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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

### MTA LIRR Marks 175 Years Of Service To Long Island And New York

The MTA Long Island Rail Road today marks 175 years of service to Long Island and New York with events in Penn Station and in Jamaica, including a commemorative U.S. Post Office hand cancel opportunity for the public.

The LIRR today celebrates New York State's approval of its charter on April 24, 1834.

"We started out as a quicker way for New Yorkers to get to Boston – via a ferry they picked up at Greenport on the East End of Long Island," said LIRR President Helena Williams. "It is doubtful our founders envisioned what we would become 175 years later – the largest commuter railroad in North America, serving 87.4 million customers on more than 700 miles of track.

"Last year, the LIRR enjoyed record ridership and record On Time Performance. This great enterprise is kept strong by our workforce of 6,800 employees. I am dedicating our Anniversary events today to them. They make it all happen, every day."

MTA Chairman H. Dale Hemmerdinger said, "This special anniversary reminds the public how important our transit system was and still is to the development of the metropolitan area. Congratulations to the LIRR, the "senior" member of the MTA's family."

The LIRR is the oldest railroad in the U.S. operating under its original name.

In its long history the LIRR has served billions of customers—taking them to and from jobs, homes, schools, recreational and leisure activities and other events. Through the years, the Long Island Rail Road grew hand-in-hand with Long Island, providing a gateway to economic development, housing and employment opportunities.

"The LIRR is a vital link in the MTA system that has served Long Island well since the days of the horse and buggy. The changes that have occurred in the LIRR system are remarkable, similar to the transformation that we will see in the near future with the completion of the East Side Access Project," said Lee Sander, MTA Executive Director and CEO.

East Side Access, connecting the LIRR with Grand Central Terminal, when completed, will be the most significant service improvement for the railroad in 100 years, allowing Long Islanders a one-seat ride to the East Side of Manhattan. East Side Access will allow for 24 peak hour trains to reach Grand Central Terminal, reducing the commute of east-side bound LIRR passengers by up to 40 minutes per day.

#### Additional LIRR 175th Anniversary Events

- Through September 13. New York Transit Museum, Brooklyn Heights: "The Route of the Dashing Commuter.....The Long Island Rail Road at 175." This exhibit examines the LIRR's role in the transition of Long Island from an idyllic farming community to one of the nation's premier suburbs. Vintage photographs, maps, illustrations and objects from the Museum's holdings and others on loan from private collectors. For additional information call 718-694-1600 or visit the NY Transit Museum's web site at [www.mta.info/mta/museum/index.html](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum/index.html)
- April 25, 9 AM- 4 PM. "The Long Island Rail Road at 175" co-presented by the Sunrise Trail Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, the Railroad Museum of Long Island and the Oyster Bay Railroad Museum. This event takes place at the Hicksville Middle School, for details visit the Sunrise Trail website at [www.nrhs-list.org](http://www.nrhs-list.org)
- April 28, 6 PM. East Side Access: LIRR's Connection to Grand Central Terminal, northeast balcony, Grand Central Terminal. Reservations not required, tickets are free and available on a first-come, first-serve basis. For information call 718-694-1794.
- Through April at the Hicksville Public Library. Exhibit of LIRR steam locomotive paintings by Lou Mallard, known for his realistic renditions of LIRR locos and rolling stock. For further information visit the Library's web site.
- Starting April 25 at the Hicksville Gregory Museum an exhibit of "LIRR Caboose Art" by George Wybenga will take place. Visit the museum's website at [www.gregorymuseum.org](http://www.gregorymuseum.org). for information and directions.
- MTA Long Island Rail Road is marking its 175th anniversary, but LIRR customers are the ones getting presents. To thank riders for their patronage, the LIRR has been holding Customer Appreciation Days each month, offering all a chance to win tickets to Broadway shows, sporting events and more.

Hundreds of prizes have been awarded so far, at no cost to the railroad, and more will be given out in the months to come. Please consult the LIRR website at [www.mta.info](http://www.mta.info) for more information.

- The LIRR has launched a contest to name two retired LIRR locomotives—No. 397 and No. 398—that are being loaned to the Oyster Bay Railroad Museum as part of the 175th Anniversary celebration. The two mini locomotives were used as "switching locomotives" in the LIRR's Morris Park diesel servicing and repair yard in Richmond Hill, Queens. These diminutive locomotives (150 horsepower) have been affectionately called "Dinkies" but the LIRR is looking to provide real names for the pair before they're officially turned over to the Oyster Bay Railroad Museum.
- Saturday, July 25. The LIRR will offer a special One-Day Getaway to Greenport, tracing the original route of the railroad. Details will be available by early June.