

# Hyde Park History

VOL. 31 NO. 1

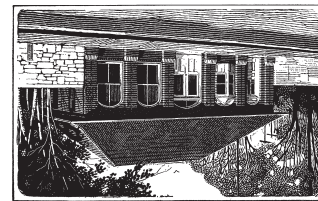
Published by the Hyde Park Historical Society

WINTER 2008/2009



KATHY HULF

WINTER 2008/2009



Hyde Park Historical Society  
5529 S. Lake Park Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60637

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Chicago, IL  
Permit No. 85

## Hyde Park Historical Society

COLLECTING AND PRESERVING HYDE PARK'S HISTORY

*Time for you to join up or renew?  
Fill out the form below and return it to:*

**The Hyde Park Historical Society**  
5529 S. Lake Park Avenue • Chicago, IL 60637

Enclosed is my  new  renewal membership  
in the Hyde Park Historical Society.

Student \$15       Sponsor \$50  
 Member \$25       Benefactor \$100

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

This Newsletter is published by the Hyde Park Historical Society, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1975 to record, preserve, and promote public interest in the history of Hyde Park. Its headquarters, located in an 1893 restored cable car station at 5529 S. Lake Park Avenue, houses local exhibits. It is open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays from 2 until 4pm.

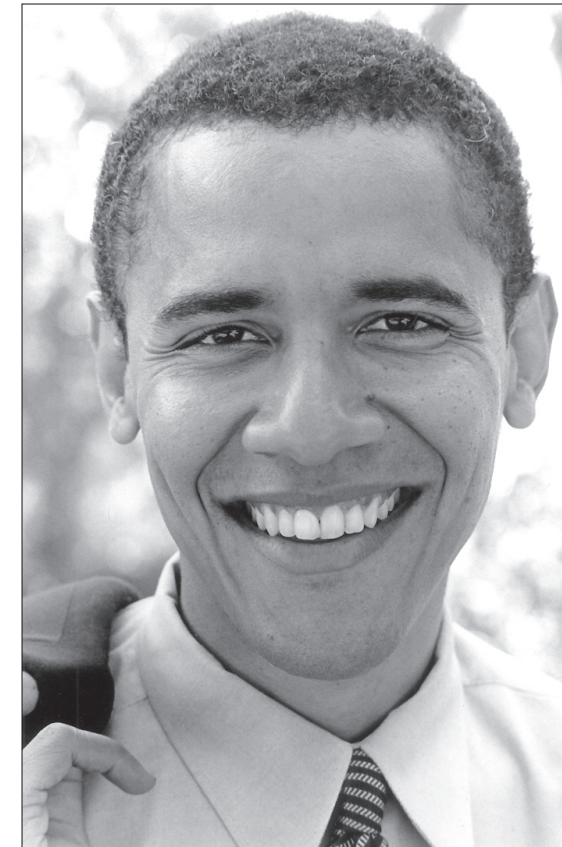
Web site: [hydeparkhistory.org](http://hydeparkhistory.org)  
Telephone: **HY3-1893**  
President: **Ruth Knack**  
Editor: **Frances S. Vandervoort**  
Designer: **Nickie Sage**

**F**ormer Fifth Ward Alderman Leon Despres, who received a special Cornell Award from the Hyde Park Historical Society at the 2008 membership, dinner, concluded his acceptance statement by reflecting upon Hyde Parkers who had served in public office over the years. He ended by saying that, "next year I might see a Hyde Parker in the White House." On January 20, when Hyde Parker and former U. S. Senator Barack Obama takes the oath of office, this will be true at last.

What follows are contributions by several Society members about the significance of Mr. Obama's election victory.

✿ **Timuel D. Black**, civil rights leader, historian and educator

On November 4th, 2008, Hyde Park-Kenwood residents and their friends could shout and yell wherever they were that one of their neighbors, U.S. Senator Barack Obama, had been elected to be the 44th President of the United States of America. It was beautiful and thrilling, not only because President-Elect Obama is a resident of Hyde Park-Kenwood, is an African-American of mixed racial heritage, and has a brilliant, beautiful wife Michelle with an American slavery ancestry. Wow! Just three generations from slavery to the White House. Such success of both President-Elect Obama and his wife proves that America can be beautiful, especially if you live in Hyde Park-Kenwood.



HYDE PARK HERALD

## A SALUTE TO BARACK OBAMA

States, but for other deserving, needy people of the world. We in Hyde Park-Kenwood are also long distance, political runners having produced such liberal stalwarts as Leon Despres, Studs Terkel, the late Senator Paul Douglas, Illinois State Representative Bob Mann, retired U.S. Justice Abner Mikva, former U.S. Senator Carol ▶ 2

Hyde Park-Kenwood is the place that also nurtured and produced the first female African-American U.S. Senator in the person of Carol Moseley Braun. The first black mayor of Chicago, the late Harold Washington, was a resident of Hyde Park-Kenwood. On January 20, 2009, President-Elect Barack Obama will officially be sworn in as President of the United States by the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. However, he has already begun to publicly announce and present his choices for important positions for his administration. As he has publicly stated very often, he intends to "hit the ground running" on issues like foreign policy, jobs, taxes, housing, health, education, etc. As one who before he publicly launched his political career, advised him on tactics he could use in community organizing, I know that when he chooses "the ground" he wants to "run" on he "runs" very fast in order to reach his goals quickly. All along the way he has had excellent trainers and coaches to help him succeed. On January 20th, 2009, he will be at the starting point as a long distance runner to reach the goals of peace, harmony, and prosperity not only for citizens of the United



◀❶ Moseley Braun, and the late Chicago Mayor Harold Washington, just to name a few.

President Barack Obama is the beneficiary of the legacies of these great personalities. He faces the challenges not only of the issues he has outlined, but also of perpetuating and expanding the history and goals of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community that started him on his historic success. The whole world is watching.

❸ **Barbara Flynn Currie**, Illinois State Representative from the 25th Congressional District since 1979 and House Majority Leader since 1997

I was thrilled to support Barack Obama when he tossed his hat in the ring for State Senator from the 13th district. Barack handily won the seat in 1996, and the political center of his lakefront district was Hyde Park.

Barack's predecessors, Richard Newhouse and Alice Palmer, were pretty impressive. State Representatives serving the same territory included Bob Mann, Abner Mikva, and Carol Moseley Braun. Carol went on to become a United States Senator and an ambassador. Ab served in the United States Congress, on the Federal Court of Appeals, and in the White House as General Counsel.

Barack was pretty impressive, too. He was a thoughtful, dynamic advocate for progressive causes and, as the nation would discover during the 2004 Democratic National Convention, a supremely gifted orator with the potential to inspire the nation to move beyond the divisive, counter-productive politics of the past. In Springfield, he worked effectively with colleagues from all parts of the state and both political parties to get things done for our community.

And now he's poised to become President of the United States of America. Hyde Park has spawned many first-rate political leaders. But to spawn the President of the United States? It's no wonder we're busting our buttons! It's no wonder we can't get that smile off our face.

Thank you, Barack. And thank you, America.

❹ Former Fifth Ward Alderman **Leon M. Despres**

Hyde Park is not a corner of heaven. But it does attract a population that is somewhat above average in social and moral outlook. It has attracted Barack Obama.

In 1948, when the real estate industry's terrible racial covenants were struck down, Hyde Parkers promptly organized and did so successfully to support open housing and sound living standards. It has been so ever since. That, plus the parks and lakeshore, attracted the presidential family and thousands of others. Hurrah for open occupancy and good living!

❺ Fifth Ward Alderman **Leslie A. Hairston**

As a long-time supporter of Barack Obama, I share the excitement experienced by millions over the historical significance of this 2008 election. It is an important moment in history for African Americans, the 5th ward, Hyde Park, Chicago, the U.S., and the rest of the world.

I am reminded of the steps Obama took before he was elected this year's President-Elect. Obama was a former 5th ward resident during his campaign for both the Illinois State Senate and the U.S. Senate. I have had the great fortune of being able to witness his historical transition from these positions into the presidency.

Hyde Park is illuminated by this historic moment just as former Hyde Park residents Harold Washington and Carol Moseley Braun were respectively elected as the first African American Mayor of Chicago and the first African American female to the U.S. Senate. Though Hyde Park will be more regularly highlighted in the newspapers, the true importance of this election is Obama's promise to focus on stimulating the economy and improving health care.

This election, I hope, marks a new beginning of voter participation. This election shows that voter involvement can make change happen. As the 5th ward Alderman, I would like to see a large voter turnout during city-wide elections as constituents are the political change makers of society.

❻ **Abner J. Mikva**, former Illinois representative, U.S. Congressman, Chief Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, and White House Counsel, 1994-95

To those of us who were not born in Chicago, Hyde Park is not a place as much as it is a state of mind. When you choose Hyde Park to live and plant your flag, you expect a certain kind of mores and community standards. (You better expect them; they are going to shape the way you live.) For example, you assume that you will pal around with all kinds of people, many marching to different drummers. They may or may not influence your drumbeat, but they are treated as part of the community. While many live well and are financially secure, that is not used as a measuring stick in Hyde Park. Community organizers and working stiffs are given the same platform for their ideas and contributions as the financial titans who choose to live here.

Politics is a body sport in Hyde Park. People know their state senators and their aldermen and constantly review their work product. They too can march to a lot of different drummers, but their music had better be heard or else. Schools, parks and the kind of

## Dahlberg Memories

By Carol Bradford

I first met Al and Thelma Dahlberg in the late 1970s, when we were board members of the newly organized Hyde Park Historical Society. In those years before we had our own headquarters, the board met



in members' homes. I enjoyed visiting their home in the historic "Rosalie Villas" on Harper Avenue. At the time, Al was still active in his dental practice, and in his research on dentition of Native American populations. He and Thelma spent many summers in Alaska and winters in the southwest, making plaster casts of jaws for his physical anthropology research. When we learned that we had both grown up in South Dakota, Thelma and I became life-long friends—South Dakotans are rare in Chicago!

Thelma was our program chair for several years. I

remember one summer she organized a field trip by bus to Naper Settlement in Naperville. I took my two young children with me and we had a great time. Thelma had enlisted some of her friends to help prepare sack lunches for everyone on the trip. They used only foods that would have been available in the early 19th century, so we had sandwiches on home made bread, locally grown fresh fruit, home made cookies, and apple cider. Another of her special accomplishments was organizing the parade and ceremony for the opening of the Society headquarters in October 1980. Alderman Leon Despres and State Representative Barbara Flynn Currie were among the speakers. Someone took a picture of Thelma and me in our period costumes. This photo still brings back special memories.

The Dahlbergs had a farm in Lee County, east of Dixon, IL, where they spent weekends, and often invited friends to visit. Our first visit was on a late spring Saturday in the mid-80s, when our children were about 10 and 11 years old. On the way there they asked "What are we going to do there?" I told them we would have lunch, that's all I knew for sure. After lunch we walked through the woods and along the stream on the property. Al gave my husband and the children a ride in his old-fashioned grain wagon, pulled by a tractor. They got stuck in the muddy field and had to walk back to the house. It was a real adventure for all. On the drive back to Hyde Park, the kids asked "Can we go back next weekend?"

After retirement, the Dahlbergs moved permanently to the farm. We continued to visit them every few years. Even after Al's death, Thelma would come back to the city for her volunteer activities with Cook County Hospital service league, and various community groups, including the Historical Society. She often came for our annual dinners, and was sometimes a guest at our home. She had purchased tickets for the 2007 dinner, but was unable to attend due to poor health. Her recent death was a sad time for us, even as we celebrated the full life of a gracious lady.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday, February 21, 2009, Annual Dinner, 5:30-10:00 pm at the Quadrangle Club.** NOTE CHANGE FROM FEBRUARY 28, AS PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED. Guest speaker: HPHS member Elizabeth Brackett of WTTW. On sale will be art photos by Nancy Hays, proceeds of which will support HPHS archival management.

**Sunday, March 8, 2009, 2-4 pm at HPHS headquarters.** Mary Ann Johnson, President of the Chicago Area Women's History Council, will talk about her books and the role of women in Chicago's history.

**Saturday, April 25, 2009, 2-4 pm at HPHS Headquarters.** Joel Greenberg, naturalist and author, will give a presentation about local natural history. His books will be for sale at this event.

## James Comiskey

James Comiskey, long-time Hyde Parker and Board member of the Historical Society, passed away on November 26, 2008. Condolences may be sent to his widow, Jane Comiskey, at 1415 East 54th Street, Chicago, IL 60615.

◀⑤ transit-style automatic couplers and heavy railroad diaphragms to protect riders from the elements when passing from one car to another.

In 1972, the Illinois Central merged with the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio to become the Illinois Central Gulf, although IC Electric riders noticed few changes from the merger other than the new ICG name on their tickets and timetables (which never caught on fully with the traveling public). Perhaps the most noticeable change of the early 1970s was with the automatic fare collection hardware. By 1974, the railroad had replaced the original two-part gates with turnstiles which used a tripod arm, similar to those that the Chicago Transit Authority was using. Not only were the turnstiles much more user-friendly than the two-part gates, they also increased passenger throughput. This was not because they processed tickets any faster (the original fare gates also checked tickets almost instantaneously), but because passengers now passed through a single set of turnstile arms rather than through two sets of jaw-like gates. Indeed, some veteran commuters learned to insert and remove their tickets rapidly enough to pass through the turnstiles without breaking their stride—a maneuver that was not possible with the slower and clumsier fare gates that the turnstiles replaced.

The passage of state legislation creating the Regional Transportation Authority in December 1973, followed by the passage of the RTA question in a March 1974 referendum, ensured a more stable future for all of Chicago's commuter rail operations. The RTA negotiated a purchase-of-service contract with ICG in 1976, to take effect January 1, 1977. The standardized RTA fares implemented in 1977 were higher than those that the railroad had charged, with the unintended result that many of the IC's urban riders – including some in Hyde Park – switched to the Chicago Transit Authority's bus and 'L' services.

On the positive side, the RTA arranged funding to replace the remaining green cars from the 1920s. An additional 36 Highliners, delivered in 1978 and 1979 from the Canadian industrial firm Bombardier, brought the total to 165 cars. One of the original 130 Highliners was destroyed in the worst collision in the railroad's history,

*on the morning of October 30, 1972. {A train} made up of four Highliners was hit in the rear by {another train} made up of six 1926 cars. {...} The Highliners were on an inbound South Chicago run which had gone by the 27th Street platform when the collision occurred.<sup>3</sup>*

One immediately visible result of this accident was the addition of large amounts of orange to the ends of all IC Electric cars, old and new. (The Highliners' ends were previously painted all black.) The railroad immediately tightened up its procedures for backing up, thus

preventing a recurrence of any similar incidents.

The delivery of the additional cars allowed the last of the original fleet to be retired in 1978. Most of them were scrapped, and the salvage value was applied to the purchase cost of the Highliners (under the funding arrangements in place at the time, the federal government paid for two-thirds of the cost of the new cars, and the railroad was responsible for the other third).

Although the IC had earlier corrected most of the malfunctions in the automatic fare collection system, some potential revenue was going uncollected because not all passengers boarding and alighting at non-gate-equipped stations were being checked, and a few dishonest passengers were simply jumping the turnstiles or evading the fare gates altogether by entering and exiting stations along the tracks (which was easier for the physically agile to do on the branches, where the tracks ran at street level, than on the grade-separated main line). As a result, the railroad supplemented the turnstiles with on-board inspection of all tickets starting in 1981, as Chicago's other commuter railroads had always been doing. In November 2003 Metra deactivated the aging turnstiles altogether, in response to growing dissatisfaction from riders about having their tickets checked three times—upon entering, on board, and again when leaving the system. Similar turnstiles, also used with magnetically-encoded tickets, remain in service on the Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) rapid transit line between Philadelphia and Lindenwold, New Jersey. **HPH**

<sup>1</sup> Roy G. Benedict, "Shop Track", First & Fastest, Autumn 2002, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> John G. Allen, "From Commuter Rail to Regional Rail: Operating Practices for the 21st Century." Transportation Research Record 1571. Washington: Transportation Research Board, 1998, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> Alan R. Lind, Limiteds Along the Lakefront: The Illinois Central in Chicago. Park Forest, IL: Transportation History Press, 1986, p. 89.

## Award Winners Announced

Recipients of Paul Cornell Awards and Marian and Leon Despres Preservation Awards will be honored at the annual dinner on February 21, 2009. Cornell Award winners are Joshua Cohen, educator and historian, the entire Cornell family for the restoration of the Paul Cornell monument in Oak Woods Cemetery, and Sam Guard, engineer, architectural historian, and educator. Two Despres Awards will be presented, the first to the Law School of the University of Chicago for the rehabilitation of the Laird Bell Law School Quadrangle. The second Despres Award will be given to Lisa and Nate Eimer for the restoration of the Frankenthal House, 4825 South Woodlawn, designed by Hugh Garden and built in 1902.

materials used to protect the shoreline from the lake are everybody's concern and few decisions are accepted from on high without some kind of protest.

The place where the Obama family is planning to take a sabbatical is altogether different from Hyde Park. But it is much less likely to have the community glue for anybody moving into town, even as the first family.

✿ **Toni Preckwinkle** has served as 4th Ward Alderman since 1991.

Barack Obama came into my office in 1992 to talk about voter registration. As a staffer of Project Vote, he was responsible for the south side and south suburbs and talked with many elected officials about working together.

I found him to be a smart and talented young man, focused and dedicated. The work he was doing was not well received by all elected officials however. Not everyone in office wants the voter pool increased. After all, new voters are by definition unpredictable in their loyalties.

We were enthusiastic about the effort. Ivory Mitchell (chair of our ward organization), and Marc Lipinski (precinct coordinator) worked closely with him to establish contacts and mobilize new voters.

The Fourth Ward Democratic Organization supported Barack when he first ran for the State Senate in 1996 and subsequent races for Congress (2000) and U.S. Senate (2004) and President (2008).

In his Senate race in 2004, Al Kindle (my chief of staff) took a leave of absence to work for Barack. The ward organization collected half of Obama's 25,000 petition signatures. Kindle went on to coordinate the campaign in the African American communities on the south and west sides and the south and west suburbs.

I'm proud both of the early support we gave him and his tremendous accomplishments over the last 12 years. **HPH**



## Another Hyde Park Connection to the Inauguration

Associate Justice John Paul Stevens of the U. S. Supreme Court, former Hyde Park graduate of the U. of C. Laboratory School and University of Chicago (B.S. 1941), will swear in Vice President Joseph Biden at the presidential inauguration on January 20, 2009.

## Seeing History in Oak Woods Cemetery

Approximately twenty-five Society members spent a splendid October afternoon visiting the Oak Woods Cemetery, the most significant historic cemetery on Chicago's South Side. It was founded in 1854, a full five years before Rosehill and Calvary Cemeteries on Chicago's North Side. The Cemetery was constructed at 67th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue on sand ridges topped by mature oaks. Four small lakes: the Lake of Reverence, Symphony Lake, the Lake of Memories, and Peaceful Lake accent the airy expanse of lawn and trees. The Cemetery, along with the Village of Hyde Park, became part the City of Chicago in 1889. The early cemetery, was served by horse-drawn carriages and streetcars. Starting in the 1860s, the Illinois Central Railroad provided regular stops at the cemetery.

Members were particularly moved by the graves of Mayor Harold Washington, Olympian Jesse Owens, physicist Enrico Fermi, Bishop Louis Henry Ford, and the memorial of activist Ida B. Wells. The Confederate Mound, which contains the remains of 6000 Confederate prisoners of war who died of cholera and typhoid fever at Camp Douglas on Chicago's south side, attracted much interest. Members gave special attention to the recently restored monument of the family of Hyde Park's founding father, Paul Cornell.

In addition to open-air plots, members visited the Mausoleum, which contains numerous alcoves, chapels, and works of art appropriate to the moment.

The tour was led by Warren Chilton, Community Services Counselor of the cemetery. He was a gracious, knowledgeable host who invited people to return to see the many other attractions of this important part of Chicago's south side. **HPH**



Cornell monument

KATHY HUFF

# Chicago's Finest Transportation: The Illinois Central Electric

*Fifth part of a series about the history of the Illinois Central Railroad's Electric Commuter Service.*

By John G. Allen and Roy G. Benedict

## DEPRESSION AND WAR

The stock market crash of late 1929 hit Chicago and the nation hard. The IC provided direct service to the Century of Progress Exhibition, held in 1933 and 1934. Although the fair cushioned the blow of the Depression on IC Electric ridership somewhat, by 1935 ridership had sagged to 22 million (a drop of almost 14 million since 1929). Despite this, the IC bravely tried to maximize its commuter business, on an initiative modestly started by a note from IC president L.A. Downs to one of his lieutenants: "See what can be done about improving our suburban service."

This brief missive, scrawled on a piece of scratch paper, brought about a flurry of changes. Car interiors were repainted, stations were spruced up, and new signs, in large black letters on a yellow background, clearly showed the street number of each exit stairway in huge numerals. Ticket prices were reduced; now Hyde Parkers could travel downtown for 10¢, ride round trip for 18¢, or ride round trip outside the rush hours for 17¢ (pennies counted during the Depression). The railroad introduced a \$1.00 weekly commutation ticket (so known because of its "commuted" or reduced price) for the benefit of regular riders short on cash and unable to scrape together the price of a whole month's transportation at a time (most people worked on Saturday mornings, so this was cheaper than six round trips). For a while, the IC sold tickets that included coupons good on Chicago Motor Coach for onward travel downtown.

World War II placed unprecedented demand on the nation's productive resources, and the IC Electric rose to the challenge. Thanks in large part to the foresight of Charles Mottier and other IC managers who planned the railroad's electrification and the various improvements associated therewith, the IC's electrified service moved record crowds during the war, culminating with 47 million passenger trips in 1946.

## POSTWAR CHANGES

The IC's commuter trains did not share in the automobile-dominated prosperity of the postwar decades, forcing the railroad to raise fares, retrench its service, and seek other economies. Although ridership rose at stations in the south suburbs as developers

turned cornfields into subdivisions, an even greater fall in urban ridership more than offset these gains.

By the mid-1960s, the IC's cars were among the oldest in operation in Chicagoland. Although the railroad maintained their mechanical gear in good condition, as a precaution the IC started to run trains in minimum consists of four cars, rather than two. That way, if one of the motor cars in a train broke down, there would always be at least one other motor car to power the train to its destination. Also, passenger amenities began to fray: many of the rattan seats began to split at the edges, and it sometimes required Herculean strength to open one of the windows. Riders understandably began to complain about the aging cars, although things never reached the point that they did on several Northeastern railroads where mechanical unreliability of the rolling stock started to drag down schedule adherence.

Until the 1960s, the IC's normal fare collection procedure was a cumbersome blend of rapid-transit-style fare collection, which is based on collecting fares as passengers enter stations, and the railroad tradition of checking tickets aboard trains. Each station entrance was staffed by two women—and Hyde Parkers could enter IC stations at 47th, 51st, 53rd, 55th, 56th, 57th, 59th, and 60th Streets. If you did not already have a ticket, you first bought one at the ticket window. You presented your ticket to the gatwoman, who punched it with a conductor's ticket punch. After your inbound train left 53rd St., the conductor, flagman, and collectors (there was one man for every two cars of the train) walked through the train, collecting the tickets, tearing off one coupon of a round trip, or cutting off a "square" of a ten-ride ticket with a separate punch. You then left the station downtown with no further ado upon arrival.

On your ride home, the gate attendants let you through with your green-colored Hyde Park ticket (after punching it), and you boarded your southbound express. Even if you just missed one train, there was never a long wait before the next one. In the decades before the railroad installed a public address system on its trains, the leather-lunged trainmen called out all the stations, but did not check any tickets until 67th St., from which point they made sure that everyone had a higher-priced, red-colored ticket for longer rides. In addition to these duties, on-board train personnel also collected fares from those few riders who got on at stations that did not have a ticket agent.<sup>1</sup>

## AUTOMATIC FARE COLLECTION

In 1963 and 1964, the railroad, sensing the promise of automation and feeling the need to reduce the costs of an increasingly unprofitable commuter service, decided to convert to automatic fare collection, starting with the downtown stations at Randolph St. and Van Buren St. The benefit to the railroad was increased

productivity. Electronic fare gates would replace the gatwomen, and vending machines would replace the ticket agents at all but a handful of stations. New public address systems aboard trains allowed train crews to announce stations without straining their voices.

As with many companies initiating new technologies, the public launching of the fare gates and the magnetically-coded tickets did not start smoothly. IC riders suffered a spectacular failure of the fare gates to function properly during their first evening rush hour



A six-car train of the Highliners in their original orange and black paint scheme, taken from the same spot south of Roosevelt Road as the picture on p. 4 of the Spring 2008 issue. In the late 1970s, the Regional Transportation Authority adopted a similar orange and brown paint scheme, which Metra continued until it began rebuilding the Highliners starting in the mid 1990s.

on July 1, 1965, when thousands of commuters were unable to get through the gates to their trains (which left Randolph and Van Buren on time but empty). Chastened by this malfunction and the ensuing public relations fiasco, the railroad moved slowly to extend the fare gates to outlying stations, a process that was not completed for another couple of years, by which time the technology was working much more reliably. The IC did not bother installing fare gates at its least-patronized stations (18th, 47th, 63rd, and 67th Streets).

Hitherto, the gate attendants only checked tickets as passengers entered the system. Under the new setup, the automated fare gates checked passengers' tickets for time and station validity upon exiting as well as entering. The railroad installed call-for-aid telephones adjacent to the gates for the benefit of passengers experiencing problems with the machinery – a welcome measure as the railroad ironed out the initial problems with automated fare collection.

Another factor leading the IC to adopt automatic fare collection was that the railroad wanted to operate its commuter trains with just an engineer and a conductor once the fare gates had taken over the inspection of most of the tickets. Except for passengers boarding at stations without fare gates, the railroad gave up the routine

inspection of tickets, on the assumption that passengers would need valid tickets in order to pass through the gates. In the late 1960s, the railroad was willing to offer generous early retirement packages as part of a strategy for reducing crew size. The conductors' union, however,

*insisted on job protection, so the issue went to arbitration. The arbitrator ruled that short trains (two and four cars) needed only a two-person crew, and that longer trains (eight and ten cars) should continue to have three crew members, but there was no ruling on six-car trains. When the railroad scheduled six-car trains to run with only two employees, the unions went out on strike in April 1969. The strike, which also involved crew sizes on freight trains, was settled within a week, on terms advantageous to labor.<sup>2</sup>*

Incidentally, the two-part fare gates that the IC used did not help the railroad establish a customer-friendly image. These gates opened in front of and closed behind passengers with a sharp motion, and left riders with a momentary feeling of being trapped between the front and rear elements. The abruptness with which the waist-level gates closed behind passengers left many with the sensation of being nipped from behind by an unfriendly dog.

## HIGHLINERS AND TURNSTILES

The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (today part of Burlington Northern Santa Fe) brought the concept of the bilevel gallery car to Chicago's commuters with its diesel-hauled trains in 1950. The Chicago & North Western adopted the concept starting in the late 1950s, and added the innovation—soon adopted by Chicago's other diesel commuter railroads—of push-pull operation. By the mid-1960s, bilevel gallery cars had spread to all of Chicago's major commuter railroads except the IC and the South Shore Line. Following years of discussion, in 1971-72 the IC took delivery of 130 Highliners, then and now the world's only fleet of bilevel gallery cars that were also electrically-powered multiple units. The Highliners also had the distinction of being the last railroad passenger cars built by the St. Louis Car Company before it went out of business. The Highliners, named by teenage railfan Arthur Peterson in a public contest, are still in service as of 2006.

The Highliners were a quantum leap forward for riders, with air conditioning and deep-cushioned, plastic-covered seats. With rising standards of comfort among its customers, the railroad made little provision for standees, opting instead to maximize the number of seats. The low ceilings above the seats on the lower deck took some getting used to. Many riders learned to maneuver carefully when exiting seats after having bumped their heads a few times. Like the cars they replaced, the Highliners featured the unusual combination of rapid ► 6