



# **The Beltline**

**On the Web at [www.nattrackers.org](http://www.nattrackers.org)**

**Official Newsletter of the National Capital Trackers**

**2022, no. 8, issued September 2022**

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### **NCT Club News**

Monthly Membership Meetings are every month on the Third Thursday. Members may attend in person at Green Acres Center in Fairfax or on Zoom.

Sep 15, 2022 07:00 PM

Oct 20, 2022 07:00 PM

Nov 17, 2022 07:00 PM

December meeting usually NOT HELD.

### **Upcoming Shows:**

Kensington Armory, Sept. 10-11, Contact Don H.

## **Bruce Kutch's Layout Featured, CTT Customer Service**

NCT Member Bruce Kutch's Pennsylvania RR layout appeared in the Photo Album section of the July-August issue of Classic Toy Trains, with a CTT promise for a feature spread on Bruce's layout in a future issue. I was reminded of this after the callout about Bernie and Lyn Gross' layout photo in the previous Beltline issue. No oversight intended; it turned out I had not received my July-August CTT issue. I emailed their customer service folks pronto, got an immediate response, and two weeks later my missing issue appeared! But the lesson here is that if you have something you'd like to see in the Beltline, **let me know**.

## **Fall is Coming!**

On the Western Maryland Scenic RR, Cumberland to Frostburg



## Disney Ride to Remain Closed For Unforeseeable Future, Fans Speak Out



Walt Disney World is filled with many rides and attractions. From thrilling coasters such as Space Mountain and Expedition Everest to family-friendly rides like “it’s a small world” and Peter Pan’s Flight, the Walt Disney World rides are unique and loved by so many. The Walt Disney World Railroad, which typically gives Guests the grand circle tour of Magic Kingdom, has been closed since December 2018. This had to be done in order for Disney World to begin construction and make way for the upcoming TRON attraction, which will be located in Tomorrowland once complete. Unfortunately, we still do not have a reopening date for the Walt Disney World Railroad, meaning the attraction remains closed indefinitely — and fans are not happy. Again, the Walt Disney World website still lists the attraction as closed throughout the entire months of August and September, with no reopening date in site.

If you’ve never had the chance to ride the grand circle tour around Magic Kingdom, check out the official Disney description here:

- Listen to the clamor of the engine, the chug of the wheels and the call of the whistle aboard the Walt Disney World Railroad.

- Ride 1 of 4 meticulously restored, vintage narrow-gauge steam trains—originally built between 1916 and 1928—and enjoy a relaxing 20-minute, 1.5-mile scenic round-trip tour.
- It's a convenient—and nostalgic—way to get around Magic Kingdom park!!

**From InsidetheMagic.net via Google news.**

**Rare model locomotives sold for 'astonishing' £25,000, By Liam Barnes, BBC News, via Google News**



**IMAGE SOURCE, GILDINGS AUCTIONEERS**

The "Special Tank" model fetched the highest price of £14,000

**Three rare model locomotives have sold for thousands at auction.**

The Fine Scale O Gauge models, made by James Stanley Beeson, went for £25,000 - nearly four times the total estimate.

A LNWR Ramsbottom 0-6-0T "Special Tank", listed for £1,500-£2,000, was auctioned for £14,000.

A 1958 locomotive "Belted Will" with tender, estimated at £2,000 to £3,000, sold for £9,500; while a 1940s LNWR 4-6-0 136 "Minerva" with tender, listed at £1,500 to £2,000, earned £3,400.

The sale was held on Wednesday by Market Harborough-based Gildings Auctioneers, which said it had bidders flying in from across Europe despite the auction being online-only.



**IMAGE SOURCE, GILDINGS AUCTIONEERS**

Image caption,

The "Minerva" and tender sold for £3,400

More than 500 lots featured, with the star attractions being the items made by James Beeson, whose family firm was one of the leading makers of the 20th Century and supplied models used in Hollywood films.

Andrew Smith, model railway expert for Gildings, said the high bids were evidence of the quality of Beeson's work.

"The astonishing prices paid for these locomotives is testament to the incredibly high regard James Stanley Beeson is held in by collectors of model railways.

"The example of his extraordinary metalcraft which sold for £14,000 is believed to have been an especially challenging shape of cab for Beeson to build, which partly explains why it attracted such fierce bidding and ultimately sold for such a huge amount of money.

"The overall results of today's sale, and in particular this private collection of scratch-built models from the mid-20th century, shows that the market remains fiercely competitive."



**IMAGE SOURCE, GILDINGS AUCTIONEERS**

The "Belted Will" locomotive and tender sold for £9,500 - over three times its estimate

**Operations begin on part of Long Island Rail Road's new third track**

First segment of 9.8-mile, \$2.6 billion project placed in service



NEW HYDE PARK, N.Y. — New York Gov. Kathy Hochul joined with Metropolitan Transportation Authority officials Monday, Aug. 15, for a ceremonial first ride and press conference marking the opening of the first section of the Long Island Rail Road's Main Line Expansion Project, also known as the Third Track project.

A 3-mile section of the 9.8-mile project, adding a third main line between Floral Park and Hicksville, N.Y., was placed into service in time for Monday's morning commuter rush. Hochul and officials including MTA CEO Janno Lieber and Catherine Rinaldi, LIRR interim president, rode to New Hyde Park, the site of the press conference.



New York Gov. Kathy Hochul

and MTA CEO Janno Lieber arrive at the New Hyde Park on Monday after a ceremonial ride from Jamaica to open the first section of third track to be placed in operation on the Long Island Rail Road’s Main Line. (Marc A. Hermann/MTA) “The opening of the Third Track marks a huge milestone for commuters and visitors that is decades in the making,” Gov. Hochul said, according to an MTA press release. “Thanks to this extraordinary project, LIRR trains will run more often, and passengers will have a smoother ride than ever.”

Lieber said, “Long Island leaders have talked for generations about adding a third track and finally it’s here. The MTA is investing billions in Long Island and the results are clear: more frequent service and greater reliability, along with strengthened reverse commuting service to give Long Island businesses access to a much bigger labor pool.” And LIRR Interim President Catherine Rinaldi, also Metro-North president, said the project “has upgraded stations with a host of modern amenities, created a more resilient system that can better handle service disruptions, and made it easier for LIRR customers to make convenient reverse peak trips.”

The third project, along with the forthcoming opening of Grand Central Madison, the East Side Access station for LIRR beneath Grand Central Terminal, will see weekday service on the LIRR Main Line increase from 56 to 94 trains daily.

The MTA says the Main Line Expansion Project is on schedule and \$100 million below budget.



With station work continuing in the background, a diesel-powered bilevel train passes through the Long Island Rail Road's New Hyde Park station on the first day of three-track operation on Monday, Aug. 15. With some of the third main yet to open, and work including landscaping and station upgrades continuing, the MTA says the project will not be substantially completed until April 2023. (Joseph M. Calisi)

## Work Continues to Return First EBT Steam Locomotive to Service

By Dan Cupper | August 18, 2022, from Trains magazine via Google News



EBT Plymouth switcher No. M-4 is ready to shove 2-8-2 steam engine No. 16 into Stall 6 of the Rockhill Furnace, Pa., roundhouse on Aug. 12, 2022. (Dan Cupper)

ROCKHILL FURNACE, Pa. – Work continues on preparing East Broad Top’s 2-8-2-type engine No. 16 (Baldwin, 1916) for a return to active service.

The narrow-gauge railroad, a National Historic Landmark, last used steam power in 2011, just prior to the shutdown that put the 33-mile railroad into a deep freeze for more than eight years. In 2020, a new non-profit group, the EBT Foundation Inc., was formed to buy the property from its previous owner, the Kovalchick Salvage Co. of Indiana, Pa.

While four of the six Baldwin 2-8-2 Mikados on the property (Nos. 12, 14, 15, and 17) saw service during the 1960-2011 tourist era, it was No. 15 that closed out steam operations — and regularly scheduled passenger service. After that, EBT ran a few motorcar trips for the Friends of the East Broad Top, but steam was done. When the foundation took over in 2020, it resumed tourist service with a diesel-electric center-cab switcher, General Electric No. M-7, while planning to bring steam back.

Among the engines, No. 16 (1916) was judged to be the best candidate for restoration — largely because it hadn’t run since 1956 — and work began almost immediately.

EBT’s Mikados fall into three sizes. No. 12 is the smallest and oldest (1911, 56 tons), while Nos. 14 and 15 are of medium size (1912 and 1914, 73-75 tons). Nos. 16-18 (built 1916, 1918, and 1920) are the largest engines (81-82 tons). All three are equipped with superheaters, thermal efficiency devices that preheat and dry steam before discharging it into the cylinders to produce movement. Superheating is a rarity for narrow-gauge engines, as most American narrow gauge railroads were declining or abandoning by the time superheating became common in steam-locomotive design in the early 20th century.

No. 16 passes boiler test; finishing work remains



Fresh paint on the pilot and smokebox of EBT No. 16 on Aug. 5, 2022, is evidence of progress in Stall 8 at the Rockhill Furnace roundhouse. (Dan Cupper)  
EBT No. 16 successfully passed its hydrostatic boiler test on May 17, 2022, and since has been test-steamed with Federal Railroad Administration staff observing. The FRA was satisfied with the test. “That allows us to install everything back on the boiler,” says EBT Master Mechanic Dave Domitrovich. “We don’t have to take it off again before running it.”

A considerable amount of finishing work remains.

Three dome covers have been painted and two have been remounted, and major fittings and appliances are either renewed or replaced and are back on the engine. This includes bell, whistle, sight glasses, tri-cocks (additional boiler-level checks), air pumps, air tanks, Hancock injectors, and boiler-pressure and brake-pressure gauges. The engine’s front end (smokebox and pilot) and tender are painted. All of

the plumbing is completed — meaning air piping and power (steam) piping — and the throttle has been reinstalled, a major step. The pistons and valves are reinstalled in the cylinders, Domitrovich said. The next major tasks involve reinstalling the main and side rods and timing the valves. Completion is getting closer, but not imminent, with the next steps being placement of boiler lagging (insulation), and completion of new stainless-steel boiler jacketing (now 50% done). The last thing to be handled will be painting and reinstalling the cab.

No. 15 to be next for restoration

In a change from the original plan, Domitrovich said the shop will turn to restoring No. 15. Originally, No. 14 was scheduled to be next, but the railroad discovered it required more extensive work than first thought. The engine needs major boiler work and major running-gear work, while No. 15 needs only running-gear work.



EBT No. 15 pulls a coal-train photo charter in October 2008. (Dan Cupper)  
The reason is that years ago, Strasburg Rail Road’s Linn Moedinger, Rick Musser, and Jim Rice (all of whom mentored Domitrovich when he was at Strasburg) helped EBT get No. 15 running again when No. 14’s FRA time expired. As a result, Domitrovich says, all of the FRA-mandated Form 4 federal boiler safety calculations for that engine have already been done, sharply cutting the amount of time and labor needed.

EBT has already bought eight new drivers for the two medium-sized 2-8-2s (14 and 15), so those parts will be on hand, he says. Boiler tubes bought for No. 14 will be used for No. 15, as the engines are the same size.

“The (15’s) boiler is a known quantity,” says Domitrovich. “All the boiler work was done, and it’s known to be in sound condition.”

Another new passenger coach

The second new coach (of four) built by Hamilton Manufacturing, Inc., of Bellingham, Wash., has arrived. It was placed on its new trucks, and work is continuing to set it up with new couplers, truss rods, air hoses, and heating and lighting equipment. It will be numbered 22.



EBT's new passenger coaches, Nos. 22 (foreground) and 21, stand in the Rockhill Furnace yard on Aug. 12, 2022, awaiting lettering before entering revenue service. (Dan Cupper)

EBT's first new car, No. 21, arrived on July 19 and has already gotten a break-in test run. EBT staff found it to be free-rolling (it's equipped with Timken roller bearings) but heavier than cars now in use.

Next to arrive will be coach No. 23 (like the others, with a capacity of 52 seats), and a wheelchair-lift-equipped, 40-seat combine, No. 17. Built to mimic the appearance of EBT's vintage wooden cars, the new cars' exterior is finished in a PVC-like vinyl that is painted dark green.

EBT General Manager Brad Esposito says the railroad may be in the market for more carbody shells in the future. These would be delivered without coach seats, so EBT can configure them for specialty use such as first-class, parlor-car seating, or as dining cars.

Lettering of the cars and No. 16 and its tender will be handled by George Williamson of Harrisburg, Pa., who does business as GW Signs. "He's one of the few guys who still does hand lettering," Domitrovich says. "We didn't want to use vinyl (lettering) on the engine or cars, because we've gone to inordinate lengths to make [them] look historically accurate." Williamson, who does custom work on

racing cars, drag-strip cars, dirt-track cars, and billboards, “is obsessed with this,” Domitrovich says, because “his father worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad.”

Brake shop/machine shop is open for business



Two of EBT’s four new air-brake test racks in the former EBT Transit bus garage at Rockhill Furnace, Pa. At left is a 4C test rack, while a triple-valve rack is at right. (Dan Cupper)

Until now, EBT has concentrated on repairing, replacing, or renewing equipment for its own needs. But Domitrovich has positioned the railroad to handle outside air-brake work by hiring Ron Freitag, a mechanic formerly with Strasburg Rail Road, and by trading with another railroad museum to acquire four air-brake test benches that can handle all kinds of equipment.

EBT has a triple-valve air-brake bench in one of its historic shop buildings, but using this equipment will avoid wear and tear on antique machinery.

The four benches can handle triple-valve (including K- and P-type valves), 4C, UC or Universal Control, and AB-style brake equipment. Other equipment includes a brake-valve lapping machine and compressor, a surface grinder, two lathes, and a Bridgeport milling machine.

“I’m excited that it will bring contract revenue into the company,” he said. “I’ve wanted to do this from the beginning.”

### New equipment for track maintenance

EBT has acquired a ballast regulator from Quality Track Products in Ohio and a tamper from a contractor in Wellsboro, Pa. Both were converted from standard gauge to three-foot gauge before arriving at EBT. The tamper conversion was carried out by a member of Friends of the East Broad Top, Craig Musser. The benefit is that these on-track machines will allow EBT to mechanize what had been a nearly all-manual task.

**Friends of the East Broad Top Newsletter**, courtesy of Tracker Tom Hargis

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**From Box Car to Tiny House**, from Autoevolution via Google News.

But where’s the space for their train room? See full article at

<https://www.autoevolution.com/news/rusty-and-rugged-on-the-outside-this-vintage-boxcar-is-a-lovely-home-on-the-inside-197771.html>



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