



# SEMAPHORE



## December 2017

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

### THIS MONTH:

The Presenter for the December meeting is Roger Edington.

Roger will be presenting a slide show on "The LIRR West of Jamaica". Included will be various motive power shots as well as the tracks and signal system of the LIRR from Jamaica to Penn Station, Long Island City and the then Flatbush Avenue terminal.

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

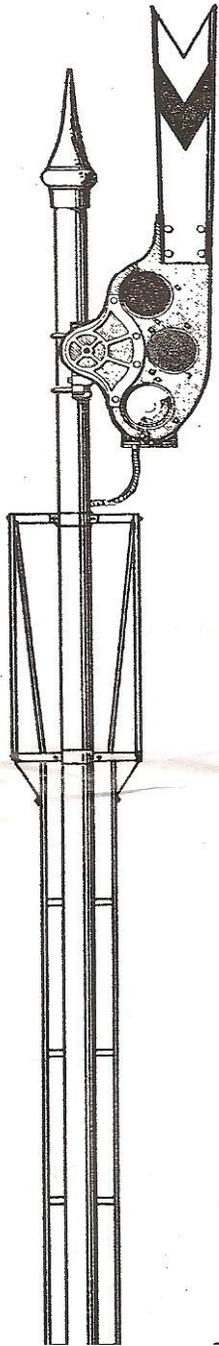
**LIST-NRHS.org**

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**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!



# _____	2018 LIRR Calendar	@\$8 each Total _____
# _____	The LIRR Co. A Hist. 1834-1965 by Bob Sturm	@\$38 each Total _____
# _____	Caboose Art by George Wybenga SEE BELOW	@\$65 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	@\$32 each Total _____
# _____	Steel Road Nostalgia, Vol.2 the Northeast	@\$32 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	@\$5 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 _____
# _____	The Rockaway Trolley by V. Seyfried	@\$25 each Total _____
# _____	Victorian Stations of the LIRR by Ron Ziel	@\$30 each Total _____

Shipping for 1 of the books or calendar, \$3.50. CABOOSE ART BOOK, SHIPPING IS \$5 DUE TO IT BEING 270 PAGES.

Shipping for extra books, please call or e mail Steve Quigley for the shipping cost.

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

Thank you to the members of LIST who have sent in their dues renewal already. We would like to ask a favor in that we would like you to send your dues renewal to our treasurer at the address noted on the dues renewal form. If you are purchasing a calendar or books, please send your order to our P O Box. Since we are an all volunteer organization, we would appreciate it if you could do this. Please send back your renewal as soon as possible as our Treasurer; Alan Mark would appreciate your timely renewal. As usual, our annual dues is \$15 per year which entitles you to 10 editions of the Semaphore plus the discounts on all of the merchandise we sell as well as first notice on any tours or trips we initiate. The \$15 per year is reasonable in comparison to other similar organizations. If you did not receive a dues renewal notice, please e mail or call me.

Elsewhere in this month's Semaphore are some stories about the passing of Bob Michele who was a longtime LIST Chapter member. Due to declining health, Bob was unable to attend chapter meetings recently but for many years, he was the person whom set up the chairs and tables for Chapter meetings and behind the counter taking care of refreshments. A true gentleman who will be missed by all.

We have received copies of the periodical known as "Conrail Quarterly" which is a publication of the Conrail Historical Society. It is a full color publication. We are selling the Fall 2017 issue and the retail price is \$10. Chapter members price is \$6 with \$3 S + H. NO tax! Conrail fans will enjoy the pictures and articles in this publication.

This is the season of model train shows. There are many model train layouts on Long Island and nearby areas including the "O" Gauge layout in the Transit Museum at Grand Central Terminal. The layout at Grand Central is up and running every day until 2/4/2018. In Old Town Hall in Babylon Village there is also an "O" Gauge train layout that yours truly helped build. The layout is up and running during December and early January. Admission is free. Enjoy these miniature railroads that in many instances have details that are amazing.

Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you as well as your family! I hope you have an enjoyable holiday season. [When Santa Claus visits your house, I hope he left you a train no matter what size it may be]

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.



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

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

### ***KITBASHING EX-PULLMAN PARLOR-COACHES 7501-7505 PT. 2***

I continue with my series on a very interesting piece of rolling stock: LIRR P74A steam/diesel coaches 7501 through 7505. There was another car in this group, 7500, but that became a commuter club car and is a story for another upcoming feature on the car it became: LOCUST VALLEY.

To provide seats for an increasing ridership, the LIRR bought a number of cars from several railroads in the late 1950's. This was a relatively easy thing to do since just about all U. S. railroads were slowly winding down and trying to phase out their money-losing passenger service. Used passenger cars that were no longer needed could be purchased at reasonable prices.

Such was the case with these five ex-Pullman cars converted to coaches and purchased from the New York Central. These cars were built by Pullman in 1925 and 1927 as Lot 6087 and were originally Plan 3416A 26-1 parlor cars for the Michigan Central Railroad. These cars were named PANSEY, ROXANA, STELLA, FLAVIA AND MARIE. The Michigan Central was absorbed into the New York Central System in 1932. Ice-air conditioning was installed in these cars in 1934. In 1942 as was the case with many Pullman cars, Pullman converted these cars to coaches. PANSY became 2811, ROXANA became 2812, STELLA became 2813, FLAVIA became 2819 and MARIE became 2825; apparently these were just a few of a number of Pullmans that were converted to coaches and sold to the railroads as Pullman had no use for many of these cars. These coaches had six-wheel trucks and double-seats for 60 passengers, a women's room and a smoking room.

The cars were operated by the New York Central until January 1958 when these five cars were sold to the LIRR. They were upgraded by the railroad (yes, they were given upgrade numbers in yellow circles with red numbers and borders.) Their conversion consisted of new 3-2 seating in the cars as well as a few other improvements and then placed into service.

These five cars operated for a good number of years and wore a number of paint schemes. Two of the cars, 7502 and 7504, were actually painted in the first MTA paint scheme of Nordic Blue and Platinum Mist and lasted into the 1970s. And one car, 7505, was painted in the World's Fair paint scheme of dark gray with orange stripe and slant orange lettering, numbers and large Dashing Dan heralds at each end of the car by the vestibule. For some unknown reason, the stripe was removed and the car finished its years of service with only the orange LONG ISLAND lettering and numbers. Why? I would sure like to know.

Next time I continue with modeling this car. Until then, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year from the LIRR Modeler. Happy modeling, too!



## Long Island Rail Road News by Steve Quigley

On December 3rd, I spotted locomotives MP-15 AC #150 and 152 going through Belmont Junction in West Babylon. They were traveling light eastbound. Loco 152 is in need of a paint job but loco #150 appears to have been recently painted in the blue and yellow paint scheme. The MP-15AC locomotives are being retained for now and thus are being shopped and painted.

Beginning on November 13<sup>th</sup>, train service on the North Fork has been increased. A new westbound train leaves Greenport at 9:43 AM making all local stops to Ronkonkoma and arriving Penn at 12:33PM. An additional westbound train departs Yaphank at 6:00PM.

The Pinelawn Station building is no longer. It appears that the building has been removed in anticipation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> track being built between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma. The Pinelawn road rail road crossing was extensively rebuilt with additional crossing lights as well as additional traffic signals. The station building was a modern/contemporary style building that was no more than a waiting room with no ticket vending machines and a very small parking lot. From my own experience, I never saw any passengers depart or get on a train and there were never any cars in the parking lot that I witnessed. It remains to be seen if a station building or a shed will be erected when the 2<sup>nd</sup> track construction project is completed.

The LIRR has announced that there will be a continuation of last year's very successful "Holiday Express." The limited engagement has 2 holiday decorated trains leaving from Ronkonkoma and Babylon with express service to Penn Station. It is a reservation only, one way only, nonstop passage on a holiday decorated bi-level train. The train leaves from Ronkonkoma on Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:35AM and from Babylon on December 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:50 AM. The cost is \$35.75 from Ronkonkoma and \$33.50 from Babylon for this reserved seat train which will have on board festivities as well as a 20% discount on the Musical at the Theater at Madison Square Garden.

Recently spotted at Mineola on Saturday November 18th was an automobile that appeared to be trying to mimic Amtrak's Auto Train. The driver made a turn at the end of a small parking lot, traveled between the station building and other cars and then wound up dangling the front 1/3 of the car over the tracks. The Mineola station building and platforms are at ground level. The driver was not hurt but several westbound trains were delayed. I had witnessed a couple of years ago a driver who was able to drive between the station building and a Bank of America kiosk without hitting either. Apparently in both instances, the drivers GPS told them to make a turn here or there was another reason for these strange driving mistakes.

Although it is not the LIRR, the vintage subway trains are returning to the subway rails between Thanksgiving and Christmas. On Sunday afternoons between Thanksgiving and Christmas, N Y City Transit will run its "Shopper Special" train which will consist of 8 cars that ran on the subway lines between the 1930's and 19970's. The special train will run on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue line as well as 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The first run of the day will depart at 10 AM and the last run will depart at 5 PM. Please see the MTA web site for additional information. Chapter members Mike Hanna and Bob Gianuzzi have been extensively involved in restoring and maintaining the fleet of vintage subway cars. These cars are in great condition and even include advertising inside that are appropriate for the eras that the cars were in regular service.

## The Story of Double Deck MU Coaches PART 4 by Mike Boland

(Reprinted with the kind permission and courtesy of Chuck Blardone and the PRR T&HS)

What had happened to the popularity of the double-deckers? Why had the Long Island Rail Road soured on its “commuter’s dream?” In less than five years, the LIRR had grown unhappy with the double-deck concept and decided to abandon it. The cars once praised by commuter and train crew were no longer popular for a variety of reasons. Commuters did not like facing each other. Some passengers called the cars “knee-knockers.” On rainy days, the center aisle got wet...and so would commuters sitting the lower seats. Conductors and trainmen had to bend down and then reach up throughout the length of the car when collecting or “lifting” tickets. Coach cleaners hated the cars; cleaning them was a difficult task.

### EVOLUTION

With the arrival of this new 20-car fleet (class MP70T #3500-3519) in 1953, the double-deckers were given a new assignment—acting as control motors in trains made up of the newer cars. The double-deckers, however, needed a visit to the Dunton car shops for minor modifications in order to be comparable with the Pullman-Standard cars. Soon double-deckers were seen at each end of solid consists of MP70T coaches, since the new cars were motor trailers and had no controls. Several double-deckers were given blue stripes to match the colors of the new cars (ironically dubbed “Cadillacs” by LIRR men) so the railroad could proudly show off its new rolling stock. As the double-deckers were modified, their appearance changed even more. End doors were now painted a bright orange for better visibility.

More double-deckers were used as control motors when a fleet of Pullman-Standard MUs was purchased in 1955-56. Of the 140 MU cars in the purchase, only 22 were control motors—probably because of their high cost—so double-deckers appeared frequently at the head-end of trains. Solid consists of double-deckers began to disappear and as a rule, they only operated with the Pullman-Standard cars, which were referred to as “long” cars by railroaders, with the MP54 known as “short” cars. MP54 coaches, though, would still occasionally be seen mixed into trains made up of “long” cars and double-deckers.



### NEW PAINT

The coming of the Pullman-Standard cars (classes MP72Cs #2501-2522; MP72T #2601-2674 and T72#2801-2844) also heralded the coming of another paint scheme: charcoal or smoky gray bodies with dark green (Brunswick?) roofs. Some of the double-deckers in the Tichy scheme had already been given a dark or Brunswick green roof. For better visibility at grade crossings, the entire end of the car was painted a bright orange. Several years later, a new herald arrived and “Dashing Dan” began to appear on each double-decker, as well as all other LIRR rolling stock.

## The Story of Double Deck MU Coaches PART 4 by Mike Boland

### FLEET CHANGES

The passenger car rehabilitation program, begun in December 1954, called for 21 double-deckers to be converted to motorized trailers and have their controls removed. In reality, only 13 cars were converted, with changes made to #201 and #1347. It's very possible that the cars were classed as motor trailers but never really were converted; they still kept their headlights and end doors but their speed control (ASC) was removed. In 1955 the controls and headlights were removed from #201. Four-motored #1347 had its controls and four motors removed, but strangely enough, its headlight housings—like the “new” motorized trailer fleet—remained intact. (Car #1347 was never equipped with ASC and was barred from head-end service since 1951.) Both cars were now considered trailers and were given class T70. In the case of #1347, it was easier to remove the four motors of the car and make it a trailer than convert it to a two-motor double-decker, similar to the rest of the fleet. In 1959, a group of control motors in the MP70A class (#1337, 1338, 1340, 1341 and 1345) were converted to motorized trailers. The cars had their headlights and porthole-style engineman's windows painted over and had their speed control removed from both ends, along with engineman's controls at one end of the car. The other end retained controls to facilitate shop and yard movements. These controls were never used in revenue service and the cars were never at the head-end of trains. These cars were now classed as MP70AT and a similar conversion was done to a group of cars in the MP70B class: #1287, 1288, 1289, 1291, 1334, 1335 and 1336; these cars were now classed as MP70BT. Control motor double-deckers equipped with speed control were given the classification MP70Ac and MP70Bc, the low-case “c” denoting Automatic Speed Control.



The January 1960 LIRR roster showed five MP70Ac and 43 MP70Bc cars in service, with the rest in use as trailers or motorized trailers, so the fleet of cars was pretty much intact. When more new passenger equipment (Zip cars MP75Cc #2525-2536 and MP75T #2675-2692) arrived in time for the 1964-65 New York World's Fair in late 1963, the double-deckers were soon running with the new, low silhouette “Zip cars,” including #1325, which had one side of the car ripped out near Woodside in a side-swiping accident a few years earlier. Several double-deckers even received a modified “World's Fair” paint scheme: an orange letterboard stripe with slant lettering and numbers beneath the lower tier and a dark gray body and roof with large “Dashing Dan” heralds at both ends.



NEXT TIME: THE CONCLUSION OF THE DOUBLE-DECKER MU FLEET PT. 5

## John Robert "Bob" Michele

We regret to announce the loss of Bob Michele who passed away on November 22nd, 2017. Donations in Bob's Name may be made to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.



### A Few Thoughts on Bob Michele by Ed Koehler

I was at a railfan event on Friday, November 24, 2017 when I received an E-Mail from George Lind that contained very sad information. Bob Michele had passed away the previous Wednesday.

For many of the more recent members of the Long Island Sunrise Train Chapter, Bob was the jovial visage behind the refreshment counter at our meetings; but he was so much more.

Bob joined the Chapter in the 1970's; he was serving on jury duty in Riverhead at the same time that Ron Ziel was. Ron was using his time in the jury waiting area to lay out his latest book and the railroad pictures attracted Bob's attention. Bob soon attended one of our regular meetings and joined us.

At the time the Chapter had just begun work on the former LIRR 35 located in Eisenhower Park; basically scrapping bird droppings off of it and painting it. Bob brought his skills and mechanics truck to the scene and it jumped our project to the next level. Bob was able to both engineer the move of the 35 from the park to the siding at Mitchel Field and have his employer lend the equipment and staff to accomplish that lofty goal. And to prove he wasn't just a flash in the pan, he helped move the former LIRR business car "Jamaica" from a siding on the Grumman property to a park for the Wantagh Historical Society.

And again, when the Chapter was given stewardship of the retired Long Island Rail Road cars he again lent his skills and talents to the project.

## A Few Thoughts on Bob Michele by Ed Koehler



Ex-LIRR Steam Locomotive #35 and crew at Mitchel Field after being trucked from Eisenhower Park. Bob Michele organized and oversaw this move.

It was during this time that the Chapter Board of Directors created the position of Second Vice President – Chief Mechanical Officer and elected Bob by acclamation to the post. Bob reluctantly served in this position until times changed and he felt the position was no longer needed. Bob was the only person to hold this title in the Chapter.

To this day even our membership meetings are affected by Bob's actions. As a field mechanic for a large paving company on Long Island, he was also responsible for providing coffee and donuts for the crews in the field. He simply brought the coffee maker from his truck down to the church basement one meeting, added a couple of dozen donuts and our refreshment program started. He also took the profit from the sale of the refreshments and used them to buy a large holiday cake for the December meeting.

Let's sum up some of the organizations that Bob had an effect on; some of these groups may not even realize Bob's contributions. Clearly the first organization to be mentioned is our own Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter. Next would probably be the Wantagh Historical Society for their business car. Would the 35 have gone to the Oyster Bay Railroad Museum without Bob's contribution; perhaps but because he got it out of the park it became easier. The Long Island Rail Road cars that went to the Railroad Museum of Long Island were in the Chapter's care for a few years; care that was directed by Bob. While most of these cars had to be scrapped; some were saved and continue to be cherished exhibits in Riverhead.

Bob Michele; you never really knew what effect he had on the preservation of railroad history on Long Island. . . We are all poorer for you no longer being with us.

Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter  
National Railway Historical Society  
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*MERRY CHRISTMAS,  
HAPPY CHANUKAH  
AND HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS TO ALL!  
From LIST-NRHS*