

Long Island HEP Power Packs



For Alco faithful, the decade of the 1960s had been a sea of troubled waters; a stillness had spread through the diesel erection shop in Schenectady, the rhythmic cathunk of four-cycle engines was faint everywhere, and scrap-yard coffers were swollen on the carcasses of 244-powered road units. However, from New York City in 1971 came one small glimmer of hope, a call had once again rang out to the far reaches, "Send us your poor, your down trodden, and . . ." The few remaining operable four-axle Alco-GE road cabs in the U.S. responded to the call; they came from places near and far -- Columbia River Gorge in the Pacific Northwest, the coal fields of southeastern Kentucky, and Helmstetter's Curve in central Maryland. They were ready to trade the mountains for towering skyscrapers and rural farmland for places with names likes Jamaica, Oyster Bay, and Ronkonkoma.**

Each FA's first stop was General Electric's Apparatus Shop in North Bergen, NJ where, the 12 cylinder 244 power plant was rebuilt. The main generator was rewired to deliver the 600-volt DC current needed for train heating and lighting, and all four traction motors removed. The cabs were fitted with multiple unit jumper receptacles and a through-the-train connection to the propulsion locomotive at the other end to provide train control.

"...The original purpose of the power car program, May 25, 1971, was not to provide "hotel" power to the passenger cars, but to also provide better crew safety than would be possible with a push-pull passenger car..." (Bob Losse, Sr.) [link](#)

Image: Long Island Power Pack #611 at Williston Park on 31 December 1979. (Charles Freericks photographer)

A Photo Review

Long Island Rail Rail Power Cars

Guest Contributor: Steven Lynch

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LIRR #601 (ex-Louisville & Nashville FA-2 #317)

George Turnbull photo (R. Craig collection)



LIRR #601

R. Craig photo



LIRR #607 (ex-Western Maryland FA-2 #303)

Steve Hoskins photo



LIRR #607

Kevin Gulau photo



LIRR #608 (ex-Western Maryland FA-2 #304)

Dave Keller photo



LIRR 608

John Fusto photo



LIRR #3100 (converted from LIRR #608)

Bill Mangahas photo

Note: All photos are from Steven Lynch's website, unless otherwise stated. If you are interested in learning more about the Long Island Rail Road, you are encouraged to use this link and visit his ["Long Island Rail Road History"](#) website.

** Text excerpted from [Alco FA: Running in the Shadow](#), published by Four-Ways West.

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