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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA NYC Transit Retires Subway Cars That First Rolled in 1969

R-42 Subway Cars Make Their Final Trip, Ending 51 Years of Service

Photos of the Final Run are Available at This [Link](#)

MTA New York City Transit retired the last remaining R-42 subway cars from service today, ending a 51-year run. The cars have been used on two dozen lines, each traveling more than seven million miles. They had a memorable role in an iconic car-vs.-train chase in the classic 1971 film *French Connection*.

The final run followed a send-off ceremony at the New York Transit Museum, and was scheduled to proceed through a final trip on the [A](#) line from Euclid Av to Far Rockaway to 207 St, before returning to Euclid Av to close its doors for the last time. Subway enthusiasts joined MTA Chairman and CEO Patrick J. Foye and NYC Transit President Andy Byford riding the last R-42 in passenger service.

"These cars have served the MTA well as a reliable fleet over the last 50 years," said Sally Librera, Senior Vice President, Department of Subways for New York City Transit. "As technology advances, we're looking to modernize our fleet of subway cars to best serve New Yorkers."

"Two of the R-42 cars will continue to live here at the Transit Museum, where they will be used to educate the public about the city's mass transportation history, and visitors will get the chance to come aboard and travel back in time," said Transit Museum Director Concetta Bencivenga.

R-42s were built by the St. Louis Car Company, and were the first cars received by the newly branded MTA in 1969, eventually totaling 400 cars in the NYC Transit fleet. The first cars were used on the BMT Broadway Line, known today as the [N](#) train. Along with the R-32, the R-42 is the only post-war car to reach the 50-year service mark. The R-32 still runs on the [A](#) and [C](#).

These were the first cars in the New York City Subway to arrive in service completely air-conditioned. The R-42 was the last car type to be designed as "married pairs," which means every two cars are semi-permanently linked together in order to reduce the amount of components that are required to operate a train. The cars that are retiring today traveled an average of 400 miles a day. They were kept in good repair by senior mechanics with longtime experience maintaining R-42s.

The R-160 fleet is replacing most of the R-42s. A majority of the R-42 fleet was retired between 2006 and 2009, and most of those cars were submerged in the Atlantic Ocean to form artificial reefs. After the reefing program ended in April 2010, retired R-42s were sent to Sims Metal Management to be scrapped.

The remaining R-42s will be replaced by the newest NYCT subway cars, including R-179s that were recently placed into service, and R-211s (when those cars are delivered).

About the Historic R-42

Seated capacity on the R-42 is 44.

Length: 60 feet

Width: 10 feet

Height: 12.08 feet

Weight: 74,388.5 pounds

Maximum speed: 55 MPH

The cars over the years have been used on the following lines: [A](#) [B](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [J](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [W](#) [Z](#), as well as the following lines no longer in use: AA, CC, EE, GG, K, LL, QB, RR, SS and V.

The R-42 was featured in the famous car-vs.-subway chase in William Friedkin's 1971 thriller *The French Connection*. The two cars, #4572 and #4573, are part of New York Transit Museum's collection.

1969 was a big year: Sesame Street debuted, the New York Mets won the World Series, Woodstock drew more than 350,000 people to a farm in upstate New York, and Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to walk on the moon.

