

"lift." Walter was a good engineer to switch with and could he ever handle those "Phoebe Snow" cars. Sundays leaving Montauk at two thirty p.m., he started up those cars so smoothly that only by looking out those big wide windows could you tell you were moving at all. The train was "stretched" tightly and he eased out the throttle so gently, that by the time you noticed any movement in the car, the train would have traveled twenty feet or so!

Weekdays there were still station agents at Westhampton, Southampton and East Hampton, while Sundays, only Southampton was manned. We always had to "report arrival" there to let the RR know "where we were", so we had time to chat with agent Charlie Muller for a few minutes. Those station jobs out there were not very busy in the winter, with only three trains in eight hours to sell tickets for, but in the summer it was just the opposite, as the "parlor car trade" kept the phones ringing with people looking for "space" on westbound trains.

During the fall going east on train 6 weekdays, sometimes there would be "deadheading" parlor cars to be put in storage for the winter at Montauk on yard tracks three or four. On November eleventh the former E-L observation-



**Parlor Observation #2082
ASHAROKEN - Greenport
Archive: Dave Keller**

tavern car, (now no. 2082), was on the rear of no. 6 for an "inspection party" of various dept. heads of the railroad. This eliminated the the usual "fall inspection train" of former years.

This necessitated turning the car on the wye so the observation-end was to the "markers end" of train 11 going west. After we completed "the move", the crew was invited into the lounge of 2082 for a "buffet-lunch", while the "inspection party" walked about the yard as it was a "perfect day out east". Some days are so clear out there in winter that Gardiners Island to the north is plainly visible, as is the very tip of Rhode Island, if one cares to climb up the hill by the Montauk Manor!

1974 was the last year for "solid parlor car trains", as in 1975, coaches would be included in all trains on the Main Line or Montauk Br. By years end all nineteen "PC-6" power cars were in service, with many "push-pull" consists of former MU coaches.

"Winter on the southside" was about the way I had always pictured it, not too much snow, especially east of Amagansett. Quite a few Sundays with the longer "swing", I was able to take long walks such as up west along Fort Pond Bay to the long abandoned sea-plane hangar that is plainly visible from the RR. One January day it was sixty degrees! Many people were walking the ocean beach with their jackets off that Sunday. In Feb. ^{THE} first snow of 1975 fell on Montauk, and it was no more than an inch. By the next afternoon there was no trace of it. About this time, Ron Ziel had his "mansion" moved across the RR tracks east of Water Mill. It was moved between the time we went east on train 6 and before we

came west on train 11. Only the RR telephone wires had to be "cut" while the move was on. February ninth was my last day on the Speonk to Montauk run, account of a big "crew revision", and I decided to go back on the one car Ronkonkoma to Greenport run again.

The next day on reporting to work at Ronkonkoma, I found we had car no. 2959, one of the very first of this series to be converted to "electric heat" from "steam heat". Now I could leave my "steam hammer" home, as there was no longer any steam hoses, ("metallics"), on this car. For protection against the elements, Morris Park had installed metal-sheathing over the buffer plates, entirely blocking off the ends. The crew now included "Kenny" Kempster as the conductor, while Charlie Read was still the hogger.

About two weeks later we were coming west with an "RS-3" when it began to falter west of Southold. Charlie managed to get us to the former Peconic sta. site, where we coasted to a stop just barely clearing Peconic Lane. Using the public phone, (RR lineside telephones rarely worked, as people were constant-



**Smithtown Station view SW
Call box - 10/08/1943
(Weber-Morrison)**

ly stealing the copper wire during the night at many places), Kenny informed "204" what our plight was. Seems there was a LIRR "Road and Rail" bus due out of Greenport shortly, and someone, (me), would have to walk the half-mile to "route twenty five" and flag the bus down. I was to inform the driver to come up to the RR via Peconic Lane and take our passengers off.

Luckily, with a little "hitch-hiking" I got down to the highway in a few minutes. Soon the bus came along and I flagged him down by Vail's garage and gave him "the good news;" that along with our passengers and the crew, he was to make the rest of the "LIRR station stops" in case anybody was there, but only as far as Riverhead. The train was to be left where it was standing with the coach half on the crossing. The automatic gates stayed in "down position", as we did not of course, clear the "circuit"! Later that evening the freight would rescue our train, what a way to "railroad"! We all were taken to Babylon sta. as that was now the "Road and Rail" transfer point, for both the Montauk and Greenport bus connections. Formerly Amityville and Huntington served as such.



**LIRR Road n' Rail #500
Greenport freight building
Photo/Archive: Daniel Marra, Sr.**

A supervisory official took us back to Ronkonkoma in a "company" auto. Our suppers were a little late that evening! Early in March there was quite a snowstorm one night "out east" that resulted in heavy drifting with the brisk northwest wind that followed. Next morning we were going east on train 202, this time with an Alco "RS-3" that had a snowplow-pilot, and all went well, until Cutchogue.

About eight hundred feet east of the station platform there was a "cut" about a half-mile in length, that was filled with drifted snow from the previous night's storm. All the snow from the "bare" fields was in this "cut"!

Charlie saw the solid drift on the track ahead and "hit" it as fast as the engine's speed would allow after just starting up from a sta.stop.

We got about one hundred feet into the hard-packed snow and that was it! The snow was up to the catwalk level on both sides of the locomotive, and in no way would she go any further ahead. Luckily, I had my camera with me, so I got some great photos on that brilliant "sunshiny" day. Charlie had remarked before we left "KO", that we should of had a 2000 h.p. Alco "C-420" in case it was drifting "out east". I guess they were short of big power that morning, and figured "Shorty", (no. 202 and 211), just wasn't that important!



**LIRR #461 Train #202 "Shorty"
Riverhead Station 8/27/1973
Photo/Archive: Dave Keller**

Fortunately, we were able to back out of the drift after several tries and backed the train to Cutchogue sta. platform. The few passengers were to be taken to their destinations by a local cab, while we were to "back" to Mattituck where we could "run around the train" with the engine and leave as train 211 from there.

It took us a good half hour to dig out the east switch to the passing siding, which included the pipe-connected derail. We then backed the coach in opposite the sta. platform, and proceeded west on the main track to the west switch of the passing siding. Just as we got there, "Win" Boerckel^{JR.} and a crew of track men drove up in a RR truck to dig out the derail and switch for us, it was a big help!

I spent the remainder of the winter and most of the spring on "Shorty", until the timetable change of May nineteenth when I again picked the ex "club car train" out of "Port". There was no longer any "Syosset" club car, it having been involved in a rear-end collision west of "Port" the night before the long 1972-73 strike ended. It was never repaired and shortly after that, the club disbanded and had to ride in with all the "others" in ordinary coaches. With only the train in to Hunterspoint in the morning, I had the rest of the long summer afternoons off. I started my four weeks vacation on June twenty fifth and used a lot of it finishing up my LIRR "track and photo album" collection, now in Stony Brook.

Many days when I was finished in L.I. City in the morning on the ex "club car" train as mentioned above, I would continue my ambition to walk the Atlantic Ocean's shore from Nortons Point in Brooklyn to Montauk Pt. It seems like a long way to walk, but four to six miles a day adds up fast!

On the "parlor car scene", soon after Labor Day, or a few weeks later, almost all of the ex KCS, NH and PRR "lightweights" that came as "sleepers", but used here as parlor cars, were permanently retired. "Lake Okeechobee", (now "Apaquogue"), as well as the ex KCS coaches, soon joined them.