HNW BYPASS p 8.

# Newsletter

INCORPORATED 1952

OBIT MERRILEES

JANUARY 1980 NUMBER 363

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

With this issue, the original U.C.R.S. Newsletter makes it reappearance. The last issue of Rail and Transit to carry a number in the original Newsletter Series was July-August 1978 (#362) and this issue is accordingly #363. The Newsletter Informer, published in recent years, will be consolidated with this publication effective with the February issue, and before proceeding further with this Introductory Statement it is only fitting that an expression of appreciation be made to Mr. Ed Campbell who, single handedly, assembled the material for the Informer and kept the publication coming to the members, on time. Mr. Campbell will continue to assemble the material on excursions, meetings and other coming events for the Newsletter.

At a meeting of the Directors of the Society held on December 13, 1979 it was decided that the U.C.R.S. Newsletter would be reinstated on a 12 months per year basis with the start of the new year and that the Society's other publication, Rail and Transit, would be published on a three issues per year schedule. It is hoped that these publication arrangements will enable news to be disseminated to members more quickly and, at the same time, provide a medium for the more frequent presentation of short feature acticles, motive power and car equipment news and notes, trip reports and like material. Rail and Transit, on the other hand, will continue to present more extensive illustrated coverage of selected matters, under the guidance of Dave Smith and Ron Layton.

More than ever before the plan is to make the Newsletter a publication not only for the members of the Society but also by those members. The ever-present plea goes out for the submission of news and other material, and the Editor resolves that every textual contribution, no matter how small, will be used and that credit lines will always be given, unless a request is specifically made to the contrary. Members are also invited to write guest editorials, and every latitude will be given for the free expression of opinion subject to the bounds of good taste.

The scope of the publication is intended to be Canada-wide, and in addition a limited amount of U.S. and foreign material will be presented, on a selective basis. A particular editorial plea is made in

respect of the submission by members of trip reports, whether the destinations have been far or near, with accounts of the railway and transit observations made on such trips. One good railfan trip report can be worth ten articles called from official sources, insofar as interest to, and enjoyment by, other members is concerned.

This first issue does not follow the intended general format of the Newsletter; it is planned to include photographs although such will be confined to one or two pages per issue in the interests of economy of production. Maps and line drawings will appear from time to time on other pages. The submission of photos for use in the Newsletter is encouraged, but the subjects should be newsworthy and the submitted prints sharp in quality, of good black and white contrast, with all parts of the locomotive(s) or other rolling stock well lit. Full information as to date, location and relevant technical matters should be clearly written on the back of the print for caption writing purposes. The Society cannot undertake to pay for photographs, whether used in the Newsletter or not. If a submitted photograph meets all of the qualifications above set forth, there is no reason not to expect it to be used. It is hoped to set and uniformly maintain a high standard of quality for photographic material used in the publication.

While, as mentioned above, Rail and Transit will present lengthier feature material, it is intended that the Newsletter present motive power and equipment rosters and assignment lists where such are of a size that they can be satisfactorily accommodated within the pages of the latter publication. Again, the submission by members of this type of material would be most welcome; both present-day and historical rosters and lists are intended to be used. Electric railway and transit material will not be relegated to a separate section at the back of the Newsletter, but may appear at any point in the pages, in keeping with the Society's constitutionally-avowed interest in railways in all of their forms and in all means of propulsion. In this connection, and in common with many rail publications, it is intended that transit coverage include trolley buses because of most railfans' general affinity for them.

It is planned, as a further service to members, to reinstate the "Readers' Exchange" Section wherein items for sale or trade, items wanted or information wanted can be listed. There will be no charge made for entries, and no yearly quota will be set on the number of entries that can be submitted. The only stipulation is that the items listed must be railway or transit material and/or cameras or other photographic equipment. Railway material, incidentally, does include model railroad equipment. Other railway enthusiast organizations and model railroad clubs will be welcome to have their meetings, excursions or open houses listed in the Newsletter at no charge, the philosophy again being that such announcements are a service to U.C.R.S. members.

It is hoped to build a "roster" of regular staff correspondents for the Newsletter in various parts of the country, and this does not exclude regular members resident in the Toronto and Hamilton areas. The ultimate size of the Toronto editorial staff cannot be determined at this time but will include, in addition to the Editor, Mr. John D. Thompson as Assistant Editor. He will concentrate on the production end of the publication as well as beating the bushes (or right-of-way weeds?) for material.

Lastly, but most impartantly, it is the sincere intention of the Editors that the Newsletter be kept on time, like all good railways. Mailings will be timed to inform regular Toronto members, at least, of the third Friday meeting for the month of issue. The editorial staff will strive to produce a Newsletter that will not only be of value to its readers for its content, but which may be counted upon by them to arrive at their front doors when they expect it.

Stuart I. Westland,
Editor

## T.T.C. PCC CAR DISPOSAL DECISION

On November 27th the T.T.C. decided to dispose of a total of 167 of its present total of 340 PCC cars. Of the 167 units, 15 were at the time of the decision stored unserviceable by reason of collision damage, electrical burnouts, etc., and are to be sold for scrap. The other 152 cars consist of those remaining cars in Classes A-6 (4300-4399) and A-7 (4400-4499) which were not subject to the heavy rebuild program of 1971-1974, together with all remaining cars in Classes A-9 (4550-4574), A-11 (4625-4674), A-12 (4675-4699) and A-13 (4700-4747), none of which classes (all purchased second hand) were subject to the heavy rebuild program. The 152 cars will be disposed of by sale "in the best interests of the Commission". The actual removal from Commission property would be at a rate matching that of the delivery of the CLRV's.

The roster at the end of 1980, assuming that all CLRV's have been received and all of the abovementioned 152 PCC's have been disposed of, will consist of 369 cars, not inclusive of the three semi-active Peter Witts. This contrasts with a total of 354 cars (the 340 PCC's plus 14 accepted CLRV's) in October 1979. The actual service requirements at present total only 306 cars, as indicated in the following table:

| | CLRV | PCC | TOTALS |
|---|---|---|---|
| SCHEDULED SERVICE | 163 | 82 | 245 |
| CNE EXTRAS | - | 7 | 7 |
| TRANSPORTATION EXTRAS (3%) | - | 8 | 8 |
| RESERVE FOR MAINTENANCE: | | | |
| CLRV'S (7%) | 11 | - | 11 |
| PCC'S (12%) | - | 12 | 12 |
| TOTAL CITY SYSTEM | 174 | 109 | 283 |
| SCARBOROUGH LRT LINE (INCLUDING RESERVE FOR MAINTENANCE) | 22 | - | 22 |
| TRAINING CAR 4700 | - | 1 | 1 |
| TOTALS | 196 | 110 | 306 |

It will be noted that the required total of PCC cars, aside from the Training Car, is 109, 64 cars less than the total of 173 cars (of Classes A-6, A-7 and A-8) included in the heavy rebuild program. However, the Commission has decided to retain all of these cars, at least on a pro tem basis, in recognition of the possibility of increasing ridership as a result of rising gas and oil prices. Having regard for the deterioration that inevitably seems to occur when surplus equipment is stored serviceable, it is to be hoped that all 173 of the Heavy Rebuilds will be kept active by being rotated in and out of service. These cars are now anticipated for replacement (by future orders of CLRV's, presumably) in the 1983-1986 period. At the time of the heavy rebuild program, the rebuilt cars were estimated to have a further life (from that time) of 8 to 10 years.

An interesting fact in connection with the above table of service requirements is that the 22-car complement estimated for the Scarborough LRT line is based on an assumed peak 3'20" headway with 2-car trains between Kennedy Station and McCowan Station. The service requirements as presented do not reflect the equipment needs of a McCowan Station-Finch (Malvern) extension of the Scarborough line nor of a Spadina (or Spadina-Queens' Quay) street car line, both of which possibilities are recognized in the staff report which led to the PCC disposal decision. (It is interesting to recall that the original heavy rebuild program covered 150 cars, to which total an additional 23 cars were later added for the purpose of filling the equipment requirement of the Spadina carline).

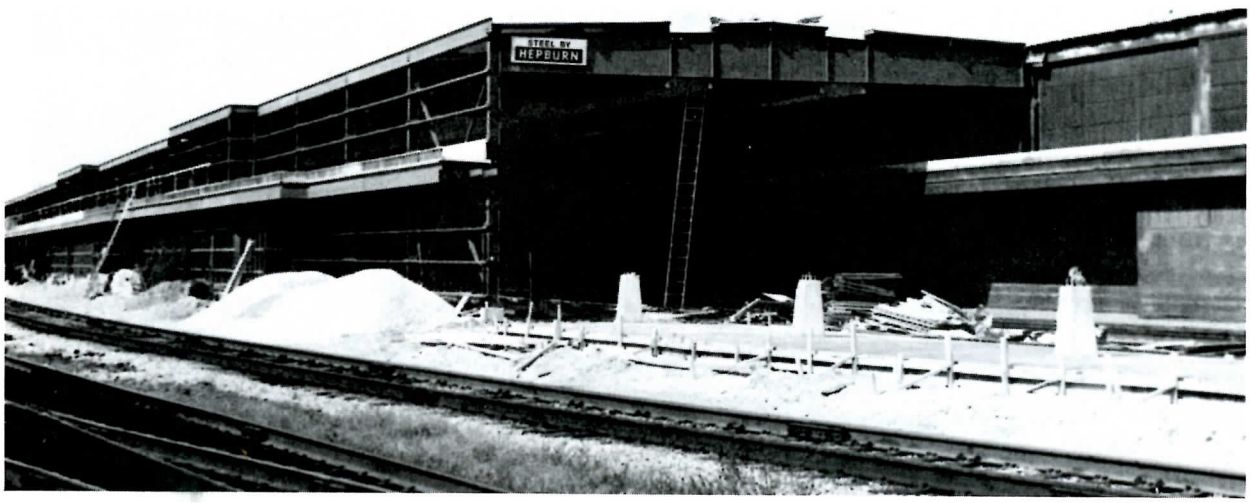
Also considered in the disposal (and retention) decision was the present storage capacity on the system, with and without St. Clair Carhouse. If the latter facility was to be used for car storage following its post-1980 vacating by UTDC, capacity on the system would be 543 cars, obviously well in excess of needs. If the carhouse only was to be used at St. Clair, the system storage capacity would be 416 cars, comprised of 173 spaces at Russell, 173 spaces at Roncesvalles, 24 spaces at Hillcrest and 46 spaces at St. Clair. Without St. Clair, the system capacity is 370 cars, 3 cars less than the total of the CLRV's, Heavy Rebuild PCC's, 3 Peter Witts and 4700. The conclusion has accordingly been reached that St. Clair is not required for car storage and that the 64 surplus PCC's to be retained pro tem can be accommodated at Roncesvalles and Russell. This would seem fortunate in that the cars can readily be rotated in and out of service when based at active carhouses. On the other hand, the post-UTDC fate of the St. Clair Division property becomes very uncertain.

## ONR REPLACING 'T' TRAIN LOCOMOTIVES WITH FP7'S

During 1980 the ONR will replace the original locomotives on its 4 European-built 'T' trains with 4 of its own FP7's, after suitable modifications have been made to them. The European locomotives have proven to be a maintenance headache for ONR, due to their unfamiliar design and the difficulty of obtaining spare parts.


ONR locomotive 1983 leads a "T" train west out of Toronto Union Station, on September 26, 1979. Soon the bright yellow train will veer north on CN's Newmarket Subdivision, for North Bay and Timmins. Such scenes will be a memory after the 1900's are replaced by rebuilt ONR FP7's this year.

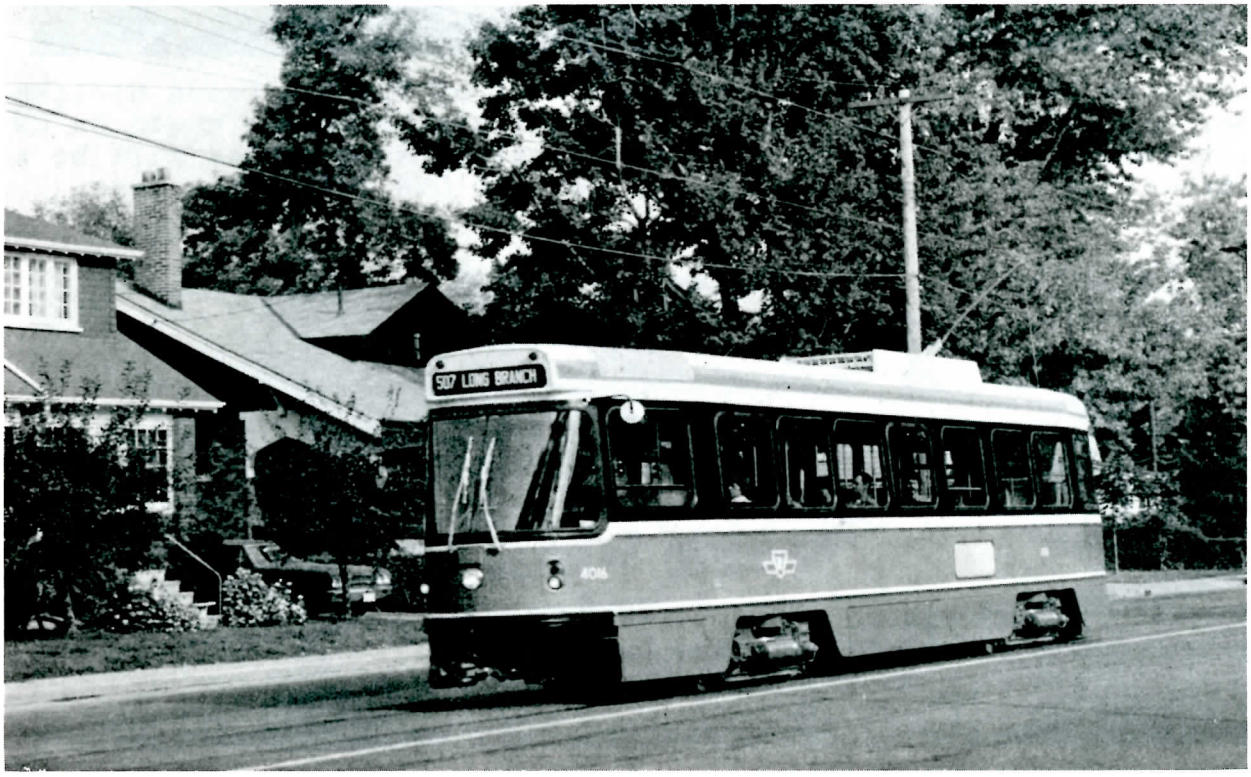
Ted Wickson photo




One of the most unique railway happenings in Canada last year was the expansion of the trainshed at Toronto Union Station. Tracks 12 and 13 were roofed over to replace Tracks 4 & 5, which were taken over for GO Transit trains. The extension was nearing completion on September 22, 1979.


Former Birmingham Transit (originally Birmingham Electric Company) PCC car 839 (TTC 4739) is representative of one of the classes that will become extinct during 1980 (except, possibly for training car 4700), following the November 27th car disposal decision. The most significant latter day differences from the appearance of the car in this June 26, 1953 photo are the small exterior advertising signs (no longer used) and the original (non-sealed beam) headlight.

TTC photo




TTC CLRV 4016,a Hawker-Siddeley alumnus, glides westward along Lakeshore Boulevard near Royal York Road. The handsome new cars, resplendent in an attractive red, gray, white and black colour scheme, have been a big hit with the travelling public.

TTC photo

The "F" units are being rebuilt with head-end power units for the train's heating and air conditioning systems; the brakes are being made compatible; the rear frames are being altered to permit coupling to the trains which will be on a permanent basis. The F's are being repainted in the 'T' train colours. Work is being performed in the ONR's North Bay shop, on a "when time is available" basis. As we go to press, two units are currently in the shops; the conversion program should be completed this summer.

Consideration was given to re-engining the European locomotives, numbers 1980-83, however General Motors Diesel reportedly declined to do so. It is expected that the 1900's will be scrapped. The ONR owns 14 FP7's, including those being rebuilt; 9 were sold to GO Transit several years ago for Power Control Units. The numbers of the rebuilt FP7's will be published in a future Newsletter.

## OBITUARY
## A. ANDREW MERRILEES: U.C.R.S. #17
## 1919-1979

With much regret the passing is reported of A. Andrew Merrilees, on December 3, 1979, who was probably Canada's leading railway historian and undoubtedly the possessor of the most extensive and unique collection of railroadiana in the country. A native of Hamilton, Mr. Merrilees had periods of employment with Maclean Hunter Publishing and the CNR before forming, in 1946, Andrew Merrilees Ltd., dealers in used railway equipment, a business which was made successful in no small part by its founder's great knowledge of Canadian railways. Two of his earliest and best known salvage operations involved the complete assets of the Hull Electric Railway in 1947 and the 1949-1950 removal and sale of the open trackage of the North Yonge Railways. Mr. Merrilees from time to time leased freight cars which he had purchased for revenue service purposes, carrying the reporting marks AAMX.

His favourite railway was his hometown based T.H. & B., to the recent history of which (In The Shadow of The Giants) be contributed much information. Several of the steam locomotives of the T.H. & B. were purchased by him for resale, including Consolidation 107 which was sold to the Bienfait Colleries in Saskatchewan in 1950. Another steam locomotive transaction was the sale to the Huntsville and Lake of Bays Railway and Navigation Co. of its last two locomotives, to accommodate which the gauge of the railway was changed. Another well known equipment purchase by Mr. Merrilees was the Ontario Northland (Temiskaming and Northern Ontario) private car originally known as SIR JAMES (Preston Car and Coach, 1910), which he restored as such and maintained for several years at the Old Weston Road property of his company before it was sold to amusement operator James Conklin.

The storied Merrilees collection of railroadiana is reportedly to be bequeathed in part to the Provincial Archives and in part to the National Museum in Ottawa.

## C.P.R. CAR UPGRADING PROGRAM

CP Rail is completing its 1979 rolling stock rehabilitation program, involving some 7000 freight cars and 172 cabooses, at a cost of $65 million. The program, employing 1300 men full time, has included the following car types, in addition to the cabooses:

- 1350 box cars with 8 and 10-foot doors (primarily newsprint service)
- 800 box cars with 6-foot doors (general merchandise service)
- 500 box cars (general manufactured goods)
- 600 insulated box cars (perishables)
- 700 covered hopper cars
- 1200 gondola cars
- 550 flat cars
- 300 specialty cars
- 1000 grain cars (50% of cost borne by Canadian Government)

The repair program has been divided among Weston Shop (Winnipeg) (3300 cars), Angus Shop (Montreal) (1800 cars) and Ogden Shop (Calgary) (1900 cars), with the 1000 grain cars being handled entirely at Weston Shop. Of particular note is the extensive number of box cars, of various types, involved in the repair program, giving the lie to the notion that this type of car is a dying breed. Also to be noted in connection with the program is the statement by the railway to the effect that it is becoming more cost efficient to rebuild or repair certain classes of rolling stock at the point where, heretofore, replacement by new equipment would have occurred.

## NOTES

- On December 28th more than 100 track torpedoes and fusees were stolen from a parked C.N.R. truck in Hamilton. Railway officials and police were particularly concerned by the dangers which these objects would pose if they got into the hands of children.

- $50,000 damage was caused to rolling stock and 360 passengers were delayed for five hours when Amtrak's southbound Montrealer was derailed by a rail spread at Easthampton, Mass., on Boston and Maine trackage, on November 21st. The locomotive and five cars of the ten-car train went onto the ties at a speed of about 30 M.P.H. There were no injuries to passengers, who were moved from the scene in coaches brought up from Springfield, about 15 miles to the south. No other Amtrak trains were delayed, as they were routed over the parallel Central Vermont line. The Montrealer had derailed in Holyoke, Mass. earlier in the year. - P.F. Oehm

- In these days of abondonments of branch and secondary lines (and even some redundant main lines) it is pleasant to hear of the possibility of a nearly dead line being restored to active and useful service. The 59-mile Georgetown-Allandale portion of the former Hamilton and Northwestern Railway (the CNR Beeton Subdivision) is being considered for rehabilitation and upgrading to serve as a by-pass line from Northern Ontario to Southwestern Ontario around the congestion of the Toronto area and McMillan Yard in particular. If such should come to pass, the entire

H. & N.W. line between Burlington and Allandale would have been restored as a freight by-pass route, a purpose far removed from that of the line's original construction. The H. & N.W. was an attempt by Hamilton promoters to divert northern trade to their city, and away from Toronto, in competition with the Northern Railway of Canada.

## T.T.C. NOTES

- Installation has been completed at the King-Bathurst intersection of two track curves, producing what in 1980 must be regarded as a phenomenon, a true grand union. (The latter term, in long-standing street railway parlance, denotes specialwork consisting of a complete double track diamond crossing with all eight connecting curves in place). The King-Bathurst track intersection had been a three quarters grand union with the east to south and north to west curves missing. With the Bathurst carline now operated out of Roncesvalles Division, the missing curves have been installed to permit cars to enter and leave service to and from the south end of the route via King Street without having to turn at Wolseley Loop. Grand unions formerly existed in Toronto at Bloor and Bathurst and at Bay and Adelaide, neither of which intersections are any longer the location of specialwork of any kind, although both locations continue to have tangent track passing through on one street. Both of these former grand unions had certain curves removed long before the specialwork was totally removed with line abandonments. Also, the King-Church intersection, which to-day has seven-eighths of a grand union, has had all eight track curves at different periods, but never all at the same time. There are no other active grand unions in North America, although there may be a number of them buried in road pavement.
- Pressure is being brought to bear by various residents in the Annex area of Toronto (north of Bloor Street and west of Avenue Road) for the relocation of the 4-Annette trolley bus line to St. George Street between Dupont Street and St. George Station, in lieu of the present routing via Bedford Road. If such rerouting was aceeded to by the TTC, the route would probably operate along Prince Arthur Avenue to enable it to continue to use the present off-street loop at the east end of St. George Station. St. George Street carries considerably more traffic than Bedford Road, the latter being essentially a local residential street, and St. George Street has a number of apartment buildings along its length which would be better served with the route relocation. The most obvious disadvantage would be the necessity for a walking transfer at Dupont Street between Annette and Bay trolley busses, unless the latter route could in some manner be extended westerly.
- It is now official TTC policy, in numbering vehicles, always to start a new vehicle order with a number ending in zero. As an example, the last series of Flyer buses (31 in total) bear the number grouping 8230-8260; accordingly the series of GM buses just recently received commence at 8270, in effect "wasting" nine numbers. As the latter series ends at 8314, a new group of 50 GM buses, recently ordered for Summer 1980 delivery, can thus be expected to have their numbering commence at 8320.

Also on the subject of numbering, it has been revealed that the 6000-6999 number block, originally reserved for light rail vehicles, has been officially assigned for deisel bus use, once the 7000-8999 block has been exhausted. This would seem to be the principal reason why the CLRV's have been numbered commencing back at 4000 rather than at 4800, the latter having been what was generally expected. With the 4000-4999 block to be used over again, the numbering of subsequent CLRV orders can be serially reflective of the respective ages of the various series.

- At time of writing, CLRV 4060 was the latest such unit to have been received. It was observed on a flat car at Hillcrest on January 4th.

## PROVINCIAL STUDIES: GO TRANSIT AND HAMILTON

On January 3rd the Toronto press carried the news that the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Transportation and Communications is carrying out a study of the possibility of electrification of the entire GO Transit rail system. The report is expected to be laid before the Provincial Cabinet in the spring on this year. It was also revealed that an electrification study of the system was carried out 5 years ago; the escalating cost of diesel fuel is presumably the reason that another run over the cost figures is being taken.

The study is reported to include the entire Pickering-Hamilton extent of the Lakeshore line (despite the fact that the Oakville-Hamilton segment sees only four GO trains a day) as well as the Georgetown and Richmond Hill lines and the still to be initiated Streetsville-Milton line. The high first cost of electrification would indicate that much more intensive services on all lines may be being contemplated for the future. Electrification of the Lakeshore line, in particular, together with the installation of a new additional intermediate stations (such as at Sunnyside and at Greenwood Avenue) would have the potential of giving Metropolitan Toronto another east-west rapid transit line. The report will certainly be awaited with interest by many transit fans.

The same Provincial Ministry has also announced that it will fund the design costs for what is termed a "demonstration" of the Urban Transportation Development Corporation's new rapid transit technology, such demonstration to consist of an active passenger carrying line between downtown Hamilton and an undisclosed location on the "Mountain". Actual construction of the line would await a commitment of partial funding by the Federal Government of the estimated $70 million cost of the facility. Each of the senior levels of government would pay 45% of the cost, and the remaining 10% would be funded by the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Government and private business. The Hamilton line would be expected to form an operating model to support bids which the UTDC would make on rapid transit projects elsewhere, notably in the U.S.A. The Federal Government's commitment to funding would have to come by July if planning and implementation of the project is to be continued without interruptions; the line would be operational by 1984 if all goes according to schedule.

The UTDC rapid transit concept is a successor to the MAGLEV system, which was generally proven to be operationally impractical. The successor system returns to conventional steel wheel or steel rail technology, but with small (although generally conventionally configured) cars, a linear induction motor propulsion system and a partially computerized control system. The anticipated quiet operation of the trains is hoped to make them environmentally acceptable in above grade alignments, and the system would characteristically be located on a light elevated structure in densely built urban areas and at ground level wherever appropriate rights-of-way could be secured. However, in the Hamilton case the line would bore into the face of the escarpment and ascend to the surface of the "Mountain" in a tunnel or twin tunnels.

## BUFFALO LIGHT RAIL PROJECT -

## A RESUMÉ OF THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Construction of Buffalo's Light Rail Rapid Transit project is now well underway, with several contracts awarded. As a background to the reports of progress that will appear periodically in the Newsletter in the future, there is presented in the following a capsule history of the development of the project from the conseptual stage up to the time of the granting by UMTA of the first construction grant.

As early as 1965 the Buffalo-Amherst and Buffalo-Tonawandas Corridors were identified as having high transit potential in what was called the "Niagara Frontier Transportation Study."

In 1967 the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) was created by an act of the New York State Legislature. Its mission was "to strengthen and improve the transportation services available to the residents within the Niagara Frontier Transportation District (i.e., Erie and Niagara counties)." Its particular responsibility was to develop and implement a unified mass transportation policy for the two-county region.

In March of 1969, the New York State Office of Planning Coordination (OPC) completed the "Buffalo-Amherst Corridor Urban Impact Study." OPC recommended that a rapid transit line be developed to serve as the spine of future development in the corridor. In response, the NFTA contracted with consultants for transit economics, civil engineering and traffic engineering to perform the "Niagara Frontier Mass Transit Study." This study was funded by a grant from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) and the State Department of Transportation.

One of the recommendations of the Study was that the NFTA design, construct and operate a rail rapid transit line in the Buffalo-Amherst Corridor. These recommendations were reiterated by the Transit Development Program (TDP) completed in November, 1971, which led to the designation of that corridor as the first priority location for a rapid transit line.

In 1971, the New York State Legislature authorized the NFTA to proceed with creation of a regional bus network and the design and construction of a rapid transit rail line in the Buffalo-Amherst Corridor. The Legislature appropriated $86 million for these activities and a separate $7.8 million appropriation for a Metropolitan transportation Center to consolidate the terminals of inter-city bus lines serving Buffalo.

In accordance with the requirements for federal funding at that time, the NFTA prepared a draft Environmental Impact Assessment in November, 1971. Following local review and consequent revisions, the draft EIA and the findings of the Transit Development Program and Mass Transit study were the subjects of public hearings held in April, 1972. Results of these studies suggested a 12.5 mile heavy rail transit line, with 58% in aerial configuration and properly integrated with a public Metrobus network serving the entire 2-county area.

Community opposition to certain portions of the rapid transit alignment and significant lengths of the aerial structure proposed at that time necessitated a re-evaluation of the project.

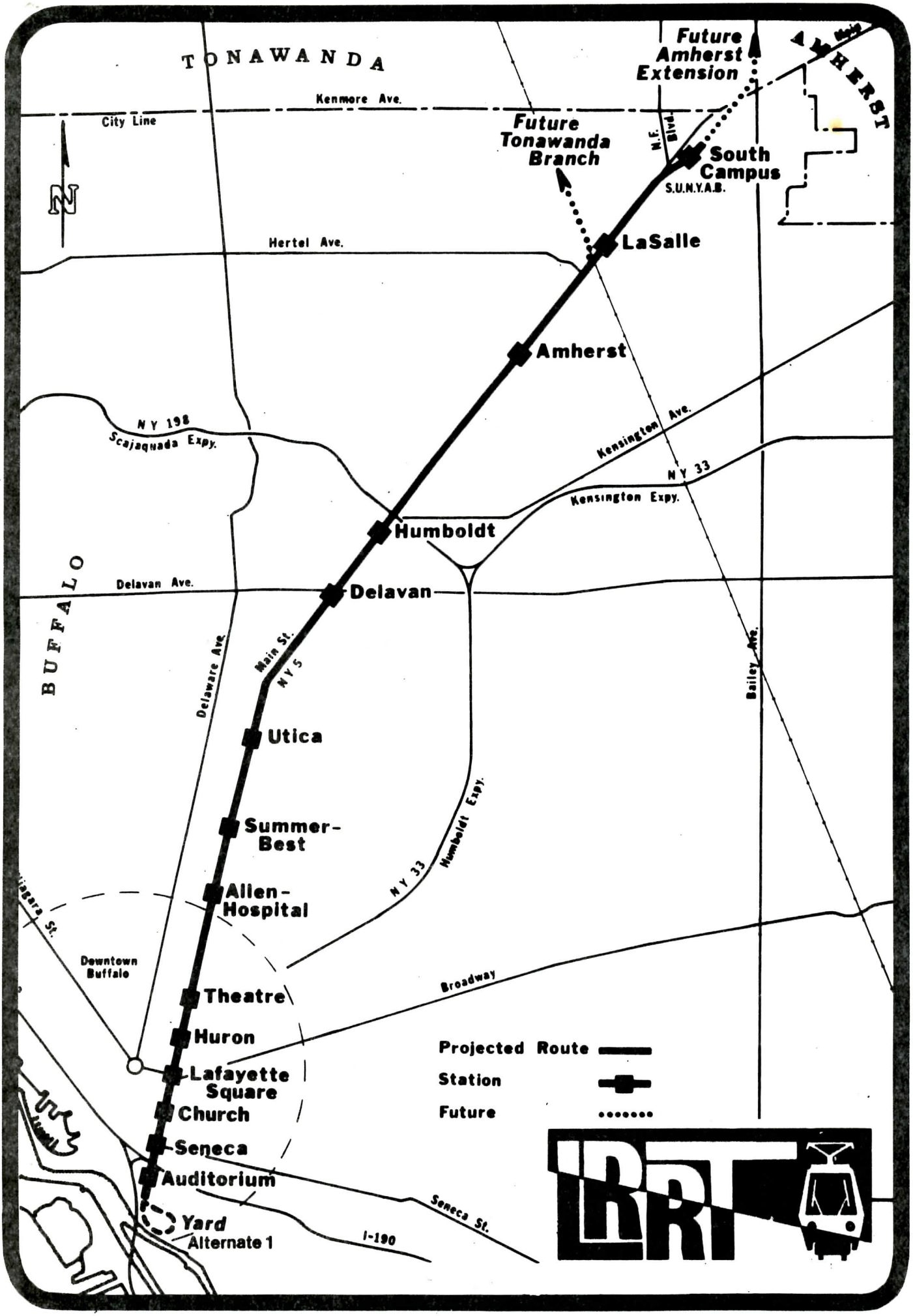
In November, 1972 UMTA awarded a $1,233,333 grant to NFTA for first year Preliminary Engineering Design Activity for the Buffalo-Amherst rapid transit proposal, representing a then-2/3 Federal share. The State of New York contributed the balance of $616,667.

In February, 1973, NFTA hired a highly qualified person as General Manager for its Metro Construction Division, with responsibility for managing the rapid transit project. It also added staff personnel in the areas of community relations, civil engineering, accounting, contracts management and systems control.

On August 2, 1973, NFTA signed a $1.4 million contract with consultants for Preliminary Engineering Design. The following month, the General Manager for the rapid transit project announced the schedule for a series of what were called "Community Forums", designed to involve the community throughout the planning process to follow.

This approach to community participation proved to be very successful. The proposed line was divided into 3 sections to allow more meaningful dialogue and to allow a greater number of speakers to be heard. A series of 3 meetings were held in each section. In addition, special workshops were arranged to allow individual groups and organizations to work out their particular problems. Meetings were well advertised in advance.

An important aspect of the Community Forums format was provision to concerned citizens of access to information. NFTA's staff even met with individuals on a one-to-one basis. At the same time, strong liaison was maintained with the local news media, which covered these meetings extensively, thus providing the general public with full project information.


TONAWANDA
Future Amherst Extension
AMHERST
Kenmore Ave.
City Line
Future Tonawanda Branch
N.F. Blvd.
South Campus
S.U.N.Y.A.B.
Hertel Ave.
LaSalle
Amherst
NY 198
Scajaquada Expy.
Kensington Ave.
NY 33
Kensington Expy.
Humboldt
BUFFALO
Delavan Ave.
Delavan
Delaware Ave.
Main St.
NY 5
Bailey Ave.
Utica
Summer-Best
Allen-Hospital
NY 33
Humboldt Expy.
Niagara St.
Downtown Buffalo
Broadway
Theatre
Huron
Lafayette Square
Church
Seneca
Auditorium
Yard
Alternate 1
I-190
Seneca St.
Projected Route
Station
Future
RT

It was clearly apparent, as the Community Forums drew to a close in early 1974, that there was progressively less opposition to the project, as the vertical and horizontal alignment had been altered during the preliminary design engineering effort to make them more acceptable. Citizens who had opposed the project now offered their support for the line.

In the forefront of this community opposition had been a group which called itself "NOT" (No Overhead Transit), comprising over 60 community-based organizations. Its chairman, satisfied with the citizen-interaction efforts of NFTA, gathered some 74,000 petitions of support and hand-delivered them to UMTA's Washington office.

A new EIA was prepared and a refined, 11-mile heavy rail system proposed, with more of the line placed in subway.

Another public hearing was held in July, 1974, at which nearly all the comments were favorable. However, escalating construction costs, due partly to inflation and delays, and to the decision to place more of the line underground, prompted UMTA to ask the NFTA to do a re-analysis of mass transit alternatives. The Authority was asked to compare the now-recommended 11-mile system with bus alternatives and with light rail transit possibilities to ensure that the most "cost-effective" project was being pursued.

In July, 1975, the New York State Transportation Commissioner appointed a 50-member citizens' committee to support local efforts directed toward a favorable decision on the rail transit project.

In February, 1976, the entire New York State Congressional delegation united to press for approval of the Buffalo project.

The "Metro for Buffalo" report on the findings of this re-analysis was completed in February, 1976, and concluded that a 6.4 mile "reduced" rail transit system, serving the downtown Buffalo to SUNYAB South Campus (on Main Street near the Buffalo City line) was most "cost-effective" in light of existing federal funding limitations and the desire to provide flexibility for future extensions.

At this point in time, UMTA was being besieged by requests from cities across the nation expressing an interest in rail transit transportation solutions. It realized, quite realistically, that it could no longer enter into agreements to fund projects encompassing many miles of track and have sufficient funds in its budget to cover a lot of cities. At the same time, in an effort to see that federal funds were spent more judiciously, UMTA began (with Buffalo) by requesting in-depth "alternatives analyses" to ascertain which mode of transportation would be best for the area.

A "Staff Conclusions and Recommendations" report was compiled by NFTA which reassessed the results of all previous studies, including the "Metro for Buffalo" study. This report recommended adopting a reduced rail transit system, partially at grade, partially underground and combining the best features of both heavy and light rail. Buffalo's Light Rail Rapid Transit (LRRT) system was proposed.

Following an UMTA "commitment in principle" to support a Metrorail System for Buffalo in June, 1976, contingent on successful preparation and acceptance of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the NFTA, in July of 1976, submitted an application to UMTA for a mass transportation capital improvement grant. The application requested $8 million as the federal 80% share of a $10 million budget for the General Engineering and Architecture Design phase of the LRRT project.

In August, 1976, the NFTA again held a public hearing on its capital grant application and citizen response was favorable to the revised rail transit system plans. This grant application was approved in October, 1976.

At the time of UMTA's approval of the LRRT system "in principle" on June 10, 1976, over 3 years had passed since the base cost data, from which the capital cost estimates were prepared, were developed. Another year was to pass before new consultants could begin a completely new estimate based on LRRT technology and a revised alignment developed in conjunction with preparation of a final EIS. Much had happened in the interim period. This area, and the nation as a whole, had experienced a period of significant inflation. In fact, inflation promises to have a continued substantial effect on both capital and operating costs.

In the intervening period, with consultants engaged, a comprehensive sub-surface investigation was undertaken, as well as further design development. Capital costs were therefore re-estimated in more detail than was previously possible. A more comprehensive schedule of design and construction activities was also developed.

In May, 1978 the NFTA approved the submission of a $439.8 million capital grant request to UMTA for final design and construction of the 6.4 mile LRRT system.

All of the planning and missionary work with citizens' groups culminated with the September 15, 1978 announcement by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams of the initial $50 million construction grant for the light rail project. - NFTA

THE NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY
THE UPPER CANADA RAILWAY SOCIETY, BOX
122, TERMINAL 'A', TORONTO M5W 1A2

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