

thirty miles per hour was a help too! Back in July I had completed my thirtieth year on the good old LIRR.



Mattituck Station - Summer, 1969
Newspapers delivered
Photo/Archive: John Schaub



Baggage car #7715 Montauk bound
Baggage man newspaper delivery
7/1971 Photo/Archive: Dave Keller

On December thirty first, the carrying of newspapers on the RR ceased. On the next day, "Newsday" shifted to truck deliveries for their papers from their Garden City plant to points "out east". No longer would the morning train for Montauk stop at Mineola to load "Newsday" bundles in the baggage car. The "balloon top" baggage cars had no reason to exist anymore, except for the "annual bicycle train" or to be used for non-revenue purposes by various departments.

About the middle of January in 1974, our "KCS" coach was replaced by the ex FEC coach "Titusville". Also that month, the ex LV car, now the "Onteora", was sold to a private party off L.I. On Jan. twenty second, we again became a "two car train" again, but just for that day. LIRR track dept. "heads" would meet us in Greenport to ride back with us on train 211. For that reason, we had car no. 2081, with observation end "east". It was the ex E-L "Phoebe Snow" car, their no. 789. The track "out east" was needing a bit of work in certain places. I recall a "low joint" just west of Alvah's Lane in Cutchogue, where even doing the allowable speed over it, the "KCS" car would seemingly "bounce" up and down!

During the middle of February we got stuck in a snowdrift about a half mile west of Cutchogue, luckily by a "farm road" crossing. Seems we were bucking drifts that were "packed" from Calverton out, and finally they had bent the footboards of the Alco "RS-3" back, so that they were "binding" on the rail-heads. We could not back out of the drift either, so there we were! The first thing Charlie Read said when we walked up to the engine was, "I told them many times when there are heavy snows "out east" to put an engine on here with a "snowplow pilot", then this probably would've happened!"

About that time my cousin Reginald Webb was traveling east on the North Road on his way home from Riverhead to Greenport and saw our train standing still in the fields. He drove down the driftless "farm road" to our train to see what had happened. Giving Charlie and the conductor a lift to the "Blue Top Inn" at Cutchogue sta., "Reg" sure came along at the right time! The Inn had a "public" phone so they could call the movement bureau, (204), of the RR, so "they" could decide what to do with our four or five passengers aboard.

Finally a local taxicab came down the farm road to take the people to their destinations. About two p.m., a "light" engine arrived from Jamaica to couple to our one coach. We left the "RS-3" in the snowdrift as shopmen would have to come with a "welding outfit" to cut the bent footboards off in order to move the engine. We assumed the schedule of train 211 from Mattituck, with a hired local bus bringing our passengers to that sta., from points east.

Carload freight to many places on the RR had vanished over the years.No freight service of any kind was now operated east of Corona Meadows on the North Side Br;east of Bridgehampton;east of Southold;the Oyster Bay Br;the Atlantic,Far Rockaway,Hempstead or Long Beach Branches.The entire Montauk Br. from Hillside to Babylon was also devoid of any amount of freight,as well as the once-busy Bushwick Br.Most of the "business" was now on the Main Line from New Hyde Park to Pine Aire;the Central Br,and Central Extension, and the Montauk Br. west of Glendale.

The Montauk Br. "out east" had one revenue-producing siding at least.A mile east of Speonk there was a sand-mining operation that sent a half-dozen cars of sand from there to Holban yard every few days.At Holban there was a "sand yard" near Hillside that distributed these loads to local contractors in the metropolitan area.The company bought about a dozen old hopper cars from the B&LE for use in this service to save on any demurrage charges.

Early in June,the RR suddenly found itself with some truly comfortable coaches! They were fifteen "Metropolitan Transportation Authority" reclining-seat,air-conditioned cars that the MTA had recently been using on the ex NYC Harlem Div. between Grand Central Sta. and Brewster,N.Y.Originally they had been D.L.&W. cars,built new in 1949 for the RR's best train,"The Phoebe Snow". After the merger of the Erie and Lackawanna,when the two roads became "E-L", the cars were used on various "long-haul" routes until Jan.,1970 when all such routes were discontinued.Soon after that,the MTA bought them for the "Harlem" where they ran for a few years.

Since the MTA controlled by this time "Harlem" commuter service as well as the LIRR,it was easy to transfer the cars via the Bronx and Hell Gate Br. to the LIRR.Above the wide-windows,"MTA" was spelled out,while the "big M" was displayed on the car's side on one end,with the word "Central" in small letters underneath it.Only two of the fifteen cars were ever repainted in LIRR colors, with "Long Island" over the windows.The "big M" remained though,with "LI" spelled out underneath.Numbers were in the high "2100s" and were never changed to a LI numbering scheme.Naturally Morris Park had to remove the diaphragms before they could be used,as was their "custom".These cars were to have a very short career on the LIRR,mostly they went to Montauk.

When Charlie and I walked up to the wye where our one-car train spent nights and weekends,the morning of June,eighteenth of 1974,we had a suprise! There



**BAR GP7 #74 - Riverhead Station
Robert Emery, Charlie Read on platform
Archive: Robert Emery/SUNY Stony Brook**

sat BAR no.74,a leased EMD "GP-7", as our motive-power for that day."EMD" would be making it's first trip on a passenger train to Greenport.BAR engines had already made trips there on the freight.Since at this time they didn't all have "speed control" equipment installed on them,their use on the "west end" of

the RR, (except between Yard "A" and Holban via the Montauk Br.), as an engine leading a train was prohibited. With a LIRR ^{ENGINE} ahead of them equipped with "ASC", they could of course go anyplace except into Brooklyn. Bridge-restrictions kept them off the Bushwick Br. From Ronkonkoma east was well out of "speed-control" territory so BAR engines could "lead". Even so, we would lose it in steam-heating season, as none of the BAR units had boilers to make steam.



**Precision (PNC) #1701
Morris Park 8/1974**



**BAR #60 at Greenport
Conductor Robert M. Emery
5/09/1975 (Ziel-Boland)**

In July we had another "newcomer" to the RR. This was no. 1706, an EMD "GP-9" from a locomotive-leasing company known as "Precision National Corporation". Train orders, "K" cards, etc., would identify engines from this company with the letters "PNC" and the unit's no. We also had "PNC" nos. 1701 and 1702, along with BAR nos. 60, 62 and 72 at different times when there was no Alco "RS-1" handy for one car "Shorty" as some folk nicknamed our train to Greenport.

One particular warm summer day on "Shorty" I will always remember! We had an "RS-1" that day and they were becoming prone to frequent breakdowns as they were twenty five years old. Charlie had been "nursing" the engine along going east on train 202, but she finally stopped "dead as a doornail" in the deep cut under Bridge Lane's wooden bridge, a mile and a half east of Cutchogue. We went to a nearby farm and managed to get in touch with Ronkonkoma sta. by public phone. They described our plight to "204" in Jamaica sta. Finally, after about an hour, a taxicab showed up for our five passengers, two elderly ladies and three young "hippie types", all carrying guitars. Now to get our people off the train and into the taxi! Easier said than done---

In summer the steep banks under the bridge are covered with a splendid, healthy growth of poison ivy on both sides for perhaps two hundred feet east and west of our train's location. Since the growth had'nt been trimmed in some time, it brushed the car's and engine's sides too close for a person to walk by it. We finally decided to take the people off by having them sit on the car's "buffer" plate over the knuckle and we would lift them off, with the aid of the "engineer-trainee" of the day. Luckily, the two ladies were "weight-watchers" in good standing, so we managed after some coaxing to get them down to the "ties". The three "hippies" thought it great fun and jumped-off by themselves. Then we walked everybody west on the track to where the "cut" leveled off, and along the edge of the potato field to the "long waiting cab".

Soon after the cab departed, an engine service mechanic arrived in his car. He got the diesel "percolating again", at least long enough to get us to Greenport, which it did, almost! Just as we cleared fourth St. in Greenport, she "died" again, and the mechanic who rode with us could not get her started no matter how hard he tried. Again reporting our "plight" to "204", we were advised that the RR was sending out an "MTA" bus from the city to represent train 211 and that we were to collect fares on it!

Conductor Russell said he would collect the cash fares, while my job would be to sit up by the bus driver and show him how to get to all the stations between Greenport and Ronkonkoma. Coming east, the driver had instructions only on following the "LIE" to it's end and then Route 25 to Greenport. He had never driven in Suffolk County before and had no idea how to find the RR stas. Well, we finally got to Ronkonkoma about thirty minutes after train 211's normal arriving time, and would you believe, they held our "push-pull" connection for us!



**BAR GP7 #72-#74
Holban Yard - 1973**

On Sept. fifth we had BAR no. 60, and on the sixth, BAR no. 72. The "72" would become more or less the regular engine on "Shorty" in the coming months. No more of the Alco "RS-1s" would ever be on the job again. I left the job on October seventh to work out of Speonk on one of those trains that "changed-crews" at that station. It was a half hour drive to Patchogue from "Port", to deadhead out to Speonk, where I would work the same train. Saturday and Sunday I used to drive to Speonk for "a change of scenery".

Going east weekdays, train no. 6 was four "KCS" coaches and an Alco "C-420" engine usually. My conductor was "Sid" Waldman and the hogger was Walter Worship. This was a "one-trainman run", same as "Shorty". Almost every other job in passenger service had two trainman and of course the conductor. The speed limit from Speonk to Montauk was now down to "30", so it was a nice, leisurely trip all the way out. Most days during the week, (we had Tues. and Wed. off), there were no more than twenty passengers on the train when we got on at "SK".

We always got "coffee" at "Nell's" luncheonette, which was located in the former ticket office and waiting room at Speonk. Mostly all the train crews would get "coffee" here, whether crews "changed", or they did not. "Nell" made the trip enjoyable for passengers too, as they often "jumped-off" here for a hot dog or can of soda to take back on the train to pass the miles with. She was open "six to six", except Sundays and Holidays. In later years there were many old railroad photos hanging in the waiting room, well worth a visit here to see!

On both Sat. and Sun., we had a half dozen ex "Phoebe Snow" coaches spliced by a "B&M bar car. The "bar car" was a waste of space, as it had only two end seats and was never in service either way. Those "Phoebe" cars rode so well, that you would hardly think there were any "low joints" or bad crossties on the line!

We arrived in Montauk at noon and left to go west at one p.m.. While "Sid" went over to the "Blue Marlin", (restaurant), for his favorite "Rueben Sandwich",



**South leg of wye, view N
from Industrial Rd.
Photo/Archive: Mike McDermet**

I "ran-around the train" and took the engine around the wye. I always brought a sandwich weekdays, but Sundays we both got a ride with George the car cleaner down to Montauk village for bacon and eggs. Most days we walked the mile back or if the weather was bad someone usually going up to the depot would give us