

*For Immediate Release*

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### **Tribute to Reefed Subway Cars at Coney Island Mermaid Parade**

Amanda and aem7ac today announced the completion of a five-foot long reproduction of the R-36 Mainline “Redbird” Subway Car No. 9678 for use on the Route of the Coney Island Mermaid Parade.

The “Redbird” subway cars were first constructed by St. Louis Car Company during 1962-1964 for the New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA). For many years, the 964 cars plied the rails on the Flushing, Lexington Avenue, and Broadway-7th Avenue IRT lines. The cars were extensively overhauled during 1985-1991 as part of NYCTA’s Capital Program started under the direction of eminent General Manager David Gunn.

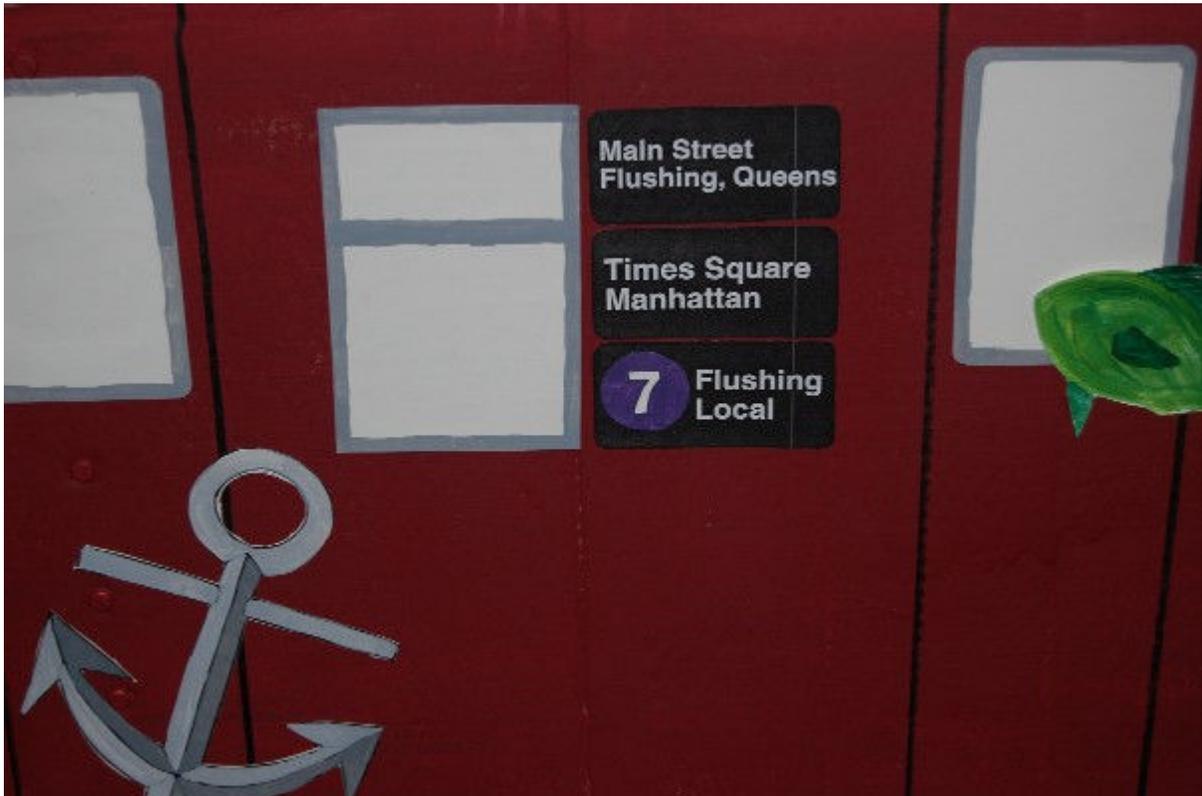
By 2001, the carbon-steel bodied cars were beginning to show their age after 40 years of sterling service. As R-142 cars arrived to replace the venerable “Redbirds”, the car bodies were offered to coastal states on the Atlantic seaboard for use as artificial reefs. Car No. 9678 was dropped in the Shark River Reef, 16 miles east of the Shark River and Manasquan inlets, as one of the last of 250 cars donated by the MTA to New Jersey’s artificial reef program.

To celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the final reefing, Redbird replica No. 9678 was fabricated in the Islip Shop of A&A Historical Rail Equipment Co. (AAHRE), for use in the 2008 Coney Island Mermaid Parade, scheduled on June 21, 2008. The replica will be unveiled at this event and paraded along Surf Avenue, along with an opportunity for the public to inspect the historic replica.

Amanda, Executive Director of AAHRE, said, “The Redbird is the most recognizable car to be reefed under the artificial reef program. It is an honor to be asked to fabricate this car from the original blueprints, with some design liberty, forty-five years after the first car rolled off the production line. In line with Coney Island Parade’s marine theme, however, our skilled craftspeople added fishes and an anchor to the replica, accurately reflecting the cars’ current condition.”

In fabricating the car, aem7ac, the Chief Engineer of AAHRE balanced the need to adhere to a tight budget and produce a quality product. He explains, “the essence of the Redbird car lies in its color, the (7) Train rollsign, the pantograph gate, the express and local signs, and the railfan window. The replica car features all of these important elements, while skipping non-essential ones such as power controllers, the air tank, and the third window pane.”

The Mermaid Parade was founded in 1983 by Coney Island USA, the not-for-profit arts organization that also produces the Coney Island Circus Sideshow. The Mermaid Parade pays homage to Coney Island's forgotten Mardi Gras (1903-1954), and draws from a host of other sources resulting in a wonderful and wacky event that is unique to Coney Island. The parade celebrates the sand, the sea, the salt air, the artificial reefs, and the beginning of summer, as well as the history and mythology of Coney Island, Coney Island pride, and artistic self-expression.



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