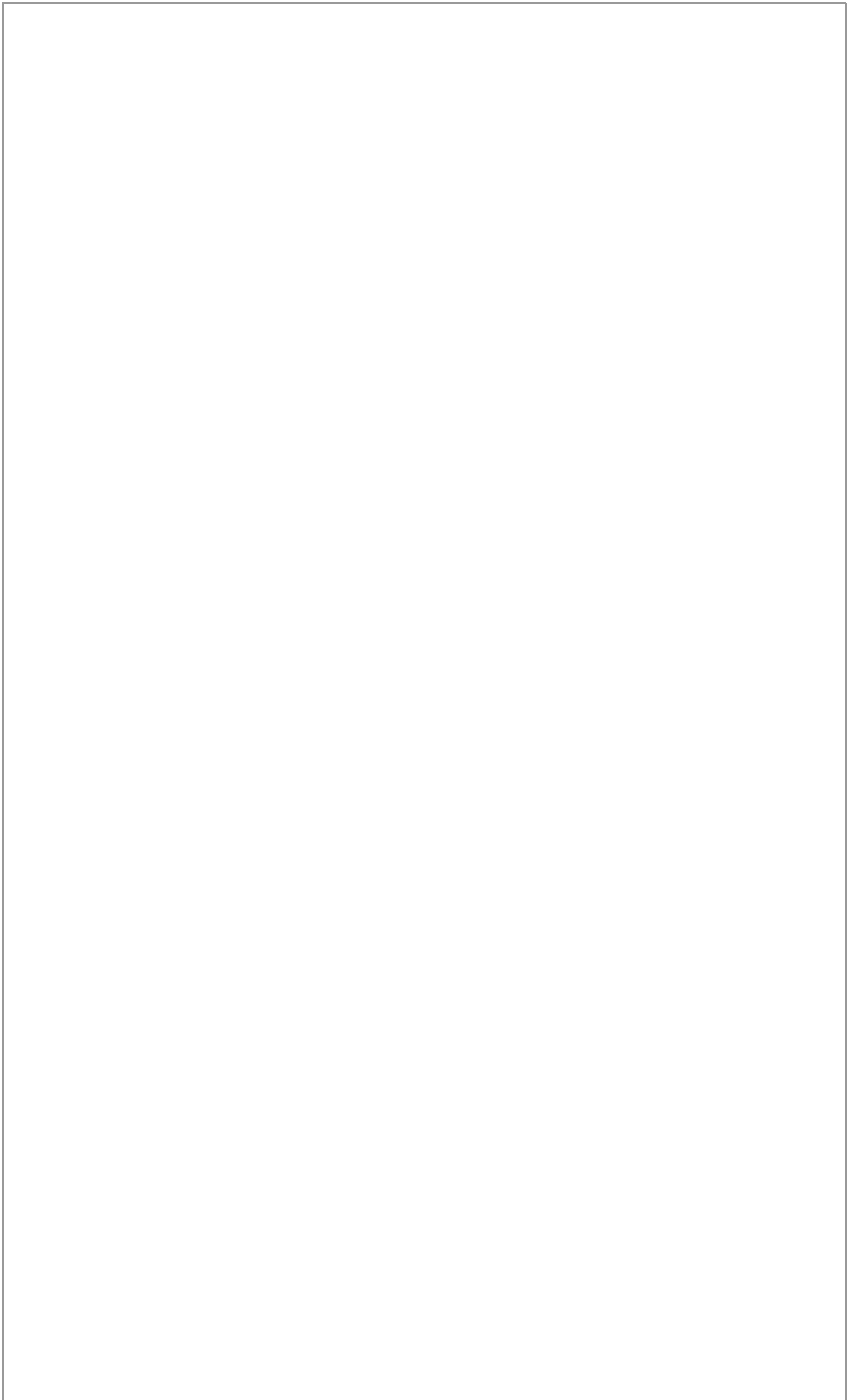


Our North Shore Narrative

by Lou Gerard



NORTH SHORE LINE

MILWAUKEE
AND
CHICAGO



**Electrically Operated
High Speed Service**

**Chicago North Shore
& Milwaukee Railroad**

Schedule Effective April 27, 1924

NORTH SHORE LINE

**LEADS AMERICA
IN HIGH SPEED SERVICE**



CHICAGO - MILWAUKEE
NORTH SHORE SUBURBS
SKOKIE VALLEY ROUTE

RACINE
KENOSHA
WAUKEGAN

LIBERTYVILLE
MUNDELEIN

CHICAGO NORTH SHORE & MILWAUKEE RAILROAD



Southbound CNS&M train No. 414—the noon departure from Milwaukee to Chicago, is in the middle of its station stop at Racine at 12:33pm as a slightly tardy northbound Electroliner, run No. 803, leaves for Milwaukee on a winter day circa 1960. The southbound appears to be a three-car train, with the first two sporting the North Shore’s “Silverliner” livery, with shadow-lining to simulate fluted stainless-steel sides—part of the railroad’s efforts to present a more modern image. Russ Porter, Mike Slater collection; timetable covers, Lou Gerard collection



HIGH SPEED through the VALLEY

Electroliners

CHICAGO

MILWAUKEE



“High Speed through the Valley” is a 20 x 30-inch opaque watercolor by illustrator Mitch Markovitz. Mitch comments, “I wanted to render a poster as if it were produced at the inauguration of Electroliner service. I wanted to feature Milwaukee, with Racine and Kenosha as the sub destinations. My suburban fantasies are played out in showing the sparsely settled

Skokie Valley with the more settled Shore Line suburbs in the distance. The colors were influenced by the first timetable to include Electroliner schedules (1941) and the lettering, all hand done, is influenced by other NSL printwork of the era.”

Jan. 21, 2013, marked the 50th anniversary of the abandonment of the Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railway, the high-speed interurban that linked Chicago and Milwaukee with hourly (or more) fast, electric passenger trains. It's hard to believe what a following the North Shore Line still has even after being gone for 50 years. How many railroads or companies can boast having reunions 50 years after closing down!

“From lowly acorns mighty oaks grow,” as the age-old adage goes, and the North Shore Line's “acorn” was the Bluff City Electric Street Railway, incorporated in 1894 in Waukegan, Ill., some 35 miles north of Chicago's Loop. Initially using diminutive four-wheeled streetcars that ran between Waukegan and nearby North Chicago, the line grew into the Chicago & Milwaukee Electric Railway Company when, in 1898, it began building south from North Chicago Junction toward Evanston, Ill., and then northward toward Kenosha, Racine, and ultimately Milwaukee, reached in 1908.

Entry into Milwaukee was done on city streets—specifically South 5th and South 6th streets—with an on-street downtown terminal at 2nd Street and Grand Avenue (today's Wisconsin Avenue). Shops were also established at Harrison Street where the street running began.

Also, in 1902, a branch to Libertyville, Ill., was added to access a gravel pit that became a large freight generator for the C&ME and also provided ballast for the railroad's right-of-way. This branch was extended to the town of Rockefeller, which later became known as Mundelein. Freight interchange was established here with Soo Line, and with the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern and the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul (The Milwaukee Road) at Rondout.

Direct service into Chicago was not feasible at this time, and the line terminated at Church Street in Evanston. However, an arrangement was made to provide connections to the CM&StP—whose Chicago–Evanston trains terminated at Davis Street in Evanston—by extending the C&ME one block to terminate at the “St Paul’s” depot. A joint ticketing arrangement was part of the plan.

Chicago’s ‘L’ (elevated) was working its way toward Evanston, too, in the early years of the 20th Century, and finally did so by extending its track over the CM&StP right-of-way up to Central Street in Evanston in 1908. The CM&StP passenger service was then truncated to terminate at Wilson Ave. Central was then made the transfer point between ‘L’ trains and the interurban even though the C&ME continued to terminate at Church Street.

One of the big traffic generators for the C&ME (and today’s Metra) was Ravinia Park which was owned by A. C. Frost who along with co-owner George Ball controlled the C&ME. Most interurban lines owned or ran to amusement parks as a source of traffic, and the C&ME was no different. Ravinia was opened as an amusement park and special trains to it were routine on weekends. Today, Ravinia is a seasonal, world-class outdoor music venue hosting some of the biggest names in the business.



The North Shore boasted a particularly elegant office headquarters building, built in 1905. Jim Boyd, Kevin Eudaly collection

The C&ME had wanted to gain entry into Chicago's Loop over a line of the Northwestern Elevated Railroad, so starting with a car order in 1907, all C&ME cars were built to specifications to operate over the 'L'. But in practice, this operation did not happen for several years until utility magnate Samuel Insull took over, for he also controlled Chicago's various elevated railroad companies.

The Panic of 1907 brought bankruptcy to the C&ME in January 1908—a bankruptcy that dragged on until Insull took control on July 26, 1916, and reorganized the C&ME as the Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad. Despite the bankruptcy, the purchase of 15 steel cars from J. G. Brill Company, Nos. 150–164, was authorized by the court and was ordered in 1915. They entered service on Limited trains between Evanston and Milwaukee. These cars set the standard for all future steel cars delivered to the North Shore Line.

Many more improvements were made after Insull took over. An order for 15 more steel cars from Jewett arrived in 1917, consisting of five coaches, three parlor-diners, and seven combines. In 1918, General Electric delivered a 50-ton steeple-cab freight motor to augment the two older ex-C&ME GE's. The Chicago entry finally became a reality in August 1919 when North Shore Line trains began running to and through the Loop. The end of the line was Roosevelt Road and the main station was established at Adams & Wabash. Limited trains were extended to 63rd and Dorchester (where the Englewood line of the 'L' crossed the Illinois Central main line) in February 1922.

Another improvement for the CNS&M's Mechanical Department was the appointment of Henry Cordell as Master Mechanic. Cordell had started with the Northwestern Elevated and was Master Mechanic at Wilson Avenue Shops. When Insull took over the North Shore, he appointed Cordell as Master Mechanic at North Shore's Highwood (Ill.) Shops. He was technically "loaned" to the North Shore—a loan that lasted 46 years until the end of service!

CHICAGO NORTH SHORE & MILWAUKEE RY.

GOOD FOR ONE PASSAGE BETWEEN

CHICAGO (Belmont Ave.)

AND

LIBERTYVILLE

Thirty Days in addition to date of sale stamped on back. Subject to tariff regulations.

Form O.W.-1

H. J. Phillips
GENERAL TRAFFIC MANAGER

18949

CHICAGO NORTH SHORE & MILWAUKEE RY.

N

CHICAGO (LOOP)

TO

MILWAUKEE

Good For Passage of One
3 Months In Addition To Date
Stamped On Back.

**SUBJECT TO TARIFF
REGULATIONS**

H. J. Phillips
GENERAL TRAFFIC MANAGER

Form R. T. 10

68411

K



NORTH SHORE LINE

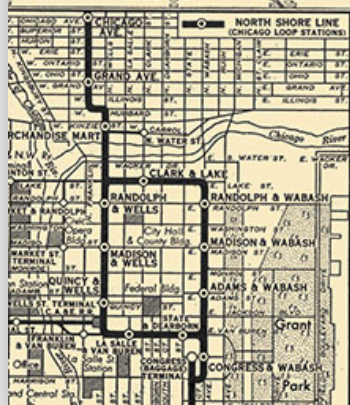
CHICAGO NORTH SHORE AND MILWAUKEE RAILROAD LEGEND

- NORTH SHORE LINE
- NORTH SHORE MOTOR COACH LINE
- CHICAGO AURORA AND ELGIN R.R.
- CHICAGO RAPID TRANSIT (ELEVATED) LINES
- T.M.E.R. & T. ELECTRIC LINES
- T.M.E.R. & T. MOTOR BUS LINES
- CONNECTING MOTOR BUS LINES
- RAILROADS - CARLOAD INTERCHANGE
- GOLF COURSES
- AIRPORTS
- TRAIN-AUTO SERVICE

GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUBS

P - Public DF - Daily Fee
Those not marked are PRIVATE

| No. | NAME | HOLDS |
|-----|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. | Arlington C.C. | DF 18 |
| 2. | Billy Caldwell C.C. | DF 18 |
| 3. | Blackhawk G.C. | DF 18 |
| 4. | Blue Mound Golf and C.C. | DF 18 |
| 5. | Blue Mound Golf Course | DF 18 |
| 6. | Blue Oaks C.C. | DF 18 |
| 7. | Boonville C.C. | DF 18 |
| 8. | Bon-Air C.C. | DF 18 |
| 9. | Bonnie Brook C.C. | DF 18 |
| 10. | Bonnie Brook C.C. | DF 18 |
| 11. | Bonnie Brook C.C. | DF 18 |
| 12. | Bryk Mower C.C. | DF 18 |
| 13. | Byronwood C.C. | DF 18 |
| 14. | Bunker Hill C.C., Inc. | DF 18 |
| 15. | Calder Park C.C. | DF 18 |
| 16. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 17. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 18. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 19. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 20. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 21. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 22. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 23. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 24. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 25. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 26. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 27. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 28. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 29. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 30. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 31. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 32. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 33. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 34. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 35. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 36. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 37. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 38. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 39. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 40. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 41. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 42. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 43. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 44. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 45. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 46. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 47. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 48. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 49. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 50. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 51. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 52. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 53. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 54. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 55. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 56. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 57. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 58. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 59. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 60. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 61. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 62. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 63. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 64. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 65. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 66. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 67. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 68. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 69. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 70. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 71. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 72. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 73. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 74. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 75. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 76. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 77. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 78. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 79. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 80. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 81. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 82. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 83. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |
| 84. | Chick O'Leary C.C. | DF 18 |



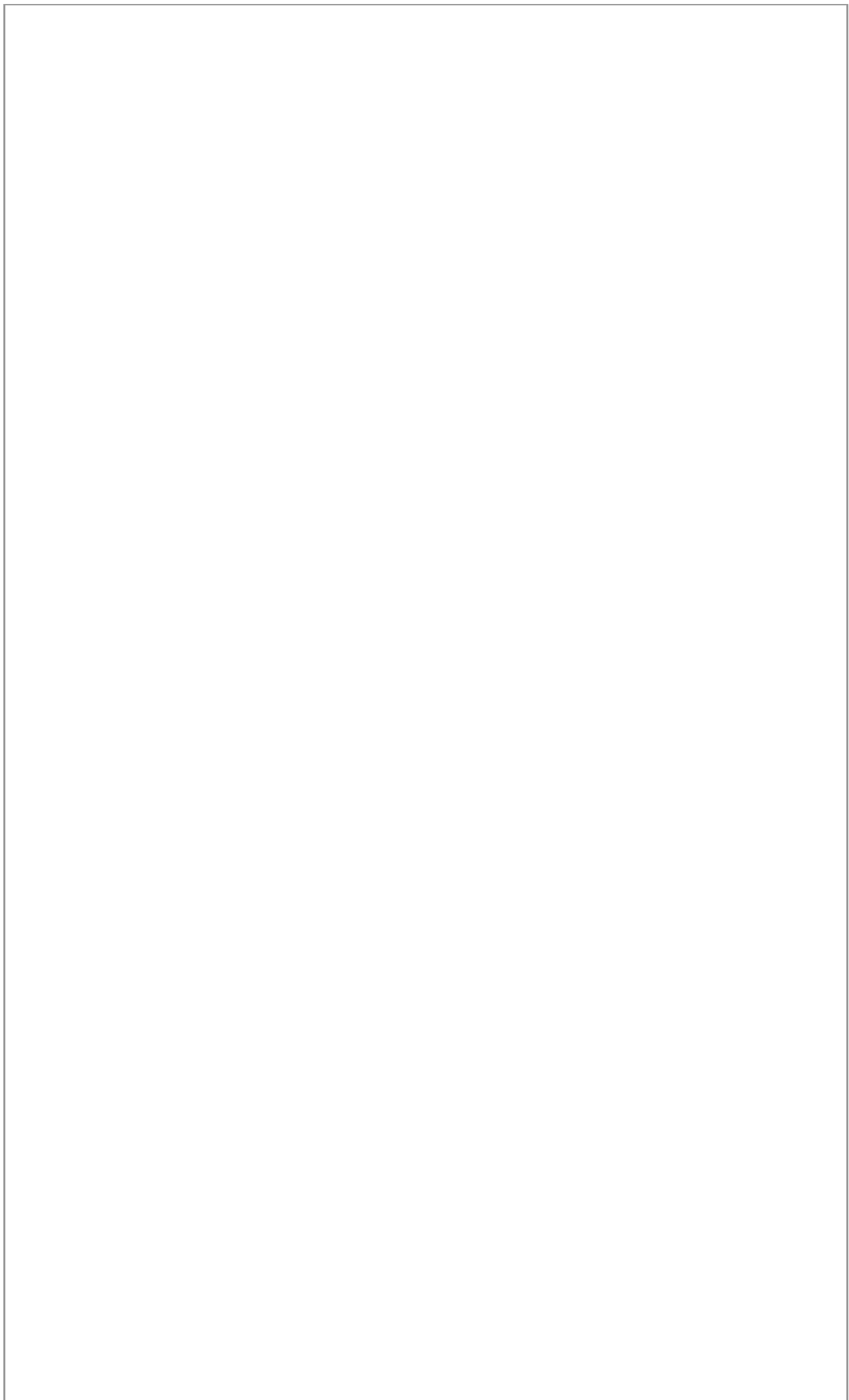


CNS&M system map from a 1941 timetable. map and tickets, Mike Schafer collection

LCL (Less-than-Carload Lot) business really got going for the North Shore in 1920. Marketed as Merchandise Despatch, the LCL service provided by a fleet of 36 wood-bodied box-motor electrics. North Shore was an innovator of the mechanical refrigerator car and “piggyback” trailer-on-flatcar (today known as TOFC) “Ferry Truck” service. These services lasted into 1947. Also, local streetcar service was operated by the North Shore in Waukegan and Milwaukee. The Milwaukee operation was run by subsidiary Chicago & Milwaukee Electric Railway Company, a subsidiary that owned the Milwaukee street trackage. Insull modernized these services with single-truck Birney cars in the early 1920s and 10 deluxe double-truck cars from St. Louis Car Company in 1928. Motor buses were also operated to feed the interurban from Lake Geneva, Wis., still a major resort in the region.

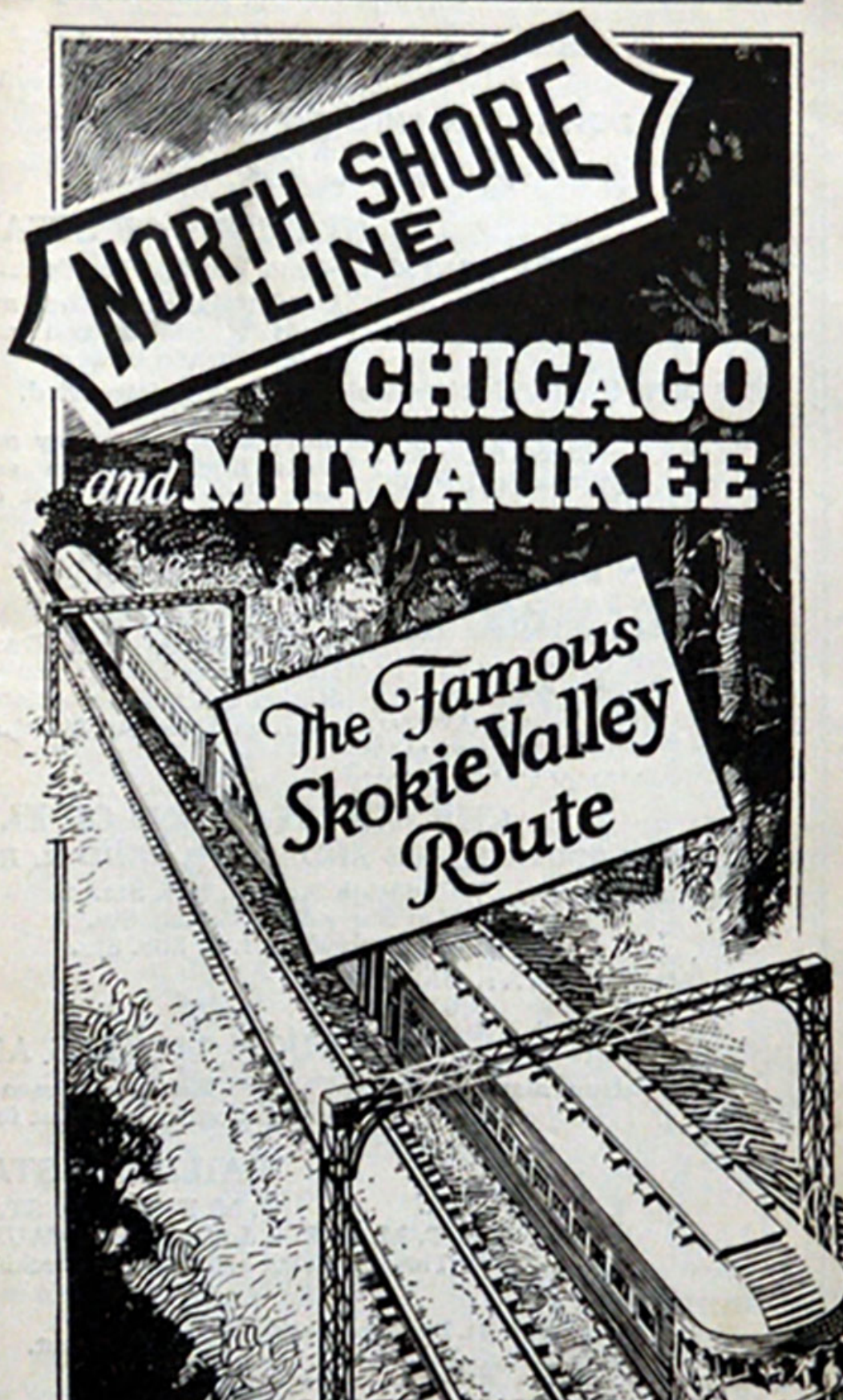
A new terminal in Milwaukee was opened in 1920 at 6th and Clybourn, replacing the old on-street terminal. Also in 1920 an order for 28 steel coaches and 2 parlor-diners arrived from the Cincinnati Car Company. Another group of cars came between 1923 and 1926 with Cincinnati again providing 34 coaches, 5 full diners, and 4 open-end parlor-observation cars. Also during this period, GE delivered two more steeple-cab locomotives. These, along with the one delivered in 1918, became known as the “Pups.”

The North Shore Line was also the recipient in 1923 of the Charles A. Coffin Medal, awarded by GE for contributions to electric railway transportation.



Schedule Effective April 29, 1928

Chicago North Shore and Milwaukee Railroad

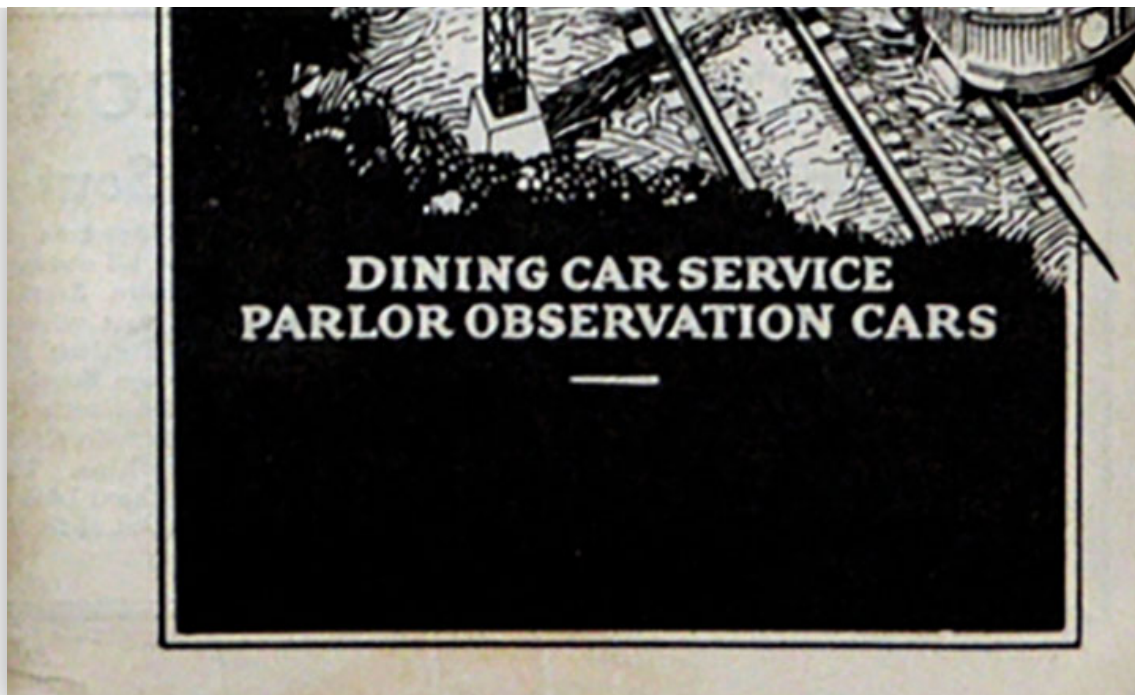


**NORTH SHORE
LINE**

**CHICAGO
and MILWAUKEE**

*The Famous
Skokie Valley
Route*

W. S. SWANSON



A 1928 CNS&M timetable touted the new high-speed Skokie Valley Route that bypassed much street-running. lou gerard collection

Slow operation through the streets of many of the North Shore suburbs resulted in the construction of the high-speed Skokie Valley Route bypass starting in 1924. The first segment, Howard Street (Evanston) to Dempster Street (Skokie) opened in 1925 with the Chicago Rapid Transit operating local service to seven stations along the extension. The remainder of the bypass opened in 1926. The line was built to very high standards with heavy rail and compound catenary. The Skokie Valley Route greatly sped up schedules and eventually gave the North Shore permanent possession of the Electric Traction Magazine's Speed Trophy in 1933. Between 1926 and 1930 the roster expanded to include more steel interurban coaches, diners, and three observation cars, one each from Cincinnati, Pullman, and Standard Steel Car, plus two trolley-battery steeple-cab locomotives from GE. The compatible fleet of cars numbered 145 units, unparalleled by any other interurban line.

The real test for the new Skokie Valley Route came less than a month after the line opened. The International Eucharistic Congress, a conclave of bishops,

was held in Chicago. North Shore ran a five-car train that was elaborately decorated for the church officials. On June 24, 1926, the closing Mass ceremony was to be held at St. Marys of the Lakes Seminary at Mundelein and hundreds of thousands of people were to attend. This resulted in the operation of hundreds of special trains between Chicago and Lake Bluff as well as shuttle trains between Lake Bluff and Mundelein, all mostly with 'L' cars. A large temporary terminal was built at Mundelein opposite the seminary. Over 170,000 people were handled on the North Shore plus another 60,000 that transferred from Chicago & North Western trains at Lake Bluff and another 30,000 on The Milwaukee Road to Libertyville. The Soo Line, although not a major passenger operator, carried 15,000 people to Mundelein. It was a monumental day of moving people to say the least.

The Great Depression of the 1930s brought down the Insull empire. Traffic fell greatly from the 1920s, and the line entered receivership. At least Insull had left the physical plant in excellent shape and the North Shore was able to weather those lean years. Parlor cars and service to Chicago's South Side were direct victims of the Depression, but dining-car service continued.



Although most of the Shore Line Route involved quaint trolley-like operation down city streets, a PWA (Public Works Administration) project in the late 1930s put the North Shore's Shore Line Route as well as the parallel C&NW main line into a cut at Winnetka to reduce the number of grade crossings in the city. This view looks southward at the Eldorado Street station on the Shore Line Route; a portion of the C&NW can be seen at right. Jim Boyd, Kevin Eudaly collection

A big improvement to the Shore Line route was made in 1938 when, in co-operation with the C&NW and the Village of Winnetka, an early Public Works Administration (PWA) grade-separation project was undertaken to get North Shore off the streets and eliminate many grade crossings for the C&NW. The North Shore and the North Western shared a combination below-grade cut and an embankment route through Winnetka. Both roads received new stations, with North Shore having high-level platforms at five of the six new stations for quicker loading and unloading.



A morning northbound Limited replete with a parlor-observation car pauses at the Kenosha, Wis., station circa 1925. The Prairie House-style depot designed by Arthur Gerber, typical of so many on Insull-controlled Chicago interurbans, still stands. North Shore photo, Krambles-Peterson archive.

The heavily populated Chicago–Keno-sha–Racine–Milwaukee Corridor was highly competitive with the C&NW, Milwaukee Road, and North Shore all vying for traffic. North Shore had a big advantage in that its trains entered the very heart of Chicago—the Loop—making several near-North Side and Loop station stops in the process. Although North Shore’s running time was some 30 minutes longer—about two hours end to end—than its two competitors owing to Milwaukee street-running and more en-route scheduled station stops, it trumped the time disadvantage with convenience.

In 1938 revenues had dropped so low that the railroad almost wasn't able to meet its payroll. The bankruptcy judge ordered wages reduced, and the trainmen went on strike. One of the receivers, Colonel A. A. Sprague pleaded with the trainmen to come back. After being out for 51 days they listened and came back. If they hadn't, the North Shore might have been abandoned as many interurban lines were at that time. As revenues increased, some of the cuts were reimbursed.



A midday southbound Electroliner twists its way out of the Milwaukee terminal on Michigan Avenue and 6th Street; the train is momentarily traversing Clybourn Avenue. A block to the right (east) out of the photo was Milwaukee Road's station. Jim Scribbins, Mike Raia collection

The North Shore Line had to do something to attract more riders as the Milwaukee had introduced streamlined Hiawathas on the route beginning in the mid-1930s. In response, the North Shore in 1938 began an extensive modernization of its fleet of 700-series cars. Although air-conditioning was not part of the program (windows could be opened), redesigned interiors and a new exterior paint scheme of green, gray, and red brought the cars a more up-to-date look, but more was needed. The real answer came in 1941 when the North Shore's first and only streamliners, the Electroliners, arrived from St. Louis Car. The two 'Liners, fully air-conditioned, were four-car double-ended articulated trains with three coach sections and a tavern-lounge. The Electroliners and the modernization program were in essence funded by the pay cut that the employee's had taken—and for which they were never repaid—but it assured the continuation of the railroad for more than 20 years.

The Electroliners became the flagships of North Shore service and remained so until abandonment. Beginning on Feb. 9, 1941, the two trains protected five daily round-trip schedules with bar and food service, including the famous "Electroburger." Capable of 85 m.p.h., a 'Liner could do the 85-mile Chicago–Milwaukee run in an hour and 50 minutes—a timing that included 19 intermediate scheduled stops and street-running in Milwaukee.

With the new Electroliners and the modernized 700s, the North Shore held its own against the steam roads' streamliners (C&NW finally introduced streamliners in 1939) and revenues began to rise dramatically. Of course, World War II brought huge traffic levels back to the railroad; the tide had shifted.



Notable North Shore Riders

JOIN THE PARADE OF STARS

to whom time and convenience are so important!

Travel the "route of the Electroliners"

Ship your freight the fast, electrified North Shore Line way.

Bob Hope Lunches on the Electroliner Between Milwaukee and Chicago

Most important factor for
North Shore Line's daily
fleet of 28 fast, easy-look-
on-the-hour trains between
Chicago and Milwaukee.

Important shippers,
too, choose North Shore
Line's electrified freight
service for intermediate
routing of carload ship-
ments to and from cities
throughout the nation.

Whether it's passenger
or freight it will pay you
to use North Shore Line.

See **Bob Hope**
starring in
The KIDNAP KING
a Paramount Picture



Milwaukee Special Photo
**Bob Hope on his way to Chicago
aboard the Electroliner**

Enjoy Fast, Convenient
Service To and from the Heart of
Milwaukee and the Heart of Chicago

on the ELECTROLINER route

MILWAUKEE - WISCONSIN - CHICAGO



(Reproduction of an advertisement appearing in newspapers published
in cities served by the Chicago North Shore and Milwaukee Railway.)

Bob Hope plugged the North Shore Line in this 1951 advertising piece issued by the railroad. Lou Gerard collection

North Shore trains may have been short and kept on a short leash, compared to their C&NW and Milwaukee Road rivals, but the railroad did draw some well-known

celebs as riders, including some locally well-known people who were semi-regular customers.

In 1960, Chicago radio station WLS, AM channel 89.0, transformed into a contemporary rock station that quickly became one of the most powerful, popular, and legendary AM radio stations in U.S. history. The 10,000-watt “Big Eight-Nine-Oh” was first to air a Beatles song, “Please Please Me,” on Feb. 9, 1963, introduced by WLS super-star DJ Dick Biondi. Biondi—at one time one of the highest-paid DJs in North America—still broadcasts in Chicago between 11pm and 2am on WLS-FM 94.7. A friend of author Lou Gerard, Dick recalled riding the North Shore several times in the early 1960s when he first arrived in Chicago.

Another of WLS’s most well-loved radio personalities was Clark Weber, who was hired from a Milwaukee-area radio station. Weber took the job, but was not in a position to quickly move his family to Chicago. So, he commuted on the North Shore Line to the WLS studio in downtown Chicago. He could be heard on the radio at times mimicking North Shore whistles when referencing his commute.

Presidential candidate John F. Kennedy rode the North Shore during his 1960 campaign in Wisconsin to win the White House. Photos on the Life Magazine website show him riding a North Shore train with his aides. He appears to be aboard any one of three cars: 720, 726, or 730.

Another star who rode the Electroliner was Bob Hope. A photo of him in the ‘Liner’s tavern-Lounge was used in North Shore advertising. I wonder if he enjoyed an Electroburger during his trip?—L.G.

World War II really taxed the railroad but it was up to the task. Having the Great Lakes Naval base at North Chicago and the U.S. Army’s Fort Sheridan at Highwood was a real traffic boom to the North Shore Line. Add to that people unable to drive due to gas and rubber rationing or to purchase new autos resulted in large profits for the CNS&M. Many military specials were operated to and from the two bases and borrowed ‘L’ cars were used on many of them. Three diners and the five observation-parlor cars were converted into coaches to help handle the increased loads.



“Swabbies” on liberty prepare to board a Milwaukee-bound train at North Chicago Junction, the principal stop for Great Lakes Naval Training Station after the Shore Line Route—which had a Great Lakes station practically on the base itself—was abandoned. Although this is a regularly scheduled train, the North Shore frequently ran sailor specials. Ed Derouin, Lou Gerard collection

Even after the war, anybody going to boot camp in the Navy was familiar with the North Shore Line. The railroad ran numerous “Sailor Specials” to get the “White Hats” to their weekend liberties in Chicago and Milwaukee. These military specials ran right up to the last day of service. In fact, the last Electroliner movement from Milwaukee was a sailor Extra to North Chicago Junction, running right ahead of the final southbound train.

Freight service, which had been established by the C&ME in 1908, was very successful. Both world wars brought very heavy freight traffic. Although the

North Shore had a very profitable freight service, in the end it was not enough to carry the losses of the passenger service when decline set in after the war.



On June 29, 1947, the Railroad Society of Milwaukee chartered its own North Shore Line train to tour the railroad. A highlight of the day's outing was a stop at CNS&M's main shops—shown in this scene—and headquarters at Highwood, Ill. Jim Scribbins, Milwaukee Road Historical association collection

Postwar, continued operation seemed entirely possible. Due to the wartime profits, many outstanding obligations were paid and some improvements to the property were made, such as relaying some rail and elimination of speed restrictions. A reorganization plan was submitted and approved by the court. The downside was that the board of the newly reorganized Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railway Company was dominated by Northland Greyhound executives, and many thought the railroad would soon be gone. Although Greyhound did siphon off North Shore money, the railroad continued.

It was under this management that the “Silverliner” cars were developed in 1950. These cars featured the faux stainless-steel shadow paint with a brilliant red above the belt rail. This scheme was eventually applied to 32 cars, the bulk being the high 700-series cars used in Chicago–Milwaukee Limited service.

Ominous clouds lay on the horizon for the North Shore, though. A 91-day strike over a wage disagreement came in 1948, and it was during this strike that ‘L’ service to Skokie ended. Traffic on the original Shore Line Route between Evanston and North Chicago Junction had turned largely to short-haul commuters and the line was losing money, so the North Shore applied to abandon the route in 1949. It even offered to run substitute bus service, but the Illinois Commerce Commission turned it down.

City streetcar service ended in Waukegan in 1948, and in 1951 it ended in Milwaukee. Dining-car service ended in 1949 with the exception of the tavern-lounge cars on the Electroliners. Standard tavern-lounge car 415 was retained and made into a Silverliner; it along with two other Silverliner coaches served as a substitute Electroliner when one of the streamliners was out for maintenance.

The newly reorganized company began to diversify into non-railroad businesses, such as bus companies and small utilities. In a 1953 reorganization, about \$5 million in North Shore assets were used to create a holding company known as the Chicago North Shore System Inc. This move enabled the company to branch out into non-rail endeavors while making the railroad into a wholly owned subsidiary along with the non-rail businesses. In 1956 the name was changed to the Susquehanna Corporation.

In 1954 the railroad again applied to abandon the Shore Line route and this time was successful. The last trains ran on July 24, 1955. A single track was kept from North Chicago Junction to Elm Place in Highland Park to access Highwood Shops and freight customers. After this, it was thought operations could continue, but the deficits mounted. In 1957 the North Shore was

carrying around five million riders yearly but was losing money rapidly. The opening of the publicly funded Edens Superhighway parallel to the Skokie Valley Route really drained off the passengers. So, with a deficit in the first quarter of 1958 of over \$120,000 it was announced on June 25, 1958, that the whole railroad would be abandoned. The Silverliner project came to a halt leaving nine of the high 700-series cars to stay in green and red. However, regular maintenance continued, with interurban cars continuing to be overhauled and painted and high-speed schedules maintained.

Edison Court



A close look at this scene looking south from the platforms of Edison Court reveals that a switchman has boarded the last car as the northbound train briefly paused before entering the station. The switchman will cut the last car from the train and handle it to the southbound storage track on the west side of the station to become an “add” to a southbound. ed derouin, lou gerard collection

Edison Court was the main station for Waukegan, Ill., on the North Shore's main line to Milwaukee. Located at the intersection of Washington Street and Edison Court, this station marked the north end of the suburban or commuter territory. South from here to Chicago was the North Shore's heaviest ridership. Edison Court boasted a yard and a platform track where trains originated and also an open track pit where minimal maintenance could be done to cars. Northbound, some trains terminated here altogether, and on trains to Milwaukee, cars might be dropped—a procedure known as a “cut.” Some Chicago trains originated at Edison Court while with some trains from Milwaukee to Chicago, additional cars would be coupled on here—an “add” in North Shore parlance. When an add was to be made, passengers could board the add car at the high-level platform track, prior to departure time, after which the switchman would run the car onto the main and couple it onto the front of the arriving train while it was making its station stop. These adds and cuts were done in the matter of minutes, the way that trains are combined or split on European railways today. In fact the last northbound North Shore passenger train on the morning of Jan. 21, 1963, made a cut at Edison Court while the last southbound did likewise.

North of the station, along Edison Court itself, was a siding where a string of cars was usually stored overnight and on weekends. It was from this group of cars that many Sailor Specials were assembled. With the Waukegan local runs and the hourly Chicago–Milwaukee service in each direction that cut and added cars, and the occasional freight train, things were rarely quiet for very long at Edison Court. But they're quiet now. In place of the once-busy North Shore Line is the Robert McClory Bike Path, formerly the North Shore Bike Path.—L.G.

The *'Liners*



Light meal fare in the Liner's tavern-lounge was served on Electroliner china. Mike Schafer



A Chicago-bound 'Liner scoots away from its North Chicago Junction stop on June 26, 1960. Howard Patrick.





Electroliners



Electroliners

Electroliners

Electroliners

Electroliners ARE HERE!

America's First All-Electric Luxury Trains
Five Trips Each Way—Every Day
Between Chicago and Milwaukee



Every ELECTROLINER coach is smartly styled by master designers in a different color motif—coral, blue and gold . . . scarlet and gray . . . apricot and turquoise. Separate smoking lounges, lens-control illumination, electric air-conditioning and temperature control give you luxury travel at its finest.



Enjoy a perfectly-served "snack" or refreshments in the unique Tavern-Lounge as you glide smoothly over the rails. With its clever murals, its superb appointments, its specially-designed lighting, the distinctive Tavern-Lounge is festive, colorful and inviting! All ELECTROLINER interiors styled and created by James F. Eppenstein and Associates.



Thrill to an entirely new experience in smooth-flowing travel on swift, silent ELECTROLINERS—the North Shore Line's incomparable new "trains of the future" . . . in service today!

Here are trains with ultra-modern appointments, luxurious equipment and club-like atmosphere unsurpassed in railroad service. Down to the last minute detail, every facility of the ELECTROLINERS is designed to give you *all-luxury* travel—at regular coach fares—on *all-electric* trains, electrically operated even to temperature control and electro-pneumatic brakes.

RIDE CUSHIONED IN RUBBER! . . . Nothing has been spared to make the new ELECTROLINERS a triumph in riding comfort. Sweep along easily, silently in spacious *all-electric* trains, completely insulated and sound-proofed to keep out noises . . . electrically air-conditioned and heated . . . and "cushioned in rubber" at every possible point to give a matchless, quiet, smooth-flowing ride.

NEVER BEFORE TRAINS LIKE THESE! Deep-upholstered seats . . . separate smoking lounges . . . superbly equipped Tavern-Lounge Cars with softly cushioned settees and unique refreshment appointments . . . here indeed is high-speed, all-electric luxury travel . . . the first of its kind in America.

Advertising, coaster, and napkin, Mike Schafer collection

The "Flexible Flyers" of the CNS&M, the road's twin Electroliners—Class of '41—were perhaps the world's most nimble streamliners. They could twist around the 90-degree bends of Chicago's 'L' with ease, then spritely notch up to speeds nearing 90 m.p.h. on the Skokie Valley Route, leaving traffic on parallel U.S. 41 in the dust. Later during the same trip, they could deftly cruise along 5th Street in Milwaukee, keeping stride with equally colorful and sleek vehicles of the 1950s that bore the trademarks of Chevy, Ford, and Chrysler.

The Electroliners brought panache to a North Shore Line dominated by staid interurban cars of the 1920s. Even though there were only two of them, the 'Liners quickly became the signature trains of the North Shore, appearing in nearly all advertising and timetables after their splashy introduction in 1941.

And when the postwar streamliners of the “steam” railroads eventually gave way to Amfleet and Superliners in the late 1970s, the 'Liners were still running! True, they were now under the wing of Philadelphia’s transit system, but the trains remained largely in their original form, though with different livery and some door modifications. And they still carried real passengers in need of speedy transport between cities. How many other U.S. streamliners remained intact after nearly 40 years of service, still operating as intended?

Long live the 'Liners!—M.S.



These two scenes illustrate the two extremes of North Shore operations at its endpoint cities. Riding on CTA rails on the early afternoon of April 14, 1957, an Electroliner from Milwaukee has just crossed the Chicago River and is entering the Loop at what it still the CTA's most famous junction, that directly above the intersection of Lake and Wells streets. The train will

travel counterclockwise along two sides of the Loop to the junction at Van Buren Street and Wabash Avenue where it will turn south on the Englewood/63rd 'L' line to the terminal at Roosevelt Road (12th Street).
Mike Slater collection



A southbound train less than 10 minutes into its Milwaukee–Chicago sprint trundles along South 6th Street and across Chase Street on Milwaukee's south side circa 1960. Generally, trains made three stops between the downtown Milwaukee terminal and where they left street running at Harrison Street Shops, which was also a stop. The brick building prominent at center background still stands today; Chase Street is State Route 38 at this point. Lou Gerard collection



The inviting seat of an Electroliner. Mike Schafer

Interestingly, several representatives from Japan's railroad industry came to America to study North Shore Line operations, equipment, and infrastructure as a model for their proposed new Shinkansen "bullet trains." (Reportedly they loved riding the front "railfan's seat" of the Electroliners, which you could say were bullet trains in their own right.) It's funny how the term "high-speed rail" is used now. We had it as far back as almost 90 years ago with the North Shore's operation.



Car 169 leads a charter move that has just passed under C&NW's own Shore Line Route and is curving northward off Shore Line Route and onto the CNS&M Skokie Valley Route at North Chicago Junction in the spring of 1959. Mike Slater collection



At Howard Street, which was the border between the City of Chicago and Evanston, North Shore's Skokie Valley Route split from the Shore Line Route. In this early 1960s scene, North Shore combine 250 leads a five-car train cranking out of the Howard Street station in Evanston, Ill., curving westward on the Skokie Valley Route. Most CTA trains terminated at Howard Street, but some to this day continue north to Wilmette, Ill., along trackage at one time used by CNS&M Shore Line Route trains. Ed Derouin, Lou FGerard collection.

In the early 1960s, North Shore ridership was down to some four million passengers, having been dealt a serious blow when the Northwest Expressway (today's Kennedy Expressway) opened, giving the connecting Edens Superhighway direct access to downtown Chicago. This alone siphoned off about 46,000 riders a month. However, there clearly was a financial incentive for Susquehanna to abandon the North Shore.

Susquehanna stood to gain a very large tax credit for all the yearly losses written off against its profits in other businesses by abandoning the railroad.

The figure had been put at anywhere from \$17 million to \$28 million, but what it actually wound up being was never really known. So it was with considerable suspicion the Susquehanna wanted the North Shore abandoned. At the insistence of the Illinois Commerce Commission, a series of fare increases brought in more revenue but was offset by increased wages and other economic factors.

A group of North Shore commuters formed the North Shore Commuter's Association in an effort to save the line when the North Shore made the second abandonment announcement. The NSCA solicited money to buy and operate the road. Their prodding of elected government officials and the Illinois Commerce Commission prolonged the line for another four years, but it ultimately came up short. When the ICC ruled in favor of abandonment and deemed the railroad not a public necessity, the battle appeared to be over. The Commission finally gave its approval for the North Shore to abandon and the railroad set Jan. 21, 1963, as the effective abandonment date.

The last full day of operation was a brutally frigid Sunday Jan. 20. Temperatures well below zero after a big snowfall the day before made operations taxing, but, as usual, North Shore employees were up to the task and their efforts that day made it seem like the old North Shore Line would run forever. I rode an Electroliner with my parents, and I remember the conductor saying, "We'll be back in February; they won't let this thing go." My dad said, "Some day they will be sorry they tore this up." How true.

The railroad went out running full tilt, culminating with the last trains from Chicago and Milwaukee at midnight ending operations around 3am. Railroad aficionados outnumbered regular riders on that last day. Frozen cameras and broken film rolls were not uncommon, and I'm sure some frostbite too. Freight operation continued until Friday Jan. 25 to take the last freight cars off the property.

The commuters continued their fight to save the railroad even after abandonment, offering over \$1.2 million for the North Shore Line plus a yearly rental fee of \$50,000 for the line up to Highwood. Susquehanna wanted over \$6.2 million claiming this was the salvage value. When the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear a Commuter Association appeal, the battle for the North Shore was over. It had dragged on for four years, something of a record for legal proceedings over an abandonment. Like now, operating a passenger railroad at a profit is seemingly impossible and at that time there was no government aid nor transit districts like today to operate and subsidize this type of operation. However, some government help came a little over a year later to form the “Skokie Swift,” and we will look at that later.



In a view that looks north along Wabash Avenue at Chicago's Loop, a three-car Chicago Express has just turned south off of the portion of the Loop 'L' above Van Buren Street. It's approaching the Wabash-Congress

stop and a few minutes later it will terminate at North Shore's Roosevelt Road station. Mike Raia collection

The scrapping of the cars began in the fall of 1963 at Rondout, with the last ones being cut up in March 1964. Thankfully, many cars found their way to museums, with the largest collection being at the Illinois Railway Museum. Somewhat miraculously, the Electroliners continued in revenue service, having been sold in September 1963 to Philadelphia's Red Arrow Lines for use on its Norristown High Speed Line. Transformed into Liberty Liners, with one trainset christened as the Valley Forge and the other as the Independence Hall, they ran back and forth between Upper Darby/69th Street and Norristown in rush hours until about 1980. After that, set 801-802 headed for the Illinois Railway Museum while the 803-804 set went to Railways to Yesterday at Orbisonia, Pa., retaining its Red Arrow livery as the Independence Hall.

Thankfully, the North Shore Line has never completely gone away. A portion of the railroad was revived by the Chicago Transit Authority in 1964 as the Skokie Swift—a story to be covered next year in PTJ. Both Electroliners and quite a stable of original CNS&M standard cars survive in museums, most notably at the remarkable Illinois Railway Museum northwest of Chicago. Here, you can still ride North Shore cars at speed and see the Electroliner. And somewhere, urban legend has it, the last Electroburger ever purchased by a passenger (a now-deceased PTJ reader, in fact) remains intact, frozen in time, in a deep freezer... somewhere.



A three-car Silverliner train howls southbound past Tower KO, a C&NW facility that controlled the diamond crossing of North Western's Lake Bluff-KO freight cutoff to C&NW's New Line freight route (at left in photo) with the CNS&M Skokie Valley Route main line. On the North Shore itself, this location was also known as Skokie Junction. Ed Derouin, Lou Gerard collection



The billboard at left says it all, although we'll bet that passenger are warm and snug aboard this northbound Electroliner slithering into Milwaukee, as photographed from the south end of one of the Milwaukee terminal's platforms. Lou Gerard collection

Lou Gerard is recently retired from CTA shop forces, having spent most of his working years at the CTA's Howard Street facilities, overlooking the well-being of the Skokie Swift cars. He lives within walking distance of the Skokie Swift, the only remaining active segment of former North Shore trackage. Like his late father, Lou Sr., Lou is also an avid follower of Great Lakes boats.