competitors were developing linkages with larger systems, Brooklyn, Bath and West End with Nassau Electric and the Brooklyn, Flatbush, and Coney Island with Kings County Elevated. The PP&CI transferred a significant number of rolling stock to the LIRR. The link between the PP&CI RR and the LIRR's Bay Ridge Branch occurred at Parkville Junction on the PP&CI. This not only provided LIRR passengers access to Coney Island entertainment, but also was part of Corbin's attempt to provide direct service between Coney Island and Boston. While the Boston link never came to past, it did fuel the fears of the BRT that the LIRR was planning to extend its influence into Kings County.

**BROOKLYN RAPID TRANSIT COMPANY (BRT) 1896–1923 by Ken Katta**

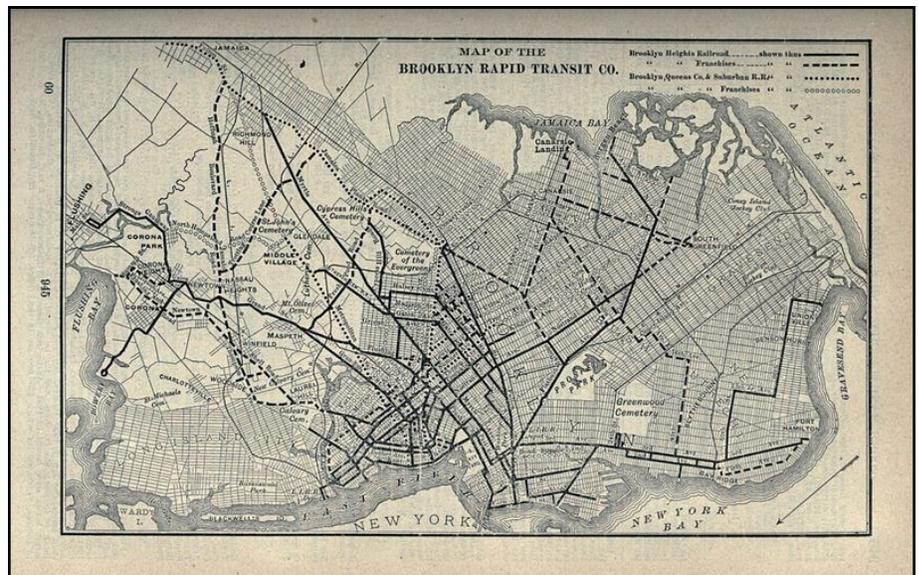
However, the LIRR did not expand its Brooklyn operations and acquired no additional Kings County properties. In fact, the LIRR reached an accommodation with the BRT in April 1899. This served the interests of both railroads by each agreeing to stay out of the other's territory. Brooklyn was identified as being the sphere of influence of the BRT while that of the LIRR included Queens and all territory to the east. While the LIRR would still be able to operate its trains along Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn, The BRT would continue its trolley car operations and elevated railway incursions into Queens. But neither would expand its operations in the other's territory. Of further relevance, as part of the deal, the agreement included the leasing from the LIRR of the PP&CI RR by the BRT. This was converted to a formal purchase several years later. Ironically, this agreement did not involve Austin Corbin of the LIRR who was killed in an accident in 1896. In addition there was a sanction for two intraline operations. The first occurred at the Brooklyn-Queens line at Chestnut Street in Cypress Hills. The second occurred between the Fifth Avenue El of the BRT and Atlantic Avenue of the LIRR providing through service from the Brooklyn end of the Brooklyn Bridge and the LIRR. Thus LIRR passengers would still have access to Coney Island.

It took five years (1900) for the BRT to unify most of the diverse operations in Brooklyn. But it took a terrible accident on the BRT's Brighton Line on November 1, 1918 to signal the demise of the BRT. But BRT's overall fiscal condition had already deteriorated so badly by late 1918 that the terrible accident known as the Malbone Street Wreck was probably not the primary factor in driving the BRT into receivership in late 1918 even considering the 93 fatalities and the resulting large civil suits brought against the BRT by the victims. The primary factor was regulatory pressures from increasing income by raising fares. Thus the BRT could not increase revenue to keep up with inflation. Because the structure of the BRT involved separate companies, who interchanged equipment, reorganization under receivership was complicated. But intense financial and operational analysis followed under the direction of the court. Eventually, the court was able to separate the various components and effect the reorganization. The BRT was reorganized in 1923 as the Brooklyn Manhattan Transit Corporation (B.M.T.). Its new chairman, Gerhard Melvin Dahl, had considerable experience in both the public and private sectors. Mr. Dahl became involved with the B.M.T., originally as a member of its reorganization committee and ultimately was elected chairman. William S. Menden (Chief Engineer of the BRT) became president. Their goal was to re-vitalize the BMT, improve service, improve its public image, and enhance shareholder value. However, the BMT still had to contend with its chief competitor from the days of the BRT-the Interborough Rapid Transit or IRT. The IRT was the private operator of the original underground New York City Subway line that opened in 1904. Several provisions were imposed on the BMT and IRT, which eventually led to their demise and consolidation into City ownership in 1940:

- The fare was limited to five cents, and this led to financial troubles for the two companies after post-World War I inflation.
- The City had the right to "recapture" any of the lines it built, and run them as its own.

The City was to share in the profits.

On June 1, 1940, the New York City Board of Transportation took over operations of both the BMT and the IRT. This was the



## Membership Dues—FINAL CALL!

**LAST CALL FOR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN LIST! WE HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED BY NATIONAL THAT ANYONE WHO DOES NOT RENEW THEIR MEMBERSHIP BY MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup> WILL NO LONGER BE CONSIDERED A MEMBER IN THE NRHS. THIS ALSO APPLIES TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN L.I.S.T.**

**IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED YOUR RENEWAL NOTICE FROM NATIONAL OR LIST, PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL STEVE QUIGLEY.**

His e mail address is [csquigley@optonline.net](mailto:csquigley@optonline.net) and his telephone # is 631-487-4766.

## This Month's Meeting Presentation

**THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD ELECTRIFICATION UP TO 1955** According to Vincent Seyfried, the Jamaica Station project was declared complete on March 9, 1913. This presentation does not address this anniversary rather it celebrates the multiple unit trains that have plied the rails of the Long Island Rail Road since July 28, 1905. Ed Koehler will visit each of the electrified branches using a series of black and white images from the late 1940's to early 1950's. All of the current electrified lines that were in service by 1955 will be visited with a special emphasis on the Whitestone, Central Branch Extension, and Bay Ridge branches. To assist in your enjoyment of this presentation Ed has prepared a 120 page booklet with short histories of each electrified track segment, employee timetables from three eras for each branch, and a summary of Long Island Rail Road multiple unit cars from 1905 to 1955. Because of the size of this document it will be available via an electronic distribution only. Please send an E-Mail request to Ed at [EdwardMKoehler@nyc.rr.com](mailto:EdwardMKoehler@nyc.rr.com) for your copy. If there are any questions don't hesitate to E-Mail me or call me on my mobile 917-603-4276.

## Information Request

Chapter member Dave Morrison is writing a book on the history of the Port Jefferson Branch. Dave is looking for high quality photographs of the following:

- 1 - The former Route 25 (Jericho Turnpike) LIRR overpass bridge in Syosset (not the current bridge near Home Depot)
- 2 - Group "reenactment" at the 50th Anniversary End of Steam Ceremony on October 8, 2005 at the Hicksville Community Center. This is the group pose in front of the #35 locomotive bell wherein Nassau County and Town of Oyster Bay officials posed with Fred Ruff (former boyscout) and LIRR President Dermody. Before you ask, I've checked with the LIRR, the County and the Town and have been unsuccessful in coming up with the requested photo.
- 3 - Crew photo taken of the 175th Anniversary LIRR train at Greenport in 2009 - the crew stood in front of equipment. Why this you might ask for a PJ book? I'm going to use this photo along with a similar "crew photo" taken on the last day of service on the Wading River extension in 1938.

If you can help Dave out, you may contact him at 516-935-3145 or by email at [daverail999@gmail.com](mailto:daverail999@gmail.com)

## National Railway Historical Society Unveils Centennial Plaque for 100th Anniversary of Grand Central Terminal

**NRHS joins birthday celebration, names New York City terminal to National Register of Historic Railroad Landmarks.**

Philadelphia, PA (PRWEB) February 15, 2013

The National Railway Historical Society (NRHS), America's largest [railroad preservation organization](#), has added [Grand Central Terminal](#) in New York City to its National Register of Historic Railroad Landmarks.

In honor of the designation, an 18' by 24' bronze plaque was unveiled at the terminal's 100th anniversary celebration on February 1. The plaque is mounted near the doors to the customer waiting area and stationmaster's office.

NRHS officials participated in the centennial tribute, which included presentations and remarks from celebrities, elected officials and the New York preservation community. Global Director Walter Zullig, Jr., National Director Mia Mather and New York Chapter President Albert Papp, Jr., presented an award to George Monasterio, Metro-North's Chief Architect, and Karen Timko, the railroad's Director of Environmental Compliance.

Grand Central Terminal is the 18th landmark announced by NRHS since the register was created in 1959 to recognize uniquely historic railroad structures and equipment. Other sites include: Horseshoe Curve in Pennsylvania, Union Station in Portland, Oregon, the B&O Museum and Mount Clare Shops in Baltimore, Maryland, the Southern Railway Station in Knoxville, Tennessee, and Chicago Union Station in Illinois.

"Grand Central is not only a magnificent landmark, but it is said to be the second largest tourist attraction in New York City -- second only to Times Square," said Zullig. "It has been beautifully restored and we felt that it was especially appropriate to recognize this building in the year of its 100th anniversary. Today the terminal sees over 700,000 people a day and is a tribute to the foresight of the engineers and architects who designed and built it over 100 years ago." Philadelphia, PA (PRWEB) February 15, 2013

*NRHS and Metro-North officials join in Grand Central Terminal's centennial event on February 1, 2013. The actual 18'x24' plaque is located near the stationmaster's office. (Joseph M. Calisi photo)*



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National Railway Historical Society  
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# **ATTENDING MEETING AT CHRIST CHURCH BABYLON**



**LONG ISLAND-  
SUNRISE TRAIL  
CHAPTER**



**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**