



London to Get Key Railroad Tunnel; New York in Doubt

Travelers and passenger trains got a big boost October 5 when British Prime Minister Gordon Brown approved funding for the \$33 billion Crossrail east-west line across London. "The line--similar to the existing RER lines in Paris and the S-Bahn lines under many German cities--will...take mainline commuter trains from the east and west of the capital under the city in 41.5km of entirely new tunnels" (*Financial Times*, Oct. 6).

As London Mayor Ken Livingstone wrote in a letter to *FT* published Oct. 10, the line "gives the financial centres in London, the City and Canary Wharf a single transport platform; links this to Heathrow; provides massive new transport capacity in the West End; and opens up the connection to the new areas of housing development in the Thames Gateway.

"It passes through most of the areas of highest job growth in London. The station at Whitechapel provides a junction to the East London Line -- which passes through London's boroughs of greatest deprivation. Crossrail therefore simultaneously underpins the areas of most rapid economic growth and opens up connection to employment for many of London's most deprived areas."

Put another way, Crossrail means a huge number of London-area trips can be served by a single-seat ride for the

first time, and an even larger number will become attractive by virtue of requiring fewer transfers than at present. The new line also addresses huge congestion problems on the London Underground, particularly the Central Line.

It also simplifies intercity trips, for example, between Norwich/Ipswich (north-east of London) and western suburbs

of London out to Maidenhead and, conversely, between Oxford/Reading (to the west) and eastern suburbs to Shenfield (north leg) and Abbey Wood (south leg). Such trips will require simpler transfers rather than station changes. Crossrail will link with Eurostar trains at Stratford.

London's businesses will pay one third
(continued on Page 3)

Eurostar High Speed Begins in England November 14



—Brian Stephenson

England's Channel Tunnel-London high speed line sees revenue service Nov. 14. Above, a Sept. 4 press run is shown at Westwell Leacon. Since inauguration of cross-Channel rail service in 1994, Eurostar trains have used conventional tracks in England, limiting speeds to 90 mph and causing delays due to interaction with much slower commuter trains. The new line also includes a station shift in London from Waterloo to St. Pancras (and Stratford, which Crossrail eventually also will serve). London-Paris running time will drop to 2:15 (from as high as 3:15 when service began) and London-Brussels to 1:51 (from as high as 3:00).

Canada Unveils Big Commitment to Intercity Passenger Trains

Canadian Transport Minister Lawrence Cannon and Finance Minister Jim Flaherty on Oct. 11 announced a \$692 million, five year commitment to VIA Rail Canada. (Amtrak handles over six times VIA's passenger-miles.)

There is \$516 million in capital to refurbish locomotives and rolling stock, lengthen sidings, upgrade signals on two VIA-owned segments, and upgrade stations. The Quebec-Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto-Windsor Corridor will get faster, more frequent service. Accessibility for passengers with disabilities will be improved on the Renaissance cars.

The other \$175.9 million will augment VIA's \$170 million a year operating grant until upgrades improve VIA's bottom line.

Transport 2000 Canada, NARP's sister organization, praised the announcement. President David Jeanes said, "Transport 2000 has been working for a long time in support of VIA Rail investment...Canada needs a stronger passenger rail mode delivering timely, comfortable and accessible service...The investments will help Canada meet Kyoto targets with more attractive and efficient trains in all areas served."

Separately, statements on June 28

(Quebec) and Oct. 5 (Manitoba) portend faster and more reliable service for three VIA long-distance trains—the Montreal-Gaspe *Chaleur*, Winnipeg-Churchill *Hudson Bay* and Montreal-Halifax *Ocean*.

Manitoba and Quebec, in partnership with the federal government, will fund track improvements on Churchill-The Pas and Matapedia-Gaspe lines and acquisition by a non-profit corporation of the Riviere-du-Loup-to-Matapedia segment used by *Ocean* and *Chaleur*. The routes have suffered from deferred maintenance due to a lack of freight traffic, resulting in service disruptions to VIA. ■

Why I Put NARP In My Will

By Robert J. Stewart, of Fort Myers, FL

It is important for me to support causes I believe in. There are times to pay back some of what has been given to us. There are so many good choices out there for our money that the decision can be tough to make. Some of the questions I like to ask are:

- Will it benefit mankind?
- Will it benefit our country?
- Am I able to see positive results?
- Do I know that the money is being used wisely?
- Is the organization run in a professional, ethical manner?
- Is the organization moving forward?
- Is it tax deductible?

Another Call for Passenger Trains

"You know you're unloved when people prefer the taxman. In the latest University of Michigan consumer satisfaction index, America's airlines scored worse than the Internal Revenue Service. This past summer has been the worst in years for delays and baggage mishaps on domestic flights. Not coincidentally, average load factors are running above 80%... America's ageing air traffic system cannot cope..."

"Ultimately, the air traffic system must be upgraded. A more integrated transportation policy might also look at investment in other options (high-speed rail?) to mitigate air travel demand growth..."

—The Lex Column,
Financial Times, October 13

Diner-Lounges to Enter Service on *City of New Orleans*

"Cross-Country Café" begins on the northbound *City of New Orleans* on Oct. 28. The Cafe is a diner/lounge design reflecting lessons learned during the Dec. 2006-Feb. 2007 run of Car 37000 on the *Capitol Limited* (*July News*).

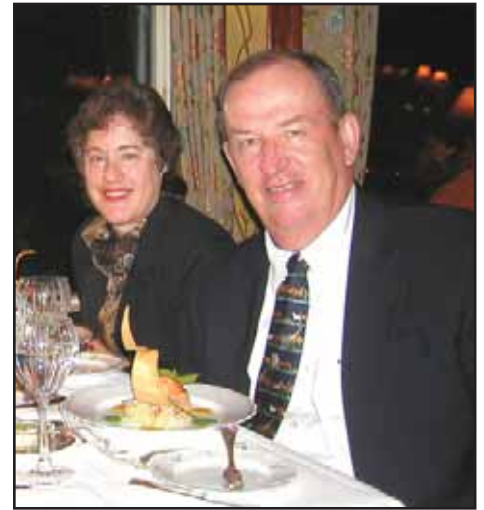
The Cross-Country Café will have:

- Continuous service (except from midnight to 6:30 AM).
- In Chicago, food service (and dinner starting at 7:00 PM (departure is 8:00)).
- Service all the way into Chicago north and New Orleans south. A key factor is

As I look at NARP, I can say that the answer to all the above questions is yes. So the only other decision is what kind of financial commitment to make—whether to put NARP in the will, renew at a higher level, make a special contribution. (I did the first two of those options.) But of course, there are many ways to contribute. The important part is to make the commitment!

I can relax in knowing my investment will be used for a very good cause. ■

For more information on NARP and planned giving, write to narp@narprail.org or NARP, 900 Second Street, NE, Suite 308, Washington, DC 20002, or call 202-408-8362.



Robert J. Stewart and his wife, Virginia, enjoy dinner on the Eastern & Oriental Express, June 17, 2002. They took the train from Bangkok to Singapore.

Drummeter Wins Latest ACAC Service Excellence Award

The Amtrak Customer Advisory Committee presents "Service Excellence Awards" to Amtrak employees that day in



—Kate Warr

Lou Drummeter, a *Capitol Limited* sleeping car attendant, receives the Amtrak Customer Advisory Committee's latest Service Excellence Award. Above, right to left: Linda Anderson, Manager of On Board Services for the *Capitol Limited*, Drummeter, ACAC member Franklin Shearer, and his wife Lucille.

and day out provide exceptional service to Amtrak passengers. One presentation occurred Aug. 24 in Washington, when Lou Drummeter, a *Capitol Limited* sleeping car attendant, received an award from ACAC member Franklin Shearer.

Shearer's nomination noted Drummeter's consistent, excellent service over many *Capitol* trips, especially his pleasant demeanor, ability to strike up conversations with his passengers, and handling of difficult situations and big delays.

The award has gone to 32 Amtrak employees in many crafts on all types of Amtrak services since the ACAC established it in 2003.

The ACAC, formed in 1997, has 23 members, each a regular user of one category of Amtrak service. ■

Late Flash on Labor

For nine Amtrak unions, the National Mediation Board on Oct. 18 "proffered" arbitration. It is likely to be rejected, so late Oct. could see the parties released from mediation, starting up to three 30-day periods, culminating in a strike or Congressional action by about Jan. 29. Three other unions asked not to be released. Releasing the parties could pose a serious threat to Amtrak's national network.

Congratulations, Cliff!

R. Clifford Black IV, an Amtrak veteran, became Chief of Corporate Communications Aug. 1. He'd been Acting Chief since Dec. 15.

Crossrail

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of Crossrail costs, partially through a supplementary property tax, and British Airports Authority—owner of Heathrow—has agreed “in principle” to contribute.

Crossrail is the equivalent of giving Boston’s North Shore commuters a single-seat ride to South Station/Back Bay and running trains across New York City.

In the U.S., **Boston’s Big Dig**, though linking North and South Stations, is highway only. However, thanks to efforts by NARP and others, it was designed to accommodate a future rail connection.

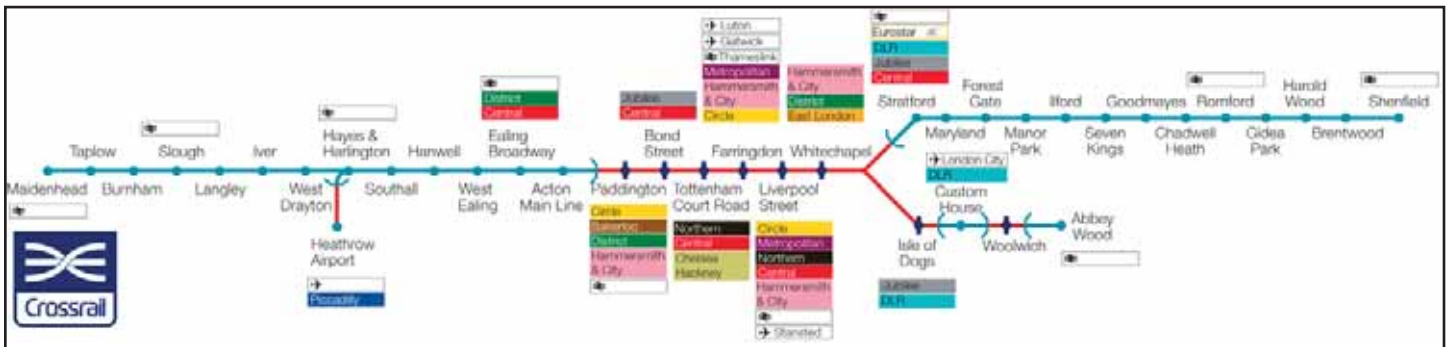
Gov. Duval Patrick (D) is being asked to protect the rail alignment through Boston to ensure that this important connection can be built when funds are available.

Meanwhile, designs for new rail tunnels under the Hudson River have been dumbed down (literally and figuratively) so they only feed some new platforms and dead-end tracks near **New York’s Penn Station**. NY and NJ transit agencies earlier envisioned connections to existing Penn Station tracks, continuing on to Grand Central, permitting NJ-Manhattan-Westchester County-CT thru service.

Philadelphia is the only U.S. city with a

true cross-town railroad link. This followed cancellation of an east-west expressway and pressure for another project with great job creating value. The Center City rail link had been on the drawing boards for some time. Then-DOT Secretary William Coleman (a Philadelphian) signed the full funding agreement in 1977. Tunnel shuttle service began in June, 1984; full operation in November, 1984.

Planning for **Chicago’s West Loop Transportation Center** envisions both commuter and intercity trains running across the city. **Ottawa** also is considering a crosstown rail tunnel. ■



NARP’s Youth Outreach: Growing the Next Generation of Rail Advocates

To continue to grow and thrive, any advocacy organization must reach out to young people. In that spirit, NARP Communications Associate Matthew Melzer was guest speaker at the Sept. 28 meeting of the Capitol Hill Cub Scouts (Pack 230), about 75 boys aged 6 to 11.

To aid in the presentation, Amtrak provided a generous set of materials, including National Timetables, complete route guide sets (for all long-distance routes), postcard sets, coloring books, Amtrak-Marvel comic books, rubber luggage tags, and plastic tote bags.

Melzer put together a digital slide presentation of 25 photographs highlighting various aspects of train travel and history, from steam trains to modern diesels and *Acela Express*, and Japan’s *Shinkansen*.

Melzer reports, “I began the presentation by distributing to the Scouts the National Timetables, and asking them to open up the inside of the front cover, to follow along on the national route map as I told them the locations of where the photos were taken. This kept their attention, as they got to exercise their geographic skills when I asked them to point out the various locations. This also allowed me to put the fun subject of trains into a real-world educational context.”

The first slide Melzer showed was of a Washington Metrorail train. “I asked,

‘Who knows what this is?’ The Scouts immediately answered correctly. I then asked, ‘Who has been on the Metro before?’ Virtually all hands shot up. So I said, ‘Good, then you’ve traveled by train!’”

Other themes included scenery, wildlife, on-board food and the Superliner lounge and dining cars, maintenance of way equipment, and the mystique of the Capitol Hill railroad tunnels directly under the church where the Scouts meet.

Melzer reports that the Scouts asked some extremely intelligent questions, ranging from, “How do the conductors know where you’re going?” to “Why can’t the *Acela* go as fast as trains in other countries?”

One parent asked, “Why does it seem like nobody takes the train in America?” Melzer noted the Northeast Corridor’s high market share and the usefulness of long distance trains for the scores of Americans who have no other options, due to geography, cost, personal preference, and, increasingly, health and age factors.

Melzer’s presentation is a great template for future efforts. Reach out to local youth groups and volunteer to make presentations! Program directors are often clamoring for speakers, and of course, kids love trains! ■

Contact Matt Melzer at the NARP office if you’d like more information on making a presentation to youth in your community.

A Century of Fast Trains

“Fast Trains and Faster,” an in-depth study of high-speed passenger trains from Engine 999 of the 1890s to Amtrak’s *Acela*, has been reprinted from *Railroad History’s* Spring-Summer 2007 issue. The lavishly illustrated, 24-page booklet traces the rise of fast trains—led by the Burlington *Zephyrs*, Milwaukee Road *Hiawathas*, and Santa Fe *Super Chief*—to compete with cars, and the slowing of service after World War II. There is a four-page table comparing Amtrak running times with scheduled train service dating back to 1899.

The authors, William D. Middleton and Mark Reutter, are noted railroad historians. The booklet is published by the non-profit Railway & Locomotive Historical Society and is available to NARP members who send a check for \$6.95 to Railroad History Reprints, 145 South Linwood Ave., 2d Floor, Baltimore, MD 21224.



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NARP NEWS

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our mission: a modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that provides a travel choice americans want.

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Disneyland Resort Shuttle runs hourly linking Anaheim Amtrak and resort properties near amusement park. Adult fare \$3 (or \$8 for three day pass); kids 10 and under ride free now, \$1 effective Jan. 8, 2008. Bus also serves as inter-resort shuttle.

Oct. 29 timetable has no major changes. Amtrak is switching to quarterly timetables to more quickly reflect changes. Next edition expected in late January.

digPlayers No Longer Available—Railway Media ceased operations; personal video viewers no longer available for rent in stations or on board trains.

Guest Rewards online redemption—Coach, Business Class, and Acela Express First Class—but not sleeper and Auto Train—reward tickets can be booked at www.amtrakquestrewards.com. Round trip travel requires booking two one-way reservations. You may still book reward travel by phone at 1-800-307-5000.

Wi-Fi at NEC Stations—T-Mobile Hot Spot now offers Wi-Fi at Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. Connect your laptop to SSID <tmobile> and follow instructions to pay for service. ClubAcela lounges still have free Wi-Fi, but T-Mobile has faster speeds and more bandwidth.

NARP Thanks Artist Thorpe



—Matthew Melzer

Noted railroad artist J. Craig Thorpe and NARP Executive Director Ross Capon pose next to an Amtrak locomotive in Washington Union Station. Thorpe was in town in connection with a commission to paint Washington Union Station in honor of the building's 100th anniversary.

Thorpe, who lives in Seattle, has sold paintings to NARP at a discount, which we present to guest speakers at our board meetings. We thank him very much for his work!

The NARP Family Grows

NARP Assistant Director David Johnson married Amanda Bechtel in Washington, D.C. on October 6. The NARP staff joined David and Amanda's friends and family for the special occasion at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill, followed by a reception at the Phoenix Park Hotel, 1 block from Union Station. Read Matt Melzer's Oct. 10 Blog entry at www.narprail.org for full details and a photo.

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