



United Railroad Historical Society, Inc.
A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Tax ID: 22-2867670
104 Morris Ave, Boonton, NJ 07005
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Non-Profit United Railroad Historical Society of NJ To Receive Historic ALP-44 Locomotive Donated by NJ TRANSIT

The United Railroad Historical Society of NJ announced today that NJ TRANSIT has donated ALP-44M No. 4424 to the URHS for historic preservation.

This donation to URHS was made by NJ TRANSIT to commemorate the 40th anniversary of NJ TRANSIT Rail Operations. By preserving this locomotive, and many others from NJ TRANSIT's history, URHS and NJ TRANSIT hope to use these living artifacts to educate the public for decades to come.

The locomotive will be available for public viewing at URHS's Railroad Museum [for a day] festival on September 24, as well as other special 40th Anniversary events throughout the year.

The ALP-44 holds a special place in the heritage of NJ TRANSIT and was integral in the agency's most formative years. It was the very first model of electric locomotive purchased new by the state of New Jersey. It represented the agency's first foray into the global marketplace, with all 32 units being built in Sweden. Most notably, that same batch of ALP-44s made possible NJ TRANSIT's extraordinarily successful MidTOWN DIRECT Service.

"We are honored that NJ TRANSIT would trust us to be custodians of their corporate heritage," said URHS Executive Director Kevin Phalon. "Most people, even NJ TRANSIT riders, will probably not know what an ALP-44 is, but they certainly understand what it means to have modern, reliable transportation to and from work every day. That is what this locomotive represents."

"Inspiring the next generation of customers, employees, 'rail buffs,' and other stakeholders is what NJ TRANSIT is all about," said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin S. Corbett. "We appreciate all the labor of love that URHS performs to preserve New Jersey's significant rail history. This special donation will be a living testament to the hard work of our Rail Operations team over the last 40 years, and I look forward to visiting locomotive No. 4424 early and often during the next 40 years as well!"

No. 4424 is one of 32 ALP-44s built for NJ TRANSIT by ABB (Asea Brown Boveri) in Sweden between 1989 and 1997. Until 2011, these locomotives hauled daily commuter trains on the Morris & Essex,



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Gladstone, Montclair-Boonton, and Northeast Corridor lines. No. 4424, built in 1996, is now the youngest artifact in the URHS collection.

“It may be young, but that doesn’t make this locomotive any less historic,” said Phalon. “This locomotive helps us complete the story of railroading in New Jersey. New Jersey is the birthplace of the railroad industry, and is, in many ways, the birthplace of the commuter. In the early 20th century, eight competing railroads made up one of the most robust commuter rail systems in America. By the 1960s, every single one of them had gone bankrupt. The state then took the remnants of those railroads and combined them into one, cohesive commuter rail system. The ALP-44 was an integral part of the infrastructure that brought all of these systems together.”

The preservation of an ALP-44 was a mutual decision between URHS and NJ TRANSIT. No. 4424 was chosen as it was deemed to be in the best condition for preservation of all the remaining units. The engine will come to URHS in near-complete, original condition.

About the ALP-44

In the late 1980s, NJ TRANSIT’s roster included diesel locomotives, self-propelled electric cars, and only a handful of electric locomotives which were purchased second-hand from Amtrak. Sorely needing its own electric locomotives, NJ TRANSIT looked to ABB, from whom Amtrak had recently purchased their new fleet. ABB came back with a new model, specially designed only for NJ TRANSIT, which would be named the ALP-44 (ALP=American, Locomotive, Passenger).

The new locomotives were exceptionally capable. They could travel up to 125 miles per hour and could generate up to 7,000 horsepower. All of that was in a package that was 20 feet shorter and more than half the weight of its predecessor. The last batch of ALP-44s, of which No. 4424 was a part, broke new ground by being computer-controlled by microprocessor, hence the addition of the letter “M” to their model name.

MidTOWN DIRECT Service

In NJ TRANSIT’s first decades, the agency was tasked with taking its many legacy routes, which were formerly competing railroad companies, and merging them into a cohesive, world-class system. Only a few decades earlier, these railroads used five different waterfront terminals to access New York City. Only the Pennsylvania Railroad had the ability to take their passengers directly into New York City. A dream for many commuters had long been the “one-seat-ride” from North Jersey straight into New York, which didn’t require a switch to a ferry or the PATH train from Hoboken and Jersey City.

Commuters got their wish with the completion of the “Kearny Connection,” which facilitated what was called MidTOWN DIRECT Service. On June 10, 1996, Governor Christine Todd Whitman ran the ceremonial first train through a banner at Newark Broad Street station. From that day on, several Morris & Essex line trains were rerouted from Hoboken Terminal to New York City, changing the lives of thousands of New Jersey commuters for the better. In the service’s early days, trains were packed to capacity. The direct trip from the New Jersey suburbs to Penn Station New York did wonders to attract residents to commuting by train. Ridership on the Morris & Essex Lines increased more than 20% in the first year of service and has been trending upwards ever since.



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Necessary to make all of this possible was the expansion of NJ TRANSIT's electric locomotive fleet, and thus the ALP-44Ms were ordered. No. 4424 and its sisters would haul nearly 5,000 customers to work every morning, with more and more riders as each year passed.

Although the ALP-44s are now retired, it pioneered a proud tradition of commuting that continues to this day. URHS and NJ TRANSIT are proud to commemorate all of that history with this unique donation.

ABOUT URHS: The United Railroad Historical Society of NJ, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization based in Boonton, New Jersey. Its mission is to preserve railroad equipment of cultural significance to New Jersey and its neighboring regions. The organization is governed by representatives of several NJ-based railroad historical societies, with the common goal of preserving the state's largest collection of historic locomotives and railroad cars.

ABOUT NJ TRANSIT: NJ TRANSIT is the nation's largest statewide public transportation system providing more than 925,000 weekday trips on 253 bus routes, three light rail lines, 12 commuter rail lines and through Access Link paratransit service. It is the third largest transit system in the country with 166 rail stations, 62 light rail stations and more than 19,000 bus stops linking major points in New Jersey, New York and Philadelphia.

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