



## MTA Press Releases

Press Release

February 6, 2008

[Metro-North](#)

IMMEDIATE

### A Railroad Reborn: Metro-North At 25

The creation of MTA Metro-North Railroad in 1983 ushered in a new era in commuter travel. Since then Metro-North has completely rebuilt and revitalized a regional railroad inherited in crisis.

On January 1, 1983, Metro North's new management team immediately went to work resurrecting the railroad. Accepting nothing short of a major reversal of decades-long deterioration in service, comfort, and dependability, Metro-North built new facilities, renovated lines and historic stations - most notably Grand Central Terminal, and updated rolling stock.

Years of deferred maintenance had made for dilapidated tracks, trains, and stations. Many of the trains were in poor condition. Cars manufactured in the 1950s and 1960s, needed to be replaced. Metro-North purchased nearly 200 new cars in the early days, photos of which are featured in the exhibition. A model of one of the latest train models to be purchased, the M7, will also be on display. These high-tech cars are safer, more comfortable, and more reliable than older rolling stock. Winter weather also required special equipment for trains. Snow and ice covered shoes caused power to short-out on trains. As part of their many improvements, Metro-North now installs specialized third rail shoes each November, designed with holes that allow snow and ice to melt through without freezing on the surface.

In 1983, track and power systems were operating with outdated technology dating back to the 1900's. Trains were running on insufficient power served by outdated substations with rotary converters manufactured in the 1930s. During the first capital campaign, tracks, power distribution, and signals were updated, and in many instances, completely replaced.

The most high profile of the many station renovations completed in the past twenty-five years was Grand Central Terminal. The once-derelict Terminal was returned to its architectural glory and outfitted with modern utility systems and upscale shops, becoming a destination for New Yorkers and tourists.

In addition to making improvements to railroad operating systems, Metro-North initiated community outreach and education programs to engage its customers. Metro Man has been on staff at Metro-North since 1983, traveling across the region to educate school children about railroad safety and teaching them the difference between diesel service and third rail power. Inspired by Star Wars' R2-D2, Metro Man's movements and speech are operated by remote control. Over time Metro Man's territory has expanded from communities on the Upper Harlem line to the entire region served by Metro-North.

Within ten years, all major service indicators have confirmed that Metro-North is among the country's best performing commuter railroads.

A Railroad Reborn: Metro-North at 25, will be on exhibit at the New York Transit Museum Gallery Annex in Grand Central Terminal from February 12- July 6, 2008.

Illustrating the railroad's dramatic turnaround, the exhibition features over fifty artifacts and photographs from the collections of the New York Transit Museum and MTA Metro-North Railroad, including a model of the Grand Central North passageway, opened in 1989; a 1920s 25-cycle ammeter from the West Farms substation, one of the specialized third rail shoes, and the original Metro Man.

New York Transit Museum Gallery Annex

Located in the Shuttle Passage, just off the Main Concourse, next to the Station Master's Office.

Hours: Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Free Admission

#### RELATED PROGRAMMING:

#### TOURS

Saturday, April 5 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

MTA ARTS FOR TRANSIT: ART ALONG THE HUDSON LINE

Reservations and advance payment required: 718-694-1867. \$30, Museum members \$25, optional Wave Hill tour \$6

To celebrate Metro-North Railroad's 25th Anniversary, the Transit Museum and MTA Arts for Transit team up with Metro-North to present a unique tour of artwork at Grand Central Terminal and select stations along the Hudson Line. Arts for Transit staff will be joined by artists who will talk about art and design in transit facilities and discuss details of the transit art projects inspired by each community. The tour will conclude with an optional visit to Wave Hill.

#### LECTURES, READINGS & SCREENINGS

Tuesday February 26 6:30 - 8 p.m.

IT'S ELECTRIC!

Grand Central Terminal. Northeast Balcony. Free admission.

On July 24, 1907, the first regular train to be operated under electric power completed a trip from Grand Central to New Rochelle. This pioneering effort of the AC electrification of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad set the standard for 20th century railroad electrification in the U.S. In conjunction with the Transit Museum's exhibition marking the 25th Anniversary of Metro-North Railroad, engineering historian Joseph Cunningham and Robert Walker, Metro-North's director - power systems (1983-1997), and current Metro-North director of operating capital projects, will discuss the evolution of the system and its reconstruction.

Check out our website:

[www.mta.info/museum](http://www.mta.info/museum)

for additional programs and exhibitions